

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session — Seventeenth Legislature
20th Day

Friday, March 1, 1974

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. R. GROSS: (Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and through you to the Members of this House some 21 Grade Six students from Vanguard, Saskatchewan. They are accompanied by teachers Mrs. Anita Froyman, Mrs. Betty Lee, Mrs. Lil Wainman parent, and their bus driver, Ralph Kuhlmann. I hope that the afternoon exercise will be an educational experience, sometimes it leaves a lot to be desired, but nevertheless I hope it is.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. K. THORSON: (Souris-Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, may I introduce to the Assembly the students from the Grade Nine class of the Pleasantdale School in the city of Estevan. They are here in the Speaker's Gallery accompanied by their principal, Mr. Ross Boulton and their teacher Mrs. Joyce Beggs. I am sure that I speak for all Members of the Assembly in extending to them a warm welcome and on this particular day a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J. G. RICHARDS: (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to join with others in welcoming students, on this occasion, those from the College Parks School in Saskatoon and their teacher Mr. Ramson, seated in the east gallery. I would also join with remarks from the Hon. Member from Gravelbourg that this House is not always quite what it should be, but given the vast array of potential talents surrounding us today, we shall doubtless be on our best behavior, a sterling example of what parliamentary democracy should be.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J. WIEBE: (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, I should like through you and to the Members of this House join with my colleague from Gravelbourg in welcoming the students from Vanguard to the Legislature this afternoon. Redistribution has done marvellous things, and besides welcoming them to the Legislature I should like to welcome them to the new constituency of Morse.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. WIEBE: — I might say it is very encouraging to see such young, bright and energetic looking people now becoming part of the new Morse constituency.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CURLING — SASKATOON WOMEN CHAMPIONSHIP

MR. H. H. ROLFES: (Saskatoon Nutana South): — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of myself and the other Members for Saskatoon I should like to take this opportunity to congratulate Emily Farnham and her rink who yesterday became the Canadian Women's Champions in curling. The other members of the team are, lead Donna Collins, second Pat MacBeath and third Linda Saunders. Anyone who comes from Saskatoon of course knows that this is not new to Saskatoon, for we have taken the Canadian Women's Championship at least four or five times, in the last three years by Vera Pezer. It just goes to show that good things do come from Saskatoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

SGIO AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES

MR. C. P. MacDONALD: (Milestone): — I should like to direct a question to the Minister in charge of Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGIO). As has been commented on previously, I have a copy here of the new licence plates rates for 1974 and a comparison to 1975. I find there is a reduction in licence plate rates for \$200 deductible with the licence plate for 1974 and yet a few weeks ago there was an article in the Leader-Post stating that there was a very dramatic increase in package policies. In fact \$100 deductible according to the report was now going to be the same value as \$50 previously. Mr. Green from the SGIO indicated that this would of course discourage people from taking package policies. Is it the policy of SGIO deliberately to discourage people from buying package policies; is it a fact that there will be a reduction in licence plates for the year 1974 and is it the policy of the Government to discourage from buying package policies and reducing their insurance coverage for cars in Saskatchewan and is this election bait?

HON. R. ROMANOW: (Attorney General) Mr. Speaker, answering the third question first, I am not in a position to say whether or not it is election bait. I can only simply say with respect to the specific question on package policies that no, SGIO does not want to discourage package policies. After all we are in business with other insurance companies on package policies and we think that the costs with respect to the \$50 deductibles are such that perhaps motorists might be justified into looking at other levels of deductibles in oilier levels of coverage.

While I am on my feet and in response perhaps partly to the question made by the Hon. Member for Milestone, I was going to ask this before the Orders of the Day of you in any event Sir. I should like to make an announcement respecting automobile insurance premium rates for the licence year 1974-75. I just didn't bring my music along with me.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

SGIO AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES

MR. ROMANOW: — I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, and the Hon. Member from Milestone and Members opposite that we are pleased to announce that the premium rates under The Automobile Accident Insurance Act for the licence year in 1974-75 will be reduced below the 1975-7- premiums..

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — . . . for a considerable number of motorists.

Of the private passenger vehicles registered in the current 1975-74 licence year 257,000 or approximately 77 per cent will receive reductions in insurance premiums depending on the loss- ratio experienced for each class of vehicle, the reductions will range from 2 per cent for 1972 model cars to up to 72 per cent for the older 1957-60 year model cars. These reductions reflect the more favorable loss-ratio experience of certain classes of vehicles.

For the new 1975 model private passenger cars the premium payable will be \$10 above the premium payable for the similar 1974 model. It is, in effect, a new category.

For a small group of luxury automobiles with a wheel base above 125 inches, the premium will be \$10 above the next highest premium category applicable to private passenger vehicles of the same year. A minimum premium of \$10 will be applicable to all private passenger vehicles.

Motorcycles and private trailers, Mr. Speaker will be classified under a new and more equitable structure reflecting some increases. For farm trucks and for all commercial and public service vehicles premiums payable for the 1974-75 year will remain unchanged. Reductions are simply not possible because of the unfavorable loss-ratio experience, but there will be no increases.

Many have felt that the existing surcharge on drivers' licences for young men and women under the age of 25 have been and are discriminatory. After all not all drivers, Mr. Speaker, under the age of 25 are involved in accidents and not everyone should be levied with a surcharge on his licence only because of his age. Accordingly the surcharge in this category will be abolished. This will result . . .

SOME HON.: MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, this will result in a further saving to 158,000 young drivers throughout the Province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to experience difficulties with the accident prone or problem driver. Clearly we must devise a system which penalizes the careless driver and at the same time rewards those with good driving records. I have instructed officials at SGIO to propose for the Government's consideration a scheme whereby we can satisfactorily tackle and overcome this

problem. In the meantime, and in this rating year all drivers with an unsatisfactory driving record will be subject to much closer concern. We are placing reinforced emphasis on the present system of surcharges on licences of all individuals who are assessed points subsequent to traffic convictions. We will continue to closely examine this mechanism and we anxiously await the report of the special legislative committee on highway traffic safety on which Members from both sides of the House are represented.

Mr. Speaker, how will this reduction be effective? The new premium rates will be made practicable by legislation that will be proposed in the House amending The Fuel Petroleum Tax Act. Under the proposal a portion of the fuel tax now paid by motorists will be transferred to The Automobile Accident Insurance Act as part of the insurance premium. Three pennies of the fuel tax will be transferred to The Automobile Accident Insurance Act. It must be emphasized that there will be no increase in the amount of fuel tax now paid. This new concept, Mr. Speaker, means that motorists will contribute premiums according to exposure. The more miles driven, the more the risk and quite rightly the more the contribution for insurance premiums.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — This is a positive new step to bringing more equity into our automobile insurance rating plan.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the whole question under AAIA is currently receiving a very detailed study in depth for the purpose of achieving the highest possible standards of equity and soundness. Motorists will this year be asked to complete a small questionnaire in order to help my officials in our total review of this Act.

The announcement that I have made today I think is a significant step in that regard. I trust that all Members of the House will welcome the statement I have made.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. D. G. STEUART: (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, we welcome the reductions that have been announced. The fact that they have not been fairly distributed is of course typical of the Government opposite. I think that the last few paragraphs of the statement by the Attorney General have great and serious implications. What the Government is saying is they intend to subsidize The Automobile Accident Insurance Act. Now they are going to boast as they do all over the country that the Government run insurance program gives insurance to motorists cheaper than any private insurance company, and in the past maybe it has. Now that we are approaching the very difficult problem of keeping the plan solvent, they have turned to subsidizing it and it is very unfair. It is not based, in fact it will not be based on the experience the bad or good experience of motorists, it will be based on those people who are forced to drive more miles, taxi drivers, commercial travellers, these kinds of people who must look to driving their automobile to make a living. They will be paying the most. There is no Question about it. One other thing that is clear about it is that people should understand that because the

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Government opposite is not prepared to face the difficult choice recognizing the accident rate and charge proper rates, charging the people using this insurance program, what they should charge them, they are in fact taking money away from schools, from hospitals, from other essential services.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — Well, obviously many of you don't know what happens to general revenue. The gasoline tax goes into general revenue. General revenue in this province is used to pay for such services, hospital services, health and educational services. If you don't know that. Mr. Attorney General, then check with your desk mate, I am sure he will tell you. You know it is a fact. Let's not be under any illusion and not try to kid the public, this is election bait, whether you go this year or you go next year. It is election bait. No Question about that, the people should clearly understand it is extremely unfair and it is a new departure from what has happened before. It is clearly subsidizing the poor drivers, the accident prone drivers, there is no other word for it.

QUESTIONS

SGIO AUTOMOBILE INSURANCE RATES

MR. MacDONALD: (Milestone): — I should like now to ask my supplementary question if I may.

First of all, I should like to tell the Attorney General I don't believe there is any reduction. This is merely a shift Mr. Mr. Speaker, is it true if you drive a model T or anything below 1965 car, maybe 28 per cent of the drivers in Saskatchewan there might be a slight reduction; Is it a fact that the total premium revenue from SGIO with the dramatic increases in package policies, the increases in certain categories of cars coupled with the reductions and the rest will bring in more premium ^ revenue to SGIO from drivers in the Province of Saskatchewan in 1974-75 than it did in 1973?

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I think that experience will only show that, whether that is the case or not. I anticipate that with inflationary and other factors that it in all likelihood will be true. Lest it not be misinterpreted by the Press about the business of whether this is- subsidization — I refer to the Press because I have no fear that the Opposition will misinterpret anything that we say — I have to appeal to the only rational body available. I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the proposal of allocating a portion of the fuel tax . . .

MR. MacDONALD: — On a Point of Order, is he answering my question, he has already had his speech. He has already made his statement, is this permissible to stand up in the House and explain again. If he can't explain it once, the first time clearly, that is unfortunate.

MR. SPEAKER: — Well I think some of our Questions get to be too broad in their implications. I would ask the Attorney General to stay as close as he possibly can to give the information required.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I will that, because the question I believe asked about whether or not the premiums would be larger and referring specifically to the three penny allocation. I just want to draw to the attention of my hon. friend the Member opposite for Milestone and the Leader of the Opposition that this approach with respect to premium payment was advocated a long time ago by, in fact in 1962 in the Florida Law Review by no less a personage than the Hon. Otto hang himself, who said it is a solid proposal in terms of the financing of The Automobile Insurance Act. I repeat to you, Mr. Speaker, that the principle is perfectly sound. I think the residents of Saskatchewan will welcome it and I am sorry to see that the Leader of the Opposition opposes it.

LEASE RENTAL — TORONTO-DOMINION BANK BLDG

MR. E. C. MALONE: (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I have a question of the Minister of Government Services. Mr. Minister in view of your answer yesterday as to the Government's intention to lease space from the Toronto-Dominion Bank Building in Regina, could you tell this Assembly how many floors of that building the Government has leased or is in the process of leasing and the rental payment for that space.

HON. J. E. BROCKELBANK: (Minister of Government Services): — Mr. Speaker, I cannot detail the rental payment for the space at this time. I will say at this time that probably the major part of the space in the Toronto-Dominion Bank Building will be leased by the Government.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, which departments of the Government will be moving into that building?

MR. BROCKELBANK: — I can't accurately respond to that, Mr. Speaker, because as the Member for Regina Lakeview may not know, they haven't built the building yet, they are just building it now. We'll make the determination at a later point, because there is other lease space coming available which might be used by the Government. In order to maintain full flexibility it is necessary that we not commit the Toronto-Dominion Bank Building at this time because it won't be available until the fall.

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

MR. E. F. GARDNER: (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Culture and Youth or in his absence someone else in the Government. In view of the concern over the availability of summer help on farms for this year would the Government reconsider the decision it made which removed summer jobs from the students' summer employment program?

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HON. A. E. BLAKENEY. (Premier): — In the absence of the Minister I would advise that the Government is not proposing this. We have not heard of any suggestions that the availability of labor on farms was being limited by the amount which farmers were able to pay. Our understanding is that the availability is limited by the actual absence of people prepared to work on farms and presumably that would be true whether or not a grant were available from the Government of Saskatchewan.

MR. GARDNER: — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Government would then consider taking a look at some of the studies that have been recently published which indicate that the reason people are not available for farm jobs is simply the fact that the salary range is too low and that perhaps some sort of a subsidized program is required?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Will we look at the studies? The answer is, yes.

WINTER ROAD TO URANIUM CITY

HON. E. KRAMER: (Department of Highways): — Yesterday the Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) asked a question regarding the winter road to Mokta mine site north of La Loche, Turnor Lake and on north to Uranium City which is in his constituency. I appreciate that he would have some concern about Uranium City and the possibility of supplies not being able to get through as they did last year for the first time in many years. Now listening to the late night news last night I think I was slightly misunderstood and I wouldn't want that to be put abroad.

It is difficult for some people to realize the vastness, the wide open spaces and some of the problems of northern Saskatchewan, especially in a winter such as this, Mr. Speaker, when there has been an early fall of snow. While our crews have done once again a stellar job of getting first of all to Mokta mine at Cluff Lake and then on to the shores of Lakes Athabasca and Carswell, they find that the ice, as I stated yesterday, is thin. I got another report on it and they are still not sure that they can cross.

Now the Member for Athabasca indicated real concern and there is an old time-honored custom among the Eskimos who used to have trouble with thin ice occasionally. Members of their community who had outlived their usefulness were always sent out first on the ice to make sure that the ice was thick enough to carry the seal hunter and whatever he had to take. On account of the news release last night I want to make it clear that if the Member for Athabasca- is really concerned and he feels that our people are not telling the truth, that there will be a snowplow prepared to cross Carswell or Lake Athabasca. If he is prepared to man it we will fly him up there and he can probably make one of the best contributions he has ever made to his constituency either way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KRAMER: — I will assure him if he is worried about the consequences we'll give him a hero's funeral in case it goes the wrong way and certainly I am sure the people of Uranium City will welcome him more than they have ever done before if he makes it. That offer is open, Mr. Speaker, and we are prepared to do everything possible.

I have another suggestion to make, the Member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Coupland) has got longer legs. He could probably tread water better. If the Hon. Member needs somebody to accompany him, he should ask his northern colleague, he'll probably want to make a contribution along with him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. A. E. GUY: (Athabasca): — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think after that long discussion about nothing, all anyone has to do is take one look at him and listen to him and then look at me and they will listen to what I said and what he said and they will all agree that if he'll go with me he'll make everybody in the province happy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KRAMER: — On a Point of Privilege, I still have a family to worry about.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

INDIANS ON SCHOOL UNIT BOARDS

HON. G. MacMURCHY: (Minister of Education): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I should like to make an announcement of another first for Saskatchewan education.

Last summer we saw the first tuition agreement signed in this province by a Unit Board, Department of Indian Affairs and Band Chiefs. This took place with the Govan Board, Department of Indian Affairs and three Bands, Day Star, Gordons and Poormans, involving the community schools at Raymore, Quinton and Punnichy. Since that signing two other tuition agreements have been signed in the province at Prince Albert and at Parkland. Two weeks ago a capital agreement involving the same board, Govan, the Bands there and the Department was signed involving capital construction at Punnichy and Raymore. Another first.

This morning at Punnichy I met with the Band Chiefs from Poormans, Day Star and Gordons and the Govan Board. I received from the Band Councils band resolutions plus a resolution from the Govan Board providing agreement to seat Saskatchewan's first Indian School trustees on a unit board. Elections will take place in the latter part of May.

The three reserves will each elect a trustee to the Govan Board. This agreement, these elections were made possible by amendments to The Larger Units Act which was introduced in the Legislature last February 6th, 1973 and passed April 27th, 1973.

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SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacMURCHY: — I am optimistic further elections will be forthcoming with respect to unit boards and since I said in the House this week with respect to Bill 50, Balcarres is waiting in the wings. The Chiefs of the Bands, Chief Kapay of Day Star, Chief McNabb of Gordons, Chief Dustyhorn of Poormans and the Board Members, Chairman George Huckle and Vice Chairman Leonard Jones, John MacPheat, Godfrey Fritzler, Charlie Schuler, along with Superintendent John Welybholowa are to be commended for their efforts in establishing this most important first for education in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

BOOKLET ON SASKATCHEWAN PUT OUT BY TOURIST BRANCH

HON. K. THORSON: (Minister of Industry): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I should like to lay on the table the annual report of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation for the year ending December 31st, 1973.

While I am on my feet, Mr. Speaker, may I draw the Members' attention to a booklet which each Member will find on his desk. It was produced by the Tourist Branch and it is in response to many requests we received from people who want to visit Saskatchewan, to know something about what it looks like and what color it has. I particularly should like to commend the staff of the Tourist Branch for producing this booklet which we shall be distributing widely throughout 1974.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

SNOWFALL AND SPRING FLOODS

HON. N. E. BYERS: (Minister of Environment): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to make a brief announcement to provide some information not only to the House but to the people of Saskatchewan with respect to some actions we are taking in view of the very heavy snowfall about. I think in view of the discussions in the last few days it is interesting that we in Saskatchewan have a very pleasant winter climate when at the same time of the year we are concerned that the ice is not very thick on the lakes for transporting inventory while we are preparing for spring floods.\

The Member for Lumsden (Mr. Lane) inquired as to measures being considered for potential flooding in one of the communities in his constituency; namely, Lumsden. I should like to advise that the Department of the Environment has been monitoring both weather and flow conditions in the province throughout the past winter and has been preparing forecast flows at key locations since the first of February. Our stream flow forecasts were updated on February 15th and are being updated again for March 1st. Subsequently, they will be updated every two weeks until the melt starts, and then they will be revised daily or as conditions warrant. The early forecasts are based primarily on the accumulation of snow as measured at weather stations

at various locations throughout the tributary areas, and future forecasts which will be more precise will be revised on the basis of actual warm-up rates and the actual recorded up-stream flows. We will be monitoring the flows at 14 points in the drainage basins upstream from Lumsden in the Moose Jaw River, the Wascana Creek and the upper basin of Qu'Appelle above Buffalo Pound Lake. Lumsden is far enough away from the source of flows that it gets more warning by several days than other communities like Regina and Moose Jaw, but based on the Department's early forecasts which were communicated to the town of Lumsden officials at a meeting on February 19th, a number of preparations have already been made. As a result of activities following the floods of 1969 and 1971 our Department and the town have developed a good working arrangement. Detailed information on dyke levels is available from the work of the Department of Agriculture and the town that have been done in the last two summers. Also the amount of sandbagging that will be required for various flood levels is also known.

The Mayor, who is the town Emergency Measures Organization coordinator, is fully aware of the flooding potential. The town has already inventoried its stock of sandbags. There are 25,000 bags on hand and town officials are arranging for more if needed. To withstand a flood like 1969 they may need an additional 25,000 bags.

The Department of the Environment will be keeping the town fully informed of the forecasts and to assure good communications arrangements have been made with the town for space for a temporary office to provide a local forecast being serviced during the runoff. The Department's best estimate at present is flood flows of similar magnitude to the 1969 flood at Lumsden however, a fast warm-up could increase this potential. If this flow occurs the town will have 1½ feet of freeboard which means that the water would not come to within 1½ feet of the top, of the existing dykes protecting the main settled area of the town. Sandbagging would be required to protect the area of James Street as in previous flood years. The dykes in Lumsden which were rebuilt during the past two years could be raised by sandbagging on top to provide more perfection if flows happen to exceed the record flow in 1969. Our Department has been in regular contact with the provincial EMO regarding possible flooding problems everywhere in the province and they are geared up and ready to assist when the local municipalities and the local EMO officials call upon them.

MR. J. G. LANE: (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, I should just like to comment on this, what could be an extremely important problem.

I should like to call to the Minister's attention the fact that in the previous serious flooding to which you have referred there was a problem with ice jams which caused, for want of a better word, some flash flooding. There was also at that time a shortage of sand for the sandbagging. I would hope that the Minister through his officials would ensure that there is a stockpiling not only of the sandbags to which he referred but an adequate quantity of sand itself. I was personally involved the last time with the matter of trying to get Highways to ensure that the sand was available. There was a problem, as I say, of access to sand. I would hope that the Minister would oversee those particular considerations.

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The people of the town are concerned. I commend the Government for the efforts made to date. Certainly there is no excuse for any flooding there this year with the monitoring that has been done and we hope that it won't happen.

MR. BYERS: — I understand, Mr. Speaker, that arrangements are in hand to stockpile additional sand to be in place well in advance in the event of any flood.

ST. DAVID'S DAY — PATRON SAINT OF WALES

HON. A. E. BLAKENEY: (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I just want to remind the House that today is March 1st, St. David's Day, the day honoring the Patron Saint of Wales. I should like to take this opportunity to remind the House of the contribution to Saskatchewan made by the people of Welsh descent. We all know they are people of song and poetry, a very gentle people, not pugnacious at all — although perhaps some of those who are engaged in mining in recent weeks have not always shown themselves as peaceful as they might be. But they have indeed made a considerable contribution to this province having come not only directly from Wales, but a good number from Argentina, those known as the Patagonian Welsh. They have been the main settlers in a number of Welsh communities. Names like Bryn Mawr, Bangor, are part of the geographic face of Saskatchewan. Here in this Legislature there has been a number of Welsh descent. I have recalled serving with persons with names like Williams and Lloyd and Davies and there are doubtless many others. They are part of the cultural mosaic which makes Saskatchewan an interesting place in which to live. I ask the House to join with me in paying a tribute to those of our citizens of Welsh descent on this the date of their Patron Saint.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

TRIP TO ISRAEL

MR. H. H. P. BAKER: (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day if I may just report to you that over the next week and a half you won't see an honest, familiar face in this seat here. I shall be away over in Israel. If Henry Kissinger can't settle things Henry Baker will try.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — At the invitation of the Israeli Government some eight mayors across Canada have been invited to visit there on a good will tour for that period of time, free of charge, no cost to the taxpayer, I may report. I am very pleased that Regina was one of the cities chosen. My wife and I have accepted, we shall be leaving Monday morning and shall be back a week, next Wednesday.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Take a Buffalo hat.

MR. BAKER: — The former mayor didn't manufacture any. I have got to get some new ones made. But we are pleased on behalf

of the city to say that we are going and we have accepted the invitation. We shall be visiting some seven cities and we shall be covering the country I believe from one end to the other according to the itinerary and I want to say how pleased we are to have been invited to go. I just thought I should report that to you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

SPEAKER'S RULING

RESOLUTIONS NO. 6 and NO. 11

MR. SPEAKER: — Before we proceed on with the items following the Orders of the Day I would like to make a statement to the House.

On Tuesday, December 18, 1973, I ruled Resolution No. 6 out of order because the principle of Bill No. 42 was basically the same as Resolution No. 6 and, consequently, the debate would have been of much the same substance.

I therefore, rule Resolution No. 11 out of order because it is identical to Resolution No. 6 and an opportunity has already been given to debate this matter. A well-known principle of the Assembly forbids a question being twice raised in the same session and I refer Members to Beauchesne's Rules and Forms, Fourth Edition, Citation 148 (l), Page 126 which states that:

It is a wholesome restraint upon Members that they cannot revive a debate already concluded; and it would be little use in preventing the same question being offered twice in the same session if, without being offered, its merits might be discussed again and again.

Furthermore, my rulings to the Legislature are final and I may not alter them without having been specifically instructed by the Assembly and I refer Members to Beauchesne's Rules and Forms, Fourth Edition, Citation 69 (1), page 58, which states:

The Speaker exceeds his authority if, without having been specifically instructed by the House, he takes upon himself to alter any of his rulings which once given, are under the exclusive control of the House.

Therefore, Motion No. 11 will be dropped.

MR. J. G. RICHARDS: (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to query your ruling.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! This is not debatable. If you want to put a Motion on the rule book and if you will read Beauchesne's you will see that it is not debatable.

MR. RICHARDS: — Mr. Speaker, I can challenge your ruling.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! It is not debatable. The ruling is plain in Beauchesne.

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MR. RICHARDS: — All right I shall certainly refrain from debate, but I would like to make it a challenge to your ruling.

MR. SPEAKER: — Is anyone else supporting the Member in challenging the rules?

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

RETURN NO. 137

MR. E. C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview) moved that an Order of the Assembly do issue for a Return No. 157 showing:

The average weekly earnings of welfare recipients before payment of Saskatchewan Assistance Plan or Canada Assistance Plan funds, in 1973.

HON. A. TAYLOR: (Minister of Social Services): — Mr. Speaker, I shall be proposing an amendment to this Return. The amendment will do two things. It will add first of all the year 1972 so that the figures are available for the two-year period. It will also add a clause excluding exempt income. I should like to explain that the reason for this is simply that it would be extremely difficult to gather the information without that exclusion.

Members may be aware that someone who is on public assistance and goes to work, is permitted an exemption depending on his status — \$25 per month and half of the next \$50 in the case of a single person; \$75 and half of the next \$50 in the case of a handicapped person or single parent. The figures which we have are net figures and don't take these exemptions into consideration. To find these figures it would take a number of months of searching through the records and taking each of the case histories out and doing it by hand. So I am sure that this will provide the Members with the same information and by putting the two years in they will see whether there has been a progression or regression.

Therefore, it is moved by myself and seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robbins) that Return No. 157 be amended by:

Striking out all the words following the word "showing" and substituting the following:

The average weekly earnings, excluding exempt income and Public Assistance payments, of Saskatchewan Assistance Plan recipients in the following years: (a) 1972 (b) 1973.

Motion agreed to.

RETURN NO. 152

MR. A. R. GUY (Athabasca) moved that an Order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 152 showing:

Since the inception of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan to February 25, 1974, the number of, if any, employees that have been (a) fired; (b) transferred from the area which comes under the Department of Northern Saskatchewan Act; (c) demoted.

HON. G. R. BOWERMAN: (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — Mr. Speaker, I am indeed pleased that the Member for Athabasca has asked this question. It's been the kind of information which we have been wanting to get out into the public and haven't had the opportunity to do so and in order that full disclosure of this might be made to the Members of the House and subsequently hopefully to the Press. I should like to propose an amendment, Mr. Speaker, moved by myself and seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) that Return No. 152 be amended by:

Striking out all words after the word "showing" and substituting therefore:

Since the inception of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan to February 25, 1974, give the number of employees that have been: 1. (a) dismissed; (b) reasons given for dismissal. 2. (a) transferred from the area which come under the Northern Administration District Act; (b) the reasons for transfer. 5. (a) demoted; (b) reasons given for demotions.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion as amended agreed to.

RETURN NO. 154

MR. J. C. McISAAC (Wilkie) moved that an Order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 15^a showing:

(a) Whether there were any "thrust groups" or study groups established by the Minister in the Department of Public Health in the year 1973-74; (b) if so, what they were; (c) the estimated cost of such studies.

He said: — I might say, Mr. Speaker, this first appeared as a question and it's now a motion and I see nothing really in it for the Government to refuse in that sense.

HON. R. ROMANOW: (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by my colleague, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) that Return No. 154 be amended as follows:

That the word "study" in the first line be deleted and the word "probe" be substituted therefore and the word "studies" in the last line be deleted and the word "probes" be substituted therefore.

MR. McISAAC: — Mr. Speaker, may I speak to the motion just for a moment please. I realize, and part of my problem you can see, Mr. Speaker, when I first phrased the question I said, were there any "thrust groups" or study groups and I appreciate

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that there may have been a change in terminology and now we learn that there is, they are now called "probes" and so the question was worthwhile from that point of view. I trust that the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) will advise when there is any future change in terminology in this respect and if we go back to thrust groups.

Amendment agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2 – INFLATION

MR. E. C. WHELAN (Regina North West) moved, seconded by Mr. Kaeding (Saltcoats):

That this Assembly commends the Government of Saskatchewan for taking steps to ease the harmful effects of inflation, particularly for those on modest incomes, by increasing the minimum wage, abolishing medical and hospital premiums, increasing social assistance allowances and other measures, and further urges the Federal Government to take the appropriate steps to control the cost of living by such measures as: (a) developing policies and programs to increase food production and ensure stability in the agricultural sector; (b) establishing a permanent Prices Review Board empowered to set selective price controls; (c) implementing and enforcing effective controls to curb monopoly power.

He said: — Mr. Speaker, this Resolution commends the Government of Saskatchewan for taking steps to ease the harmful effects of inflation, particularly for those on modest incomes, by increasing the minimum wage, abolishing medical and hospital premiums, increasing social assistance allowances and other measures. In addition, Mr. Speaker, the Resolution asks this Assembly to urge the Federal Government to develop policies and programs to increase food production and ensure stability in the agricultural sector; establish a permanent Prices Review Board empowered to set selective price controls and take action implementing and enforcing effective controls to curb monopoly power.

Mr. Speaker, in the Leader-Post of December 13, 1973 a headline said and I quote, "High Grocery Bills to Continue". The news story of that date points out that there has been more than an 18 per cent increase in food prices in the last 12 months and that there will be "several more high grocery prices" to quote a committee of food and beverage officials, speaking on December 13.

Mr. Speaker, with the present Federal Government in Ottawa, and their ability to talk, and their inability to act, and with their pompous phrases expressing an interest in poverty and their refusal to recognize the problem, the Canadian consumer, particularly in the lower income bracket is left in a desperate, if not impossible, situation. Everyone in this House and most citizens of Saskatchewan will recognize the plight of those who are suffering as a result of the high cost of living.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. WHELAN: — The inflationary spiral, if you will, is really the inability to purchase food with the income at the disposal of these people.

At first, Mr. Speaker, those who suffered from this inflationary trend, from the high cost of living, were the elderly, those needing assistance from public funds, those who are retired on a fixed but not adequate income. Today, Mr. Speaker, the cost of living has risen so rapidly, the cost of food and clothing and shelter in particular has gone up like a sky-rocket and has now reached a stage where in the family group a breadwinner, who thought he was earning an adequate income, is now trying desperately to pay bills, to provide the money to feed and clothe his family, to pay for shelter and to make repairs to his automobile.

Mr. Speaker, what are the symptoms that tell you the cost of living is too high? Ask any housewife. She will list the symptoms. They are socks that have been darned because there is no money for new ones, trousers with holes in the knees that have been patched because the next pair will have to wait another month. The work clothes of the breadwinner worn threadbare. The mother no longer able to purchase new clothing for the family. An increasing number in this bracket are taking sewing lessons. A housewife buying fabrics, making jackets and shirts, skirts and blouses. The room that can't be painted and has to wait, automobile tires used beyond the recommended length of time. Fewer and fewer new cars being purchased by this group and, in the grocery basket, fewer expensive cuts of meat, no precooked foods, no luxury items. The housewife spends hours bargaining and shopping for groceries. Each week with each pay cheque the breadwinner, the family manager, plans to cut more corners and to curtail expenditures.

Many of the people who live in Regina and people who live in a constituency like Regina North West are in an economic squeeze. They are at the stage, Mr. Speaker, where there is not enough money to provide the usual type of entertainment, hockey games, etc., no more meals out in a restaurant, there is a drastic cutback, absolute elimination of luxuries.

While the young family is desperately seeking some relief from their financial predicament, the Federal Government in Ottawa in their benevolence, Mr. Speaker, pays the head of the Prices Review Board, \$40,000 a year to make pompous statements. Meanwhile the giant corporations, the multinational corporations, extend their octopus hold to a point where three food chains control more than 70 per cent of food sales in the Province of Saskatchewan. Look at Regina for instance. In 1972 Safeway, Dominion, O.K. Economy, controlled 75.5 per cent of the grocery sales. In Saskatoon — 72 per cent. It is significant, isn't it, that it is the chain stores, it's in these stores there's been a spectacular rise in gross margins, amounting to not 10 per cent, not 15 per cent, but 25 per cent since the age of the supermarkets began, in earnest, about 1960.

These supermarket chains, Mr. Speaker, are part of the giant octopus engaged in the food industry. Let me give you part of the picture.

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George Weston Ltd., the little biscuit bakery of World War I, today owns 150 companies, 1,850 supermarkets, over 1,500 franchises, 250 warehouses and 80 manufacturing plants. George Weston operates through 59 holding companies and here are some of the more familiar names. George Weston Ltd., with 100 per cent interest in Eddy Paper, Marvens, McCormicks, William Nielson, Paulin Chambers, Weston Bakeries, Willards Chocolates and there are five other subsidiaries in this group.

Kelly Douglas with a 100 per cent interest in Nabob, Super-Valu Stores, and there are ten other subsidiaries in this group.

Food Marketing Holdings with a 100 per cent interest in Pickering Farms and there are five other subsidiaries in this group.

Perrin Investments with three subsidiaries, including Loblaw Companies and Westfair Foods.

Westfair Foods, in turn, has 11 subsidiaries, including Western Grocers.

Dominion Fruit, with three subsidiaries, including Shop Easy and B.C. Packers, with five subsidiaries.

Then there are three other very familiar names in the group.

Atlantic Wholesalers with seven subsidiaries, almost or wholly owned in each case.

Connors Brothers Ltd., with seven subsidiaries.

Dunedin Investments, with six subsidiaries including Tamblyn.

Weston is the largest food company in Canada and perhaps in the world. In addition, Mr. Speaker, Weston is a controlling force in agro-business in the United States, in the United Kingdom and in South Africa.

If Members of this House think, for one moment, that Weston or other chains are satisfied with manufacturing, wholesaling and retailing food, that is not so. The giant multinational corporations in Canada and the United States have spread their tentacles around the world.

Let's look at one of the big companies in the United States — let's look at the Kern County Land Company for instance. Not only do they own land and huge corporate farms they own the farm tractor companies as well — Allis-Chalmers for instance. They raise their own beef — they have the largest feeder lots in the world and their land holdings are larger than one of the States in the United States. They have a controlling interest in Safeways; they own citrus orchards, oil wells, pipe lines, they even manufacture furniture — television sets, radios. Aside from the fact that they control the food we eat from the time the animal is born, food from the time the seed goes into the ground until it arrives at the consumer's table, they manufacture consumer goods in a wide variety. From every transaction, Mr. Speaker, they exact a profit by selling (not

at a competitive price, Mr. Speaker) but at their price.

Some of the octopus organizations eliminate, not only the retailer, but also the wholesaler; the farm machinery from Allis-Chalmers goes directly to the company farms. Millions of pounds of beef go directly from the slaughter sheds to the shelves of Safeway stores and each time, Mr. Speaker, they exact their profit, the profit that they set.

In Canada we also have the Argus Corporation. As you know, Argus was a mythical giant with a hundred eyes — six holding companies, three of which in turn have a number of subsidiaries. The holding companies have names which you will recognize immediately — Dominion Stores Limited; B.C. Forest Products Limited; Domtar Limited; Hollinger Mines Limited; Massey-Ferguson Limited; Standard Broadcasting Corporation.

Dominion Stores have six subsidiaries, five supermarket chains and one bakery.

Domtar has 15 subsidiaries including eight paper or paper products companies.

Massey-Ferguson has eight subsidiaries, including two finance companies and an office equipment company.

Friends of these huge corporations, Mr. Speaker, who take political donations from them in order to get elected, allow these corporations to exploit the fixed income people, the low income people, the middle income people, Mr. Speaker, all of the consumers of Canada.

Oh, the Liberal party at Ottawa, when they are the government, say, "We will make war on poverty." This Liberal Government at Ottawa says they have discovered that the prices on food items have been changed on the shelf and they call this 'gouging'. But the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal Government could do something about it, because as the former Premier of this province pointed out, trade and commerce and anti-trust laws are within their power. The fact is that the Federal Government has control of the amalgamation and business operations of these huge corporate giants. Mr. Speaker, it is the only government in this country that is in any position, that can exert power, or has any influence over these modern-day highwaymen. But this Government at Ottawa sits idly by and says, "We'll leave it to Mrs. Plumptre."

Mr. Speaker, if they ever stop the habit of taking financial donations from the little corporations, the big corporations, the multinational corporations, the machinery corporations and food corporations, then, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that there might be, there just might be, a possibility that this Federal Government at Ottawa would effectively curb and control monopoly power.

My colleague, the Hon. Member for Saltcoats (Mr. Kaeding) will be talking about programs and policies to increase food production and ensure stability in the agricultural sector.

The Hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Tchorzewski) will be speaking at some length on the resolution, about the establishment of a permanent Prices Review Board and the need for selected price controls.

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Let me turn for a moment, if I may, to some of the areas where this Government has tried to help those who are battling the high cost of living and who are suffering from the results of inflation.

Personal income tax and the Education and Hospital Tax, by their very nature, increase when there is an increase in the cost of items, and, an increase in the income from royalties. These have been put to good use by the Government. These sums of money have been utilized in a number of ways. Let me give the Members some examples:

Mr. Speaker, this Government took off the burden of hospitalization for those 65 and over as of January 1st, 1972. For 98,000 people in this province, those 65 and over, no longer is it necessary to scrape and save for the first of November to put together nickels and dimes from their small reserves to pay the hospital and medical premiums. Effective January 1st, 1972, this was no longer required. The previous government, in its benevolence, Mr. Speaker, in its wisdom, by its action, imposed upon the sick and dying the despicable \$2.50 per day deterrent fee. It cost the people of the province \$4.5 million a year. Its removal took from the sick a burden, from the young — and particularly from the family groups, and from the elderly — an unfair levy amounting to approximately \$5 million.

Mr. Speaker, effective January 1, 1974 approximately \$15 million was used to pay the medical care insurance premium for all the people of the province. A move that will help fight the cost of living.

These amounts, Mr. Speaker, covering all the population at a crucial time, are significant and are appreciated by the people, by mothers with small children, retired people, senior citizens, they have enunciated over and over again, in many ways, in letters, vocally, their appreciation for the elimination of one of their living costs, at a time when rising food prices are hounding them.

Compare if you will, Mr. Speaker, and particularly with those who say that these charges should not have been removed, compare our province's record with the provinces of Alberta and Ontario. In Alberta, for instance, the basic premium for a single person is \$69, and for a family \$132; in Ontario for a single person \$132 and for a family \$264.

Let me remind those who say this premium should not have been removed, that these are the rich provinces of Canada, but they did not remove these premiums. The provinces of Alberta and Ontario did not remove the medicare premiums. Picture, if you can, people in those provinces who are hard-pressed, family groups trying to scrape together the money required to pay \$132 in Alberta; \$264 in Ontario for a family group — in provinces that are affluent, but where people, because of federal inactivity, are in a desperate fight because of the cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, looking at this comparison and at the cost of living, I say that Saskatchewan is making an honest, sincere and determined effort, to help our citizens battle inflation.

True, the Homeowner Grant was introduced by the Members opposite, but, in order to fight the cost of living, to relieve the homeowner of some of the burden of taxes, this Government has increased the grant, not 10 per cent, not 20 per cent, but approximately 50 per cent. Approximately \$12 million this year — the average payment has increased from \$70 per house to \$144. This represents a real effort on behalf of the government to reduce living costs.

The Property Improvement Grant is now more than twice what was paid out in the last full year the people opposite were in power. I predict, Mr. Speaker, that when the last application is complete, as of February 15, 1974, the returns will show that this Government, in this year, will have paid out three times as much as the previous government in the 1970 year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. WHELAN: — In 1970 they paid out \$10 million and this year this Government will pay out approximately \$50 million.

Mr. Speaker, when the Premier went on radio and television to announce an increase in the minimum wage, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart), said that he was against the increase. And yet, Mr. Speaker, in order . . .

MR. STEUART: — What?

MR. WHELAN: — And yet, Mr. Speaker, he looked pretty harried that night. He looked like a boxer in his corner who had just been plowed and plowed properly.

Mr. Speaker, in order to combat the cost of living, while he deplores social assistance, he suggested that an outright grant be made to cover the increase in minimum wage. Mr. Speaker, these contradictions and inconsistencies indicate pretty poor judgment.

But what did the increase in the minimum wage mean as announced by the Premier? It meant an increase in income to approximately 78,000 people, some of them full-time, some of them part-time. It meant an increase to 43,000 people in service industries and to 55,000 people in the other employment groups. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the minimum wage increase, which was criticized so roundly, so vigorously and completely by the Members opposite, in effect, was an effort on behalf of the Government to alleviate the plight of 78,000 wage earners in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. WHELAN: — These 78,000 people, I predict, will not forget that those on the Opposition benches did not approve of this payment, were opposed to it . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. WHELAN: — . . . objected to it and criticized it. The Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, would leave these citizens in their

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plight, they would leave them at the mercy of their friends in the food corporations, the profit-seeking monopolies and food giants.

Mr. Speaker, senior citizens facing a desperate situation, short of funds to repair their homes, using every nickel on hand to pay for the necessities of life, driven sky-high by monopoly prices, have been able to get some relief in the grants available through the Senior Citizens' Home Repair Plan. At the end of November, the Government had approved approximately 7,500 grants, averaging \$400 each. Applications have been pouring in so rapidly that the staff have been unable to keep up with them. This \$400 grant will help alleviate the increased cost of repairs and make available to senior citizens a few extra dollars to buy the essentials of life. In addition, the Senior Citizens' program, which to date has committed approximately \$2 million of provincial money, will help alleviate the cost of living. It was hoped, initially, when this program began, that the Ottawa Government would match our grant dollar for dollar. The grant to repair senior citizens' homes is an effective, necessary way to fight the high cost of living and at the same time recognize our obligation to the pioneers of this province, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. WHELAN: — Mr. Speaker, at an average price of \$75, approximately 600 Saskatchewan citizens have purchased hearing aids through the Saskatchewan Hearing Aid Plan. Each purchase represents a substantial reduction to them in the cost of living. Hearing aids which did vary in price from \$180 to as high as \$400, are available at an average price of \$75. This saving is made possible by virtue of the fact that these hearing aids are handled by a government agency. As use of the agency becomes more extensive, senior citizens and others will be able to make a substantial savings in service, batteries, parts and, of course, the initial cost of the hearing aid. This action on the part of the Department of Health represents a sincere and determined effort to reduce the living costs for those who are hard of hearing, Mr. Speaker, at a time when it is most appreciated and in an area where there has been serious exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, in the short time at my disposal, I have quoted the 18 per cent increase in food costs since last year, plus the prospect for a further increase, and described the multinational organization of retail and food manufacturing corporations, proving the need for a Prices Review Board with power to impose selected price controls and legislation to curb monopolies.

Let me list again, in conclusion, the chains that together control over 70 per cent of the retail food market in Saskatchewan, and whose margins have increased 25 per cent in the few years: Safeway, Dominion Stores and O.K. Economy and Loblaws, and their multinational corporation associates. These companies make a profit on the manufacture of food, they make a profit on the transportation of food, they make a profit on the buildings they rent, they make a profit on the operation, including a mark-up on the wages of the people who work in those service industries who, as a general rule, are in the lower income bracket.

Mr. Speaker, these corporations are allowed to run unbridled, free of restrictions, and they have gradually increased their hold on the food market in Canada. Federal action on a selected price control program and legislation to bridle these giant corporations cannot wait any longer. Every citizen must have food, every citizen must buy groceries. The behaviour of the monopoly corporations controlling the food business demands immediate, all-out action. The provincial government can pass legislation, can introduce programs. I commend this Government for the programs that I have described, for they have reduced living costs as set out:

Medicare premiums — \$5 million for those 65 and over; Removal of Medicare premium for all the people — \$15 million;

Property Improvement Grant — increased to \$30 million; Increased income to 78,000 citizens by increasing the minimum wage;

Senior Citizens Home Repair Plan — 7,500 people at an average of \$400 each; Hearing aids made available to hundreds of applicants at a saving to each of them.

Mr. Speaker, the federal legislative record to curb inflation is bad; the provincial record is good, I maintain.

Therefore I move, seconded by the Hon. Member for Saltcoats (Mr. Kaeding), Resolution 2 as it appears on the Order Paper.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. D. G. STEUART: (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, in rising to speak to this Resolution, I want to say that the only thing that I think is commendable about it, is the fact that at least someone on that side of the House decided to talk about the most serious problem that is facing the people of this province, or of this nation, and that is inflation — almost run-away prices. But, as soon as I say that, I want also to add that the attitude of the NDP Government, as exhibited by the Member who just spoke (Mr. Whelan) and by this Resolution, I'm sorry to say is one of hypocrisy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — Now I think before we get into this, I think we should look at what has really caused inflation, what is behind inflation. Of course, it depends on where you sit in the economy. Some people have blamed increases in wages as a major cause of inflation. I say this is wrong. Wages for some groups in our society in the last five to ten years have exceeded the rise in the cost of living index. But a great many groups in our society have had wage increases that have fallen behind the cost of living index, the rise in prices. In fact, increase in wages and incomes have had little to do with inflation.

MR. ROLFES: — That's not what you said.

MR. STEUART: — That is exactly what I said. I said that the working people in this province need a substantial increase in wages.

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But an increase in wages in effect of 20 per cent as was given to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation worker's, and I don't blame them, was in fact inflationary.

In regard to profits. Of course, the profits by some corporations and some companies, including Crown corporations, have contributed to rising prices. But again if you studied dispassionately the record of profits in this nation, you will find that they have not played the major role in rising prices. They have played some role in rising prices and where they have been out of line, then of course it is the responsibility of both federal and provincial governments to move in. I find it rather interesting that this Government opposite is now discovering inflation, now pointing its finger at the villain, they have within their jurisdiction all the power they need to step in and expose any one who is charging unconscionable prices, who have taken advantage of the situation and have forced prices up. Prices not related to costs that have increased or feed the fires of inflation. Profits, in fact, across this nation have been behind some of the increase in prices. They have not been the major cause. I will bring figures in to prove what I say.

The major reason behind inflation in this country and the western world, the real villain, the beast is government spending and government fiscal policy. The Federal Government is as guilty as any other government in this nation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — The recent Throne Speech that was brought down by the Federal Liberal Government, I think, could be welcome for some of its aspects. Its attention to long standing problems in western Canada was welcome. But its lack of serious attention, its obvious lack of intention to face the major problem in this nation, the number one problem, inflation with real responsibility and courage were disappointing.

The track record of the Federal Government in regard to inflation has been terrible. They have not only not tackled inflation, they have been one of the major reasons for inflation. Not because they have necessarily not done something about wages or incomes or profits but because they haven't done anything about government spending, government hiring and government fiscal policies.

The Federal Government has increased its civil servants by 50,000 people in this last three and one-half years. The Federal Government's new budget is \$22 billion, up by something like 10 per cent.

If you study the record of the Federal Government over the past few years you will find that not only have they increased spending at an unprecedented rate, but they have also increased the national debt at a rate of almost \$2 billion a year during the same period. In other words, when they spent all the money the taxpayers have handed them, they borrowed more.

The only people who have matched the record of the Federal Government have been the Provincial Governments led by the NDP administrations in western Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — I predict when they bring the Budget down next week or whenever they bring it down it will show a new record for spending. And it probably will approach or maybe even exceed \$800 million.

The budget of British Columbia just announced was increased over last year by almost half a billion dollars, in fact, the NDP in that province have increased spending since they came to power by about \$900 million.

This Government of Saskatchewan since they came to power are actually governing less people. There are fewer people in the Province of Saskatchewan than there were in June of 1971. But it is a fact that we have from 1,500 to 2,000 more people on the government payroll. Your spending has been irresponsible, your hiring policies have been irresponsible. And you have the nerve to stand up here and say, look at the wonderful record we have in regard to shielding our people against the vicious circle of price increases or inflation that plagues this province and this nation.

The record of the Federal Government is terrible. It is only matched by the record of this NDP Government that is a disgrace.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — On top of spending more money, spending money totally irresponsibly, the hiring policies, both the national and the provincial government have done nothing. In fact, both have encouraged the increase in available credit.

The money supply in this nation the last seven or eight years has increased almost 100 per cent. The number of dollar bills in circulation, the amount of credit available through all sources to the public increased almost 100 per cent. In fact, if you study the increase in productivity as measured by their gross national product, you will find that the amount of money available to chase the amount of goods available, the amount of money has increased 30 or 40 per cent faster than the goods and services produced in this country. This is a sure-fire formula for inflation and it is getting worse every year.

Last year the cost of living went up by 9 per cent or 9 per cent plus. The cost of living, the goods we buy in this country the last five or six years has almost doubled in most cases and in some cases has doubled and even tripled.

Now what has been the policy of the Federal Government and the policy of the Provincial Government? Well they have had a policy and that has been to attempt to shield or protect people in low income groups, people on fixed incomes from the very, very serious effect of rising prices.

We have seen the national government raise old age pensions. We have raised them 'til we now pay the highest old age pensions of any nation in the world. We have seen them" raise family allowance twice to where they are now paying \$20

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per child. We have seen them increase other forms of transfers of payment from governments to groups and individuals through welfare schemes of all sorts. Unemployment insurance, direct welfare, old age pensions, pensions to veterans, and family allowances.

Now, of course, just as the actions by the Provincial Government of raising minimum wages, of reducing the hospital and medical care premiums, taking them off, of course these things have helped people on low incomes, on fixed incomes, old age pensioners. But what I say to you, Mr. Speaker, and I say seriously, as welcome as those measures have been and what I said the Premier announced on radio and television the wiping out of the hospital and medical care premiums, the increase of the minimum wage, I said these actions are inflationary. They will push up the cost of living and of course, they have done exactly that. As welcome as these moves to shield people on fixed incomes are, they are not getting to the root cause of inflation. They are not getting to the basic problem. In fact, they are actions by both the Federal Government and this NDP Government to avoid their responsibility and what they are, in the medium and long run, is a cruel hoax on the very people they are designed to help.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — The only way that we are going to control prices in this country is for governments to set the example by showing some responsibility in the way they spend taxpayers' money. When governments pump more money into the economy without a corresponding increase in productivity, prices are bound to go up. And it is not good enough for the Federal Government to say that this is an international problem, so there is little or nothing we can do about it. The truth is that we in this nation have brought most of our inflation on ourselves and we can cure most of our inflation only if we have the courage to face what has to be done and then take the action necessary and that begins and almost ends with governments.

It is just as hypocritical and just as hollow and false for the NDP Government of Saskatchewan to point the finger at the National Government and say it is all their fault. I agree a great deal of it is their fault. I also charge that— a great deal of it is your fault. You are not only not taking the steps necessary that you could take to control prices and to slow down the increase in prices but you are adding fuel to the fire.

But we hear the same old tune from the NDP. It is all the fault of the National Government or it is the fault of big multinational corporations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — Well, that is very interesting. Let's take a look at the meat packing industry. It is very interesting that in this speech the Member from Regina North West (Mr. Whelan) didn't mention the meat packing industry. You know, if you go back in the history and listen to the NDP and before them the CCF, one of the villains in the rising prices, in fact, the major one was those dirty packing houses. Burns, Canada Packers and

of course, Intercontinental Packers. But now they are 4⁵ per cent shareholders in Intercontinental Packers. Have we seen them move in? Have we seen the price of bologna drop, the "baloney" is spread over there just as thick and not quite as high quality. The price of meat in Saskatchewan is exactly as high as it is in Alberta, Manitoba or anywhere else where the government doesn't own any part of a packing plant. If the packing plants in big multinational concerns, like Swifts, like Canada Packers and like Burns are ripping-off the public then why doesn't this Government move in on the packing house plant that they control and say let's set an example. We will cut the price of meat and meat products and we will force competitively Swifts and Burns and Canada Packers to do the same thing, then you will have proved your point. Then we would stand in this House and we would say now let's get in the grocery business. Because as the Member from Regina North West points out those terrible people in the grocery business are gouging and ripping-off people in Saskatchewan and in all of Canada. So move in, take them over, you have the money. You have got millions of dollars coming in from oil, you can do it in packing plants, you can go into the food business. You are into it now. Go into it all the way. Set an example. Say we will operate without profit. Let's see the kind of example you do set.

Let's take a look at your own Crown corporations. Here are the telephones, they are pretty important to the people of this province. How much money did you make, how much did you rip the people off in this province? This last year you made \$14 million net profit. You weren't satisfied with gouging the people with \$14 million net profit, this year you made \$16 million in net profit.

Let's look at the Power Corporation. That's pretty important, the gas that heats the home. Please, Mr. Member from Regina North West don't bleed in this House about the poor old age pensioners who can't go out and have a little meal in a restaurant or are asked to scrape their fingers to the bone to put food on the table. Because those same people have to heat the homes they live in. They have to buy the electricity to have a little light to read their old age pension cheques by.

Let's take a look at your record here. This great Government that thinks of the people. Who wouldn't think of ripping anybody off or charging unconscionable profits, who say we go into business for service not for profit. Let's take a look at their record. Well, what did they do in 1975? I have got the record here of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, the people's Power Corporation. This year in gas for heating of the homes they made almost \$10 million. For less than a million people, \$10 million. What did they make in Power? In Power they made \$17 million.

What did they make in the liquor store? You know the old age pensioner is entitled and the poor people to a glass of beer, we caught you with your hand in the cookie jar subsidizing the price of beer. So you didn't give the breweries any increase. But let's look at what you do in your own retail stores. This year you will make \$55 to \$40 million out of booze. So please don't point your finger at those rip-off artists in the private sector of the economy, those terrible big multinational corporations with their tentacles all over

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the world charging unconscionable profits when you people have your hands in the same pot. You are at the same hog trough.

I just pointed out heat, light, telephones; I can go into every one of your Crown corporations. I got one in lumber. You are very proud of the Timber Board. The Timber Board this year made over a million dollars. The Attorney General applauds, he is happy that his Government is gouging the people for power to heat their homes, electricity to light their homes and lumber to build their homes to live in. He is proud of it. Well, I don't know how then you can stand up and associate yourself with this motion and this speech from the Member for Regina North West. How can you point the finger and say there goes the thief when you should all be in jail yourselves on the same principle?

If it is unconscionable to gouge the people for groceries, for bread and for milk and you just said it, then you tell me why it isn't unconscionable to gouge the people for meat and you are in the meat packing business. You tell me why it isn't unconscionable to gouge the people to heat their homes. And you are in the home heating business. To light their homes, you are in the electricity business. Or to build their homes and you are in the lumber business.

Your record condemns you. Out of your own statements that you have filed in this House, so proudly and you will applaud. You have condemned yourselves to be no better than the people that you point the finger at.

I admit that there are some limits on what a provincial government can do about inflation. Of course there are. Just as there are some limits that a national government and a relatively small country like Canada can do as far as inflation is concerned. Of course, we import some of our inflation and there is little we can do about that. And of course, a great deal of inflation is caused by the action of the national government or large corporations over which you have no control. However, there are many things that you could have been doing, should have been doing and could still do. And to get up and make a speech like the Hon. Member's and that up to this point is the only time that this Government through its Throne Speech or its actions in two and a half or almost three years has even paid lip service to the greatest problem facing the ordinary people of this province or this country.

Mr. Speaker, I say that their actions here today are hypocritical. This should be the number one cause for concern of the Government opposite. There are many prices that they could control in this province. Rent, light, heat, water. . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Are you in favor of a rent control board?

MR. STEUART: — If you want to control rents I am telling you, you could control it. You introduce it and see, you are the Government.

I say this, if you can come into this House and show us that rents were too high, yes, we would have rent control. If you are prepared, at the same time, to cut the power rates which you could do, to cut the telephone rates which you could

do, if you are prepared to show fiscal responsibility in your spending of the taxpayers' money, yes, we would support it. I am telling you that there are many areas where, if you wanted to, you could put in selective price controls. There are many areas, if you wanted to, where you have the power to put in selective wage, profit and income controls. You also have the opportunity, and you have had it for two and a half or three years, to set an example for the rest of the nation by being responsible with the taxpayers' money, responsible for whom you have put on the payroll because when you do it you are putting on the back of those same old age pensioners, those same fixed income people, who pay education tax that you still have on the books, who pay gasoline tax if they can afford to drive a car, who pay all the taxes that you impose or we imposed. So if you can reduce those taxes, don't try to kid anybody that you are reducing the burden on the same people that you stand up here and profess to champion.

You are hypocrites by your own actions; you are hypocrites by your own words.

I intend, Mr. Speaker, in this debate to bring in facts and figures to show that the real villain as far as a guilty party, as far as inflation is concerned, is irresponsible government spending, irresponsible fiscal actions by governments at all levels including the Saskatchewan Blakeney NDP Government and so I beg leave at this time to adjourn debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

RESOLUTION NO. 5 — CONSTRUCTION OF ADDITIONAL FACILITIES FOR GRAIN-HANDLING

MR. J. K. COMER (Nipawin) moved, seconded by Mr. Larson (Pelly)

That this Assembly urges that the Federal Government take immediate steps to provide for: (a) construction of additional facilities for grain handling; (b) the dredging of Churchill Harbour to a depth of 40 feet; (c) the provision of bulk loading facilities for sulphur, potash and ores; and (d) immediate construction of sheds and cranes for the import and export of general cargo, in particular containers.

He said: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise today to move a motion respecting the Port of Churchill. This is a matter which has been debated, many, many times. It is a matter where year after year the Hudson Bay Route Association meets, listens to presentations from the various interested parties, including the Federal Government. It is encouraged and always nothing comes of it.

In many respects the way that the Port of Churchill has been treated is one of the many crimes against western Canada that has been perpetuated in this country. Canada developed from along the St. Lawrence, along the Great Lakes, along the CPR through western Canada and into British Columbia. Eastern Canada grew wealthy and western Canada and the Maritimes supplied the wealth.

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It is because of this sort of equation of Canada, this equation of western Canada, shipping our produce to the East and through the East and making the East wealthy in the process, that those of us with imagination in western Canada look to the Port of Churchill as one of the possibilities for bettering ourselves in western Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. COMER: — The railway to Churchill and the Port itself was built many years ago. Continually it has been underused. Never has it handled the grain that it could. Often, when sales have been made, international sales, the Canadian Wheat Board has completely ignored the Port of Churchill.

A few years ago when a very large sale of wheat was made to the Soviet Union it was announced by the Wheat Board that all of this grain would either be going through the West Coast ports or through Thunder Bay. The Hudson Bay Route Association got in touch with the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board and was told that the Russians were not interested in Churchill. The Hudson Bay Association wasn't dismayed and contacted the Russians. The Russians didn't know anything about Churchill. At no time during the negotiations had the Port of Churchill ever been brought to the Russians' attention. When the Russians found out, they were interested in Churchill and do take grain through Churchill periodically.

I think this is a story of many of the negotiations that have gone on in various agreements which resulted in the sale of grain or some other product from western Canada. All too often, Churchill has been ignored. We are not just asking that just a little bit of attention be paid to Churchill, we are asking that Churchill be used to the full, only to the full, of its present capacity. Our Port, western Canada's port, the Prairie Port has a much greater potential than what the present facilities can provide. More grain could easily go through Churchill if the facilities were there, if the storage facilities and the loading facilities were there. It is very important, it is essential that the Government of Canada build those needed facilities, make possible the shipping of a great deal more grain through Churchill to the markets mainly of Europe, shortening the distance, greatly reducing the cost to the farmers of western Canada.

You know it is obvious that for every cent we save by shipping our production through Churchill we get another cent for our people here. The full use of Churchill could mean millions and millions of dollars for western Canada.

Churchill needs a better harbour, a deeper harbour. Many ships today are not able to come into the harbour at Churchill. We are talking about bigger and bigger superships hauling all kinds of commodities. The harbour at Churchill must be dredged so that those ships can come and can take the majority of the exports from western Canada going to Europe.

I think we can look at other products that could be sent through Churchill that today are not shipped in any significant amount. Certainly much of the mineral ores of northern Manitoba and northern Saskatchewan that are being exported to Europe or of the partially refined ores, could be shipped through

Churchill. Potash could be shipped through Churchill. We are presently developing a number of uranium mines in this province. Some of that production could go through Churchill.

We must press the Federal Government to build the facilities for the bulk loading of various ores for the shipping of these ores through our port and therefore increasing the value to us for those products.

The Resolution also mentions that we should be constructing facilities — sheds and cranes — for the handling of general cargo.

We, in western Canada are not particularly a manufacturing area but we do manufacture some products and we do export some. We should be making use of Churchill for some of the small agricultural equipment that we manufacture in Manitoba, in Saskatchewan and in Alberta, making them more easily available in the European market, benefiting our small manufacturing concerns in this province.

We also import a good deal, a great many products from Europe. Very few of these products, even though they are destined for western Canada immediately upon reaching the shores of Canada, come through Churchill, whether it be automobiles, farm machinery, any other equipment, any other import. We don't bring them through Churchill because we don't have the facilities. I maintain, and I know the majority of people in western Canada maintain, that this is a sense of deliberate slight against western Canada. It is for that reason, after those few words that I move this Resolution.

MR. G. B. GRANT. (Regina Whitmore Park): — Mr. Speaker, I agree with practically everything the Hon. Member for Nipawin has said. I have a long lasting interest in the Port of Churchill dating back to the mid '40s and there is a considerable amount that I should like to add to what the Hon. Member has said. Due to the lateness of the day and the condition of the weather, I would ask leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:38 o'clock p.m.