

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session — Seventeenth Legislature
45th Day

Friday, April 5, 1974

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Expansion of Agra Industries Limited

Mr. K. Thorson (Minister of Industry): — Before the Orders of the Day I thought the House would like to know that as a result of discussions between the Government of Saskatchewan and Agra Industries Limited, an agreement has been reached which will see the company undertake a major expansion in the Province of Saskatchewan, again conditional upon assistance from the Federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion. The proposal is that Agra Industries Limited will establish a rapeseed crushing plant at North Battleford which will be similar in size and capacity to the one presently operated by the company at Nipawin. That is to say it should use about 7 million bushels of rapeseed annually and will employ somewhere in the neighborhood of perhaps 200 people.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, the company will embark on the establishment of a pasta manufacturing plant — that is to make the base products for macaroni and spaghetti-like products — and a bake mixing facility, although the exact location of that has not yet been determined. This pasta manufacturing plant and bake flour mixing facility should employ about 100 people when it is fully operational.

The House would no doubt be interested in knowing that the Government has agreed to inject a further \$5 million of equity investment in Agra Industries Limited and to lend up to \$7 million by way of loan to the company. The end result in all this additional investment and expansion of the company will mean that the Government of Saskatchewan will own about 20 per cent of all the issued shares of Agra Industries Limited.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. D. G. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, we welcome the news of this very valuable addition to the industrial development or the business development in Saskatchewan especially since it is based on one of our growing natural products, the rapeseed industry. Certainly it is another indication of the excellent co-operation between the Federal Government, through DREE, and the Provincial Government and private enterprise. It follows the pattern we set when we set up the first Agra Industry in Nipawin . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — It's going to expand and we are very happy that this has happened and we congratulate them.

QUESTIONS

Election in Prince Edward Island

Mr. C. P. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I wish to direct a question to the Premier. I am sure the Premier is aware that Premier Campbell in Prince Edward Island has called an election and I should like to ask the Premier has any civil servant from the Province of Saskatchewan requested a leave of absence so that he might journey to Prince Edward Island and campaign in that election? If not, it's a little early perhaps, some of the civil servants haven't yet made up their minds, is it the intention of the Government to grant a leave of absence to a civil servant if he requests it to campaign in the Province of Prince Edward Island?

Hon. A. E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any public servant having asked for leave of absence to campaign in the election in Prince Edward Island. If and when such an application is made it will be considered.

Mr. MacDonald: — I wonder if the Premier is going to send an official letter of appreciation to Premier Campbell for calling that election so soon after the election in Nova Scotia. Now if Mr. Coulter would like to stay instead of having to pay the air transportation all the way back to Saskatchewan, all it will cost is the ferry across the strait. I wonder, too, if the Premier can now tell me, he couldn't tell me what Mr. Coulter's official capacity is in his staff. I notice now we have a new Assistant Clerk, it would appear that Mr. Coulter's political responsibilities have overcome that particular area, could the Premier indicate what Mr. Coulter's official responsibilities are with the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Coulter, I believe is called a Special Assistant to the Premier, or an Executive Assistant to the Premier and those are the duties he performs when he is here. When he is on leave of absence without pay he performs such duties as he wishes to perform for himself personally.

Murray Koski

Mr. A. R. Guy (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, I have a similar question I should like to address to the Premier. The announcement in the Commonwealth the other day stated that Murray Koski, Executive Assistant to the Premier, is seeking a nomination in the Quill Lake constituency. I should like to ask the Premier if Mr. Koski has requested and been given leave of absence to campaign for the nomination in that constituency?

Mr. Blakeney: — So far as I am aware he is not. I am not aware of any request for leave of absence. He may be taking holiday leave on occasion but so far as I am aware that is the only leave that he has requested or that he has taken.

Mr. Guy: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Would the Premier

agree that it would be very unfair for the Premier or any Minister of the Government to give civil servants leave of absence to campaign against the Speaker of this House when due to the Speaker's responsibility in the Legislature he is unable to campaign for the nomination?

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, as I understand the situation at that particular constituency Mr. Speaker has announced that he is not a candidate.

Mr. Guy: — Didn't have much choice did he?

Permanent Constituency for Speakers

Mr. E. C. Malone (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to ask a similar question of the Premier. In view of the rather shabby treatment that your Party is showing to the Speaker, I am wondering whether or not you are looking into the possibility of having a Speaker's constituency, that is a permanent constituency for a Speaker to run in, in the future to avoid a recurrence of this rather, I think, shabby treatment?

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I will not reply to the allusions which were not part of the question. The question is this: are we considering a Speaker's constituency. The answer is at this time, No. However, I note that on the Order Paper there is a motion dealing with constituency re-organization and if Members opposite will support a motion that we have a Speaker's constituency the Government would certainly give that serious consideration. I would appreciate it at the appropriate time if a representative of the Party opposite would indicate whether or not they are in favor of that as I think any such move should be done only on a bipartisan basis.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Bias in Hiring Practices of Department of Natural Resources

Mr. J. G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Acting Minister of Natural Resources. It concerns the Kelsey Institute in Saskatoon which has a course in renewable resources, 82 people are there as first-year graduates, seven were women. The Department of Natural Resources interviewed 40 of them including five women. All of the women had above average marks and none of them received any summer employment from the Department of Natural Resources. To its credit the Department of Northern Saskatchewan hired three. My question would be to the Acting Minister: would the Minister examine this situation and if, as it appears evident, there has been sex bias in the hiring practices of the Natural Resources Department, that he would seek to correct it?

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I regret that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kowalchuk) and the Acting Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Bowerman) are both ill. I am not able to answer the question posed by the Hon. Member, I should like the Hon.

April 5, 1974

Member either to put the question on the Order Paper or to convey it to me in writing unofficially and I will seek to have the answer found out and provide it to him.

Mr. Richards: — Mr. Speaker, that will be satisfactory and I hope the Government will pay attention and resolve this, what appears to be, blatant cases of sex prejudice.

Mr. Speaker: — This is a period for questions and not for statements.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 19 — Saskatchewan Land Bank Transactions

Mr. E. F. Gardner (Moosomin) moved, seconded by Mr. Weatherald (Cannington):

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to consider the desirability of immediately providing to Members of the Legislature full details of all Saskatchewan Land Bank transactions that have occurred to date.

He said: Mr. Speaker, you will note on a number of occasions we have attempted to get some information on Land Bank transactions either from the Minister or in the House through questions. We asked the other day if we could get an indication of the transactions that occurred where a certain person may not have had the highest number of points in the allocation system and still received the lease. We weren't given that information, that particular question was converted to debate and amended and we never did get the information.

We feel very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that the general public and Members of the Legislature are entitled to information regarding Land Bank transactions. They simply must have more information on these transactions and the information must be available to them in a relatively short time. The Land Bank has now either spent or had allotted to it \$50 million to buy land in this province - \$1.9 million this year for administration alone. This is a pretty sizeable amount of money and the people are concerned about how it is spent. Not only the rural people but people in urban areas who are putting up this money, who are responsible for it, they want to know if it is spent in the proper way and they want to know that the most deserving person gets the land. This is really the part, I think that is the most important. We have had indications from the Minister on several occasions that he is going to put out and has put out an annual report, which is going to give us some of this information. I just want to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that this report while it does list the land that was purchased, the description and the purchase price, there is nothing in here that gives any indication of who received this land, whether it was the most deserving individual, whether it was someone from that area or someone from another area. All it gives is the purchase price of that particular parcel of land.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, the worst part of the annual report, and I mentioned this the other day, that most of the transactions are reported long after they occur. Land traditionally changes hands in this province in the months of perhaps

April and May in the spring – March, April and May – and this annual report then for March 31st, if we get it tabled as we did this particular report that I have in my hand, many of these transactions are going to be 20 months old by the time they get in the annual report. I think you can see that for people who are interested in that land, interested in knowing what the land was purchased for, the information is not very valuable to them 20 months later. The transactions that are occurring right now, today and yesterday, this week and next week, if the same practice is followed, they will be in the annual report that will be tabled in the fall session of 1975, some 20 months from now and this is just not good enough.

Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, I think you will recall that two or three weeks ago in the Leader-Post there was an editorial indicating that more details were needed on Land Bank business. I thought it was a very good editorial. I believe there was some misunderstanding about some small point in this, the Leader-Post subsequently published an apology to the Minister for the fact that they had misquoted him slightly. I don't see any need for an apology by the Leader-Post, they had the right idea when they wrote this editorial. Far more details are needed than what we are getting. The fact that we get an annual report, the Minister can get up and say, yes, I'm going to put it in the annual report. Of course, the annual report doesn't say anything about who got the land, whether it was the most needy individual or not, and, of course, this is the most important thing as far as the report is concerned. It just simply doesn't give us the information that we require.

I always hesitate to bring individual cases before this Legislature but there are some questions that have been asked on the Order Paper and they are public knowledge and I should like to bring them to your attention. Just as an example of the type of information that we are getting. There is a parcel of land that happens to be only a couple of miles from where I live and last fall it was, to my knowledge, leased to a very worthwhile and worthy individual, a deserving individual. He is a person who needed more land and I think the local people were very pleased that he apparently got this lease. Incidentally this individual moved on to this land in October, last fall, built a big barn on there and he has got some PMU mares as part of his operation, and it appeared that he was a person that really needed this. However, on December 6th, this very same land is listed in the Western Producer as being available for lease which was rather a strange thing. So I asked a question in this House, I believe I got the answer on March 4th, has the Saskatchewan Land Bank leased the land described as so and so, the same as in here on March 4th and they simply say, "No, it hasn't been leased." Now if this is true it is a very odd situation that an individual in the area, it's public knowledge that he has this land, he's living on the place and built a barn there, and the land was still listed as for lease. I would think the local people and certainly this individual would like to know whether he has this lease or not. So it is a very strange way for the Land Bank to operate and I would think that this kind of knowledge should be made available to everyone.

I had an inquiry the other day from someone in the Pelly constituency. They said that there were a number of needy people in that area. There was a parcel of land come up for lease and they said they had heard that a fellow from British Columbia got this land and he was going to start growing some apples or some kind of an orchard on it. I said, well, I doubt if that is true

but if you give me the description of the land I'll ask a question in the Legislature. So I did and here on March 21st, I got the answer, "Has the Land Bank Commission purchased the land described as" so and so and they say, "Yes." I said, "Has it been allocated" and they say, "no final allocation has been made, it has been tentatively allocated and it is now under appeal." "How many applicants applied to lease this land?" "25 applicants." "What was the name and the address of the successful applicant?" "The tentative allocation was made to a Mr. Cort Larson. Mr. Larson's address is R.R. 3, P.Y. Road, Armstrong, British Columbia." Now again I think you will agree that this is rather a strange situation, if this person is the most deserving, that's fine. We should know the point system and we should know the details and be able to find that out.

I asked a question which was only answered Wednesday of this week. I was home last weekend and I had two or three phone calls and two fellows came to see me and they said, that land west of town that the Land Bank purchased, we hear that it has been allocated to a chap in Saskatoon. I said, "Well, are you sure of this" and they said, "Yes". I've got the letter right here, here is the name of the person who sent me this letter in the mail. It shows the name of the person who sent me this letter in the mail. It shows the name of the person who got the lease and it gave his address as Saskatoon. He said, there are four or five of us, certainly very deserving young people right adjacent to this land that needed it and should have had it, why did it go to someone in Saskatoon? So I asked again and as I say, Wednesday of this week the answer came out in the Votes and Proceedings. "Has the Land Bank Commission purchased the land described as so and so?" The answer was, "Yes." "If so, has this land been leased by the Land Bank Commission." Then I asked who to and if it was the highest number of points. For the question, if it had been leased by the Commission, they say, No. Of course the others are not applicable. Now these people have received letters last week saying that it was leased. I got a report here on April 3rd, just two or three days ago and I have the answer and it is dated, saying that it is not leased. Either the Land Bank doesn't know what it is doing or we are not getting the proper information and this is all the more reason we are entitled to full details of all of these transactions. Again, I should like to emphasize that it is simply not good enough to say that we are going to get this in the annual report, because if the annual report follows the same procedure as the one that we got before, we are going to get it 20 months after many of the transactions have taken place and all we are going to get is a description of the land and some bit of information as to the cultivated acres and the amount of money paid for it.

We are not going to find out who got the allocations; what his address was; if he was the most deserving individual or not. These are the things that I think are the most important. They are of interest to everyone in the area and I am sure that those of you who are from rural areas will realize that nothing is more current as a topic around the rural areas than what someone sold his farm for; who got the lease, whether it was the most needy person and, I believe, that this information should be readily available.

I would suggest that it would be in the interest of the Government to give this information very readily because we all know that it is possible that we will get information that is not correct, circulated in an area. It would be to the advantage of the Government to give the proper information immediately

to clear up any rumors that may be going around in an area to make sure the people know the true information; exactly what was happening. I think that would certainly be to the advantage of the Land Bank Commission and the Government. We are concerned that we are not getting this information that we asked the other day, that the Minister supply us with the cases where the person with the highest number of points did not get the land. It has been indicated that we are simply not going to get this.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this motion is very important in that it is of interest to the people throughout the province and I should like to move this motion, seconded by my seatmate, Mr. Weatherald.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HON. ED SCHREYER PREMIER OF MANITOBA

Hon. A. E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might beg the indulgence of the House to interrupt proceedings momentarily to introduce to the House a visitor from our neighboring Province of Manitoba. I am pleased to introduce to the House the Premier of Manitoba, The Hon. Ed Schreyer.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Assembly resumed the interrupted debate on Resolution No. 19.

Mr. T. M. Weatherald (Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, I don't expect to be lengthy on this particular subject, but I should like to say a few words about the motion moved by the Member for Moosomin.

I think what is needed most at this stage of development or retardation, as the Opposition would look at it, concerning the Land Bank in Saskatchewan is an analysis of just precisely what the Land Bank has been doing in the sense of reaching the objectives that the Government set for it. I think that because we are lacking a lot of the information, an analysis of precisely the effect the Land Bank is having on Saskatchewan is very difficult to determine. I think that the information that the Opposition has been able to accumulate, I think the information that the Government itself, I am sure, has been able to accumulate, would bring about at least two conclusions as of now.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, the Land Bank is having a decided inflationary effect on land prices in Saskatchewan. I wish to read a letter, a little later on, regarding what I said earlier.

The Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris) laughs and I think that all that indicates is that he doesn't know anything about the subject.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Weatherald: — The Land Bank in actual fact is being used this way. A farmer decides that he would like to sell. He finds out what offers he can get from the rest of his neighbors and then he goes to the Land Bank and he finds out what the Land Bank will pay. There are a great number of examples where we can show that the Land Bank is paying more than what the farmer would have been able otherwise to receive. The farmer then goes to the neighbor and says, if you want the land you will have to pay me more than

April 5, 1974

the Land Bank. Now if that isn't inflation I don't know what you would call it.

Mr. Speaker, I also think that the second aspect of the Land Bank that is having a very serious negative effect in rural Saskatchewan is the fact that in many cases it is eliminating young farmers. This is absolutely true that it is eliminating young farmers, because there are many cases coming about like the following. A father may have two sons 16 or 17 years of age. The father wishes to buy a piece of land that is coming up for sale on a neighboring farm, which added to the present farm the boys would be able to continue on after the father retires. Now, the Land Bank comes along and buys the piece of land, outbids the father, the family can't raise the kind of money that the Land Bank is willing to pay and so then one of the boys, obviously, is not able to get the land. And in actual fact it is highly unlikely that he will receive the lease either. So what happens is that a family farm that would have been expanded to incorporate two boys to be farmers in that area, one of them is left out in the cold and the Land Bank piece of land goes to someone else.

I want to read to you a letter, and I take full responsibility for this letter. Since it came to me only this week and it was a personal letter, Mr. Speaker, I wish to leave the names out. I shall give it to the Minister of Agriculture if he requests it, but I don't wish to put the names on the record because it was a personal letter written to myself.

I have a few gripes on the Land Bank which may or may not interest you. My two boys were renting a farm when it was sole to the Land Bank. I thought they would stand a pretty good chance of renting it from the Land Bank, but they were refused and it has been offered to three brothers, supposedly from the Esterhazy area.

Mr. Larson: — On a Point of Order. Would the Hon. Member either table the letter or not read it.

Mr. Gardner: — He doesn't have to table it.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! The Hon. Member in presenting the letter said that he would be prepared to show it to the Minister of Agriculture and give him the full information. I believe other Members would have the same courtesy on a private basis too. I believe that was the intent.

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — On the Point of Order. Is it not the rules of the House that if a Member wishes to take personal responsibility, he is not required to issue the names?

Mr. Weatherald: — Mr. Speaker, I said at the outset that I would take personal responsibility for the letter. The letter was written to me as a personal letter and I will give the Minister of Agriculture the names if he so wishes. Because it was written to me as a personal letter I don't wish to divulge all the names that are in the letter.

Mr. Speaker: — The Hon. Member is correct as long as he takes full

responsibility for the statements made as though it was his own, then he may read the letter, but if he is not prepared to take full responsibility then they must table it. The Hon. Member said that he would take responsibility and he will show the letter to the Minister if he wishes to see it.

Mr. Weatherald: — Mr. Speaker, I quote further:

The farm was offered to us and indeed to the whole country at \$90,000, by the original owner. I figured it was a little high and when it was suggested that the Land Bank might buy it I got the idea to get an outside appraisal that was a good one. I thought for sure that the appraisal would be lower than the \$90,000 suggested price and if it was I would have a good basis for my offer for my boys.

However, the Land Bank jumped their price from the original offer of the owner of \$90,000 and the Land Bank offered \$103,500, which put it out of my reach as I wouldn't be able to bid against that with my kind of money. They are now putting three brothers, two married and one single on it from another area. The rental is \$8,500 with taxes so I wonder how much of a favor they are really doing them.

These facts can be substantiated. In another instance, in addition, a quarter just outside of town was up for sale at \$8,000 with \$11,500 being the price, \$8,000 plus taxes. This land was bought by the Land Bank at \$16,500 and subsequently rented to someone from Regina. In addition, another farm has been offered in our area to someone from Saskatoon, although several well-deserving young fellows from the district were after it.

The farm that I first spoke of for \$90,000 that my two boys were interested in, we summerfallowed 400 acres last year and I contended that with the time and money they put into it they should have had the chance at it but the Land Bank couldn't see it that way.

Mr. Speaker, the writer sums it up when he says:

The Land Bank seems more interested in what they thought I had than what the boys have.

I think a letter such as this, Mr. Speaker, is indicative of the problems that the Land Bank is creating in many cases in local communities and in actual fact is working against the establishment of many young farmers. We have contended, in the Opposition, for some time that most young farmers in Saskatchewan would come from farmers that were already located on the farm and they would come from farm families where there were two or three boys where the farm families were able to increase their land holdings. I think now is the most appropriate time to have an indepth analysis of the precise effects the Land Bank is having in Saskatchewan. We can't have that type of an analysis unless we have complete and full information that is now in the Government's possession.

Therefore, I think that the Resolution that my colleague from Moosomin has moved, is timely and I should hope that the Government would come forth with all information that is currently in their possession.

April 5, 1974

Because I feel that this is so important, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Resolution No. 20 – Increase in Food Allowance re Saskatchewan Assistance Plan

Mr. J. G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I trust that this is a relatively innocent and straight-forward subject that we can raise here. It concerns the question, obviously of food allowances in northern Saskatchewan and bears upon the question of the differential costs of purchasing the same basket of food in northern communities versus southern communities.

Obviously, nutrition has got a good deal to do with the general state of health of the public in any region. I think that as a background to this motion it is interesting to note some of the elementary figures to demonstrate the disparity and health conditions between northern and southern communities.

For example, if we take infant death rates, which is something which has been discussed extensively, infant death rates are deaths of children under one year. For the province as a whole the rate is 19.4 per thousand live births; for Saskatoon and Regina – Regina is 15.9, Saskatoon is 15.7. However, if we go to the Meadow Lake Health Region, Meadow Lake is 47.4 and northern Saskatchewan exactly the same. We have, obviously, a range of over two to one in terms of infant death rates. If we take respiratory disease rates 43 per thousand for the population as a whole in the province, it is 89 per thousand in northern Saskatchewan.

In southern Saskatchewan the procedure in order to estimate what welfare will pay for food allowances is to take a nutritionally balanced diet and conduct a survey through the Department of Public Health, in southern communities. However, when the Department of Northern Saskatchewan conducted a similar survey for northern communities by contacting the Regional Nutritional officer for the Department of Public Health, Prince Albert, he prepared a balanced diet very much of an economy diet – margarine not butter, economical meats, if any meats can be considered economical, in 1974. They included only hamburger, liver and stewing beef. We get a basket for the DNS survey costing an average of \$151 in southern Saskatchewan, an average of \$182 in northern communities. Thus, the average for northern communities on all-weather roads is 20 per cent above the provincial average in the south, for fly-in communities fully it is 50 per cent above.

This survey was done in January 1973. The survey was checked in August 1973. In the intervening period southern food prices for that basket had gone up 11 per cent, northern prices by 15 per cent, clearly the gap was in no way closing. What is to be done about it? I think a clear case can be made that in northern Saskatchewan the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan should recognize these different costs and should be prepared to pay higher food allowances in northern communities.

Obviously the problems of these differentials in food costs

cannot solely be attributed to higher transportation costs, although that is part of the explanation, it also results from the monopoly situation that certain retail stores such as Hudson's Bay Company obviously have in many of these isolated northern communities.

The request was made to the Treasury Board in the past to allow this increase in northern food allowances. To date there has been no action. I trust it is a small and simple step that could be achieved with relatively small cost given at least 50 per cent sharing by CAP – Canadian Assistance Plan – and I think that this Legislature could indicate the direction that it would like to see the Government take.

Accordingly I move Resolution No. 20.

Mr. Speaker, I am afraid I have no seconder arranged for this motion but if it is of interest to other Members of the Assembly, I trust that I can have a seconder at this time in order that the issue can be discussed.

Mr. Speaker: — It is the usual custom for movers to always have a seconder before they make their motion. Is there anyone prepared to second this motion?

Motion dropped for lack of a seconder.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 22 – National Transportation Policy

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. D. H. Lange (Assiniboia-Bengough):

That this Assembly commends the Premier and the Attorney General for the stance they have taken for Saskatchewan regarding transportation development, and wholeheartedly agrees with the Hon. John Marchand when he says that Canada's transportation system is a mess and with his good intentions for reform; we urge the Government of Saskatchewan to adopt a transportation policy which will set an example for the Government of Canada in its search for national transportation policy designed to serve all Canada rather than be based on negative effects on some regions of Canada, and which will provide: (a) for a transportation system based on the complementary use of the various transport modes with each mode doing the job it can do best, (b) minimized investment in duplicate facilities to ensure lowest operational costs, (c) service and price levels set in relation to economic development objectives and service requirement of people, (d) for the minimization of energy consumption in the task of transporting goods and people, (e) for social utilization of the Canadian rail transportation system either through public ownership or by comprehensive regulation of the rail system as if it were a single public utility, and (f) the leadership that the Government of Canada so badly needs to get this country back on the "right track."

Mr. J. G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to speak briefly on and in support of the Resolution moved by Mr. Lange concerning transportation. My contribution to this debate will not be anything of profound economic significance about cost benefit analysis of alternative modes of transport. I should like to tell the Members something of my own not inconsiderable experience with public transport in Saskatchewan.

I have the privilege of a rail pass from CNR, I also happen to reside in Saskatoon and on several occasions I have not been able to make my schedule jibe with the bus and I have tried to use this rail liner. The rail liner between Saskatoon and Regina the last time I used it was scheduled to leave at approximately 10:00 p.m., a highly convenient time. However, it is usually two hours late. So the rail liner actually leaves at midnight from Saskatoon. You manage to get into this rail liner in which there are approximately six other people and you can't sleep on the benches because the benches aren't quite the right length so you are doubled up on the seat and you arrive in Regina at the glorious hour of 3:30 in the morning. Then the rail liner goes back at 5:00 in the morning arriving at Saskatoon at approximately 8:00 o'clock. So we have got a rail liner running in the middle of the night between Saskatoon and Regina, every day, back and forth in the middle of the night. Quite naturally there aren't a great number of passengers. Accordingly the CNR can then make representation to the Federal Government or the appropriate authorities of the CTC that the people won't ride on the trains. I think that there is one good reason why they won't ride on the trains. Because I am not particularly keen on riding on the train in the middle of the night either.

Now we come to discuss Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation, and I am in many ways a great supporter of the Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation. I think that I have travelled that bus back and forth from Saskatoon to Regina and across the province quite extensively. I think that it has performed such a great service that it is earning a 30 per cent rate of return. A 30 per cent annual rate of return on its equity if one cares to look up the annual report of the Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation on a total equity of about \$1.6 million and total net profit for the year 1973 of \$467,000 which would suggest that this is a highly profitable corporation. Therefore, it was of considerable interest to me when Mr. Gross moved a motion in the Crown Corporations Committee on March 19, that the Saskatchewan Transportation Company give consideration to adopting an imaginative program utilizing smaller bus-van type commuter type vehicles that could haul people and light freight to small communities.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this is a modest recommendation made by the Member for Gravelbourg (Mr. Gross) and it fits in a humble way within the context of this Resolution which shows the desired imagination with respect to public transport reflected in this Resolution which agrees with criticisms made by Mr. Marchand of the CPR. And where better but to start at home and to try and undertake experiments with our public transportation system. Accordingly I wrote to Mr. Flynn, who is the General Manager of the STC immediately thereafter, and we asked him, what were his intentions with respect to that motion which had been passed by the Crown Corporations Committee concerning

the use of small vans to provide commuter service among rural communities that couldn't justify a whole large bus.

I should like to read, in part, from the reply I received today from Mr. Flynn:

The Board of Directors are sympathetic to the needs of the people in rural areas but are somewhat concerned about the degree of use the bus service would receive. STC has lines now that need more support. There are people living on those routes however, who wait until their neighbors are going to the city and take them free of charge. One has only to travel the highways and watch the cars go by just ahead of the bus and just after the bus, full of people, five or six adults to a car, to know that people want the bus service in case they might want to use it some day.

But companies cannot live on promises or expectations. They need adequate support from the public at all times.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the reason I quote to the House that passage is that I think that it is indicative of the lack of willingness to experiment on the part of the senior management of Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation. Here is one modest idea about the use of smaller buses to provide rural commuting services for people in rural communities who don't have access to the regular network. The bus company is making its 30 per cent annual rate of return and yet the attitude of the General Manager is one that the people don't count. The people are 'pigs' to use his language when we were discussing another matter during Crown corporations.

I think that unless we get over that kind of an attitude, unless we are willing to experiment, and there is lots of money to experiment with when you are earning a 30 per cent rate of return, we aren't going to have the new kinds of transportation policies which the Member was so anxious to have in moving this motion.

The rail liner is one example of Saskatchewan public transit; the Saskatchewan Transportation Company and the bus system is another, and I could for some time regale Members with my happy experiences with Norcanair. Norcanair, Mr. Speaker, is living proof that private enterprise can be a good deal less efficient than public enterprise. I had the glorious experience two weeks ago of having a meeting in Prince Albert – overload flight – trundle out the old DC3, 20 below, no heater. Norcanair DC3 and a head wind takes one hour and a half to trudge up to Saskatoon. A great sense of community was produced, I assure you among the 12 passengers on that DC3 as we huddled together at 20 below up to Saskatoon. Wait for an hour and one-half in Saskatoon while they attempt to repair the heater on the DC3. They can't repair the heater on the DC3, back into the ice box, back up into the air again and up to Prince Albert. We arrived at 11:00 o'clock, flight due in at 8:30 p.m., flight half an hour late in leaving Regina, hour and one-half stopover unexpected in Saskatoon, arrive at Prince Albert at 11:00 o'clock when scheduled to arrive at 8:30. A mere two and a half hour difference between the scheduled time of arrival and the actual time of arrival.

I should like the Members on this side of the House to keep that example in mind when extolling the virtues of private enterprise and how inevitably it runs things very much more efficiently than public enterprise. That is the most recent example I can cite from Norcanair, but I think the case can well be generalized. I sat in the Prince Albert lounge waiting to go up North on flights for three hours at a stretch beyond the scheduled time of departure, and I don't think that is in any way exceptional. I talked to many people in the North who have had that experience and they have grown rather fatalistic towards it.

I think the conclusions are obvious about the need for public ownership of air lines within the Province of Saskatchewan. I think that these are small examples that help illuminate the frustration which people have with public transportation or mass transportation such as air lines. It isn't working satisfactorily. With the exception of the bus company which does, on its major routes, provide an adequate service, I think there is a great field to be explored for the provision within Saskatchewan of efficient and as economical air, bus and rail transport as possibly can be done. At the moment we seem to be quite happy to ignore this problem, but I am sure Hon. Members, as petroleum becomes more expensive, as a province with a very sparsely spread out population we are going to have to pay a good deal more attention to making our public transport work more efficiently.

Mr. Speaker, I will support the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. G. T. Snyder (Minister of Labour): — Mr. Speaker, there are just a few words that I want to add to this Resolution. I will try to restrict my remarks to three principal points which I consider to be of special importance.

I believe there is an obvious need for the development of an inter-mode transportation system in both this country and this province. I expect it will be recognized that there should be a corresponding minimization of duplication of services and finally, I think it should be recognized that there is an urgent necessity for conserving our energy resources in this country.

Mr. Speaker, the so-called energy crisis has if nothing else brought home to the people of this world and perhaps in particular to the attention of the people of the western world that given our present knowledge, energy resources are not unlimited, but in effect they are scarce and therefore, we must in the future be more careful of the utilization of these resources. And in this respect, the transportation industry cannot be overlooked.

A recent study published by the National Research Council states that the transportation system accounts for 33 per cent of the energy consumed by Canada every year. It is obvious that we must give careful thought to the present system. And the question arises, whether we need be so dependent upon fossil fuels in our various modes of transportation. I think not. With increased development of hydro power, nuclear and solar energy we can perhaps make better utilization of

relatively clean fuel, electrical energy in particular.

Europe, for example converted to electric trains many years ago and perhaps it is time that Canada and Saskatchewan had a closer look at that operation. Europe, in effect, has maintained rail travel while we have switched to an ever increasing use of the automobile on the North American continent.

In 1972, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan alone had almost 300,000 automobiles, that is one car for every three people in the province. Not only does it take a considerable amount of energy to fuel those vehicles but energy is also consumed in the manufacturing of them, the building and the maintaining of the roads on which they travel and servicing them from the time they roll off the assembly line, until they are processed by Operation Cleanup.

Environmental questions aside, Mr. Speaker, the energy consumed today by the automobile to propel more often than not, one person at a time is really a shocking waste of Canada's and Saskatchewan's resources. But what are the present alternatives for intercity travel in Canada and in Saskatchewan in particular? Well thanks at least to some intervention by the Federal Government rail travel has not quite, and I emphasize not quite, been eliminated from the scene in the whole of our country. The CPR Canadian passes down the main line once a day in each direction. Given advance warning it will stop at a total of eight stations in Saskatchewan. After initially providing, Mr. Speaker, \$25 million in cash along with 25 million acres of the best prairie land, the CPR's Transcontinental passenger service stops at six points in the Province of Manitoba, eight, as was mentioned, in the Province of Saskatchewan and all in the dead of night and it stops also at four points in Alberta. That, Mr. Speaker, is certainly not much of a bargain for the people of the prairie provinces.

From all appearances it would seem that the railways and in particular, the Canadian Pacific Railway have done their utmost to downgrade passenger service to make it as unattractive and as uncomfortable, as inconvenient and as uncompetitive and as inefficient as is possible. The CPR Canadian passes through Regina at 6:00 o'clock in the morning going west and at 2:20 in the morning going east. Sleeping accommodation is always in short supply. If you wish to travel during the busy summer season, you must book for months ahead. It is a real effort in order to gain accommodation.

Mr. Speaker, the CNR doesn't do a great deal better. Its Transcontinental train, the Supercontinental also stops a total of eight locations on its way through the Province of Saskatchewan. They have under subsidy from the Federal Government continued some services in northern Saskatchewan including the Saskatoon-Prince Albert rail liner and some semblance of service to other points in the northeastern part of our province. In addition to the rail liner service between Regina and Saskatoon, North Battleford and Lloydminster, these are linked by rail liner service, not to Saskatoon as might be expected but rather to Edmonton. The extent of even that little service is less than desirable. The rail liner link between Regina and Saskatoon is geared solely to feed the Supercontinental mainline train.

For example a Saskatonian wishing to do a day's business in Regina would have to leave Saskatoon the night before and stay

April 5, 1974

overnight in Regina and carry out his day's business and spend a second night in Regina before he could return by rail to Saskatoon. As a result of what can only be called token passenger service, bus companies, then have had to duplicate those same routes in order to provide some real service to the people living in many communities.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's known that rail travel in many respects has a distinct advantage over road transport. Not only can it be more comfortable and quicker, but on heavier travelled routes it can be much more economical.

If, for example, Canada considered electrifying its rail system, it would be entirely feasible that quick, inter-city passenger rail service could be developed between all major Saskatchewan centres. Buses which have a distinct economic advantage on lightly travelled routes could then be utilized as feeders into that rail system, in the same way as the Regina Telebus feeds into the city's main transit route. In this way, I believe we could eliminate some needless duplication. I think we could extend services to greater parts of the province and improve the service to those communities that are on existing routes.

But, Mr. Speaker, even without being so progressive as to introduce electric trains into this part of the world, there is no reason why a rail liner service could not be improved and extended to more Saskatchewan communities and still utilize the bus lines over lightly travelled routes.

The Resolution before the House suggests that the Canadian transportation system is in a mess, Mr. Speaker, and I think when the statement is applied to the transport of goods, particularly in this part of the country that has to be the understatement of the century. Since the advent of the first motor vehicle, railways and road transport have with considerable help from the government, been in constant competition one with the other. The people of Canada, after pouring millions of dollars into railways, turned around and over the last 60 years, poured millions of dollars into road transport. I suppose given the advantage of hindsight it is still impossible to determine whether it was the poor service of the railways or the aggressiveness of road transport that has led to the decline of railway transport and our present dependence upon trucking.

One thing is clear, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan, a province so dependent upon surface transport, land locked as we are, has today a transport system that does not serve the needs of our Saskatchewan people or of Saskatchewan industry. But it is instead full of needless duplication, endless inefficiencies and cannot properly be called a transportation system at all. Canadian railways have simply failed, deliberately or otherwise, to keep pace with modern day technology. Worse than that, they have failed to maintain their rolling stock and their trackage.

Without government regulation, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that both the CN and the Canadian Pacific would have abandoned practically all but their main lines and most of the less lucrative branch lines regardless of the social cost to the affected communities.

Today we have many miles of trackage that are inadequately maintained. Less than diligent attention is given by the

railways to grain movement whenever higher paying merchandise can be moved with greater returns to the railways. In short we have a railway that fails to meet the demands that are being placed on it.

Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago when the railways wished to improve the communication adjunct of their operation, they got together and they formed the CN-CP telecommunications. Did they do this when it became apparent that there was a need to rationalize the rail system in western Canada? Of course they did not. The answer is a loud, No. Instead of exchanging running rights over each others' tracks they still needlessly backhaul.

Just to give an example, Mr. Speaker, a box car of grain loaded at Neidpath, a station just south of Swift Current, destined for the Port of Vancouver should logically be routed a few miles into Swift Current, over a CN diamond, westward on the CPR main line directly to the west coast port. But it so happens that Neidpath is on the Canadian National and instead of going west, that car is hauled east and south to Gravelbourg over to Avonlea, northwest to Moose Jaw, east to Regina and then northwest again to Saskatoon before it begins its westward travel to the Port of Vancouver. Instead of a few short miles to Swift Current, that car is backhauled some 300 miles to Saskatoon before it can again head west and this is a good 30 miles east, that it has travelled before it begins its trip farther west.

Mr. Speaker, as every Member of this House knows the railways have been pushing to abandon branch lines in this province for many years, with no consideration given to the hardship that will befall the people of this province. To the railways, I'm afraid rail line abandonment is a rationalization of the rail system, or to quote Otto Lang:

Fundamental change in the overall system.

Fundamental it may be, Mr. Speaker, but rational it isn't.

For instance, the CPR would dearly like to drop its Rockglen-Killdeer line which would require farmers in the Killdeer area to haul their grain some extra 23 miles to Rockglen. At the same time they make no move whatsoever to abandon their line which runs parallel and never more than six miles from the CN main line for more than 140 miles from Saskatoon to Unity. Those two lines parallel each other for approximately 144 miles and never are they more than six miles apart. Now there is duplication and there is a situation which could require some rationalization. I think such a rationalization would be an indication of good faith and an indication that our railways are attempting to approach some system of transportation rationalization.

If the CPR had running rights on the CN lines, they could utilize the Saskatoon-Rosetown line, they could swing up their own Rosetown-Kerrobert line and rejoin the abandoned route heading west at Macklin. The distance covered in doing so, is little more than 10 miles further than following the CN main line all the way to Unity. It would enable the railways to maintain adequate and more efficient service to those same communities and yet eliminate 140 miles of trackage at the same time. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the kind of rationalization

which we should be looking at and which the railways should be responsible for.

Last week, Otto Lang indicated that some 1,000 prairie elevators will be temporarily taken out of service, so that the rail companies can catch up. Mr. Speaker, I wish to draw the attention of this House to just one example of the result of those closures as revealed by the Canadian Wheat Board earlier this week. The farmer, who normally hauls to Kyle or a point in the surrounding district, all of which now has been closed, will face the choice of hauling 45 miles to Swift Current or 40 miles to Rosetown. Mind you, Mr. Speaker, farmers in that area, provided that they have a vehicle capable of making the haul and despite the fact that they will have to bear additional transportation costs of that haul, are fortunate because at least they have a good highway on which to travel. Farmers in other parts of the province who have likewise been robbed of their usual delivery point will have to attempt that same haul on rural roads during the spring thaw.

Mr. Lang has for some time been an advocate of branch line abandonment and this recent move, while supposedly temporary, is a bad omen for Saskatchewan farmers and for Saskatchewan in general, Mr. Speaker. Long hauls cannot be made efficiently, using normal farm vehicles. This policy can only follow the lead of the livestock industry, which will mean the introduction of commercial grain haulers in the near future, I am sure. That of course, means yet another intermediary between the farmers and the price that he gets for the product which he draws to market.

The loss of grain elevators will have a disastrous effect on many small Saskatchewan communities, just at a point of time, Mr. Speaker, when this province has begun to come to grips with some of the problems of rural depopulation.

Rural municipalities and indeed the government will be faced with the onerous and the expensive task of upgrading municipal roads and provincial highways to bear the burden of heavy grain carriers. It would seem, Mr. Speaker, it would certainly seem that Otto Lang and his Liberal colleagues are determined to pull the rug out from under rural Saskatchewan.

The transportation system in Saskatchewan, both for passengers and for goods, needs to be completely overhauled. The prime objective should be to provide proper service to all Saskatchewan people and to all Saskatchewan industries. The secondary objective should be to provide this service as efficiently as possible, utilizing a suitable mix of all the transportation modes. Needless duplication and needless waste of energy resources should be erased from the entire system.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that a service oriented, efficient, energy conserving, inter-mode transportation system can be developed, not only in Saskatchewan, but in the whole of Canada. I think the present lead given by Saskatchewan, if followed by the Liberal Government in Ottawa, will go a long ways towards accomplishing this goal.

Mr. Speaker, this Resolution was of the utmost importance when notice of it was given to the House some two weeks ago. I think the following recent developments indicate that it is most imperative that this Resolution be passed and I would

urge that all Members of this House support the Resolution.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. D. Boldt (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to say a few words on this Resolution, and particularly to the comments made by the Member for Saskatoon University (Mr. Richards) and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder).

The Minister of Labour mentioned in his comments that we were using our vehicles, one person to a vehicle and I want to say again, if we want to correct this, then we are the responsible ones and I'm quite sure that he came to work and comes to work every day with one government car. Maybe he lives close to some other Minister and they should get together, but I'm sure he doesn't do it. But he wants everybody else to do it. He himself will not do it. I remember the time when we were in La Ronge looking at the DNS scandal up there, we were told by the airport people there that every other civil servant was flying back to Regina by air and one time they sent the Government plane over to La Ronge to pick up the Deputy Minister and when they got there they found out that he was in Regina. Using a plane, going back and forth.

These are the things you are talking about Government. I don't want any more government control. Let's look at what the Member for Saskatoon University has to say about the rail transportation. That little rail liner, I think over in our country we call it the skunk, well I would have taken it off the rails a long time ago. The reason there is so very little service rendered by this little rail liner is the government between 1960 and 1964 together with the city council, negotiated for the Idylwyld Freeway and moved the station out of Saskatoon. It must be at least six miles from the centre of town, and I don't care whether you have that rail liner on that rail going every two hours, I don't think that my friend, Herman Rolfe, I don't think he would take the rail liner if it left at 2 o'clock in the afternoon or 8 o'clock in the morning because you have to pay \$1 to get there and then it might not be on time. It is something that we have created and yet we blame, we blame the Canadian National. The situation in Saskatoon was created by the government between 1960 and 1964 and the Canadian National. This was negotiated, this is what we wanted. We wanted that railway out of Saskatoon.

While I was the Minister of Highways, the city council in Regina had been pleading with the Department of Transport to get the railway and the station out of Regina. And yet we want better services. I think the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, they are building a new station in Saskatoon and it is right in the heart of the city, that's where the people will go, and you can have rail liners running on the hour, every other hour and very few people will take the rail liner because it is so very inconvenient because we have created that situation.

Now the CN is a Crown corporation and look at what a mess it is. Because it is a Crown corporation no government official has really got the guts to say that we are going to take that rail liner out. That rail liner, if it leaves Regina at 2 o'clock in the morning, I have been in the bus riding right along side No. 11 with the rail liner beside, and I couldn't see any passenger on the rail liner, but it was on schedule,

April 5, 1974

it had to go. Well, you know, any two year old child would have taken that rail liner off there a long time ago, but when it's a government Crown corporation, they won't do it. They just won't do it.

Now we are a very similar country to Australia, and I've been in Australia. Their road system is poor, they have a very poor highway system, the trans-Australian highway is a very narrow lane, they say, I've been on part of it, but most of that road has just one lane right in the centre paved, and if you want to pass a car coming head on you just drive half your car on gravel. But Australia has an A-1 air transportation system. A city of 20,000 people in Australia has a far better air terminal than the city of Regina or Saskatoon. People in a country like Australia and Canada, the rail is completely out as far as human transportation is concerned and the sooner they fold up the rail liner and the sooner they fold up the transcontinental rail liner from East to West, the better they are, because that's where they are losing most of the money. Very few people use it.

In regard to Norcanair, the Member for Saskatoon University, mentioned the schedule and the plane was running two hours late or three and a half hours late, well last winter it was bad. I think this is subject to the weather, it has nothing to do with the service. If the weather isn't right, then Air Canada or Norcanair will not fly.

About two weeks ago and as Members will know, I spoke in the Crown Corporations Committee about the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. I have absolutely no complaints to make. I think they give really good service, but two or three weeks ago when the Department of Highway people were on strike on Friday night I phoned over at 3 o'clock to the Saskatchewan Transportation Company and asked whether the bus was leaving for Saskatoon and they said, yes, it is, the highway is open. So I took a taxi around 5:00 o'clock and drove down to the bus depot and I asked again about the bus and they said, it's cancelled. It was cancelled. Then I phoned the Department of Highways here and asked them whether Highway No. 11 was open and they said, yes. That open line that you talk about. They said, yes, the road is open, the highway people have opened the road, the bus is definitely going. I phoned Saskatoon on that same number which didn't cost a cent to phone down. It's an open line, and I phoned the people in Saskatoon, the Highway Department and they said the highway was closed at Davidson. One direct line to Department of Highways, here in Regina said it was open and the other district where you have the same open line, they said it was closed. This is all government, not private. It's government. So don't complain about how inefficient private enterprise is.

The Canadian National is in a real mess and because it's a Crown corporation it will never, never really give the kind of service that a free enterprise system will do. The complaint that the Minister of Labour makes about the recent statement by Otto Lang that he was closing down service to a thousand elevator companies, well I am going to tell you that the Wheat Pool and the United Grain Growers and the Pioneer Grain Company are tickled to death that he's done it. I can assure you the railway doesn't have to abandon any lines. The farm organizations, including the Wheat Pool, they would be just tickled to death if they rolled them up. The railway company is not going to

abandon the line because the companies are doing it for them. They are closing elevator after elevator and this is the trend. I'm sure that the grain companies wouldn't mind if they only had about 60 delivery points in Saskatchewan. They are not going to listen to the farmers, they are going to do what is economically advantageous.

So I certainly want to make my position clear on this Resolution that I don't want any more Government involvement and I am not going to support the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. D. H. Lange (Assiniboia-Bengough): — Mr. Speaker, I wish to re-emphasize a few words about the importance and the appropriateness of this Resolution at this particular time.

You recall last year at WEOC that the Federal Government was pressuring western Canada for the upgrading of highways to promote load limits of 20,000 pound axles on trucks. The major reason for this was so that CN and CP, private and public trucking lines, could truck freight across Canada through Saskatchewan and now pick up cheap diesel fuel on the way.

Upgrading highways to 20,000 pound road limits on axles does absolutely nothing to help you or me to get from point A to point B in Saskatchewan any quicker in a passenger car. You can upgrade them to 30,000 and 40,000 pound axles and the speed limit will still be 60 miles per hour. The highways are quite safe at present load requirements and furthermore, an oiled grid road in the province will still facilitate 60 mile per hour traffic at much less expense.

You will recall also that Otto Lang has for some time been pressuring for more trucks to haul grain. As a matter of fact the Task Force Report advocated something along these lines a few years ago. It is rumored in the last few days that wheat payments are somewhat low this year as a result of some of the trucking rates that have been imposed because of hauling grain by truck to inland terminals.

If it is true, that our wheat payments are somewhat low because of trucking rates, then one would have to ask how the trucking of grain can be cheaper than hauling grain by rail. It seems to be a bit of a paradox in Ottawa, Otto Lang and federal committees have been pressuring for energy consuming trucks on expensive highways. At the same time Jean Marchand is asking for a rational national transportation system not based on the principle of competition.

One is sometimes forced to ask whether or not the Federal Liberal Government ever caucuses. Also, given the past record of the Federal Government and the exploitation of western Canada by eastern business, one is also forced to ask whether we can particularly trust the Federal Liberal Government at this time, with their good intentions for freight reform.

Maybe by endorsing the Federal Liberal stance on transportation taken by Jean Marchand we will simply be endorsing a 2nd century of eastern business rip-offs and this time by truck instead of rail.

April 5, 1974

I want to emphasize that this province and western Canada, has only several months to decide which way we are going to go as far as freight and transportation is concerned. If the province allows a case to be made for trucking of freight, trucking of grain or even trucking of people, then a case will be made for trucks. And if a case is made for trucks then we are in effect saying that we don't want a case to be made for rails, rails which are already extant in western Canada.

The efficiency theory of trucks versus rail is simply this. They theorize that by putting larger loaded trucks on roads they will consume less energy, and by consuming less energy they will drive the freight rate down. They are saying in effect, that by putting large energy consuming trucks on highways which parallel railroads and running greater loads on bigger trucks alongside empty boxcars, through the theory of competition, we are going to drive the freight rates down. I would ask how this is possible when the railroads and the major trucking industries are owned by the same companies.

Through this efficiency theory they are making a case for the hauling of grain by truck. If we haul grain by truck it means that we are going to want to make that mode as efficient as possible. And in order to make trucking as efficient as possible it means that we will have to have the largest trucks that we can possibly have on roads. And in order to have large trucks on roads we will have to have the road system upgraded to the point where it will haul 110,000 or better gross vehicle weight capacity. And what does that mean?

That means that over the next two decades, while hauling more grain by truck we will be upgrading more roads at the expense of the next two generations of Saskatchewan taxpayers. I say that if the Federal Government and if the western governments agree to the proposal to truck grain by energy consuming trucks over the next six-month period that they will be in effect committing this province alone to an expenditure over the next two decades on roads of over half a billion dollars. One half billion dollars to the next two generations of taxpayers. And this decision will be made within the next several months in Canada.

It is the public, obviously, who must subsidize transportation. And transportation in itself is not an end, transportation is merely a means to facilitate the mobility of people, nothing more. It will be the taxpayer who will subsidize every mode of transportation. The short and long of it is that we simply can't afford to subsidize all modes.

We must decide, as governments, which modes are going to be most efficient and see that those modes are going to cost the least to society. It is necessary, in the next couple of years, for governments to change people's psychology regarding the utilization of transportation modes. My generation in North America, for instance, is the only generation in the world over the last 200 years who has never ridden a train, as a way of life. This psychology could be changed within a ten-year period.

This Government has an unprecedented opportunity to do something about transportation. The issue is very prevalent in the minds of Saskatchewan farmers and Saskatchewan businessmen. It is prevalent in the minds of Saskatchewan people because of the energy issue. Furthermore, we are getting tremendous

revenues from oil. This Government could do some experimenting in transportation modes. We could experiment in air transportation; we could experiment in flywheel and electrical vehicles; we could experiment in commuter rail service; and we could experiment with these modes using them in a complementary fashion.

We know that transportation is instrumental in the development of Saskatchewan. It is instrumental in agricultural stability; in the promotion of secondary industrial processing of agricultural and industrial products and it is necessary for rural urban development.

I would hope that all Members of this House will support the Resolution, thereby setting an example for the Federal Government regarding a national transportation system.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to.

Resolution No. 9 — Policies and Operations of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. A. R. Guy (Athabasca):

That this Assembly urges the Saskatchewan Government to immediately convene an independent or judicial commission to inquire into all aspects of the policies and operations of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. J. K. Comer (Nipawin): — Mr. Speaker, this motion is urging the Government of Saskatchewan to establish a judicial inquiry into the operations of what is commonly known as DNS.

I was not intending particularly to speak on this until a week ago last Tuesday when the new northern critic for the Opposition spoke, the Hon. Member for Cannington (Mr. Weatherald). After making the decision to speak I went through the reasons why the Opposition would want a judicial inquiry into the activities of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

I think it is important to remember that when calling for a judicial inquiry that we are asking for an inquiry conducted by a judge into activities that appear illegal and an inquiry that goes to the very heart of activities which appear suspect. When a Member of this House calls for a judicial inquiry I think we must listen carefully to the evidence that Members, who support that call, present. We must ascertain whether the question of illegality or impropriety on certain activities has any reality in it. Simply because one group criticizes a government department or government activities that is not reason for a judicial inquiry. Just because of adverse Press reports the government shouldn't be setting up judicial inquiries. Unless there are facts which indicate illegal activities or activities which are suspect I don't feel there is need for a judicial inquiry. I should like to go through, briefly, for a few moments some of the reasons that have been presented in this House by people who support this call for judicial inquiry.

I should like to go through the case that was laid down by those calling for judicial inquiry.

April 5, 1974

First of all I should like to look at the comments of the mover, in his over an hour diatribe before this House. I should like to go through the reasons why he wanted an inquiry.

Mainly, he quoted Press clippings. From the Prince Albert Herald he quoted one article and two editorials. He quoted two articles from the Leader-Post; he quoted three articles from the Star-Phoenix and one editorial. He went on to quote nine other news reports to which he attached no origin. I can only assume it is either a Press report that nobody printed or came from the Saskatchewan Liberal.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, I can see no reason why a judicial inquiry must be called simply based on reports that appear in the Press. That is not proof enough for a judicial inquiry. The only letter that he was able to refer to, from a person in northern Saskatchewan, was a letter from a nursing Sister at Sandy Bay supporting the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

The Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) represents more of the area covered by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan than any other Member in this House. He wasn't able to quote one letter, one letter, from anyone in his constituency calling for a judicial inquiry, suggesting anything that needed a judicial inquiry.

If there is such an uproar where are the letters? You can't quote letters that don't exist. You talk about unrest that doesn't exist other than from the papers.

The Member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Coupland) also spoke. He didn't quote any letters either, he had none. The Member for Prince Albert East (Mr. Feschuck), my colleague on this side of the House who also represents part of DNS, he doesn't have letters. We haven't any phone calls; we haven't been accosted on the streets by people from the North, calling for an inquiry. And the reason is that this massive discontent that has been talked about in this House does not exist. Does not exist outside of the Press and a few people who, I think, have basically stirred up a press war. It is very easy for a few people to stir up an uproar in the Press. A dozen people, to make an enormous noise.

He went on and he said, "I don't know whether it is significant or not, but there have been seven Cabinet Ministers try out the Premier's seat since he was away." Now I don't know whether that had anything to do with DNS, and I doubt it, but his case was so weak he had to comment on irrelevant things. He didn't know what the weather was like outside as he hadn't been out for awhile.

Mr. Speaker, following the fearless fighter from the North, who is now I understand righteously running in Rosthern, came the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart). And why did the Leader of the Opposition want an inquiry? The main reason he wanted an inquiry was because the CCF and the NDP haven't held that seat since before 1960. They hadn't won Athabasca since 1960 and so for that reason they needed a judicial inquiry. Maybe we also need an inquiry for Mr. Guy's exodus into Rosthern.

And then the Leader of the Opposition finished up with quite a quotation. He said, "If there is nothing to hide then have an

inquiry.” That is like saying to any Member of this House, you stole something and the person says no, and I say if you didn’t steal it why don’t you go to trial. They would think I was crazy. And they are crazy suggesting it. Now that is the sort of thing that Hitler did, that is the sort of thing that Stalin did, haul people up and inquire into their activities, based on no proof. No proof, no inquiry.

Then came the Member for Meadow Lake and why did he want a judicial inquiry? Well, he wanted a judicial inquiry because of the wind in the 1960 election. There was a wind on election day. That was one of the reasons that he gave. I can only assume that is why. He was talking that he wanted a judicial inquiry and he talked about the wind in the 1960 election. And then he talked about \$2 plywood. I don’t know what he meant, so he needed a judicial inquiry into that.

And then came the Member for Cannington. As I said, the northern critic, the junior Member of the grain dust twins. Why did he want a judicial inquiry? He wanted one based on his trip up there last fall. He described his trip last November, and I am going to quote him:

The latest of many trips I have made over the last 20 years in northern Saskatchewan.

It’s in Hansard and you can look it up. And then he said, talking about how we needed a judicial inquiry, he said that the Hon. Member for Meadow Lake was so popular up there that he should be a banker. He could make all kinds of money lending it up there. Lending money! Maybe there is a need for a judicial inquiry, maybe there is.

An Hon. Member: — . . . Loon Lake.

Mr. Comer: — Loon Lake isn’t in the DNS area. And then he went on and he talked about a number of things. He talked about the municipal council. Did he want a judicial inquiry because of the northern municipal council? No, he liked that idea. Did he want a judicial inquiry into the situation because of the schools in the North? No, he liked that idea that we were building schools. Did he want a judicial inquiry because of the housing situation? No, he liked that idea too.

Why he wanted one was because we had hired some social activists. This was the problem. It would be very interesting to compare the type of comment that was made by the Member for Cannington, in talking about social activists, hiring trouble makers, with the comments that have been made say to the Roman Catholic priests who have gone from Canada to Brazil, comments made by the military hierarchy, complaining that they are trouble makers, social activists. You know maybe we do need social activists in the North; maybe we do need people who will bring the people in the North to their feet and get them involved in what is going on around them. When that happened, when the people in the North started getting involved the Member for Cannington and the Liberal Party say, let’s have a judicial inquiry. Let’s keep them suppressed for another 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, I’ve looked through the case, the case that has been presented in the House to this day, by the Member for Athabasca. He moved the motion. I can only assume that the

April 5, 1974

very best case that could be made for this inquiry was made by the Member for Athabasca. There was no case.

The Leader of the Opposition was going to lead the charge of the light brigade, into the North. What was his case? The CCF hadn't won the seat since 1960. That hardly warrants a judicial inquiry. We all know that. Although apparently the Member for Athabasca, the present Member for Athabasca (or Athabastern) is not sure that's going to happen again in 1975. He's not taking any chances.

I've looked through the record. The case that has been made by the Member for Athabasca, the Leader of the Opposition, the Member for Meadow Lake, the northern critic for Cannington, and I find no case, I find no case. I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan know that this is sham tactics, sham tactics, cheap tactics by the Liberal Party. The people of northern Saskatchewan know it and I urge all Members of this House with integrity to stand and defeat this Motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. A. R. Guy (Athabasca): — Well, that is a sample of what we've heard from that side of the House. He said he looked and he couldn't find a case and I'm not surprised because there hasn't been one speaker over there who has understood the problems let alone what some of the reasons for an inquiry were. We weren't saying, if he would read the motion, that it had to be judicial, it said an independent or judicial inquiry. I know he was trying to muddy the water by saying it was judicial therefore there had to be something illegal. It shows his complete lack of any knowledge of what goes on in northern Saskatchewan. He said that anybody who called for an inquiry didn't have any integrity. Well, I'll just remind him that the NDP convention in Saskatoon for two consecutive years have requested an inquiry into the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. If he wants to stand up and say that all members of the NDP have no integrity, that's his statement not mine.

No, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is evident from what we've heard from Members opposite, they just don't understand the problem of northern Saskatchewan. The Minister of Northern Saskatchewan (Mr. Bowerman) has created something which he can't handle and the rest of them know nothing about it. We saw that when the Member for Touchwood (Mr. Meakes) made his comments. The Member for Pelly (Mr. Larson) had a few comments. Who else spoke on that motion? Well, it doesn't matter, they all made the same speech, so when you heard one, you heard them all.

Every one of them praised the work of the DNS and they showed they didn't understand the problem. Not one speaker, Mr. Speaker, tried to explain the reasons for the criticisms, the reasons for the complaints, the reasons that there are sit-ins, the reasons that there is unrest and the reason that there is disillusionment. If there is no need for an inquiry why didn't they stand up and tell us why all these things are happening up there. Why are there sit-ins? Why are people coming down from the North holding public meetings across the South of the province, trying to inform the people of the problems of northern Saskatchewan? Why are all the complaints coming from the school teachers and the social workers? Surely if there are complaints there have to be reasons. Why didn't you stand up and

admit there have been complaints? Not one of you, not one of the speakers on that side of the House had the courage to stand up and try and show us why these complaints are not valid. If you had been able to prove to us that the complaints and the criticisms of northern Saskatchewan that I outlined when I opened this debate, were not valid then maybe we would take another look at our motion. But there wasn't one of you even mentioned them. You didn't mention them because you don't understand the problems of northern Saskatchewan.

The reason for the motion, Mr. Speaker, as I pointed out when I opened the debate was that there has been criticism from many quarters and there have been many requests for inquiries into the activities that are going on in northern Saskatchewan. There were editorials in the Press. The Member who just took his seat said, why didn't you read some letters. Well, you can imagine what he would have been saying if I'd have read some letters from northern Saskatchewan. He would have said, "Oh yes, you just got your friends to write you some letters and now you're putting them out. Letters don't mean anything." So his argument was weak because he didn't have anything to pin it on. He doesn't understand what's going on. He said he represents part of northern Saskatchewan. It's a small part and if he represents it by the knowledge that he has shown here in the House today, he won't be back again next time, I'll tell you that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Guy: — Teachers have complained, Indian and Metis organizations have complained, the Metis Society has complained and of course, the Minister's answer is, "Oh, the Metis Society doesn't really represent anybody in northern Saskatchewan anyway", even though they represent the majority of the people up there. Civil servants have complained, the NDP convention, as I mentioned on two consecutive years, complained about the activities that were going on in northern Saskatchewan. And concerned northern residents are continually asking for an inquiry and asking for something to be done to solve the problems and do something about the bureaucracy that's being built up by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

The Ile-a-La-Crosse school issue just the other day, is another good example. And yet what did the Minister do there? The Minister called for an inquiry. Inquiry into something which he had absolutely no business to call an inquiry into because it's a local autonomous school board. They don't need any inquiry from the Minister of Education and the acting Minister of Northern Saskatchewan. If he wants to have an inquiry, let him have an inquiry into the things that he's responsible for. Then it has got some validity.

An Hon. Member: — Louder!

Mr. Grant: — I don't need to be any louder. You may be dumb but I think you can still hear.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to conclude my remarks by saying, as I said earlier, if there is nothing to hide, why is the Government so afraid to have an independent inquiry into the policies and the activities of the Department of Northern

April 5, 1974

Saskatchewan? Surely if there is nothing to hide, an inquiry would clear the air once and for all and it would be good for everyone concerned. We have to accept the fact that by their refusal to have an inquiry and if they vote against this motion, then there is something to hide in northern Saskatchewan. They are afraid to have an inquiry, even though they know of the unrest and the unhappiness that is prevalent up there.

I was hoping, Mr. Speaker, that this Resolution would receive unanimous consent from both sides of the House. It appears from speakers opposite that this is not going to happen. So all I want to say to them is that unless there is something done in the very near future regarding the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, matters are going to get worse before they get better and the Government is going to have to assume the full responsibility for some of the unrest, criticisms, the problems that are developing there day after day.

I certainly know the Members on this side of the House are going to support the Resolution and I call on Members on the other side once and for all to clear the air as far as the Department of Northern Saskatchewan is concerned. Vote for an independent inquiry and it will be in the best interests of the northern people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Resolution was negatived on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 13

Steuart	Grant	MacDonald (Moose Jaw N.)
Coupland	MacDonald	Wiebe
Loken	Weatherald	Malone
Guy	MacLeod	
Boldt	Lane	

NAYS — 30

Dyck	Pepper	Owens
Meakes	Michayluk	Gross
Smishek	Byers	Comer
Romanow	Whelan	Rolfes
Snyder	Kwasnica	Lange
Thibault	Engel	Hanson
Larson	Cody	Oliver
Baker	Robbins	Feschuk
Brockelbank	Taylor	Kaeding
MacMurchy	Faris	Flasch

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Final Report of the Special Committee on Welfare

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Mostoway (Hanley) that the Final Report of the Special Committee on Welfare be now concurred in.

Mr. L. Larson (Pelly): — Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to say a

word or two about the Report of the Welfare Committee.

I want to say first of all that I welcomed the opportunity to serve on this Committee. I think that it was a good Committee, I enjoyed working with all the members, I enjoyed the fellowship and the companionship from both sides of the House. I think the Committee discovered many things that really some of us were not fully aware of. We discovered conditions in the province that were rather disheartening and rather sad to observe. I think we discovered that all poverty doesn't begin or end at the welfare level.

By the number of presentations, as was pointed out by the Member for Hanley, made to us, there certainly was shown a lot of interest in poverty in Saskatchewan. If there is any heartbreaking event to observe it's the conditions that some people are forced to live under. It makes us feel that really as citizens of a rich country like Canada, that probably we are not contributing as much, or doing as much as we probably ought to. It makes one wonder and makes one realize how fortunate some of us are, when we compare our lot to others.

The tour in the North has certainly opened my eyes to a lot of conditions that I had read about, had some glimpses of, Mr. Speaker, but really did not fully understand. I discovered that these northern people are just as human, have just as many feelings and are as concerned about themselves, their welfare and the welfare of their children, as any of us are. They are locked in.

The Member for Lumsden (Mr. Lane) will have his opportunity to speak, and I would appreciate, Mr. Speaker, if he would keep his mouth shut.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Mr. Larson: — If he has any personal matter that he wants to settle, even though I'm a lot older than he is, I will be pleased to meet him anywhere. Anywhere, either inside or outside of this House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — I am getting pretty fed up with the kind of atmosphere and environment, Mr. Speaker, that exists in this House. I am trying to make an intelligent observation.

Mr. Lane: — Don't strain yourself.

Mr. Larson: — Do I have the floor or does the Hon. Member for Lumsden have the floor?

Mr. Speaker: — Proceed.

Mr. Larson: — As I was saying, the feeling in the North is certainly as acute and certainly as human as the feeling of those of us in the South. That this gap between the North and the South exists is a very difficult one to comprehend. As you get north of Prince Albert you discover that people think those living south of Prince Albert are living in the lap of luxury. We don't

April 5, 1974

understand their problems and I don't understand theirs to be specifically honest about the whole situation.

That we had this opportunity to view first-hand, all Members of the House, certainly broadens my perspective of what Saskatchewan and Canada is all about. I wish I were in a position to contribute more, to contribute materially more to a total understanding of these people, their aspirations, their hopes and the futility that they feel. In the southern part of the province, we found again, an affluence and we found poverty, mixed and blended together.

I think this again throws a tremendous challenge to all of us, both in and out of government to see what can be done. I am very happy and proud that this Government saw fit to inaugurate and set up this kind of an investigation. If and when the time comes that I will be able to make my contribution towards remedying some of these things I will feel that my effort and that my experience was extremely worthwhile.

I want to congratulate, as I said, Members on both sides of the House for the conscientious and honest effort they put into seeking out some solutions to this very difficult and very deep rooted problem. I was a bit disappointed that the Members of the Opposition saw fit to bring in a minority report at the last moment. I think this indicated that as an afterthought they saw some opportunity to play petty politics. This was not evident through the findings and workings of the Committee and I was a bit sad that it had to manifest itself in the dying moments of the Committee's hearings.

Certainly we worked well together and I look forward to the time when some of the recommendations which are in many respects far-reaching, which can set a pattern for the rest of Canada and which probably more important than all, can do something for the less privileged, for those who don't have the opportunity, by virtue of a very great number of reasons, Mr. Speaker. As we talked to them as we visited with them we found that they had aspirations, they had hopes, they had ambitions, but because of a variety of conditions, that for the most part was not within their own control, they were caught in circumstances that made them dependent on the generosity of others.

Really it was a very deep experience and one that has certainly broadened my perspective of human life as it exists and as we find it in this affluent country of ours. I think that we shall do well to follow, whatever stripe of government is in power, the recommendations of this Committee.

They are far reaching as I have said. They reach into some of the very basic problems, problems that politics can't resolve. I think we all recognize that there is no political prestige to be gained by dealing with this whole problem of poverty. You may satisfy a few people by giving them a little more but at the same time you will hurt some people who feel they are privileged, they have a supreme right to have more and are called on to contribute towards their fellow man who is not as fortunate. So, I certainly feel that the blueprint of this Committee will serve well for Saskatchewan governments whatever stripe follows in the future.

I should like to have the opportunity to review probably in greater detail at another date, some of the recommendations

and I will therefore beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Final Report of the Special Committee on Business Firms

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Engel (Notukeu-Willow Bunch) that The Final Report of the Special Committee on Business Firms be now concurred in.

Hon D. W. Cody (Minister of Co-operatives): — Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about the Final Report of the Committee investigating small businesses and businesses of all types.

First of all I want to congratulate the Committee for the work that they did, and particularly their chairman, certainly a capable individual and most conscientious man. He did a tremendous job trying to keep this Committee afloat. With some of the Members you have on various committees it gets kind of difficult from time to time, I am sure.

Mr. Speaker, it is with some pleasure that I make some comments on this Report, the Final Report of the Special Committee on Business Firms, because it relates in part to credit unions, co-operatives and the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation of which I am the Minister in charge.

It is noted that the Committee recommends that the province contribute a major portion of the funds required to assist the starting up of small businesses. Insofar as credit unions are concerned, they are formed by local groups to provide a financial service for providing and what have you of production co-operatives, productive purposes for farmers and also city dwellers as well. Basically it is for all of its members. I might add however that if the Provincial Government were to undertake to guarantee these loans in each case, then quite conceivably many credit unions in the province would likely be in a position to make loans on that basis, depending of course upon the availability of surplus cash, source of funds that would be available at the time. Certainly I think here is a source of funds which should not be overlooked by government or anyone else.

The proposed immersion course of basic business principles and practices for inexperienced people who desire to get into business is a practical suggestion, in my opinion. It should be proceeded with, I would think, before granting financial or other kinds of assistance. I concur wholeheartedly with the approach of this kind of educational process.

Regarding the recommendation for assistance to all businesses, I might say at the outset that all consumer co-operatives in Saskatchewan, as well as British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and western Ontario own a wholesale organization known as Federated Co-operatives Limited, with its head office in Saskatoon, through which co-operatives can purchase their needs at wholesale on a cost plus basis, and through which volume discounts can be obtained on quantity buying. A similar service is also available through the Wheat Pool on certain and specialized commodities. The savings to the local co-operatives and the ultimate consumer member, have been substantial over the years. Federated Co-operatives incidentally last year had a

April 5, 1974

saving of \$16.6 million. It is quite conceivable that smaller business proprietors and other local entrepreneurs, could derive many benefits through forming their own bulk buying organization or setting up the same kind of program as has been devised by the co-operatives in their wholesaling.

Today's trend toward big business mergers, consolidation and what have you and the competitive influence of big business places puts the small entrepreneur in a vulnerable position. In order to stay alive he must be competitive and yet try to generate sufficient earnings from the business to stay solvent and provide a decent return on his capital investment. This businessman, in all probability, cannot afford to hire help. It may be a husband-wife or a family type operation. A program whereby quantity purchasing could be made from the wholesaler, the jobber or indeed the manufacturer, or grower, would be an invaluable enterprise for the small local merchant. Most large chain businesses or those with a franchise indeed have sources of supply in many cases right now to the producer level. A significant saving can be achieved through this kind of process and certainly I think it would be a good idea to have a bulk buying or bulk purchasing type of an operation.

My Department, Mr. Speaker, has the expertise through which assistance and advice can be given to interested groups wishing to embark on a self-help program to wholesale bulk buying which should be significantly beneficial financially to the small businessman.

A number of years ago a canning operation was started in the Pierceland, Saskatchewan area. This venture certainly had possibilities. However, due to the rather short and sometimes severe climatic conditions in that part of the country at least, such as frost and what have you, it damaged corn and peas and beans, consumer crops of all kinds and the association had to fold up. But certainly I think in the southern part of Saskatchewan this kind of an enterprise could be one of viability.

Mr. Speaker, as the Minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, I should also like to offer a few remarks in this area.

The remarks I wish to make are on the recommendations of the Special Committee on Business Firms. The Committee recommended that the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation make adequate provision for meeting the housing needs in smaller centres in the province. That information on these programs receives wide possible distribution. Page 43 of the Report indicates this kind of recommendation.

I would welcome the opportunity to advise you, Mr. Speaker, that these recommendations already form one of the primary objectives of the Housing Corporation. Since its establishment a year ago, the Corporation has been developing new programs directed to the needs of smaller centres as well as seeking to extend existing programs to these communities. The low rental public housing program which in the past was limited by the Federal Government to large centres has been progressively expanded to make approximately 100 to 130 new centres eligible for public housing.

It is certainly gratifying to see the Corporation work the way it has to try and get the smaller communities involved.

However, let me tell you that it is just like pulling teeth to try and get the Minister of Urban Affairs in Ottawa to agree that small communities in this province should be able to have the same kind of housing as the cities have. We, in the Housing Corporation are continuing the fight to try and get more communities of a small nature involved. I think smaller communities need this kind of service, need this kind of help as well as cities and towns.

In the area of new housing, Mr. Speaker, to be purchased by persons of low and moderate income, the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has developed a major new initiative in co-operation with the Federal Government. Under the subsidy and self-help program, low income families in all areas of the province are able to benefit from provincial down payment assistance, mortgage subsidies and self-help incentives. In addition to Federal subsidies and interest rate reductions, the self-help aspect of the program which is especially directed towards smaller centres should be particularly helpful to groups wishing to build their houses on a co-operative basis.

For persons who do not wish to purchase a new home but would rather remain in their current dwelling, the Housing Corporation offers a new program to assist in making needed repairs to their housing. For senior citizens receiving the guaranteed income supplement, the Housing Corporation provides grants up to \$500 under its extremely successful Senior Citizens' Home Repair program.

Families of low and moderate income can receive assistance under the second program, the Residential Rehabilitation program. These programs like the self-help program are intended to be of special benefit to our smaller centres. With the programs I have mentioned already in operation and other programs for smaller centres under development, I can truly say, Mr. Speaker, that the Government through the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation is making major strides towards meeting the housing needs of our smaller centres.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — Information on these programs has been sent out to all municipal offices in the province so that all communities will be aware and be able to benefit from the new housing initiatives of this Government. Incidentally the Member for Lumsden says hear, hear, or where, where, or whatever it is, but let me say that we believe in sending out information on our programs because it's those kinds of programs that are going to keep the Province of Saskatchewan alive in the rural areas.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — And it is certainly not like your government, Mr. Member for Lumsden, that constantly had programs coming out, big announcements but the public was never allowed to get at them. That's where the problem is. That is why we are doing the kind of advertising in the Housing Corporation that we are, and we are going to continue doing it so that the people of this province get to the root of the problems that they have out in the country, and get the kinds of programs that they need to become viable communities. Certainly not like the old Liberal government used to do.

April 5, 1974

Mr. Speaker, one of the major reasons for forming the Housing Corporation was to provide these new programs for smaller centres and we will continue to develop programs that will enable us to meet housing needs wherever they exist.

Without question, Mr. Speaker, I think the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has done a tremendous job in this province with regard to bringing housing to the people who really need housing, not only to the larger centres.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad to have had the opportunity to inform the House on the efforts in the areas of which I am the Minister in charge and I once again congratulate the Committee for its work, particularly the chairman for a tremendous job that he has done and I certainly do support the Report and its recommendations.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. B. M. Dyck (Saskatoon City Park): — Minister in discussing this Report, I wish to say at the outset that I was very pleased to have the opportunity to serve on this Committee to study the problems and the prospects for business in Saskatchewan. It was a good idea that this Legislature back a couple of years ago did create this Committee and it is an excellent approach that I personally supported, the approach of talking to the business people right in their home towns.

I want to congratulate all the members of the Committee for their efforts and particularly the chairman for the time and enthusiasm that he put into the Report. I wish to congratulate at this time the staff for their patience and their perseverance until the Final Report was completed.

Our terms of reference as Members will know were very broad. It is no easy task to approach a problem with so many aspects to it. Nevertheless it is in my opinion a very good Report. I must confess that during some of the many sessions we had, I sometimes doubted whether or not we would emerge with a report that would come to grips with the real problems of business, particularly when we had such broad terms of reference.

I believe it is a good Report because it does come to grips with some of the problems of the small businessman in Saskatchewan.

I will deal with some of these. I want to say how much the many business people of the province appreciated the opportunity to speak to our Committee; to speak to our Committee and to express some of their opinions, some of their concerns and some of their ideas. For too long this group of people have been forgotten. They were particularly forgotten during those seven years from 1964 to 1971. During those years the government in office, the government of the day was primarily concerned about the large glamorous business firm. The large glamorous firm of the large corporate variety. As a matter of fact they appeared to have some kind of a fixation on these types of organizations which were to solve all of the problems of the day in this province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we know all about that and the failures

associated with that approach and it is now history.

The business people welcomed the opportunity not just because they had been forgotten in the past but because they too feel the growth of the large corporation, the growth of these organizations which are slowly squeezing out the small and medium sized business firm. And one need only look around and see how the large corporation has done away with many of the small business firms.

One can look at the retail industry, hardware stores, grocery stores, drug stores and now even the corner grocery store. All in the hands of the chains. We can look at service stations, restaurants, manufacturing firms slowly moving into the hands of larger operators. The businessman of this Province of Saskatchewan has some real concerns in this regard and he did not hesitate to tell us of some of these concerns.

The other reason the business people were anxious to talk to us was because they had been completely forgotten during the seven years of government by the Party represented by the Members opposite. That Party, Mr. Speaker, would hardly speak to a businessman if he wasn't worth a few million.

To illustrate that government's disregard for this group of people one need only look at the approach that was taken toward the Department of Industry and Commerce. This department was downgraded in those years. It was downgraded because it was felt that most of the problems would be solved by big business and negotiations for big business were carried out straight from the office of the then Premier and the then Provincial Treasurer. Our Government, Mr. Speaker, has taken a completely different approach. You will recall that in our Interim Report our Committee recommended that business representatives should be appointed to help the small businessman at the local level. I am pleased to point out that the Department of Industry and Commerce has responded to that recommendation and we now have qualified men out in the field and working.

I do not wish at this time, Mr. Speaker, to discuss the entire Report. In the main, the Report speaks for itself. And certainly my colleagues have alluded to various aspects of that Report.

Let me point out that there are some fundamental difficulties that need to be overcome before there will be a significant industrial development in this province. Saskatchewan is not close to any large markets and to tap any large market involves large transportation expenditure. In the last few decades we have seen a major development take place on the western and eastern seaboard of this country. These developments have grown up near large population centres and have tended to reinforce and multiply the effect of industrial and population growth in those areas. Also industries developed in these areas have access to foreign markets with relatively cheap water transportation rates. In addition to our long distance from markets we have the problem of discriminatory freight rates. And as one member of the Business Committee, Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize, that until the problem of discriminatory freight rates is solved, we will continue to have problems in terms of development in this province.

It was the feeling of our Committee, Mr. Speaker, that in

April 5, 1974

spite of the geographical disadvantages we have there was much potential in this province. And it was our view that we should concentrate on those areas of development where we have a natural advantage such as the processing of agricultural products and the production of manufactured goods and the machinery associated with the agricultural sector.

In addition with high demands for fibre these days throughout the world, it is my view that there is a real potential for the lumber industry in this province. With the needs in the future for more pipelines, I feel that there is a real potential for the steel industry in this province.

These three areas, Mr. Speaker, could be very important and worthwhile growth areas in the immediate years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, may I say that as one Committee member I am very optimistic about the potential of these growth areas. However before this goal can be approached it will be necessary for us to get a freight rate structure that acts as a catalyst to growth as opposed to one that impedes growth.

Mr. Speaker, one area of the Report and I do not propose to comment, as I mentioned before, on all the areas, but the one area of the Report that has in my opinion some real potential is the innovation corporation. As Members will appreciate Saskatchewan has a real shortage of basic research personnel. Usually the function of basic research is carried out to a large extent by larger financial organizations. As Members know we do not have a large number of these types of organizations. We have seen over the years some of our graduates in the sciences and in engineering leave the province and find jobs elsewhere. I think it is important that basic research be carried on in this province and that we provide a funding agency to carry out this research. Therefore I am very optimistic about the function of the innovation corporation as proposed in our Report.

I believe the first responsibility of this innovation corporation would be to identify all those areas where potential development should take place. I believe the Department of Industry and Commerce has already done some work in this area. Further it should be the responsibility of this corporation to carry out the initial stages of planning and organization for a given industrial development. I have, Mr. Speaker, had an opportunity to discuss some specific aspects of the Report with the staff of the Department of Industry and Commerce and I am very pleased to note that already work has been commenced towards providing more research in the field of industrial development by this Department.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I was very surprised to read in the Final Report some reservations by the Members opposite and they were alluding to the fact that they didn't really have adequate time to provide their input in the preparation of the Final Report. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe this is true. We did consider the Final Report on a number of occasions. The Members opposite had all kinds of time to provide their input into the Final Report.

Let me illustrate. On October 23rd the Business Committee of this Legislature met and the purpose of the meeting was to consider the Final Report. On October 31st the Business Committee met and the purpose of that meeting was to consider the

Final Report. The Business Committee convened meetings on November 7th, November 19th, November 23rd and November 27th, all to consider the Final Report and the Members opposite tell us they didn't have time to provide their input into the Final Report.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Dyck: — I challenge the Members opposite to prove that they didn't have this time.

Mr. Speaker, I have other things that I would like to add to this speech on the Business Committee so I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Progress Report of the Special Committee on Highway Traffic and Safety

Mr. A. Thibault (Melfort-Kinistino) moved, seconded by Mr. G. B. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park) that the Progress Report of the Special Committee on Highway Traffic and Safety be now concurred in.

He said: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to move concurrence in the Progress Report of the Special Committee on Highway Traffic and Safety. I want to thank the members and the staff, also the news media as well as those who made presentations to the Committee. It was a pleasure to work with a group of dedicated people who worked diligently at a problem that had no easy answer. I want to make special mention of Mrs. Joyce Rublee, typist; Mrs. Marion Kelly, recording secretary; and Mrs. Hazel Innis, recording secretary, who are not mentioned in the Report but whose work was exceptionally good.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Thibault: — At the outset, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the statements that I make are my own and not necessarily those of the Committee. I will not cover the entire Report as other members of the Committee will also be speaking on this and by the time I close the debate I believe it will have been well covered. It was a great teamwork job and I want to keep it that way.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out some of the things that we have done. All the members of the Committee took a defensive driving course so as to be better informed. All the members spent a day in court to know what the courts were doing. We listened to 71 briefs, 75 letters and 50 presentations. We made a trip to Phoenix, Arizona and studied a DWI program. In 1974 we plan on having hearings throughout the province and then come up with the Final Report.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that if Item 2, 3, 4, 5, 10 and 11 in the Report were pursued to the limit you would have very little trouble with No. 9, that is driving while under suspension which is a very serious situation in our society today.

Nos. 7 and 8 would be well looked after with a well co-ordinated education program. With a good program more drivers would have a chance. Today when we give a person driver's licence too many times we hand him his death certificate and who is to blame? Mr. Speaker, I believe that collectively all violations of traffic rules are responsible for the 274 deaths a year. But those who think it would never happen to them, I want to remind them that a large number of people are killed in their first accident.

Mr. Speaker, if every local government in our province had a traffic committee and a few people to promote traffic safety programs it would do a lot to develop a good attitude toward safety. Every driver over the age of 18 should have at least 8 hours of defensive driving course. Mind you the defensive driving course is all classroom work and no driving. It is vital that we have a co-ordinating body, headed by a Minister in charge with the responsibility of co-ordinating all of the various driving safety programs. This authority would have the power to direct various departments on matters of traffic safety. Mr. Speaker, let us keep it out of petty party politics. I am not interested in empire building by bureaucrats but I am interested in coming up with the kind of programs that will reduce deaths by automobiles and a program that society can accept.

Mr. Speaker, I wish all those that say something has to be done would carry it a little further and do something about it. All the Members of the Legislature are invited by the Safety Council to take a defensive driving course. It is my hope that the Whips of both sides of the House will be able to arrange it. As a matter of fact I urge you to take it. You will realize how important it is, it would be a good example for the people of the province and it would prove that we mean business. Mr. Speaker, if you check my record throughout my political career I have always said that courts were the poorest place to make good drivers. It's too late, society should have gotten to those drivers long before that.

Courts as we know them are a bitter experience. In the early '60s we then watched the program that was carried on in the city of Medicine Hat. At that time they held the world record. They had five years without a fatality. Every citizen was involved in traffic safety and the results were tremendous. You must get to the young before they develop bad driving habits. I will put it this way. Good driving examples must start at home and it is not provided by parents who break every rule in the book as long as they don't get caught. What is the good of a good sermon on Sunday if the priest leaves a trail of dead dogs and dead chickens when he drives through the community? What is the good of a driver education program if the teacher drives like a maniac? And what is the good of a police officer that takes the youngsters to a hockey game and breaks every traffic rule on his way there. People who act that way it seems to me have many standards and are not consistent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of the House the fact that first aid is not taught in our schools. I also questioned university students and the students who had taken first aid training received it only at camp. I have spoken to teachers of other lands and first aid is taught at an early age. A school curriculum that does not include 12 hours of first aid is nothing to toot our horn about. Ambulance drivers take 12 to 20 hours of training, yet we have no time in our school

system for first aid.

Mr. Speaker, after observing different department involvement in traffic safety it is very obvious that there is a need for a co-ordinating body, in order to prevent overlapping which is a waste of money. In some areas there is a serious gap, such as education of first aid not being taught. Mr. Speaker, the most important person at a time of an accident is the first person who arrives on the scene and he should be knowledgeable about what to do under the circumstances. Many lives would be saved but with our present school set up many lives are lost because of not knowing what to do or not doing the right thing.

Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on our super-market justice. We visited the court room and I noticed that at one point that cases were being handled at one in forty seconds. Mr. Speaker, before the rubber wheel was introduced into our society there was a stigma attached to going to court and people were frowned upon for having gone to the court room and being fined. Today this stigma has worn off. In 1972, nine per cent of the people over the age of seven were charged for some reason or another. This looks more like an industry rather than a Department of Justice. Mr. Speaker, the aim of the court should be an educational experience and geared to improve drivers. Judges should be experts at driving so as to be able to treat each case on an individual basis. Today court rooms are over crowded beyond reason. Judges do not have the time to do a good job of justice. Mr. Speaker, sentence practice should be reviewed. The day fine used in Sweden should be studied. I will elaborate a little bit here.

In Sweden if you earn \$10 a day and you're fined one day then your fine is \$10. But if you earn a \$1,000 a day like some of our rich lawyers, then your fine would be \$1,000. The courts should include education so that the courts would be a profitable experience.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to at this point refer to the Liquor Committee Report, page 52, where it is recommended that each case of DWI be referred to an assessment committee to determine what approach to take. Mr. Speaker, if we say that alcohol is a disease then let us treat it as such and diseases are not treated in the court room.

I want to say in closing that we are years behind in the matters of traffic safety and the best we can hope for, people like you and me, is a patch job. Some will co-operate, some will argue and some will never learn but if we set up a well co-ordinated program I can assure you that we will come up with a generation of good drivers.

I will have more to say, Mr. Speaker, in closing this debate, but now I will move seconded by the co-chairman, Mr. Grant, who did his job beyond the call of duty that the Progress Report of the Special Committee on Highway Traffic and Safety be now concurred in.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. G. B. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park): — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased indeed to second this motion and I might point out that I am not sure whether it was because

April 5, 1974

I was never fingered for a special committee or whether I was successful in avoiding them, I'll leave that to your imagination, but this is the first committee of this type that I have served on in this House. I found it quite rewarding and I'm pleased that since it was the only committee I have ever served on that I picked one that doesn't at this stage appear to be that controversial that we can't expect the full co-operation and support of the House when the Final Report is brought in.

Like the chairman I want to extend my sincere thanks to the staff members who worked so diligently in trying to put together all the bits and pieces that came out of the meetings and also to express our appreciation to the associations and groups that appeared before us and co-operated so well. Now I found personally that there was a considerable interest in this question of traffic safety by associations such as Traffic Safety people, the police bodies, the Motor Club and the likes of those, and certain officials of different organizations and bodies, but to date I haven't really seen evidence that the public at large is really that concerned. I think the public at large would be more concerned if the price of beer went up five cents a glass or ten cents a glass than they are about the number of traffic deaths on our highways. I say this because we didn't have that many of the general public appearing before the Committee. That in itself wouldn't indicate a complete lack of interest because I think they quite often look to associations and groups to express their views. But in spite of all the publicity that comes out of gatherings associated with safety and the news that we hear every morning, this morning I think was one of the worst examples of fatalities over the last 24 hours and over this last week in Saskatchewan. I think there were about four or six killed in the last 24 hours — nine in one day, Mr. Guy tells me. And yet in this building and in my contacts downtown today, not a single person spoke to me about it, about how terrible a situation it was, they were more concerned about the weather being a little better. I really don't think the public is that concerned until they are affected personally and then it certainly drives home the necessity of some action being taken.

I think it is because the loss of life, whether it is on the highway or in the battlefield or in a tornado such as we saw where 350 people were killed. It is such an everyday occurrence now that it is no longer news, the loss of one or two or nine lives certainly doesn't hit the front page like it did when I was a kid a few years ago. I know of one single car accident out on the Moose Jaw turn, back about 1925, attracted far more attention among the people of Regina than the loss of those nine lives in the last 24 hours.

I really feel that our concern as a public is very limited but that in itself doesn't excuse the Legislators and the people responsible for the safety of the general public to take some action about it.

Mr. Speaker, due to the fact that it is late in the week and late in the day, and I have considerably more that I would like to say on the subject, I ask leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:20 o'clock p.m.