

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

Tuesday, March 18, 1975

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Hon. W.A. Robbins (Saskatoon Nutana Centre): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity to introduce to you 107 students from Grosvenor Park School in Saskatoon. They are seated, a portion in the west gallery and a number of them in the Speakers Gallery. They are accompanied by their teachers, Miss Maushel, Miss DeJong, Mr. Allis, and Mr. Adegarde. They came down from Saskatoon, I understand, by bus and they will be touring the Legislative Building. I hope to meet them about 3:15 and I hope at that time to be able to answer any questions that they may have with respect to the proceedings in the Assembly.

I am sure all Members will join with me in wishing them a fine afternoon. I hope they find it educational and interesting.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W.E. Smishek (Regina North East): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and to the Members of the Legislature a group of 45 students from the Grade Eight class at St. Anne's School, which is located in Regina North East. They are accompanied here by their teachers, Mr. Ted Zurowski and Mr. Glen Thompson.

On behalf of yourself, Mr. Speaker, and the Members of this Legislature I should like to extend to them a warm welcome and express the hope that their presence here today will be enjoyable and a pleasant experience. I, too, intend to meet with the students at about 3 o'clock in Room 275 and perhaps they might prepare some questions that they might like to direct to me when we meet at 3 o'clock. Again, welcome and have a pleasant day.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. D. Boldt (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce a group of students from the High School at Rosthern. There are 43 students from Grade Eleven and Twelve and they are here under the direction of their teachers, Mr. Booker and Mr. Fahl. I am sure all Members will welcome them here, they are in the east gallery. I hope that they will have an enjoyable time here in the Legislature and we will meet with them later on this day.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Campbell Tartans – Marian High – Basketball Champions

Mr. H.H. Rolfes (Saskatoon Nutana South): — Mr. Speaker, at this time I should like to congratulate

Campbell Tartans and Marion High . . .

Hon Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Rolfes: — The Member for Moose Jaw reminded me that I had this duty to perform today, so I should like to congratulate them on their basketball win proclaiming them as the provincial champs.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Size of Farms to Be Limited

Mr. J.G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister responsible for the Land Titles Office. In light of the proposals of the Government opposite to limit the size of farms and how the officials of Land Titles offices are checking into various rural municipal offices to determine the number of farmers owning more than three sections of land. The figure of three sections, is that the chosen limit to the size of farms in the future under the Government opposite?

Mr. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I know of no proposal to limit the size of land that the Hon. Member refers to. Accordingly I assume that the question is predicated on a wrong assumption of facts.

Mr. Lane: — A supplementary question, it wasn't limiting the size of land, it was limiting the size of farms. It has been stated by Members of the Government opposite, its party and government officials, that farm size should be limited. Is the Government opposite now prepared to table this policy on limiting the size of farms in the Province of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Romanow: — I just want to say that anything that the Land Titles Office people are doing in this type of activity is totally unrelated to any of the irresponsible suggestions made by my learned friend and colleague for Lumsden. As far as I know there is no action or development on hand and accordingly I say again to the Member he is totally misinformed.

Energy and Resource Development Fund

Mr. J.G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robbins) as the Minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Energy and Resource Development Fund. My understanding is that approximately \$160 million accumulated in the Fund during 1974. My first question is, is this approximately the correct figure? Would the Minister be prepared to give a precise accounting to the House of the amount in the Fund?

Hon. W.A. Robbins (Minister of Finance): — I think the Budget states that there was \$161 million in the Fund as of February 28th. The amount at the end of the

fiscal year, that is March 31st, I can't determine at the moment but could make an estimate of it.

With respect to the question as to whether or not we will divulge, please repeat the question.

Mr. Richards: — I am interested in knowing a precise accounting as early as possible of how much money has come into this Fund from the various sources.

Mr. Robbins: — Well, I presume that would be available. You should discuss this with my colleague, Mr. Cowley.

Mr. Richards: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Obviously there will be a formal accounting of this in the Public Accounts, I would assume, which would come out finishing the fiscal year in 1975. I am interested in having that information as early as possible. The supplementary question, have there been any major decisions made by the Government in the allocation of these moneys?

Mr. Robbins: — We mentioned in the Budget that we could be taking probably \$35 million out of the Energy Fund. This probability is related to the seven cent gas tax reduction, plus the farm cost reduction rebate. The estimates are \$21 million in gasoline tax reduction, plus \$14 million on an annual basis in relation to the farm cost reduction program. This \$35 million would be taken out, if necessary, of the Energy Fund and utilized in terms of consolidated revenue in the next year to cover these reductions already passed on to our consumers.

Constituency of Cumberland

Mr. A.R. Guy (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan (Mr. Bowerman). Now that Mr. McAulay has been officially nominated as an NDP candidate for the constituency of Cumberland, I should like to ask the Minister if he has submitted his resignation or taken leave of absence in order to do his campaigning?

Hon. G.R. Bowerman (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — I have not received any notice of termination or rather an application for him to resign and I, therefore, do not know what the intentions of the nominated candidate to be at this moment.

Mr. Guy: — A supplementary question, wouldn't the Minister agree that it is in the best interest of the political process that the civil servant should resign from that position in order to campaign in the election?

An Hon. Member: — If you don't know the answer just say so.

STATEMENT

Increase in Saskatchewan Population

Hon A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might give a brief statement before the Orders of the Day. I think Members will be interested in the most recent population estimates of Statistics Canada. I invite all Hon. Members to take note of some of the facts herein contained.

The population of Saskatchewan as of January 1, 1975 was estimated at 912,000 according to Statistics Canada's release today. This is an increase of 5,000 from October 1st, 1974 and 6,000 from January 1st, 1974.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — The year 1965 was the last time in which an increase of this magnitude was experienced. The figures indicate that in this quarter Saskatchewan showed a net immigration of about 1,000 persons. The last period in which more people entered this province than left was during the beginning of 1964.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ADJOURNED DEBATES

BUDGET DEBATE

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Robbins (Minister of Finance) that this Assembly do now resolve itself into a Committee of Finance.

Hon. E.L. Cowley (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure to rise today in this Debate, to be taking part in this Debate following the announcement which the Premier just made of the latest estimates from Statistics Canada. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will join with us in telling the people of Saskatchewan that this indeed is the true test of the record of this Government, that there is an increase in population.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — He may even be able to say it is the acid test.

Mr. Speaker, I think actions and results speak louder than words and the actions and the results of this Government's economic policy, including turning this province around after seven years of disastrous Liberal Government, now stand before us with those figures from Statistics Canada. Mr. Speaker, I am confident that in the next three months the facts that we and others will be able to put before the people of Saskatchewan will also show clearly to the people of Saskatchewan the difference in the results that are delivered by this New Democratic Party Government as compared to the Members sitting opposite.

Mr. Speaker, before the Debate was adjourned last night, I indicated that I would have some additional things to say about

the remarks made in this House yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition. Before getting into that, Mr. Speaker, I would just briefly like to go over a few of the things which I indicated made me confident that my constituency and indeed this whole province will view this Government favourably when we next go to the polls.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that over \$2 million in FarmStart grants and loans have been made in my constituency. I mentioned a 3,000 per cent increase in the crop insurance program in my area. I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, the 400 hog producers who received over one third of a million dollars under the Hog Stabilization Program. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the interim Hog Stabilization Program and the activities of the Hog Marketing Commission will be resoundingly endorsed in my Constituency in the forthcoming election.

Mr. Speaker, I pointed out to you carefully, and to this House carefully, and I point out particularly to the Leader of the Opposition, that it was the farmers who received this money, not the hogs.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, that worked out to about \$840 a farmer which points out that the large majority of the recipients, in my constituency at least, were small producers who otherwise might not have been able to stay in hog production.

Mr. Speaker, I also talked about the 94 per cent rise in equalization grants to the rural municipalities in my constituency. The \$50,000 in unconditional grants to the urban one and nearly \$400,000 in the Community Capital Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I talked a little bit about Operation Mainstreet and Operation Open Roads which have been taken advantage of by nearly every community in my constituency. It was with great pleasure that I was able to talk about the new highway No. 376 from Asquith to Maymont and also particularly to speak about the new bridge at Maymont. Mr. Speaker, I was also able briefly to outline the fulfilment of the commitment which I made in my constituency to the rebuilding of highway No. 14 between Perdue and Biggar. That road the Liberals for seven long years staked and staked, but never built.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other things that I was able to mention and I briefly will only summarize two or three. A new addition to the Diamond Lodge Nursing Home in Biggar and a new hospital under construction there. Additions and renovations to several schools in my constituency and the construction of several recreation and senior citizen centres.

I should like now, Mr. Speaker, to turn to the remarks on the Budget made yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was St. Patrick's Day and I suppose we should have expected a lot of blarney from the Leader of the Opposition. However, all we got was a lot of baloney. Mr. Speaker, he said that this Budget was an example of the NDP's incompetence in money matters. Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose that doesn't really

need any response considering the source but I thought perhaps I would respond by quoting from yesterday's edition of the Financial Times of Canada. Now, you all know, Mr. Speaker, the Financial Times is the voice, indeed some say the economic bible of the business community. And what did they have to say about the Budget which we brought forth on Friday? Mr. Speaker, they said and I quote:

The document appeared to be typical of the character of Mr. Blakeney's administration, attractive to the taxpayer and sensible enough to stand the testing appraisal of professional economists who are fed up with having to hand this Government the 'Good Housekeeping' accolade of the year.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, the Financial Times saw no signs of economic incompetence in this Budget and I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the incompetence exists nowhere else but in the warped visions of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition also dealt briefly with succession duties. He said, I believe, that they were stupid and unfair and were chasing business to Alberta. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the Leader of the Opposition's characterization of them as stupid and unfair. A succession duty is nothing other than a tax one pays when one inherits money. I find it difficult to argue that there shouldn't be a tax on wealth passed from one generation to another. Indeed, if you are going to tax the individual who is earning the minimum wage or close to it, it certainly seems reasonable to tax someone who inherits a million dollars. The Leader of the Opposition's statement that taxes have already been paid on this money begs the question. It is not money that is taxed but individual's income. And all money that one earns has often been taxed before. Mr. Speaker, the argument the Leader of the Opposition uses about driving business to Alberta is totally unsubstantiated.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note one experience where an individual told everyone he was leaving Saskatchewan because of succession duties. And where did he move, Mr. Speaker, why, to sunny British Columbia where they have succession duties and indeed a lower exemption than there is in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is in the area of taxation that the Leader of the Opposition's criticisms are full of the most serious inconsistencies. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition argues that this tax cut is too little, too late. Let's look at the record of the man who sits opposite and makes that criticism. The Leader of the Opposition delivered four budgets in this House - 1968, 1969, 1970 and 1971. Mr. Speaker, he increased the income tax about 20 per cent. He raised the sales tax 25 per cent. He raised the corporation tax 10 per cent. Mr. Speaker, in all he raised nearly 1500 taxes. Now, Mr. Speaker, one might ask how many taxes did he lower? One hundred? Check the record. No. Fifty? Check the record. No. Ten? Check the record. No.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, if you check the record you'll find that the Leader of the Opposition in his four years as Provincial Treasurer never lowered a single substantial direct tax in this Province, not one.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, that's the record of the Member opposite. That's the man who would like us to believe, were he to be the leader of this province, that there would indeed be lower taxes.

Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the record. Let's look at Income Tax. In 1964 when the Liberal Party took office a married person with two children earning \$4,000 a year would have paid \$36 in provincial income tax. That's 1964, when the Liberals came to office, \$4,000 a year, \$36 income tax. In 1971 when we became the Government after seven long years of Liberal Government and four even longer years with the Leader of the Opposition as the Provincial Treasurer, the same individual would have paid \$44 in income tax. Mr. Speaker, an increase of 22 per cent on an individual who had a \$4,000 income and who had gone through seven years of Liberal mismanagement and seven years of inflation and he found his provincial taxes up 22 per cent.

Now what's happened under the NDP Government? Today in 1975, Mr. Speaker, that individual will not pay one cent of provincial income tax, not one cent.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at someone making \$10,000 a year in 1964. This is before the Liberals were able to wave their magic wand and supposedly reduce taxes. His provincial income tax - this is before the Leader of the Opposition had any chance to make any adjustments - would have been \$333. In 1971, after four years of 'Steuartship' it would have gone up by 43 per cent to \$472.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Really socking it to them with the tax reduction, up 40 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, after four years of NDP Government it's been decreased by one-third, a substantial \$157.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, we can go on. We'll look at someone earning \$20,000 a year, 15 times what the Leader of the Opposition is worth.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — 1964, before the Leader of the Opposition was able to cast his shadow on this Province's Provincial Treasury, this individual, married with two children would have paid \$1,225

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in provincial income tax. By 1971, after seven years of Liberal Government it would have risen to \$1,736, a 42 per cent increase. Mr. Speaker, after four years of NDP Government we find a 21 per cent decrease, a decrease of \$364.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, on top of this the Leader of the Opposition, when he was Provincial Treasurer, introduced deterrent fees. He introduced deterrent fees on visits to the hospital and visits to the doctor. Mr. Speaker, this Government has removed those deterrent fees at a substantial saving to Saskatchewan taxpayers.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Steuart: — You got them on the drug plan.

Mr. Cowley: — I'll get to the drug plan, Mr. Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, under the Members opposite, the cost of hospitalization and medicare rose to \$72 a year. Mr. Speaker, this Government removed that charge entirely.

Mr. Speaker, the home owner, under the Government Opposite received \$70 a year. There was nothing for the farmer and nothing for the small businessman. Under this Government, that's risen to a Property Improvement Grant of \$200 per year for the householder, \$220 for the businessman and up to \$330 a year for the farmer, a record we can be proud of.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, when he increased the sales tax by 25 per cent in 1968 said that even on this widened base, you'll recall, that he put the tax on motel rooms and hotel rooms, the tax was on meals and telegrams and telephones and teletype and private wires, he said then that even with this widened base which he created and with the new rate, our sales tax would be still lower than Quebec's, Newfoundland's, New Brunswick's and the same as several other provinces. He said and I quote: "We're still among the lowest in Canada." Now, Mr. Speaker, since that time in many other provinces there have been substantial increases in the sales tax. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, we are now the lowest in Canada with the exception of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, that's been consistently maintained through four years of NDP Government and in this Budget we've removed the E&H tax on meals which was introduced by the Leader of the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to return briefly to the Leader of the Opposition's discussions on the record of this Government, its leadership and the province.

The Leader of the Opposition says that our revenue base has been expanding greatly and we should further reduce taxes. Mr. Speaker, I should like to quote to him from his 1968 Budget when he found it necessary after four years of Liberal Government to substantially raise taxes. He said and I quote:

Frankly even though our tax base has expanded greatly these last four years, it's been outpaced by the rising cost of many government services.

Mr. Speaker, after four years of NDP Government we've seen in Canada and in the world more inflation than the Leader of the Opposition has had to cope with. I grant you we have seen the expanded tax base but let's look at the result after four years of NDP Government and the result after four years of Liberal Government.

This year your NDP Government brought in a balanced Budget with substantial tax reductions.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — After four years of Liberal Government in similar conditions, there was a balanced budget with over 1,400 new or increased taxes to make it balance.

Mr. Speaker, that's the comparison the people of Saskatchewan want to make. That's the record, it's on the record of the Members opposite and the record of this Government that the people of Saskatchewan are going to have to make their decision on the promises that I am sure will be brought forward.

I was interested to note that the Leader of the Opposition is making some comments and some promises to the senior citizens. I was interested to note that in the seven years the Liberals opposite sat on the Treasury benches, there was no additional assistance to senior citizens in the form of a guaranteed income. None at all, Mr. Speaker, There's a promise now. Mr. Speaker, the last time the Liberals became the Government of this Province they made some promises too. I think we should look at the record and see how they delivered.

They promised 80,000 new jobs, Mr. Speaker. 80,000 new jobs. If you look at the record of that Liberal Government opposite you'll find that the seven years produced about 7,000 jobs. Now, maybe it was a hundred-year program but if it was, they failed to tell the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition now promises additional assistance to senior citizens. If one can judge him on his record, that's another hundred-year promise.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to one other area, that's the area of the Prescription Drug Program. The Leader of the Opposition is saying that under him there would be no prescription charge. Now, Mr. Speaker, let's look at the record. In 1964, during the election campaign, the Liberal Party promised a prescription drug program. That's right, it didn't cost much. Three and a half years later there was no drug program, but there was another election coming. There had to be another promise. So along came the 1967 election campaign and they couldn't really pull out the same old promise so they pulled out a new one. They didn't promise a program this time, they promised a plebiscite.

Three and a half years later when again it was time to face the electorate, if you check the record, there was no drug program, there was no plebiscite. Seven years and typical of the Members opposite, no action.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if we in Saskatchewan should have the misfortune of having a Liberal administration govern this province, I'm sure that the Leader of the Opposition is correct in saying that there'll be no dispensing fee.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure you there'll be no dispensing fee under the Liberal Government because there'll be no plebiscite, there'll be no drug plan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, an NDP Government will bring in a drug program. It will bring it in when it's been able to negotiate an adequate program for the people of this Province and will not be pressured into rushing by the Members opposite or by any vested groups in this Province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition yesterday dealt at some length with the resource sector. And I want to deal with it as well today in the time that I have and specifically deal with the potash industry in this Province.

The Leader of the Opposition said you can set tough rules, leave a fair rate of return, stay out of the potash industry, and, he said, have substantial private development.

Now, Mr. Speaker, all I can say is that we saw, in the seven years when the Members opposite were the Government, the examples of the tough rules which they set, the examples of the substantial private development and prosperity which they brought to this Province.

Mr. Speaker, you can look at the Liberal policies when they were in office and our policies today. In order to return to those policies, if that's what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to, it would cost us in excess of \$100 million a year in lost revenue to encourage those in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Leader of the Opposition is deluding himself. He says if you set tough rules and leave a fair rate of return, the industry will respond. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it is quite possible that the industry will not respond to what is determined to be a fair rate of return. They may see opportunities for higher rates of return elsewhere and may indeed, even though the rates of return are fair, move their capital and expertise to some other area. Then the alternative that I suspect the Leader of the Opposition would follow would be to abandon the idea of fair rates of return and go chasing after them.

I might also point out that I believe the industry is quite capable of bringing pressure to bear upon governments by withdrawing from expansions and new mines for short periods of time in order to try and force governments to renew or change tax policy.

Mr. Speaker, in a nut shell, that's one of the reasons I believe there is a role, and an important role, for the public sector in the potash industry. We need to be able to set tough rules so that we get adequate returns for our resources. We need to leave a fair rate of return to the industry and Mr. Speaker, we need to be prepared, and I say we are prepared, when companies indicate that they will not expand or operate under our rules, to do it ourselves.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition talks at great length about the fact that he says many of these companies have cut back on their planned expansions. We're not dealing with whether or not they were planned or announced, Mr. Speaker. I only want to quote to him some interesting things which I've been reading in the newspaper. Central Canada Potash in early January announced its decision not to proceed with an \$8 million expansion and at that time, at least in Saskatchewan, they blamed the investment climate in Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Speaker, it was with some interest that I read the Financial Times of January 20, 1975, when it was announced that Noranda Mines Limited, who I might point out to the Members, are the owners of the controlling interest in Central Canada Potash, were cutting back \$100 million in their capital spending this year. \$40 million of that cut back will be in Quebec, \$20 million in Ontario, previously mentioned \$8 million in Saskatchewan and some \$10 million in British Columbia and \$21 million outside of Canada. The reason given by the president of the company was that they would have to borrow heavily in money markets. Market analysts quoted in the article suggested that the low cost of metals, copper and zinc specifically, affected the decision as well.

Mr. Speaker, nowhere in the Financial Times article were the taxation policies of Saskatchewan mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I think one needs to look at all of the explanations to get at the real truth. A \$40 million cut back in Liberal Quebec, a \$20 million cut back in Tory Ontario, a \$21 million cut back outside of Canada and an \$8 million cut back in NDP Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, was the reason the taxation policies of the Saskatchewan Government?

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition yesterday made a few comments about the new Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and he was commenting about the Board of Directors. Mr. Speaker, I want to say first of all that I am pleased that we have a Board of Directors which is composed of people who live in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cowley: — Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the expertise in the potash mining industry that's in the Corporation will come from the staff which has been hired, who I believe are very competent people, augmented by independent outside expertise.

They all have extensive experience in Saskatchewan potash mines as well as other facets of the mining industry. And I am confident that these individuals and the people we have in

SaskOil are competent people who can do the job for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm equally confident the Board of Directors of these Crown corporations can make competent judgements in the best interest of the people of Saskatchewan based on this expert advice.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close by saying that I'm extremely confident that in my constituency and indeed in this province that when the election comes the people of Saskatchewan will judge our Program in light of our record and I am confident that this will result in the overwhelming re-election of an NDP Government under the leadership, the very able leadership, of Allan Blakeney.

Hon. D.W. Cody (Minister of Co-operation): — Mr. Speaker, last Friday marked a very important day in the history of Saskatchewan and in the history of the New Democratic Party. That Budget, Mr. Speaker, delivered by my seatmate, the Minister of Finance, will, I predict, go on record as one of the most dynamic and positive budgets ever brought before the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget fulfils the commitment we made to the people of Saskatchewan, prior to the election, when we presented what is now called the famous New Deal for People. I commend this Government for its foresight in bringing forward policies and programs which recognize our strength and at the same time successfully deal with weaknesses that we have encountered.

Mr. Speaker, during the Budget Speech last Friday I started wondering about the position of the Liberal Opposition and the Liberal Party and how they would conduct themselves during this debate. I knew that if they were to be honest with themselves and honest with the people of Saskatchewan, they would have to recognize and give credit for the many positive initiatives found in this document. I realized at the same time, however, that there would be some areas of disagreement, such as I knew that they weren't interested in tax cuts for 70,000 people. I knew that they didn't believe it and weren't interested in the increased property improvement grants. I knew, Mr. Speaker, that they were not interested in our senior citizens and giving them an additional increase.

Mr. Speaker, I did, however, feel confident that we would learn what they were going to do and what they would have done, what alternatives they had for the people of Saskatchewan. I thought they would offer a different approach; this, Mr. Speaker, was last Friday. The weekend passed and no doubt the Leader of the Opposition spent all week, and all weekend huddling with his political friends and ghost writers to prepare a response to this great Budget.

Yesterday arrived and the Leader of the Opposition went on the air with one of the weakest and most pitiful speeches I think I have ever heard in this House. For over an hour, Mr. speaker, we heard the same old tired arguments and the same old emotional defence of big business, the same condemnation of any and all government programs and the same distortions and untruths. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition was so busy defending his blind allegiance to free enterprise, he

didn't even have time to get around to commenting about the Budget.

All in all, Mr. Speaker, I am sure the people of Saskatchewan expected more, they expected more from a man who pretends to be a friend of the people.

Mr. Speaker, before detailing my thoughts on this Budget, I feel it is necessary to set the record straight on a number of points, which were twisted yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition. He says there is no provision for and the Government does not intend to allow Land Bank lessees the opportunity to purchase after five years. Not true, Mr. Speaker, that is simply not true. He says the Government exercised a power grab in taking over the Matador Co-op Farm. Not true, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition knows full well, and if he doesn't, the public of Saskatchewan do, that it was because of the expressed wish of the members of the Co-operative that the members wanted the Land Bank to purchase that production unit.

The Leader of the Opposition then went on to claim that the Matador Co-op farm was now the first state-owned farm, because the members have entered into a lease arrangement with the Government. Not true, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that more farmers and ranchers in the southwest part of this province will be pleased to hear that the Leader of the Opposition feels that they are nothing more than tenants on a state farm, because they too lease from the Government for grazing purposes. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition had thought they were state farms he would have sold them during the seven years they were in power. What did he do? He did nothing about selling that land which those farmers in the southwest part of this province are leasing today.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition didn't talk about the Budget and I can't blame him. I wouldn't talk about the Budget either if I had a record like he had when he was the Minister of Finance. Yes, Mr. Speaker, this is a good Budget, it is a budget of fulfilment, at a time when the nation is engulfed with recession and inflation, Saskatchewan continues to stand out as one of the few bright spots.

Total personal income is up by 19 per cent over last year; retail trade is up by over 20 per cent; commodity production is up over 18 per cent; manufacturing is up over 20 per cent; total investment is up over 22 per cent and, Mr. Speaker, our unemployment rate is the lowest in Canada. Our population has stabilized and in fact increased and more people are working in Saskatchewan today than at any other time previously in the history of this province.

Yet the Liberals say the province is in a mess. They say we haven't done enough. They say we are responsible for imposing unparalleled taxation. Mr. Speaker, the Liberals are the very last people who should have the audacity to talk about taxation. We still shudder as my colleague the Hon. Member for Biggar just mentioned, about Black Friday, 1968, when the Liberals unveiled one of the most oppressive taxation schemes ever inflicted on the people of this province. Mr. Speaker, they imposed a sickness tax, and a deterrent fee was imposed on people lying in hospitals, sick and dying with cancer, that's

what they did, \$7.4 million. Education and hospitalization tax cost \$12.3 million; gasoline tax \$7.9 million; motor tax licence \$2.3 million; tobacco tax \$1.8 million. The list goes on and on. In fact when the Liberals were done destroying this province they had imposed over 1,446 taxes in this province.

No, Mr. Speaker, the Liberals should not be taken too seriously, I don't think the public will take them that way. They shouldn't be taken seriously when they talk about taxes and their record is by far the most regressive and oppressive ever perpetrated on the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate this Government for again increasing the Property Improvement Grant. I can assure you we have come a long way since the \$50 grant only to homeowners under the Liberals. This year's increase to homeowners, businessmen and farmers will result in a 22 mill reduction, a 22 mill reduction in property tax for educational purposes. Mr. Speaker, the Property Improvement Grant will put back into the hands of taxpayers over \$40 million. How does this compare with the Liberals?

In 1971, under a Liberal Government, they put back \$12 million, a paltry \$12 under Liberals, a gigantic \$40 million under New Democrats. Mr. Speaker, this new increase will give homeowners \$200, businessmen \$220 and farmers \$330.

Mr. Speaker, the decision to cut provincial income taxes will remove over 70,000 taxpayers from the provincial income tax rolls, another 240,000 taxpayers will have tax reductions of \$100. This \$100 cut is equivalent to six point reduction in our 40 per cent provincial tax rate to an average level of 34 per cent based on the federal tax. I can assure you that that kind of reduction and that kind of tax will be very much welcomed by the citizens in Lumsden and citizens in Fort Qu'Appelle and my people whom I live with in Glen Cairn. Mr. Speaker, this progressive tax cut will return to the people over \$27 million this year. Yes, Mr. Speaker, this Budget will receive widespread enthusiastic support from the people of this province.

The Leader of the Opposition says our taxation and assistance programs do nothing to help the average family. Well, let us take the example of a family with two children living in my area of Glen Cairn and the father earns \$10,000 a year. Our announced income tax cuts, coupled with income increased by the property improvement grant program, the elimination of the medical care and hospitalization premiums, unconditional municipal assistance provided through equalization grants to the municipalities, means the family will save \$424. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, \$424 to people in my area is very welcome.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — It is particularly welcome when you look at the record in 1971 under a Liberal Government when there was no saving at all. The difference is then \$424 today and nothing for the people under a Liberal Government.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have come a long way since the old days of deterrent fees and high taxation.

I want to turn for a moment to agriculture. Again we have built on a record of marked achievement in contrast to the do-nothing approach instituted by the former government when they sat on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the announcement yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition that his party will abolish the Land Bank program if elected certainly reflects the short sightedness and downright ignorance in my view on the part of the Members opposite. I am sure that the twelve to thirteen hundred young farmers will be pleased to hear that the Liberals would cancel their agreements. I am sure those farmers who are enjoying the benefits of a long-term lease through the Land Bank will be pleased to learn that a Liberal government will destroy those leases and institute a straight purchase program.

Mr. Speaker, the people who couldn't afford to purchase land, that land would be taken out of their hands, put out of their homes and those families would be dealt with just like Liberals have always dealt with people, in a callous disregard for families.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — No, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe the Leader of the Opposition when he talks such nonsense, I simply can't believe it.

However, Mr. Speaker, in 1946 those same Liberals opposed auto insurance. In 1962 the Leader of the Opposition went up and down this province opposing medicare and in 1971 when we came to power, you would have thought that they had invented the programs. I am confident that the same change of heart will take place with respect to the Land Bank program. It takes them a while as the Member for Maple Creek said and he is absolutely correct.

I also commend this Government, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister of Agriculture for continuing to place a high priority on the FarmStart program. Over 2,000 farmers have been assisted and another 1,000 will be assisted this year. There are many other initiatives as well, which show leadership and dedication in bringing forward policies and programs which are assisting in the dynamic and positive way to stabilize and prove our family farms.

Mr. Speaker, this Budget has in it \$11.2 million to assist in meeting the housing needs of Saskatchewan people. Since the inception of the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, positive strides have been made in improving the housing situation in this province. The Senior Citizens' Home Repair program has been a fantastic success, over 14,000 grants have been issued in the first two years. We expect an additional 11,000 applications this year and are providing over \$4.6 million for that purpose. This Budget also contains \$3 million for the House Building Assistance Grant program. We anticipate a 50 per cent increase in grants this year over last year. The Neighbourhood Improvement Grant Program started last year and will be expanded and additional funds are being appropriated. We will also continue our present land assembly development program. This foresight will enable Saskatchewan people to purchase lots at reasonable prices and they will not be taken to the cleaners by certain

developers just to make an extra dollar from people who can't afford it.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition didn't even mention housing. I wonder why? Let me put the facts before you. You will realize why the Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal Party don't talk about housing in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, let me give you the statistics for the record. In 1971, 1970 I should say, housing starts were at 1,743 under a Liberal Government, in 1971 with six months as a New Democratic Government, we increased this to 3,560 starts. In 1972 under the NDP it went to 4,845; in 1973 we were just getting the ball rolling and the NDP put in this province 6,386 starts. This year, the year ending 1974 was a record year of performance in Saskatchewan for housing starts with 7,684 starts in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — Mr. Speaker, let me tell you that we were the only province in Canada, Saskatchewan was the only province in Canada which had an increase in housing starts over last year; that is simply due to the foresight and good planning and good management by this Government.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal record is dismal in housing, they know it and they don't want to talk about it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — Mr. Speaker, I think our future has never been brighter, as we head into the second half of this decade. I am confident that the people of Saskatchewan will never again, let me emphasize, never allow the reins of government to be turned over to the Liberal Party, a party, Mr. Speaker, which constantly shows its ineptitude and complete indifference towards the needs and desires of this province and its people.

Our commitment reflects the economic and social realities of Saskatchewan. Somehow the Liberals like to ridicule our efforts to stabilize and revitalize the rural sector of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the Liberals have no faith in the people of this province, they have no faith in Saskatchewan people. I can assure you, New Democrats do. We have the utmost of faith in the people of this province. We believe that the people of this province will respond positively by way of a positive vote in the next provincial election. They will further reduce the ranks of the opposition by New Democrats coming to this House which can be trusted, Mr. Speaker, trusted to carry out its commitments as we have done in the last three and one half years.

Mr. Speaker, it is more than a pleasure for me to stand here, be proud and support this great Budget.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. L. Larson (Pelly): — I am indeed very proud to take part in this historic \$1 billion plus Budget Debate. The superb manner in which the Minister delivered his presentation merits the heartiest and most sincere congratulations. During the last four years this

House has become accustomed to an outstanding performance by the Minister in charge of Finance. The performance of the present Minister of Finance (Mr. Robbins) in this Budget has been no exception. I am very proud to be associated with him. This Budget is historical, not only for its size, but for the generally sobering approach it and the Government is taking to the dangerously inflated economic conditions that prevail throughout the entire world today. To implement this sobering and responsible attitude requires foresight, courage and a strong and capable Minister backed by an equally strong and capable government.

Saskatchewan is very fortunate to have such a Minister and such a Government. In this, an election year, it would have been very tempting, and I am sure very politically attractive to have ignored all the signals of inflation and its consequences and embarked on a program for irresponsible spending and tax cuts.

What are some of the consequences of the raging inflation that is plaguing Saskatchewan people, and indeed, all Canadians? I submit, Mr. Speaker, that they are far reaching and devastating. Senior citizens see their savings eroded to a point with those who retired with some assurance of financial security now find themselves insecure and hard pressed to maintain any standard of living. Workers find their wages eaten up by a continued rising cost of living and are equally hard pressed. The net result of this is a rash of strikes that has in some cases affected the whole nation. Farmers find the price of livestock at an intolerably low level and are being forced to the brink of bankruptcy. The cost of farm machinery is at an all-time high and farmers are not able to purchase because of the insecurity of markets and income. Fertilizer costs are almost prohibitive and will result in decreased use, thereby reducing production at a time when the whole world faces almost inevitable famine. Education costs have risen to a staggering level, yet, we cannot allow costs to deter continuing expansion and improved levels of learning. Health costs are at an all time high and rising. Housing and building material makes it impossible for middle and low-income people to undertake any building. Road construction costs are almost prohibitive. The list could go on and on.

I want, Mr. Speaker, to spend a few moments dealing with the fraudulent claims and the reckless innuendoes levelled against the Saskatchewan Land Bank by the Leader of the Opposition and some Members opposite. By their desperate efforts to gain some political favour with Saskatchewan people before an election, they are resorting to the same old time-worn and deplorable tactics that they have employed against the CCF and now the New Democrats since this movement was founded.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — Their tactics are, of course, one of repeating falsehoods, half-truths, and misinformation, often enough and loud enough that someone will finally believe you. In 1944 the theme was “Don’t elect them, they will burn your churches, they will burn your schools, they will take away your homes, take away your stores and everything you own.” The song went on and on. Today, in 1975, 31 years later, Mr. Speaker, out of which we have had 24 years of either CCF or New Democratic Government in the province, they are still at it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — But today it is the Land Bank. The Liberal Party opposed with equal vigour and equal vehemence medicare, hospitalization, Saskatchewan Government Insurance, grid roads, farm access roads, Saskatchewan Timber Board, Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation and they practically gave away the northern airline when they finally got into power. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they have opposed every piece of progressive legislation that has come before this House during the 24 years they sat in opposition. And the tactics they have employed have been the same as they were in 1944. Every program and every move this Government and its predecessors have made has been opposed on the scare theme and the scare tactics. What are, Mr. Speaker, some of the facts regarding the Land Bank and the sale of farm land?

I want to put on the record, Mr. Speaker, some of the very important factors. First, the Land Bank is operated by a Commission that takes its orders and its regulations from this Legislature and the Department of Agriculture. Second, the Land Bank does not advertise or solicit the purchase of land. Anyone who sells to the Land Bank does so of his own free will.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — Third, the Land Bank attempts to give young farmers with little or small capital an opportunity to acquire land without the heavy burden of land payments until such time as they are in position to buy the land. Fourth, the Land Bank does not force farmers to buy the land unless they so desire after five years of leasing. Fifth, the Land Bank is not a land brokerage firm set up for the sole purpose of exploiting the transfer and sale of farm land in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — Sixth, the sole purpose of the Land Bank is to facilitate the transfer of land from one generation to the next without the burden of perpetual mortgages and its ensuing insecurities.

These facts and these objectives, of course; the Liberal Party oppose with all their vigour and all their power. They are opposed to any form of orderly change. They are opposed to orderly marketing of grain as is displayed by the recent altering of feed grains and other commodities to gambling on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. They are opposed to any and all forms of orderly control by the people of the province of their resources as they amply displayed while they were in office. And now, Mr. Speaker, they oppose the orderly transfer of farm land to those who need it and are not prepared to put themselves and their families into bondage for the purpose of purchasing farmland.

The freedom, Mr. Speaker, of this kind of bondage is still open to anyone who wishes to use it. Any one who wishes can buy all the land he wants and at whatever price he wishes to pay. That has not changed one bit. To the charge by the Opposition that not one acre of land has been sold, I want to say

this, the first leases were issued January 1, 1973, the Act that the Liberals seem to know so much about states clearly, in Section 18 as follows:

Where commission land has been leased for at least five years to a lessee who is domiciled in Saskatchewan, the Commission may, upon application, sell the land to the lessee.

Thus, it is clear that no land can be applied for until 1978, even the Liberals ought to be able to figure that far. It is equally clear the lessee has a free choice to continue with his long-term lease or to purchase the land. It is equally clear that he can apply to purchase the land any time during the lifetime of his lease. He is not forced to buy as the Liberals want, nor is he forced to continue to lease if he desires to buy. Compare this, Mr. Speaker, to the hollow and the misleading promises of the Liberal Party in 1964, and I quote from the Liberal election brochure of that time:

A new Liberal Government will immediately revise the present legislation on farm credit to give a square deal to young people to start farming and to small farmers wishing to enlarge and improve their operations. It will make loans to these people at low interest rates covering 80 per cent of farm value with 50 years to repay.

Let me suggest that the Saskatchewan voters had better consider rather carefully the choice you are going to make. The Liberal Government had seven years from 1964 to 1971 to deliver on that promise. I remind you that during that time not one dollar was loaned through the Government programs to purchase a single acre of land. Compare that hopeless record against the present NDP Government. This is what the Land Bank has done in three short years; purchased some 390,000 acres from some 1,096 people who voluntarily and of their own free will offered land to the Land Bank. This land is presently leased to 1,055 lessees out of which 178, 17 per cent of them, never owned their own land before. This together with FarmStart has meant that a substantial number of farmers who are all young have a chance to become permanent farmers. They have long-term leases, they have transfer options to sons or relatives and they are not burdened with 30 or more years of mortgage.

I invite you to compare this to the dismal and disgraceful record of the Opposition when they were the Government.

Let's compare figures, compare numbers and above all let's compare results and achievements. When we have done this then let's debate which program is most successful and acceptable.

I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, that the five-year purchase option in the leases is not at this time in question or an issue. I submit that this will only be in question when the five years have elapsed and if the Commission refuses to sell leased land upon application. If, at the end of the five-year lease term, the Commission refuses to sell land to the lessee then we have courts, we have judges, we have lawyers to decide whether or not an infraction of the Act or the lease has been committed. If that happens, then I invite the Member for Regina Lakeview (Mr. Malone) who seems to know so much about the Act, who is, of course, not in his seat at this time. I invite the Member for

Lumsden (Mr. Lane) who is probably out campaigning and also not in his seat to plead the case.

To make sure that there is no political bias, Mr. Speaker, involved I suggest that the case be heard before the former Member for Albert Park (Mr. MacLeod) who now sits on the Bench and who I am sure would not exercise any political bias, I suggest that the Member for Cannington (Mr. Weatherald) and Moosomin (Mr. Gardner) be called as material witnesses. To be sure that a proper debate takes place you ought to include the Leader of the Opposition. To add some flamboyancy, colour and some gusto to the hearings, I suggest that the Member for Milestone (Mr. MacDonald) be called. It will be a little difficult to know what to do with the Members for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) and Morse (Mr. Wiebe) as the one will be hard to control while the other won't have too much to contribute. In this matter it should be possible to lay to rest once and for all this idiotic charge of the Opposition that the Land Bank does not intend to sell land.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — So, Mr. Speaker, the only people who are concerned about the Land Bank are the Liberal Party and Members in the Opposition. Remember, all who sold to the Land Bank did so of their own free will. All those who have leased from the Land Bank were glad to get the land. Remember also that they had all the chance in the world to buy all or as much of the Land Bank land as was offered for sale and they could afford to buy and pay for.

Let's have a look at what some of the farmers in the province and outside have to say about the Land Bank. An article from the Yorkton Enterprise headed, "Provincial Land Bank Finds Favor With Parkland Farmers," reads as follows:

From the result of the survey it is quite apparent that it is favoured as a sensible means of land transfer from one generation to the next.

Another clipping dated February 15th, in the Leader-Post states: "Dakota Farmers Show Interest in Land Bank". Another clipping dated December 5th, 1975 is headed, "Minnesota Eying Land Program". It is interesting to note that Mr. Willis Eken, Vice-chairman of the Minnesota Agriculture Committee stated:

We want to get the land transfer program to young farmers who need help rather than those who can afford to get started on their own. Our principal effort is to gear the program to transfer ownership from generation to generation and not to become a land broker.

It is very obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the only people concerned are the Liberal Party and Members opposite. Time does not permit me to go into complete details of what their idiotic and their unfounded charges mean. I want to say clearly and definitely to the farmers of Saskatchewan, be very careful of what you are doing, don't wreck one of the best programs that Saskatchewan has ever had.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Larson: — I will leave it to my colleagues to cover other very important points in this Budget.

Very obviously, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. M. Kwasnica (Cut Knife): — Mr. Speaker, first of all I must say I am very pleased with the Budget brought in by the Hon. Wes Robbins on Friday last. This is a well-planned Budget that does everything possible to stay within the limitations of the tax revenues of our province. It is not a wild, free-spending, irresponsible Budget as was repeatedly the case prior to an election when the Liberals were in power.

I wish to deal with four major areas of the Budget in my speech today. Farming, the oil industry, highways and bridges and senior citizens. These four areas are of major concern to me and my constituents in Cut Knife-Lloydminster.

Regarding agriculture, Mr. Speaker, the farmers in my constituency are extremely satisfied with the programs offered by the Hon. John Messer and his vibrant Department of Agriculture. Everywhere I go in my constituency, farmers tell me over and over again how happy they are with FarmStart, farm fuel rebates, property improvement grants, our regional veterinary clinic program, crop insurance program, decentralization of the department, Hog Marketing Commission and the Hog Stabilization Program.

FarmStart is by far the most popular agricultural program in our area. At last count 45 young farmers had taken advantage of this program in my constituency to buy calves and feeders and weanlings, sheep and other livestock. They received grants and loans totalling \$1 million in my constituency alone to build corrals, barns and to buy machinery related to their livestock operation. The terms of FarmStart are extremely reasonable and fair. Loans of up to \$60,000 are offered at six per cent interest with 15 years to repay. The average age of these farmers is 28 - and this says something in itself, Mr. Speaker.

Now we have just heard a good explanation of the Land Bank program which is extremely popular in the south-central part of our province and has played a lesser part in our constituency. In Cut Knife-Lloydminster to date there have been 22 enquiries to the Land Bank which resulted in nine transactions. Of these nine, five were direct father to son or daughter transfers. How wonderful it is today, Mr. Speaker, for a retiring farmer to receive the going price in cash for his farm operation and retire in dignity. How wonderful, Mr. Speaker, for the son to be able to receive a guaranteed lifetime lease to his father's farm for a rental of six per cent. How wonderful for the son to be given five years to get on his feet financially and then take the option to buy or to continue to rent for as long as he chooses. This is a far cry from the previous straightjacket farmers were in. Fathers borrowed from lending institutions at unfair interest rates and spent all their life in debt to them. Then when the son wanted to take over he had to go to that same lending institution, pay exorbitant interest rates and then he was in debt for the rest of his life.

Mr. Speaker, this was fine for the banks and the lending institutions, but it was a sad situation for our farmers.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — Thanks to the NDP, our farmers have the option of the Land Bank to help them. Mr. Speaker, I want to sound a warning to those in Liberal or Conservative ranks who choose to discredit this. The Members opposite have spent millions already in the news media of this province trying to scare our people. They are saying such things as - the farmer does not have the option to buy after five years, and the NDP has not sold one acre and doesn't intend to.

Let's examine the facts so that we can get the truth. Our Land Bank policy is stated clearly and I want to quote right from the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission's pamphlet, printed for 1975, Section 4 under Leases:

4. Opportunity to Purchase.

The holder of a long-term lease may apply after five years to purchase the land from the Land Bank Commission. The price will be based on market value at the time the opportunity is exercised, but not less than the market value at the commencement of the lease. Once an agreement is reached, the applicant will be given a period not exceeding six months in which to pay in full.

And that quote is right from Land Bank Policy.

Mr. Speaker, how plain and simple and reassuring the truth is. How distorted, insinuating and underhanded the Liberal lie is.

The second statement that "The NDP has not sold one single acre and doesn't intend to do so", must be challenged also. The Land Bank policy with option to buy after five years has been proven without a doubt. The first Land Bank leases became effective January 1, 1973. This is 1975, in case the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart) doesn't realize it. The program has been operating for two years only, so how can any of the land be sold yet? The first sales cannot be made until January 1, 1978. So, of course, no land has been sold yet. Yes, Mr. Speaker, how simple the truth is. How insidious and deliberate the distortion by the Liberal opposition.

An Hon. Member: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — Another program which is really appreciated in the Cut Knife-Lloydminster area is the Hog Stabilization program which guaranteed hog producers a basic price of \$57 a hundred weight at its peak. This program and the orderly marketing system set up by the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Commission has been a resounding success. It is so popular that it has put the Alberta Hog Marketing Board to shame. Many Alberta farmers are trying to slip across the border to get under the Saskatchewan plan. Alberta hog producers are all just about out of business while Saskatchewan hog producers are all continuing to thrive. As a matter of fact, I have a commitment from a farm family who had always been Liberal, that they will be voting NDP this time to show their appreciation for the program and the Party that made it possible.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — And that's support that the Liberals or the Conservatives will never regain.

Before I leave the topic of farming, Mr. Speaker, I want to comment briefly on another program of tremendous value to our livestock industry, the program being none other than the Regional Veterinary Clinic Assistance program. On Friday, February 21, the 22nd veterinary clinic was opened in Saskatchewan at Neilburg, with a \$25,000 grant to aid in its construction. A further annual grant of over \$2,200 will be paid to help defray the travelling costs of the veterinarian. With the help of many dedicated local people, the clinic is now complete and operative. It is sincerely welcomed by all farmers in the area who are famous for Finsheep, Charolais, Maine-Anjou, Herefords and other kinds of livestock.

Mr. Speaker, it is heartening to know after spending five solid weeks travelling to every corner of my constituency before coming to this Legislative Session that the farm vote will go solidly NDP again this time, and they will register their thanks forcefully and enthusiastically on election day.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — The second major area I want to talk about is oil. The oil industry in Lloydminster, Lone Rock, Marshall, Lashburn and Maidstone areas has added much to our economy, as indeed the oil industry has done across the whole province. In general, the oil industry has done extremely well over the years. We are aware that the Saskatchewan oil industry has reached a tremendously high return from 1967 onward, when they had most of their wells in place. Total oil profits in 1973 alone reached \$134 million. But the policy of the multinational oil companies ever since 1967 was to spend less and less on exploration and drilling in Saskatchewan and to take their profits out of our province and reinvest them elsewhere. The smaller independent companies started moving in on a lesser scale to fill the gap. When world oil prices began to rise astronomically because of the energy crisis scare it became obvious that fantastically huge windfall profits would be accruing to the oil companies on top of the already handsome profit margin. This is when our Government brought in Bill 42 which limited the profits to the oil companies to approximately where it was prior to the huge windfall increases. Naturally the oil companies were upset. Huge windfall profits were now being taken into the Provincial Treasury for the benefit of Saskatchewan people instead of the coffers of the directors of oil companies to be taken out of Saskatchewan and invested elsewhere for handsome profit.

It is because of this oil policy that our NDP Government is able to provide all the new services such as denticare for the children, medicare premiums abolished, hearing aids, housing projects and many more for our citizens. And the Opposition says it would repeal Bill 42, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — I want to ask Members opposite - where would you raise the \$140 million revenue coming in from the oil industry

if you repealed Bill 42? We all know the answer, Mr. Speaker. From you, from me; every taxpayer in the province would have to make it up the first year the Liberals ever took office. That would mean \$155 increased taxes a year for every man, woman and child in our province. The Conservatives would do the same, Mr. Speaker.

I said earlier that the oil companies were a bit upset because they did not get the huge windfall profits they expected on top of an already handsome profit. Some of the management became vicious. They threatened to pull out; some temporarily closed some wells near main highways and roads, but in the backwoods the wells pumped steadily.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — But what I am more concerned about is that they threaten their workers with loss of their jobs and blame it all on the NDP Government. This political blackmail will backfire in the final analysis.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kwasnica: — Mr. Speaker, since Bill 42 was enacted we have had one other development. Ottawa has now disallowed companies the right to use royalties paid to provinces as income tax deductions. This has put an extra squeeze on the oil company profits. The Ottawa move is unfair, unconstitutional and unprecedented. But what can you expect from an arrogant Liberal Government fresh from an election victory in July of last year.

Our Provincial Government has brought in two different programs to help the oil companies. One allows greater tax exemptions from the provincial share of income tax. The other is a drilling and exploration incentive program worth at least \$27 million a year to the industry. This policy is being well received. One company in Lloydminster which owns some 250 wells has worked out the benefits of these incentives and has now 15 new wells on the drawing board for this coming year, 1975. And I am sure that other companies will be following with major drilling and exploration plans in 1975 and the years ahead.

Two years ago, Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of being MLA of a constituency that had every highway mile paved or oiled. Today, Mr. Speaker, that picture is changed drastically with the enlarged riding since the new electoral boundaries were brought in. Also, we have taken in a major grid road into the highway system as part of the north-south highway system between the Maidstone ferry and the town of Wilbert. A great deal of work has been done on this stretch and more needs doing. I am pleased that \$800,000 is earmarked in this Budget to begin construction on the Maidstone Bridge.

I am also pleased that the contract will be let for rebuilding of the first eight miles of No. 3 between No. 17 and the Deer Creek Bridge. If the construction firm is capable, it will continue to build the whole 17-mile stretch this year.

I want to thank the Hon. Minister, Mr. Kramer, Minister of Highways for looking after the needs of my constituency as he does all constituencies. In the last four years about 75 miles

of highway have been oiled and some 23 miles of the Yellowhead route between Lashburn and Paynton have been recapped with blacktop. Thank you also for resurfacing eight miles of Highway 40 near Marsden.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the senior citizens of our province have enjoyed the prosperity along with all the rest of us. Since the NDP took office we have begun a subsidy payment to all those receiving level III care. The amount is now \$210 monthly and about to be increased. I had specifically written to the previous Liberal Minister in charge back in 1969 and I got a flat nothing. We have doubled the number of level IV beds to approximately 1,100 in the province and I am particularly pleased with the announcement that 57 level IV care beds will be built at North Battleford to serve the northwest region of the province.

Other programs brought in for our senior citizens are: free angling licences, senior citizens' home repair grants, no more deterrent fees, no more medicare premiums, a hearing aid plan, half-fare on weekdays on STC buses, meals-on-wheels, senior citizens' housing and low rental units being built all over the province, nursing care services, senior citizens' advisory committees. And does this Budget stop here, Mr. Speaker? No! This Budget goes further and assists our senior citizens by paying a provincial supplement of \$20 per month for singles and \$36 a month for couples to those receiving the Federal supplement.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of our record. As soon as negotiations are complete, we will have a prescription drug plan for all, which will greatly reduce the cost of drugs.

Let me sum up by highlighting some of the proposals in this 1975 Budget:

1. Twenty-six million dollars more to school boards for operating costs;
2. One hundred dollars income tax rebate to everyone - taking some 70,000 off the provincial income tax roll. This is a tax reduction of \$27 million;
3. Property improvement grant increased again
 - \$200 for urban house owners - up \$40
 - \$330 for farmers - up \$30
 - \$220 for businesses - up \$20
 This is a tax reduction of some \$40 million.
4. Tax on meals removed completely - effective April 1; tax on books and reading material removed;
5. Succession duties removed from estates of less than \$500,000;
6. Seven cents a gallon rebate on farm fuel;

and, Mr. Speaker, many, many others.

Mr. Speaker, need I say more? This Budget speaks for itself. I will support it with enthusiasm and a new hope for the future.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. E.C. Malone (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, before starting my remarks about the Budget, I should like to take this opportunity to make a few remarks about the remarks of the Minister of Mineral Resources

(Mr. Cowley) who took his seat just a little while ago.

I thought it was significant that in the Minister's speech it wasn't so much what he said as what he didn't say. I think it should be pointed out, Mr. Speaker, that this is the Minister who is in charge of SaskOil, this is the Minister who is in charge of oil development in the province, this is the Minister who is in charge of potash development in the province. He did not allude on one occasion to SaskOil to tell us anything about that company. He did not say one thing about the oil development of this province over the past year and for the future of 1975. His only reference to the potash companies was to remark that in effect the Government couldn't trust the companies because they had on occasion tried to pressure the Government into changing the tax laws. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister could have perhaps used his time to better advantage and told us about some of the things the Government has for plans for oil and potash in the year ahead, if they have any.

Mr. Speaker, I regret that I am unable to support the Budget that was read to this House Friday last by the Minister of Finance, Mr. Robbins. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the Budget is completely inadequate in its provisions, or perhaps more properly the lack thereof, for senior citizens. It is completely silent and offers no expenditures whatsoever for solutions that will attempt to bring an end to strikes and lockouts in the Province of Saskatchewan, and most important of all completely ignores the great opportunity for economic improvement that has been offered the citizens of Saskatchewan by the rest of the world.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — Mr. Speaker, in my opinion a first priority of any Government must be to help themselves. I believe that many thousands of our senior citizens find themselves in this category, notwithstanding the fact that they attempted to provide for their years of retirement either through individual savings or through various pension plans. No matter how thrifty they were, no matter how good a pension they became entitled to, practically all of their savings and pension plans have been wiped out because of inflation and the high cost of living. The inflation that we are experiencing today is not the fault of the senior citizen, but he is certainly its number one victim. If anything, Mr. Speaker, the inflation of today has been caused by ourselves and accordingly we have a moral obligation to assist those who are unable to assist themselves.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, the best way to help our senior citizens is by putting money in their pockets, not by establishing senior citizens' councils, not by establishing government departments, for these do not put any buying power or cash in the pockets of the people whom they are supposed to serve. What good, Mr. Speaker, is a senior citizens' council or government department that will likely say to senior citizens that most of all their problems could be cured if they had more money. As well, Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have sufficient government departments to handle the problem and any additional government agencies or departments simply create more bureaucracy,

more red tape and more jobs to be filled by NDP supporters. It is, of course, true, Mr. Speaker, that the senior citizens' commission suggested such an agency. But they also requested more, they requested a guarantee of \$350 per month for single senior citizens and \$500 per month for married senior citizens. The Government, Mr. Speaker, has simply not responded to this request and the provision in the Budget for a monthly payment of either \$14 or \$20 depending on how the Budget is interpreted is almost an insult when one considers the other things the Government is spending millions of dollars upon. If the Budget provision for the monthly payment is not changed, it will mean, of course, that the only payment to a senior citizen who is single will be \$14 because the Federal Government will be increasing its pension and supplement to the sum of \$210 on the first of April of this year. I understand, however, that the Budget will be amended or the necessary regulations will be passed to permit a maximum payment of \$20 per month to single senior citizens when the Plan is finally implemented.

It is interesting to note, however, Mr. Speaker, that in the Estimates that were delivered with the Budget, only the sum of \$3.2 million has been provided for this Plan. We must ask ourselves, Mr. Speaker, as to when this Plan will be implemented and I trust the Minister of Social Services will give us some indication of this when he enters this debate.

The Minister of Finance has said in the past that the Government simply cannot afford to pay significant amounts to senior citizens. I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that he is right in this regard as the priority of this Government has been to spend millions, I believe needlessly, in order to become involved in the oil industry, the potash industry and the meat packing industry and the steel industry and many other spheres of private enterprise, rather than to spend some of these monies on the people who built this province and made it what it is today.

It is clear, Mr. Speaker, the priority of the NDP is power, not people. If the NDP Government was sincere in its wishes to help our pensioners they could very well have done so by making provisions for them in the 1974 Budget when they realized that the province was going to be receiving a record income from the sale of petroleum products, potash and just from the general tax base because of the buoyant economy. They did not and they now feel that \$20 per month is sufficient to allow pensioners to live in dignity and to the standard they became used to while they were receiving an income during their income earning years. I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the senior citizens of this province will regard this miserable payment to them for what it really is, a desperate attempt at an election bribe.

Mr. Speaker, I regret, as well, that there is no provision in the Budget for money to be provided for a study of management-labour relations within this province with a view to finding an alternative to the strike or lockout as a means of settling industrial disputes. It is apparent, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan are sick and tired of industrial disputes that hinder our economic growth, that cause hardships not only to those directly involved but to the public at large and disrupt our day-to-day lives.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to make myself perfectly clear that I do not put the blame for all strikes on labour nor do I put the

blame for all labour-management disputes on management. Many strikes are, of course, caused by management when labour finds they have no alternative but to strike when management refuses to bargain fairly and sincerely.

We see, Mr. Speaker, that the public is quickly reaching the stage where people will not tolerate any longer strikes in essential industries, whether they be caused by the workers or by the employers. The time has come to examine the whole question and if possible, seek an alternative. Maybe there's not an alternative to strikes, I don't know. But surely if we can pass laws that are acceptable to the majority of people in all other spheres of activity, we can surely put our collective brains together and at least try and find a solution to this problem that plagues us almost on a daily basis.

Hopefully before the end of this Session the Government will address itself to this problem, provide for a commission of the highest level and investigate the situation and make recommendations for the consideration of the people of Saskatchewan and this Legislature.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Malone: — In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, we stand on the threshold of an economic boom that would make the last three years of economic prosperity look poor indeed, by comparison. It is apparent, Mr. Speaker, that much of the world is in a recession and indeed in many parts is in a depression. One of the many reasons for this is that the world desperately needs the goods and resources that Saskatchewan has in such great abundance, agriculture products, energy resources, and fertilizer. Our economic prosperity over the past three years can be attributed solely to the fact that the world is prepared to pay record prices for our grain and no matter how much the NDP tries, they can not take credit for this situation. But now, for the first time, when an alternative to the agriculture economy presents itself the Government simply is not grasping the opportunity that is there.

It is not because the Government does not want to sell our oil, natural gas, potash, coal, uranium and other resources, they do but they'll sell it only if they control the means of production that are involved and they apparently do not realize they can do this simply through the power of taxation and regulation. But that is not good enough for the NDP. They also want to control the day-to-day operation of the businesses involved in the production of these resources and because of this we have lost millions of dollars over the past two years. To date in the potash industry alone we have lost a capital investment of \$500 million simply because the Government will not permit the potash companies to develop the existing reserves unless the Government is a party therein.

That is only the capital investment we have lost. We have lost hundreds of millions of dollars more from the potash that could have been produced, from the jobs that could have been created directly and through related and supportive industries.

In the oil industry one can only guess at the millions and billions of dollars that have been lost because of the stubbornness of this Government. They blame the oil situation on Ottawa but the laws of Ottawa apply to Alberta as well as to this

province. In Alberta the oil business is booming. The people of that province are receiving their fair share from the oil that is produced. They are not being ripped off by giant multinational corporations. In that province jobs are being created, royalties are being paid and the people are enjoying even greater economic prosperity than they had in the past. In fact, the situation in Alberta is so attractive that the Government-owned company SaskOil has been investing the taxpayers of Saskatchewan's money in the province to take advantage of the existing situation. This means, of course, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan are providing jobs through SaskOil, not in the Province of Saskatchewan but in the Province of Alberta. They are paying royalties on the oil that is being found, not to the Government of Saskatchewan but to the Government of Alberta, and they are contributing to the development of even a healthier oil industry, not in the Province of Saskatchewan, but in the Province of Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it was Sir Wilfrid Laurier who, many years ago, said that the 20th century belongs to Canada. This may or may not have come to pass. But I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that it is conceivable that the last quarter of the 20th century could belong to western Canada and in particular Saskatchewan. But Saskatchewan will only share in the great economic future that lies ahead if we now grasp the opportunities that are being presented to us, not by turning aside. So far the NDP with its short-sighted policies, its determination to grasp power, its insistence on control of all facets of the economy, have lost sight of the greatness that we are on the threshold of achieving.

It is for these reasons, Mr. Speaker, that I am unable to support the Budget as proposed by the Minister of Finance and wish to offer the following amendment to it.

I move, seconded by Mr. Guy (Athabasca)

That all the words after the word 'assembly' in the motion be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

Regrets the Government of Saskatchewan has failed to develop a sound program of development for Saskatchewan so as to ensure our future prosperity; and has specifically neglected to provide for the financial needs for Senior Citizens or make funds available to meet the rising costs of local Government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The debate continues on the motion and the amendment.

Mr. P.P. Mostoway (Hanley): — Well, you're correct when you say I was sleeping. I was put to sleep just a little while ago.

Mr. Speaker, before I go on, I want to congratulate the Minister of Finance for a fine Budget speech, and it gives me pleasure to be able to reply to it. It gives me pleasure because this Budget indicates clearly that the citizens of this province were right when they rejected the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan. This Budget indicates all too well that under this New Democratic Government, Saskatchewan has moved ahead and will continue to do so.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mostoway: — This Budget also indicates that Members opposite have no hope in forming the next Government. And, Mr. Speaker, I believe Members opposite know this for I well recall how pale-looking they were when the Minister of Finance brought down the Budget the other day. And they had reason to be pale for this is a Budget for people that has received wide acclaim in the province as well as outside. But, Mr. Speaker, I believe another reason why Members opposite had a reason to be pale is because of the remarks of their glorious leader, who in my estimation, knows full well his party will be dumping him after the next election. And why shouldn't they dump him when they know full well they will have to get a leader who will be able to criticize constructively, not blindly like the Leader of the Opposition has done for the past four years.

Mr. J.G. Lane (Lumsden): — You won't be around, Paul.

Mr. Mostoway: — Maybe I'll not be around, but I'll assure you that you fellows won't be. Further to this, Mr. Speaker, I want to label the Opposition Leader's speech as being a farewell speech to this House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Mostoway: — The speech of the . . . I'm sorry, but I think I have the floor.

An Hon. Member: — Speak up Paul, speak up.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! The Member for Lumsden knows quite well he can't speak from the other seat, and is supposed to stand up when he does speak.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mostoway: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I went to label the Opposition Leader's speech as being a farewell speech to this House, the speech of one who is tired and of one who will certainly be given ample time in the future to find out where he went wrong.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition Leader spent some time speaking on the natural resources of this province. He went on to plead the case of the huge corporations as usual. He went on to blame this Provincial Government for insisting on acting on its moral, social, and economic obligation to get the best deal possible for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, he spoke on potash and tried to imply that potash production has not increased. Mr. Speaker, since this Government took office, Saskatchewan potash production has more than doubled because we now have the same number of potash mines producing at near 100 per cent capacity as compared to the Liberal era when they were forced to operate at less than 50 per cent capacity as a concession by the Government to the American potash states. Further to this, Mr. Speaker, the price of potash

has more than tripled.

But these things are ignored by Members opposite, and for good reason because there is no doubt the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan is a spokesman for these potash companies which would wish to completely dominate potash policy for their sole benefit.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mostoway: — And further to the resource issue, Mr. Speaker, do Members opposite really expect us to believe they do not agree 100 per cent with Ottawa when Ottawa takes on an average six dollars for every barrel of oil produced in Saskatchewan as compared to the two dollars and fifty cents this Government collects.

Mr. Speaker, I believe Members opposite do the citizens of this province a disservice in not bringing this fact to the attention of all.

Mr. Lane: — Cancel the agreement.

Mr. Mostoway: — I'd like to cancel your agreement for yapping.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mostoway: — We haven't even signed it yet.

Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't presume for one minute to think that Members opposite owe their first allegiance to the Federal Government which represents wealthy, central Canadian interests. And you have good reason to be obligated to that. We all know why. And the citizens know why, also.

I don't presume to think that Members opposite would sell Saskatchewan citizens down the drain on the resource issue, but it certainly looks like it.

Mr. Speaker, hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent by Opposition parties in Canada discrediting our Land Bank Program. Now why would they discredit a program which they had a hand in formulating? Mr. Speaker, there's no doubt in my mind that Liberal callousness and insensitivity in the past helped create this situation where upcoming farmers could not get into farming because of high farm credit corporation rates and high collateral.

There's no doubt in my mind that many a farmer is still paying for land purchased in the '30s, land that some of them paid for twice and three times because previous governments, old-line governments, offered them no protection from land shysters of that era. Mr. Speaker, the two old-line parties helped create the situation which now demands a land bank program such as ours. And if Opposition Members now criticize it, it really indicates an open confession on their part that past performance was pathetic and not geared to keeping our young citizens on our farms. So, fellows, you can take part of the credit for the Land Bank Program.

Mr. Speaker . . .

March 18, 1975

Mr. Lane: — You can take the credit.

Mr. Mostoway: — No, we won't let you get all the credit, no.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to comment on some certain remarks one honourable Member of the Opposition made a few weeks ago. These remarks referred to the Premier as being inept, and I'm sorry that that gentleman is not in the House right now. Can you imagine the Member for Athabasca calling the Premier inept, in light of the record of his leader? Mr. Speaker, by his remarks and in light of the high praise all Canadians have for our Premier, I would venture to say that it is the Member opposite who made the statement who is inept, and that was verified when I was up North with the Welfare Committee up in Athabasca constituency. This is what the people told us.

Mr. Lane: — Play bingo, eh!

Mr. Mostoway: — Well, I'll tell you what. We don't mind playing bingo. It's a heck of a lot better than playing certain other games.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mostoway: — If you know what I mean, Mr. Hon. Opposite Member. Mr . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mostoway: — You never know. Mr. Speaker, another Member opposite recently had the gall to criticize this Government's excellent Highway and Open Roads Program. He went on to rant and rave as usual without saying anything of substance. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say something on this matter. Now it concerns another recent meeting that I had with three municipal councils. It appears that these three municipal councils had done some road building. It also appears that these three municipal councils were promised by the former Liberal Government that should they build up their portion of this grid road, that it would be taken over into the highway system. Well, that's not too bad, Mr. Speaker, but I find out that I can go to every rural constituency in my area and everyone was promised the same thing. Liberals did this so they could have roads built up in the country without having to pay their fair portion. A standard Liberal trick, and they never put anything down on paper.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to go on record as saying that the people in and around the Saskatoon area are extremely pleased with this Government's program in regard to roads. Contrast Liberal petty chiselling, Mr. Speaker, with this Government's highway program. Consider this Government's promise to incorporate into the highway system, this year, I may add, the grid road running south from Saskatoon to Lake Diefenbaker. That's another road that the Liberals said that they would take into the highway system, I believe, in 1964. So many promises that the former Minister of Highways doesn't even remember.

Consider the hundreds of communities now enjoying dust-free access roads at no cost to them. Mr. Speaker, I have found that Liberal attacks on this Government's road policy are met with the scorn which they richly deserve.

Mr. Speaker, Members opposite claim they are concerned about our senior citizens. Now I ask, when did they change? I don't believe they have changed deep down, but it is obvious that they would like our senior citizens to think they have.

An Hon. Member: — It's an election year.

Mr. Mostoway: — Is that it? Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to hundreds of senior citizens in Saskatoon and area lately and if there is one thing I have learned, it is that senior citizens don't believe the Leader of the Opposition. They remember all too well how he and some of his cohorts opposite squeezed every penny out of them that they could. They recall all too well those same Members imposed deterrent fees on them for daring to be sick. They recall all too well how those same Members attacked the estates of those who were mentally incompetent. They recall all too well how those same Members opposite promised our citizens a drug plan or at least a voice in the drug plan. Mr. Speaker, because our senior citizens recall so vividly, I would venture to say that senior citizens will also recall these same things on election day, a day which will see Liberal fortunes plummet downward even further than they are now.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Mostoway: — Mr. Speaker, I should like to relate to you a little story which neatly sums up the whole area of services to Saskatchewan citizens over the past number of years. At a recent banquet at which I had the honour of bringing greetings from the Provincial Government, I had occasion to listen to a speaker from the Maritimes who said for the hundreds there that Saskatchewan under the NDP and the New Democratic Party Government was and still is, a leader in such areas as health, treatment of mental retardation, assisting the working poor and services to the disadvantaged in general. Now, Mr. Speaker, he made no bones about it, but here I want to stress that he termed the Liberal era from 1964 to 1971 as one of backwardness - as an era where the disadvantaged were sacrificed, which to me is really the essence of Liberal policy. And, I might add, that I had occasion to talk to the gentleman and I believe, sirs, that he favoured your party but he was certainly willing to admit the truth.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to spend a little time on specifics within the Budget. I am pleased that the five per cent sales tax will be removed on meals and reading material. I must add, though, that I am still hopeful that this Liberal-imposed tax will be removed on other articles in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I am naturally pleased to note that hefty increases in school operating grants are to be given to our school boards. Now to me this indicates that education of our young citizens is a high priority with this Government, unlike the low priority the previous Liberal Government gave education. This I can say is a truth well known by school boards who were ordered by the previous government to cut down on the quality of education and all related educational services. Add to this the fact that never before in many a year has there been so much local input into the education of our younger citizens. Mr. Speaker, this new input on the part of citizens has been made possible by this Government's desire to listen to people because

it knows the input of local people at the grassroots level is extremely valuable and necessary.

Mr. Speaker, this Government listens, Liberal Governments don't and see what happens.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to know that a new provincial government building will be constructed in Saskatoon Centre constituency. Now, to me, this is a good move for it will insure that in future those in the Saskatoon area will not have to go gallivanting all over the city in order to deal with various Saskatoon-based Government agencies. Further on the provision of government services, Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that in the future more government services will be located in Saskatoon because that city is truly the hub of Saskatchewan. Saskatoon is more readily accessible to the largest number of citizens than other Saskatchewan cities. To me this goes hand-in-hand with the trend already established by this Government whereby such government jurisdictions as Consumer Affairs, SEDCO, SGIO, and Labour will set up shop in Saskatoon, and I might add, with success in meeting the needs of citizens for that area.

Mr. Speaker, I have said it before and I will say it again . . .

Mr. Lane: — Good.

Mr. Mostoway: — I can say it some more if you want me to. I believe this Government has done very well in consumer protection and in assisting consumers and having justice done them. This in spite of the fact that any good piece of legislation that was ever introduced in this House was fought hammer and tongs by Members opposite. We certainly know the reason for that. I know for a fact that many citizens of Saskatoon and area have been helped by the Saskatoon Consumer Affairs office.

Mr. Lane: — Name one.

Mr. Mostoway: — Name one. One, I believe, had occasion to deal with you. Now to this I say, fine, but I am of the opinion that more consumer protection must be given citizens. To me this protection should be in the form of more readily available information on warranties and guarantees before people make purchases. This information should cover more thoroughly such things as insurance and some of those cursed retirement savings plans, housing and consumer articles. Mr. Speaker, in regard to extra consumer protection which I advocate, I should also like to suggest closer working relationships between the various provincial governments and the Federal Government. It would seem that at present it is almost impossible for people to get justice done them if a particular concern is based outside the province.

Mr. Speaker, may I take this opportunity to express my personal disgust at recent remarks made by a Member opposite in regard to senior citizens and hog payments. I might add that I have had some telephone calls asking me if it is true what he said. I said to them the blanket policy is that anything the Leader of the Opposition says is not true. At any rate I have already had feed back from Saskatoon on this. Now an apology from that Member is in order but don't think senior citizens will be getting one from him.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, allow me in a moment of weakness to commend the Federal Government in announcing that it will shortly be paying the senior citizens' pension to the younger spouse of one who will receive the pension. Now this is long overdue and I believe was promised in the past by the Federal Government. It makes sense and it will be well received by all. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I also want to commend this Government for its own guaranteed supplement to citizens in need. Oh, I know there are those who will claim that it does not go far enough and in some cases this will be so, but it certainly is a great step forward in light of Federal Government inaction in this area.

An Hon. Member: — Did you . . .

Mr. Mostoway: — Mr. Speaker . . . well, certainly, can't you figure out that you can congratulate a jurisdiction on one point and possibly condemn it on another? You are used to condemning every thing you run into. You wouldn't know anything about this, Mr. Hon. Member.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words on another program this Government has initiated for senior citizens. This is a program whereby assistance is given to the setting up and operating of senior citizen centres. This program often in conjunction with the Federal New Horizon Grants Program, involves provincial aid in capital in operating costs. Now the point I wish to make is that in many cases, often in as little as two years, provincial financial input is greater than federal financial input. Further to this, provincial aid relative to these centres is ongoing and well it should be, because these centres are of value as activity centres for our senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I believe you are well aware of the severe shortage of housing throughout Saskatchewan, particularly in the larger urban centres brought on, no doubt, by our buoyant economy. Does this situation not call for much more public housing than has been the case and still is? I believe more public housing is the answer in our larger urban centres and even in some of our smaller ones where industry ensures future growth.

Mr. Speaker, this Government's record insofar as labour legislation is concerned has been good, particularly in comparison to the record of the previous Liberal regime. However, I do believe certain areas need action. Now I am only going to mention a few of them. Once such area involves part-time workers, particularly those hired by large chain stores. Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe these workers are being denied certain benefits to the advantage of these concerns. In other words, Mr. Speaker, I believe partial benefits should be given part-time workers. It should not be an all or nothing situation as it now stands.

Now, the second point I should like to spend a few moments on concerns compensation. I fully realize that this Government has done much in the area within the past few years, a lot of it cleaning up the mess inherited from the former regime. The thing that bothers me, Mr. Speaker, is the way some large concerns are still able to get around compensation claims or involvement in them by inducing injured workers not to work, to do nothing but sit around and, as they say, "go on light duty."

Naturally this distorts the true picture of injuries and time lost due to accidents. It naturally follows that rates paid by these large concerns often end up being lower than they really should be. It also follows that in some cases future complications due to these injuries are not given the proper attention to which they're entitled because of distorted data in the first place. Mr. Speaker, this situation must be looked at and action must be taken to correct it.

I want to say a few things pertaining to the Federal counterparts of Members opposite. In light of recent happenings it would seem to me that once again the credibility gap between politicians and the public has been widened and as far as I can determine, for good reasons. But what annoys me, Mr. Speaker, is the evasive attitude of those in key positions who should be seeking the truth and not trying to cover it up as some of them are now in the very process of doing. What also bothers me, Mr. Speaker, is the ease with which those who are suspect can get the heat off themselves by going into hiding and not having to answer to the public. Mr. Speaker, such politicians do democracy a disservice and their actions should be remembered when the next election occurs.

Mr. Speaker, when I look back on these last four years of NDP Government, one thing stands out and that is the fulfilment of the New Deal for People. Such a situation contrasts sharply with the situation as it stood when the Liberal Government was dethroned by the people in 1971. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe that the Liberal Party believes promises should be made without any thought of keeping them. In light of two bad experiences our citizens have had with Liberal Governments from 1964 to 1971, I know I am correct in saying our citizens are well aware that Liberal promises really aren't worth much more than a pinch of Saskatchewan dust. This I know they will remember on election day.

Mr. Speaker, I fully intend to support the motion.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. D. Boldt (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, the Member who just sat down gets carried away. Recently he made a statement regarding the NDP candidate of Rosthern that he has done more for the constituency of Rosthern than any other candidate or Member in history. Now that certainly takes the argument away from my good friend the Member for Redberry when he said, time and time again, that all the money that was spent by the Department of Highways was spent in Rosthern. So the NDP are really doing something for Rosthern.

Also the Member said that the road to Outlook from Saskatoon was promised by the Liberals to be taken into the highway system on many occasions and never fulfilled. Well, this is not true and he knows it is not true. He is deliberately misleading the House. The councils came to me on a number of occasions and wanted me to take that grid road into the highway system. I told them it was not going to be done. The Member for Hanley knows he is not telling the truth.

When he was talking about the old age pensioners, I can see old Mrs. Henry, the other day Friday, who broke her rocking chair when she heard that the old age pensioners were only going to get \$20 a month as a guarantee from this benevolent government.

This afternoon, the Premier came in with a report that the population in Saskatchewan is on the rise.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — Of course he was very careful in saying that it was only an estimate from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, only an estimate. Well, I have a few copies here of the 1974 Saskatchewan Municipal Directory and the 1975 Directory. This is what they report. We are concerned about rural population. For the edification of the Member for Hanley (Mr. Mostoway) I should like to report the facts. In the RM of Laird in my constituency in 1974 the population was 1,600, today, in 1975 the population has been reduced to 1,218, a reduction of almost 400 people in one rural municipality alone. I want to be fair. I took the RM in my constituency and in the RM of Rosthern, it is a bigger community and many of the people from Saskatoon want to buy an acreage in this community, the population is up from 2,100 in 1974 to 2,123 in 1975. However, in the RM of Douglas No. 436 in 1974 the population was 1,050 in 1975 it is 840, down by 254 per cent. The RM of Birch Hills . . .

Mr. Michayluk: — What has that got to do with the population?

Mr. Boldt: — The population of that RM we are talking about rural populations. If the Hon. Member for Redberry wants to get into the debate I'll sit down and let him argue.

In the RM of Birch Hills No. 460, the population in 1974 was 1,150 in 1975 it is 1,040, down over 100, down by more than 10 per cent.

Now what about the cities. The city of Estevan in 1974, population 9,500, in 1975 - 9,150, a reduction of 350 people in a community where you say oil production is now moving forward. The cities of Lloydminster, Melville, and Moose Jaw are practically the same, no decrease. But the city of North Battleford in 1974 the population was 12,865 - this is taken out of the Municipal Directory - in 1975 12,698. A reduction. What about Prince Albert? The city of Prince Albert in 1974 29,150, in 1975 28,464. That is the record of the NDP Government.

There are municipalities that have increases, the only two major increases are in the city of Regina and the city of Saskatoon. The others are losing population. When we look at the population in 1971 and 1974-75 under the NDP you will find that there would be a total loss. Even with the increase that the Premier said today, if that is a fact, we are not even holding the population with the number of births that we have in Saskatchewan as compared to the people who stay in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition must have been very, very effective in his speech because so much time is devoted to the Leader of the Opposition's speech. Any time a Member on this side of the House can raise the ire of the Members opposite who devote most of their time criticizing what the Leader of the Opposition has said, he must have been very, very effective. You people are on the run, there is no argument about that. I feel more confident today than I ever have during the past four elections. When the election will be

called, Dave Steuart is going to be the Premier of this Province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — There are many here who should give the same kind of speech that the Member for Touchwood (Mr. Meakes) made yesterday, the only difference between him and some of you, you are nominated. He saw the time for him was to retire.

The Minister of Finance and other Members have tried to persuade the public what a wonderful benevolent administration they have had during their term of office, and how thankful we should be that Premier Blakeney and the socialists have managed our affairs. However, surely nobody in his right mind can believe the NDP propaganda machine and I am sure very few do.

During the election campaign of 1971 they promised peace would reign within the labour force. Inside of a few weeks they had no intentions of calling a session, but they had a promise and the labour unions demanded that the Government call the session. Inside of a few weeks the Government called the Session and the unions forced the Government to do away with Bill 2. The labour unions' bosses were not satisfied with the promise that Bill 2 would not apply, great speeches were made by the Members opposite on the Government side that was on labour had ended and never again would the Government bring in back-to-work legislation.

Then all of a sudden in 1975 in January, the courtship between the NDP and labour was disrupted and the principles of Bill 2 were applied in this particular strike. The Union was told to go back to work, something that the Minister of Labour and the Premier said would never happen under an NDP Government. If the economy and public relations with the present Government is good, how come we have more labour unrest in Saskatchewan this year than ever before? How come we have more strikes in Saskatchewan, more lost man days in the last year than in the seven years of Liberal Government? But everything is fine. Today the farmers can't sell grain or move grain, the Wheat Board won't ship grain because your party supporters are stopping the movement of grain wherever possible.

How come our senior citizens find it so difficult to make ends meet when the Government tells them that things have never been better. Surely the Government can't claim that the oil industry is booming and that great big oil fields are being found or discovered to meet our future needs, nor can they say that the potash industry is expanding and new mines are being developed in Saskatchewan. No, the fact is the only industry that is reasonably happy is the grain farmer and the socialists have done absolutely nothing to enhance his position. If it wasn't for the good grain prices enjoyed by our farmers the NDP Government would have been bankrupt in its first year of office. Socialism just doesn't work and if it wasn't for a free enterprise government in Ottawa, our economy in Saskatchewan and our standard of living would compare with that of Communist China.

Mr. Messer: — You are not running, are you, Dave?

Mr. Boldt: — No, I have served long enough.

Although farmers are reasonably well off, thanks to the policies of the Federal Government, their costs are climbing by leaps and bounds and there is a growing concern among farmers that if price increases are not halted, many farmers will end up in bankruptcy. The New Deal for farmers promised by the Socialists in 1971 was to keep costs down. Farm machinery and repairs were to be kept in line with the costs of production. That was one of your promises. Costs to the farmer includes fuel and fertilizer.

Let's compare how well this Government has been able to keep that promise. The Government has manipulated in the oil and potash industries and I am confident that because of this meddling prices have gone higher than necessary and they could have prevented these drastic increases if the Government was sympathetic to the farmers.

Mr. Engel: — Talk about fuel costs in . . .

Mr. Boldt: — If you want to speak my good friend, then get up and speak and I'll sit down.

Let's take a look at some of the price increases related to farm costs. Farm tractor fuel sold on my farm on July 9, 1971, shortly after the NDP took office, sold for 20.0 per gallon. Today diesel fuel from the same dealer delivered on my farm is 38.7 cents a gallon, or an increase of 18 cents a gallon. Oh, the Minister of Agriculture is going to return seven cents per gallon out of 18, which still leaves me with 11 cents per gallon increase in three and one half years of NDP Government, or an increase of over 50 per cent in less than four years.

First grade car gas sold in July, 1971, delivered to my farm for 47.8 cents per gallon, today it costs me 58.3, that's an increase of 10.5 per gallon and there is no refund coming. Propane gas for home heating in 1971 cost me 18.5 cents per gallon, today it is 35.5 cents per gallon, almost a 100 per cent increase with no refund coming. Diesel fuel for home heating the same thing, in 1971 cost 19 cents per gallon, today it costs 36.2 cents with no refund. This too is almost a 100 per cent increase in costs.

Now what about fertilizer? I suppose most of you socialist farmers don't use fertilizer, you don't know what it is. In November of 1971 fertilizer delivered on my farm 11-48-D cost me \$98 a ton, today that same fertilizer delivered to my farm costs me \$198 per ton, more than double since the NDP came into power. The socialists don't talk about these increases to the farmer. If the price of grain had not increased to where it is, very few farmers would have remained in the business. You can't farm under socialist theory.

Property in urban centres and land taxes in rural areas have all increased in the last years, much faster than the rate increases of the property improvement grants. In 1971 the socialists promised the farmers that implement companies would be told to hold the line. They introduced legislation to police implement dealers. They applied the 40-hour week to

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rural Saskatchewan. The end result of it all is that farm machinery and repairs have gone up more than 50 per cent since 1971 and in some instances costs have now surpassed the 1971 costs by over 100 per cent.

Mr. Feduniak: — Give us the record for western Canada.

Mr. Boldt: — This is the true record of the NDP, my good friend from Turtleford. This is the true record of the NDP Government as to farm price controls. You haven't done anything in this regard except raise the prices.

The Minister of Consumer Affairs who is very much concerned about the cost to the consumer hasn't even touched farm prices. In addition to this sad record, the Government has had a real bad history of dealing with other farm-related problems. The Family Farm Protection Act is a good example. They forced implement dealers to carry a farmer's debt load. Oh, they said, they were going to protect the farmers. Who protected the farmers? It was the implement dealer who was supposed to protect the farmers. Dealers were mad at the Government, the carrying costs were charged to the consumer, Mr. Minister, which resulted in higher costs of farm machinery. Then of course, after that fight, they had to get into the battle with the rape seed growers of Saskatchewan. They spent thousands of dollars of government taxpayers' money on their propaganda trying to persuade the rape seed growers to their way of thinking. They lost out very badly.

The Hog Marketing Commission is another example of what kind of democracy the socialists believe in. The vote is not considered to be democratic unless you vote where the Government wants you to vote.

The Farm Ownership Bill is a terrible piece of legislation. It discriminates against Canadians. The Provincial Government considers Canadians outside the boundaries of Saskatchewan as foreigners when it relates to ownership of farm lands. It is not in the interest of good Canadian citizenship and this Bill should be struck from the records of our statutes.

The cost of high labour is not related to the farmer's income and it results in fewer dairy and hog farmers and the trend off the farm has never been halted. Farmers are still leaving the farms by the hundreds and farms are becoming larger in size.

The Land Bank is not the answer to keeping people on the farm. Canadian citizens in general want to call that piece of property they live on their own. No matter how long the Premier and the Minister preach state control, the Saskatchewan farmer wants title to his property.

To many farmers and businessmen, the Province of Alberta looks like a good place to live, a good place to farm and a good place to retire. As I see it, there are very many advantages if you could figure . . .

Mr. Michayluk: — How do you figure . . .

Mr. Boldt: — You might be thinking of going there too, my friend from Redberry.

First, there is no estate tax in Alberta; second, there is no five per cent sales tax; third, there is no education tax on property in Alberta; and fourth, about 30 per cent less income tax to pay than in Saskatchewan. Add up all these benefits and you will find that the average farmer pays from eight to ten thousand less in taxes in Alberta than in Saskatchewan.

In Alberta, private enterprise is not jeopardized by sick socialist politicians. In the Province of Alberta their budgetary surplus this year is about 50 per cent greater than our entire Budget. The free enterpriser thinks before he spends. You socialists spend before you plan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — How has this \$1.1 billion Budget been accepted by the average taxpayer? Oh, we had somebody comment here about the Financial Post and what a great budget it was. The answer must be one of extreme disappointment. The news media outside the Financial Post have given the Budget a rough going over. Of course this can be expected because the Premier has said they are the enemies of the NDP. But what does the Mayor of Saskatoon have to say about the Budget? He stated there was great disappointment. The city of Saskatoon is wrestling with a 13 mill increase. The mayor claims the Budget has very little relief for the urban taxpayer and Mayor Sears is absolutely right. It is not only true for Saskatoon, it is true for all taxpayers of Saskatchewan, all taxpayers, including Moose Jaw, they will be faced with a tremendous increase in the mill rate. The Budget has more than doubled since 1971 and yet the school boards and municipal councils are faced with ever increasing tax burdens. The Government's priorities are not with the taxpayers but rather in foolish investments such as Intercontinental, Provincial Pipe and Steel, SaskOil and many other socialist experiments that have not contributed to the welfare of the farmer or the urban taxpayer.

Let's take a look at some of the spending priorities this Government has. The DNS is perhaps the most outstanding. The Department, only three years in existence, this year has a budget of \$45 million. All we hear in terms of accomplishments is dissatisfaction in the North. No job opportunities for the natives, no industries, no mining, school problems, social problems. All it has done, it has created a tremendous political machine, it resigned itself to keep the natives on welfare rolls for life. The Minister of Social Welfare argues publicly that the number of welfare recipients is down. This argument can be debated successfully. The Government has placed many welfare recipients in job training. They get paid while in training but apparently many never graduate but are kept in training. This to me is another form of welfare. The cost of public assistance, this does not include training program, in 1971, the cost was \$27 million as compared to \$54 million in this year's Budget. The total budget in 1971, the total welfare budget was \$42 million as compared to \$137 million in 1975. To this must be added the many welfare programs that are administered by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

Neither the Minister of Social Services, nor the Finance Minister can convince me that welfare rolls are down. This is not true. The welfare budget has increased by over 300 per cent in less than four years. There is very little concrete evidence, if any, that your rehabilitation is working. We are faced with more family breakups, more alcoholism, more crime, more citations, more fines, more delinquent young people, more vandalism, more slaughter on our highways than in any other given period in our history. Your Social Services Department is in a complete mess. One of the reasons for this problem is that many of your family counsellors, guidance counsellors and social workers have problems of their own and really do not qualify as counsellors for people who need genuine assistance.

I want to say a word about your highway budget. I don't want to take any ammunition away from my friend, the Member for Morse, but having been the Minister of Highways for a good many years, I know something about that Department.

Your highway budget, in terms of work to be done, is down about \$15 million. In 1971 the budget for highway construction, I am only talking about highway construction, was \$40 million. This year the budget for highway construction is \$65 million. Every contractor in the province and your own highway officials will admit that costs have risen 100 per cent since 1971. So in actual work to be accomplished with \$65 million is about 20 per cent less than what \$40 million accomplished in 1971. On top of that the Federal Government is going to give you about \$10 million to spend on highways. This is the reason why our Saskatchewan highway program is not keeping pace with demand. The \$10 million gas tax given to the Automobile Accident Insurance Fund would be better spent if it remained in the highway spending estimates.

The Budget is a sickening revelation of a socialist experiment that has never accomplished anything but chaos.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Boldt: — In his closing remarks, the Minister of Finance on six occasions stated 'we promised - we delivered.' He ran out of deliveries that might have been positive perhaps only to a degree. He could have continued by stating we promised to halt oil production, we delivered. We promised to halt potash expansion - we delivered. We promised to have state control of industries - we delivered. We promised labour unrest - we delivered. We promised cancellation of all forest agreements - we delivered. We promised a New Deal for People - we delivered miserably.

Mr. Speaker, I will not support the motion, but support the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J.K. Comer (Nipawin): — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Lumsden said, "Is this another swan song?" We just had a word from the Ugly Duckling.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — You know, Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise to speak in the Budget Debate and what I think has been a landmark Budget for this province, the fourth budget of the NDP Government. I think we all want to congratulate our Minister of Finance (Mr. Robbins) for bringing down yet another balanced budget with a substantial surplus. Before I go on and deal with some of the items in the Budget I should like to make a few comments, a very few, on the remarks of the speaker who proceeded me, the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt).

You know, the Member for Rosthern's speech was a little disappointing. Generally I look forward to them although I don't agree with them, because he always has something original. But this time it was just sort of a whole lot of the old arguments thrown together in a little bit different order, but the same. One thing, I shouldn't say that there was nothing different, today in his speech the Member for Rosthern took a giant step to the left. I am not sure if any of you noticed it. He said that the reason that we have what we have in Saskatchewan is because of the free enterprise government in Ottawa. This is the first time, the first time in his life that the Member for Rosthern has ever admitted the Federal Liberals were a free enterprise party. I have heard him in this House get up and call them socialists. You know, I think there is a reason, the Member for Rosthern isn't running again and he knows that if he wants to get into the Senate it is going to have to be Mr. Trudeau who appoints him.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — You know, Dave, if you want to get in and you want any letters of recommendation, we'll write them.

Mr. Boldt: — He mentioned my name and I am critical of what he said. I have no intentions, nor will I ever sit in the Senate.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — I agree with him that he never will, they'll never appoint him. You know it is fairly obvious listening to the Member for Rosthern and other Members who have spoken here today that what the Liberals campaign will be all about is the old Liberal scare, the old Liberal scare; don't offer anything, just history, be deceitful, scare. You know the way they talk they aren't going to have a program. If they do, they will probably announce it the day after the election is held. In the meantime they will just go on and make up stories about the Land Bank and about potash. They are going to have a program, they are going to cut taxes and increase services.

The Member for Rosthern also went on and did another thing the Liberals like to do, he compared Saskatchewan with Alberta. It's funny, why do they compare Saskatchewan with Alberta? Alberta hasn't had a Liberal government since 1920 or 1921. Why don't they compare it with Prince Edward Island, they've got a Liberal government. Why don't they compare it with Nova Scotia, they have a Liberal government. Why don't they compare it with Quebec, they have a Liberal government. No, they have to compare it with a province which has not had a Liberal

government for over 50 years and it's probably one of the reasons for their good fortune.

The Member for Rosthern also mentioned that he might like to move to Alberta and I would suggest that possibly he should begin his trip before his bus pass runs out. It is also very interesting to see who is attempting to replace the Member for Rosthern from the Liberal Party, the Member for Athabasca. Every other year the Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) got up in this House and he went on and on and on about the horrors, about the terror of DNS. Apparently he was escaping and they apprehended him at Rosthern. He had a half-ton half full of half completed student loan applications. Instead of one northern critic, they have two of them now, they had one last year, but the Member for Rosthern, he is not running away, he is not running again. Then they have the Member for Cannington (Mr. Weatherald). I think he lives closer to the equator than he does to northern Saskatchewan. He doesn't know very much about it and he doesn't have very much chance of getting any reaction in his riding. You know there is no point in Liberals talking about northern Saskatchewan to anyone who knows anything. They know that they will have no effect.

Mr. Speaker, I think this Budget is most encouraging to the people of Saskatchewan. In the light of the inflationary situation which is presently occurring in Canada and the rest of the world, in light of the record Budget of over a billion dollars this year, and in light of substantial tax cuts in this province, this province has managed to come out with a budgetary surplus something in the neighbourhood of 3 million bringing our cash carry forward to approximately \$70 million and when one considers the reserves in the Crown corporations and the various other funds, the reserves of this province have grown from about \$90 million, as the Leader of the Opposition said shortly after the last election, to well over \$300 million. Without exaggeration and without fear of contradiction it can be stated that the Government of Saskatchewan is today in its most favourable financial position in its 70 year history. It is in its most favourable financial position with a declining tax rate and a record Budget. In the last four years Saskatchewan has gone from one of the higher taxed provinces to one of the lower taxed provinces. Income tax is effectively down to 34 per cent . . .

Mr. Guy: — That's where it was when . . .

Mr. Comer: — I'll talk about that a little later and then you can comment. Sales tax at five per cent is one of the lower rates in the nation. Free medicare, a denticare program for children and soon to be implemented, cheap prescription drugs, all substantial savings for our people. We have one of the lowest rates of gasoline taxes in Canada with a substantial rebate to farmers. You know, mentioning that rebate I notice that the Tories have an interesting platform. They are going to do away with the rebate and they are going to take the tax off farm fuel.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Comer: — That's an interesting one, that's the way the farmer loses seven cents a gallon.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Comer: — Looks as if the Liberals are getting ready for a seal hunt, they sound like a bunch of 14 year old Eskimo boys who just came back from their first successful seal hunt. A lot of noise but not much substance.

In Saskatchewan we have cheap power and gas with a substantial return to the Government of the province. We have cheap automobile insurance. We have very substantial property improvement grants. I wonder if the Liberals are going to promise \$100 a year this time. You know, Mr. Speaker, when one takes all of the taxes into account and all of the benefits the people of this province receive from their Government, we are one of the lowest taxed, if not the lowest taxed province in Canada. It might be asked how can this Government implement so many programs while substantially reducing taxes. I think everyone here remembers that in 1971 the New Democratic Party campaigned on a slogan of Saskatchewan resources for Saskatchewan people. Opposition spokesmen joked about this claiming that they were getting almost everything possible out of our resources. They claimed they had to raise taxes by \$1.5 billion to implement our programs. Individual taxes have gone down, resource taxes are now bringing in almost as much, as individual and corporation taxes combined.

Often, as I mentioned, Saskatchewan is compared with Alberta with respect to taxes. If Alberta had an NDP Government, government services could be substantially increased and not only would there be no sales tax, there would probably be no individual income tax just due to resource revenues alone.

Mr. Speaker, this is a Budget of optimism. Four years ago when the New Democrats, under Premier Blakeney, took office this province was an unholy mess. Today, for the first time ever, Saskatchewan's economy is booming while the rest of the Canadian economy is sagging. In Canada, housing starts drop, in Saskatchewan they are up. In Canada unemployment is high, in Saskatchewan unemployment is so low it is insignificant. Our population is once again on the increase. The labour force has grown faster in the last two years than it did in the seven years that the Liberals were the Government in this province. In 1974 for the first time in the last 30 or 40 years, the number of people on farms in Saskatchewan did not decline. This figure alone calls into question, if it doesn't discredit completely the criticisms of the Land Bank and the FarmStart Program. The number of people working in manufacturing has increased dramatically. Mr. Speaker, by every economic indicator available the people of Saskatchewan are the most fortunate people in the nation. The economic climate and the stability of Saskatchewan and the favourable outlook for the future is clearly demonstrated in the willingness of investors to invest in Saskatchewan debentures at reasonable rates of interest.

Mr. Speaker, this Government and this Budget have put Saskatchewan in the lead in many areas, in the lead over all provinces regardless of government. In going around my riding recently, I had the opportunity of speaking with three people who had come from outside of Saskatchewan. One from Ontario told me that he recognized that for his tax dollars he received many more benefits in Saskatchewan. A man from Minnesota told me that for medicare and SGIO alone, he would support the NDP. A

man from Arkansas said that his wife got sick and was in hospital for some months. He said in Arkansas he would have been broke just trying to pay the hospital bill. He said, "They can say what they like about the NDP, just for that (meaning hospitalization), I will always support them."

In just four years we have pulled so far of the rest of the provinces of Canada that they can't even see our dust. Remember deterrent fees? John Munro, the then Minister of Health in Ottawa said, based on the Saskatchewan experience we do not support deterrent fees. Unfortunately today Mr. Munro is harbouring under a heavy burden. We abolished these same deterrent fees; we have introduced the Dental Care program for children, the first such program in North America. We introduced a hearing aid program, we have removed medicare premiums, we have included chiropractic care under medicare and shortly we will be implementing a prescription drug plan.

The Government of Saskatchewan has given special attention to our senior citizens. The number of special care beds is substantially up. A number of new special care homes have been built in our smaller towns. Just recently a Provincial Senior Citizens Council was established and it will be establishing 40 to 50 local councils to effectively hear the views and concerns of our senior citizens.

The Department of Social Services is to be congratulated in its establishment of a special senior citizens branch. We have long recognized the fact that the basic pension and the income supplement do not adequately care for the senior citizens of this province. In this Budget we are guaranteeing our senior citizens \$224 a month for individuals and \$425 a month for married couples.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I heard the Leader of the Opposition saying that this Government cared more for pigs than for senior citizens. Let's just look at the record. Let's go back to 1968. In 1968 that same Member raised taxes in this province by \$35 million. What taxes did he raise, what taxes did he put on? Deterrent fees, taxing the old and the sick. He placed a tax on farm fuels, taxing farmers. He put on the hot dog tax and even extended it to the wedding feast. I am not sure whether this was meant to raise money or promiscuity. He lowered some taxes. Under massive pressure from the Member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Coupland) he took the tax off turkey saddles. The elderly and the sick got it; the farmers got it; the wedding party got it; but when it came to the harried and haggard hen turkey, old D.G. helped them out. Their slogan could well have been: "Turkeys mattered more".

Mr. Speaker, the many tax cuts announced in this Budget are particularly welcome when our people are faced with such unprecedented inflation. Firstly, of course, the removal of \$100 from income tax is particularly beneficial, making Saskatchewan a low tax province. I think probably the Member for Athabasca cum Rosthern, possibly would be interested in these figures. In 1971 a married couple with only the husband working paid \$76 in provincial income tax. In 1975 they will pay nothing. In 1971 a couple earning \$6,000 would have paid \$201 in income tax, in 1975 they will pay \$43. A married couple earning \$8,000 in 1971 - \$350; in 1975 - \$206. Going to a family of four, two children under 16, in 1971 that family earning \$4,000 would have paid \$44 provincial income tax under the Liberal taxation scheme;

in 1975 they will pay nothing. In 1971 a family of four again earning \$6,000 would have paid \$162 income tax; in 1975 they pay nothing. If they earned \$8,000 in 1971 they would have paid \$305 income tax; in 1975 they will only pay \$147 income tax. You can talk about your 34 or 40 or whatever per cent you want, Saskatchewan taxes are lower.

We have removed the sales tax from all meals. We have removed the sales tax on books and reading material, benefits to the people of Saskatchewan. We have increased the Property Improvement Grant. Mr. Speaker, this is a good Budget, it is a Budget for a prosperous province, it's a Budget that I am proud to support and will oppose the amendment.

Hon G.T Snyder (Minister of Labour): — Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the hour grows late and I would like to call it 5:30.

The Assembly recessed from 5:30 o'clock p.m. to 7:00 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Snyder: — Mr. Speaker, I have already been congratulated for the speech that I delivered directly before 5:30. I am determined to keep the same standard of performance over the next 30 to 35 minutes and I would beg your indulgence for that period of time. I want to begin first of all, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by indicating my first words in this Budget Debate must be ones of congratulations to the Minister of Finance for his presentation of yet another progressive, forward looking, social conscious, sound and balanced budget.

I am convinced that the people of Saskatchewan have become accustomed and have grown to expect of our party the kind of responsibility and the kind of integrity which this Budget reflects.

I intend to use the time at my disposal today to review the activities and the programs of the Department of Labour that have been carried on since I had the privilege of becoming Minister of that particular Department. When I assumed that portfolio in 1971 I think it can quite honestly be said that all of us in the Department were quite appalled at what confronted us. It was only too apparent that in the years since 1964 the status of the Department had been downgraded to a point where it had become a strictly third-rate service, poor relation in the other departments of government. It was merely vegetating without purpose and without direction depending for its existence upon a few of the budgetary crumbs that fell from the table after the appetites of the departments of government had been satisfied. This, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was a thoroughly deplorable and irresponsible situation when one considers the size and the importance of the target population which is served by the Department.

We are talking about the Saskatchewan labour force. Over a third of a million people who are responsible for producing the goods and the services which make this province tick. Without them the wheels of industry would grind to a halt. With their families they represent the overwhelming majority of our population and there are precious few households who are not profoundly affected by the programs of the Department of Labour. And yet in the face of the vital significance of its activities, the Department was left to flounder for seven years while the labour

relations climate in this province deteriorated and working conditions stagnated.

Having rather easily identified the problems we were faced with considerable pressure in 1971 to develop appropriate solutions. This I submit has been done over the past three and one-half years. We have carried on an extensive program on improvements based on a rational and a progressive plan which we call the New Deal for People. At the risk of being accused by my friends across the way of being overly biased or immodest, I can say that I look with a great deal of pride at our accomplishment during this particular period. I am proud of our new labour legislation, designed to promote the well-being of the labour force and the public in a way which will encourage orderly social and economic progress.

I am proud of the expansion of the re-organized Department which has resulted in the streamlining of administrative procedures, the co-ordination of individual branch activities and the better servicing of a growing need in labour and management and for the public generally. I am proud of the revitalized staff of the Department also who without a great deal of public fanfare are working efficiently and conscientiously to promote a healthy and productive employment environment. There is perhaps no better way of focusing attention on the new role of the Department of Labour than by comparing budgets over a period of time. The 1970-71 budget of the Department in the last full Liberal year was \$1.8 million. For 1975-76 we are asking this Legislature to approve a total budgetary appropriation for labour of \$4.5 million, or nearly two and a half times greater than the 1970-71 expenditure.

I was rather amused by the remarks from the Member of the Legislature for Lakeview (Mr. Malone) when he indicated that somehow the budget of the Department of Labour was not quite large enough in light of the fact that there were considerable problems facing us in the years directly ahead. I think these remarks are particularly significant in the light of the budget of the Department of Labour at a time when it was starving, when it was suffering from malnutrition and rickets under the Liberals to the point where we are now receiving a budgetary appropriation of something like \$4.5 million - up from \$1.8 million in only a matter of a few short years ago.

I want to ask you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then, are the people of Saskatchewan going to receive full value for their money in this field? I sincerely believe so and I think that this can be demonstrated in terms of the effectiveness of the programs which this particular budget will support.

Let's start with the Occupational Health and Safety Program. What legislation there was in 1971 was fragmented, uncoordinated and largely inoperative and largely unenforced. The present Government has taken two major steps to establish occupational health and safety in this province on a stable foundation. Firstly, we have combined in a single division of the Department of Labour, all these health and safety activities previously scattered throughout Government service. The Occupational Health Branch and the Radiation Safety Unit of the Department of Public Health, the Mines Safety Unit of the Department of Mineral Resources, the Industrial Safety Branch of the Workers' Compensation Board and the Gas, Electrical, Boiler and Fire Safety Branches of the Department of Labour. This action has paid off

in the form of the organization and the operation of a more adequate and a more standardized Health and Safety service to accommodate the complex demands of the current era of technology.

Secondly, we introduced the Occupational Health Act as will be remembered in this Legislation in 1972, a remedial measure directed towards the lack of attention being paid to the health and safety of persons in the work place. The provisions of this legislative Act represent a significant new program direction and a major departure from the traditional approach to health and safety in employment. The Occupational Health Act is a legislative first in North America, in as much as its operative clauses apply specifically to people in addition to machinery and equipment to which legislation elsewhere is confined. Through the establishment of these labour management occupational health committees in all places of employment with ten or more employees, working people are being provided with the opportunity to come to grips with their own health and safety requirements. When the Occupational Health Act was passed, it was described by some critics, including a number of Members of that august body of experts across the aisle as cloud nine legislation which was completely impractical and unrealistic. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how is that cloud nine legislation working out in actual practice? It is very gratifying to me to be able to report that it is making very real strides in improving the working conditions of Saskatchewan's wage earners. Approximately 3,000 occupational health committees representing over 100,000 workers have been formed and the committee approach to health and safety has become widely accepted across the entire province. In this connection I think congratulations are due to the many workers and enlightened employers who are responsible for the success of this concept. The committees working in concert with the inspection and testing resources of the Department of Labour have already been instrumental in identifying and taking steps to rectify a number of hazardous and potentially dangerous conditions throughout Saskatchewan industry. Examples which may be cited include cases involving overcrowding, thermal environment, ventilation, lighting, the use of dangerous substances such as asbestos, noise levels in the work place and so on. I think the success of Occupational Health Committee mechanism is evident in the words of an employee after the Committee in her place of employment was successful in arranging an improvement in an air conditioning system in her place of work, and her words were and I quote:

Well, we never had any place to take these kinds of problems before. I for one, am glad that we have somewhere to go to deal with these matters now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in addition to the establishment of occupational health committees, The Occupational Health Act gives the Occupational Health Officers the power to enter and to inspect places of employment to identify health and safety hazards and to make the necessary tests and examination to make the program work as we believe it should. Medical supervision of employees in a dangerous environment may be required, together with action directed towards the protection of employees and the control of materials and equipment.

What about labour standards policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker? By 1971 Saskatchewan, which prior to 1964 had been ranked near the top in Canada in the field of labour standards legislation, had slipped to a position close to the bottom. In that infamous seven-year period virtually nothing was done to protect the best

interests of Saskatchewan's working men and women. This, at a time, when working conditions elsewhere were advancing rapidly in response to new pressures and rising prosperity. The results at the polls in 1971 were the obvious reaction I believe of the people of Saskatchewan, to this niggardly and short-sighted policy or rather it could possibly be described as a non-policy.

Let me take just a moment to refresh the memories of the Members of this Assembly with regard to labour standard measures which we have implemented to recognize the vital contribution of employees to the life of this province. We have increased the minimum wage four times since 1971 and it will be raised to \$2.50 per hour on March 31st of this year, making it together with the British Columbia rate, the highest in Canada. We have introduced legislation calling for a universal 40-hour work week, the first province in Canada to have done so. Then there was the four-week annual vacation after 15 years of service becoming four weeks after ten years of service by 1978. A first in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We introduced the universal three-week annual vacation after one year of service, a first in Canada. Employees are now entitled to leave of absence in order that they may stand for office to participate in public life, a first in Canada. An employee has been given the right to refuse to perform unusually dangerous work until an Occupational Health investigation has been made, another first in Canada.

Under the amended Labour Standards Act, women are now entitled to 18 weeks of maternity leave so that they no longer have to quit their job in order to bear a child, the best maternity leave in Canada, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In addition, magistrates can now order reinstatement when employees are wrongfully dismissed.

Employers can no longer fire an employee simply because they have been served with a garnishee summons with respect to that particular employee.

An additional provision has been made for the protection of employees from loss of wages where an employer goes bankrupt.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these provisions came into effect at that time when dire consequences of their implementation were predicted by some Members opposite and in particular Members of the Liberal Party throughout Saskatchewan. Employers were all going to go bankrupt, business activity would decline, massive unemployment would occur, chaos would result.

I wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what they are saying now. By what feats of magic are they going to get themselves off the hook? Because, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has adjusted very well to the legislative changes that I have just noted. I haven't noticed any great rash of business failures and as far as business activity is concerned I noticed that retail sales in 1974 were up no less than 17 per cent over 1973. Moreover this February's labour force figure revealed that there are 16,000 more people employed in Saskatchewan than a year ago and 33,000 more than in February 1971. Employers, I suggest, have improved and adjusted their work practices to accommodate the 40 hour week in a convenient way and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have yet to hear any genuine protest about the latest announced increase in the minimum wage.

In actual fact, of course, the new legislation has had a very positive effect throughout the province. In economic terms there is reason to believe that our labour standards initiatives have led to the expansion of purchasing power which has in turn served as stimulus to demand for goods and services, productivity, employment, and the rate of economic growth.

In social terms it has afforded our working people an equitable measure of job security, a decent standard of living, a fair share of increased leisure time, and some of the rights and privileges enjoyed by other groups in our society.

Another area of concern which has received major attention from the Government involves industrial relations. Very little need be said about the intolerable mess that we inherited in 1971. We introduced an entirely new Union Act which has reassessed and re-established the rights of workers eroded by amendments passed between 1964 and 1971. The new statute is providing additional protection for freedom of employees to organize into unions of their choice and set guidelines to promote appropriate and harmonious labour-management relations.

The revised Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker, contains clauses related to technological change which affords protection to employees who have been dislocated by automation through provision for 90 days notice of the change and the re-opening of bargaining on the effects of that technological change.

It's not my intention to attempt to minimize the impact of work stoppages in the Province of Saskatchewan but I do feel that some people tend to over-dramatize the negative side of labour-management relations. It is true that some 300,000 man work days were lost in Saskatchewan by work stoppages in 1974 and this, of course, is very great cause for concern. It should be remembered, however, that at the same time an all-time record of more than 9 million men days were lost in strikes in Canada as a whole during 1974. This is an indication that recent stresses in labour-management relations represent a national phenomena and an obvious by-product of the inflationary spiral in which working people are caught at this present moment.

To keep matters in perspective, it's also important to note that in Saskatchewan 70 per cent of our time lost in 1974 or 225,000 man days can be attributed to one single strike. That strike during 1974 related to the construction industry. Moreover, it's only fair to point out that 14 million man days were actually worked by Saskatchewan union members in 1974. And it's exceedingly important to remember too, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that 300 collective bargaining agreements were signed without a work stoppage. From the period of 1972 to 1974 there were 69 work stoppages. From the period of 1972 through to 1974 though there were 69 work stoppages there were 1,000 agreements signed with no dislocation, no lockouts, no strikes. Much of the credit, I believe, belongs to the Conciliation Service of the Department of Labour.

In 1971, the last year under the Thatcher Liberals, there was only one Conciliation Officer working within the Department of Labour, vainly rushing around over the entire province attempting to put out brush fires. We've expanded and upgraded the mediation and conciliation service and a program has been developed which facilitates involvement before an emergency situation actually arises.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a minute to quote, if I may, from three of the many letters that have been received by the Department commending our conciliation staff for their efforts. I'll refrain from identifying the particular Conciliation Officer involved, but here's a letter or an excerpt from a letter from a management representative and I quote:

An Hon. Member: — Will you name him?

Mr. Snyder: — If you like I can or if you like I can show it to you.

From the time we called, until the agreement was signed the Conciliation Officer gave himself without stint, above and beyond the call of what others might consider to be normal duty. The differences were many and his wide knowledge, tact, patience and good will were responsible in a large measure for the agreement found.

An excerpt from another letter from a union representative, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I quote again:

I have witnessed a good number of conciliators doing their thing. Your man ranks about the best. His way of reaching people, it enables both management representatives and labour representatives to place their trust in him. There's no doubt in my mind that had it not been for the Conciliation Officer entering the picture, our members would still be out on the picket lines.

Another excerpt from another letter from a lawyer representing management and I quote again:

The expertise with which the Conciliation Officer handled his duties brought about a speedy resolve to the differences between the parties. It was fortunate for the parties involved that the Conciliation Officer possessed the ability to gain the complete confidence of the parties and then throughout he was able to maintain impartiality.

These words, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think sum up better than I can the positive impact that of the Conciliation Service on labour relations in the Province of Saskatchewan.

It was evident in 1971 that there was wide spread dissatisfaction with the weakness inherited in Saskatchewan's Workers' Compensation Program. Accordingly, since that time we have reconstructed the Workers' Compensation Board. We established a task force to review and make recommendations to us regarding improvement in workmen's compensation. We've amended the Workers' Compensation legislation twice improving its coverage and significantly increasing compensation benefits. And we've appointed a worker's Advocate. There are two of them presently handling the present work load. We're actively engaged in providing assistance to injured workers and their dependants.

Mr. Speaker, the present Administration has made many other positive adjustments to labour programs as well. The Research and Planning area has been established as a major departmental division and its staff has been beefed up in a way that has permitted the development of specialized working units to devote to collective bargaining analysis, to Manpower analysis, to wage

surveys and information and library services. The division is in a position now to provide much better information base for policy development and to make available more adequate labour data to employees, employers and the public. A monthly labour report is published as well as regular reports on results of collective bargaining and these have been very well received.

The latest development in this connection relates to a new report just issued on occupational wage rates and working conditions directed towards the provision of more adequate information for pay determination purposes both within the collective bargaining system and in the unorganized sector as well. And we regard this as a major step forward in providing to both Labour and Management better information in order that more constructive and more intelligent bargaining can take place.

The Apprenticeship Branch has been strengthened and its activities have been rejuvenated to meet the occupational training demands of the 1970's, also, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Registration and the analysis of employee pension plans have been improved and legislation has been passed to provide additional protection for employees' pension rights.

In this International Women's Year it is fitting to refer also to the Women's Bureau which, under the former Liberal government had been forced to carry on without adequate resources and without any clearly defined function between 1964 and 1971. During that period of time the Women's Bureau remained as nothing more than window dressing. We have assigned a new and more constructive role for the Bureau relative to the affairs of the growing number of working women in Saskatchewan's work force. The Bureau has been given more specific equal pay legislation to administer. It's been assigned investigative staff to ensure compliance with equal pay and maternity leave provisions and since July, 1973, when the new system came into force, investigators have adjudicated claims for 206 women and one man and have arranged for restitution to them of almost \$42,000 in wages.

Let me hasten to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I do not mean to speak exclusively in the past tense when it comes to changes in labour programs. The Government recognizes that more remains to be accomplished. To this end we are currently developing additional policies. For example, in August of last year an advisory committee on non-occupational sickness and injury was appointed under the chairmanship of former Judge Harold Pope, to inquire into the problem which exists for those persons who suffer illness or injury away from the job. This represents, I believe, the main remaining gap in the worker income protection in our province. The need for the review arose largely out of the recommendations of a task force on Worker Compensation some time previously. As the task force stated and I quote from it:

It's difficult to understand the logic behind the system which provides that a person who is hurt on the job is compensated by a Government established agency. But if that same individual is injured five minutes after returning home in the evening, he is left out in the cold without financial coverage.

The Committee has submitted an interim report to me which deliberately avoids making any firm recommendations to actions to be contemplated in the sickness and accident field in light

of the complexity of the matter. Here study and dialogue are required before any conclusions can be drawn and it's proposed that public hearings will be held across the province during the latter part of March and into April in order to solicit inputs, advice and comments from interested individuals and organizations.

Another emerging area of concern relates to the concept of industrial democracy and whether workers should play a more important and a more active role in the decision making process affecting jobs and the central issues of industrial production. I had the very rare privilege of attending a conference of 63 nations on this subject in Oslo during August of 1974 in which a great many useful and thought provoking ideas were presented. One of the facets of this question which has been attracting attention most recently has been a form of consultation between work councils and management. In several of the western European countries and to a more limited extent, in Canada, committees of workers meet on a more or less regular basis with their management to discuss a full range of matters related to the operation of that particular enterprise.

Interestingly enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when in Oslo I had the opportunity to visit Norsk Hydro, a large industrial plant which is a major producer of fertilizer which uses some of the potash which is produced in this province of ours. At that plant an experiment in industrial democracy has been in operation for over two decades. In that particular plant all matters related to production techniques, to work schedules, to sales mechanisms, even matters relating to mergers and expansions involve worker participation at the plant level. And I think it is worthy of note, too, that during the 28 years during which Norsk Hydro has been in operation that plant has had one strike which lasted three days. Now whether the introduction of that form of industrial democracy would beneficially effect the labour-management relations in the Province of Saskatchewan remains an unanswered question. In any event the Department of Labour will continue to carefully study and research all aspects of employee participation in decision making in the work place.

In addition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Department of Labour is continually assessing its current activities with a view to determination of appropriate new program directions.

A Trade Union Act Review Committee is currently operating within the Department and at the same time a series of committees has been set up to study the Labour Standards Act and recommend improvements to its administrative operation and enforcement procedures.

In the context of labour policy, I believe it is fair to say that what was simply a plan on paper in 1971 has become an accomplished reality in 1975. It was not a pipe dream. It was not cloud nine legislation. On the contrary the positive and far-reaching labour enactment of the past three and a half years have been instrumental in developing the framework within which much of our social and economic advancement has taken place. We've restored Saskatchewan once again to its position prior to 1964 as a home for the most progressive labour legislation in North America. We've established a Department of Labour as a viable and a dynamic force, stimulating the growth of the well-trained and efficient complement of workers. We've taken steps to ensure that the labour force will receive an equitable share of the benefits produced by technological advances and rising living standards.

Mr. Speaker, anyone who doubts the validity of these statements has only to ask the working people of this province.

This Budget points the way towards further steps in the direction of progress, equity, and social justice. For all of these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the motion and I will be opposing the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

INTRODUCTION OF SCOUTS

Hon. A.E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Health, the Member for Regina North East, I should like to introduce a group of boy scouts in the Speaker's Gallery. They are from the 68th Uplands Troop and are accompanied by their leaders, Mr. Dave Leslie, and Mr. Art Bloos and by the assistant who is with them, Mr. James Millington. The group of scouts are here observing the proceedings in the Legislature as part of the general scouting program. I know that all of us would wish to extend to each of them our warm welcome and our hope that they will enjoy the parts of our proceedings which they are watching tonight.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Budget Debate continues.

Mr. G.F. Loken (Rosetown): — The Budget presented to us last week by the NDP Government can best be described as a failure. It failed to come to grips with the challenges and opportunities facing Saskatchewan. It fails adequately to answer the needs of senior citizens, low and middle income earners and the business community. In the upcoming provincial election, Saskatchewan residents will have an opportunity to register their dissatisfaction with the Government opposite.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Loken: — More importantly, voters will have a chance to make a positive choice for the future in supporting the Liberal Party. This Budget more than any one thing clearly indicates more than anything why the NDP Government must be defeated.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Loken: — While some of my remarks will deal with agriculture I should like to make a few observations on other areas of the Budget.

Government construction. Under the heading of General Government Services the Minister of Finance announced that in the coming year government capital construction will be held to a level of the fiscal year now ending. This is being done, the Minister claims, to reduce the pressure on the construction industry. Mr. Speaker, this is a classic example of the NDP's total ignorance of what's going on around them. As long as the Government opposite continues to rent every square inch of office space from private developers, the pressure on the construction industry will not subside. What difference does it make if the

new Toronto Dominion Tower here in Regina was not a government capital construction project. The fact remains that the NDP have moved hundreds of civil servants into the office tower, renting all but one or two floors. If the Government is serious about relieving the pressure on construction they need only do one thing, stop hiring more and more civil servants so that they will not have to rent more and more space. At the present time the Government occupies office space in about 50 buildings in the city of Regina alone. Even Mr. Robbins should be able to realize the sort of pressures this puts on construction.

Budgetary increases. The period of the NDP Government in Saskatchewan since July 1971 has been marked by greatly increased provincial revenues, greatly increased payments from Federal Government and very extravagant expenditures. The overall expenditures of the Saskatchewan Provincial Government from 1975-76 will total about \$1.14 billion compared with \$450 million in 1971-72 under the Liberal administration. This is almost 150 per cent greater. In 1975-76 payments to the NDP Government by the Federal Government will total about \$330 million as compared to about \$252 million in 1971-72. Large amounts of additional revenues received by the NDP Government has been squandered in senseless extravagance. Under the NDP Government administration costs have skyrocketed. According to the 1975-76 Estimates, administration costs will amount to over \$200 million as compared to \$128 million under the Liberal administration. This shows an increase of around \$73 million to pay for salaries of the 4,000 new people hired to administer the province. The Government's mistaken priorities have meant that, while the old age pensioners received next to nothing in the Budget, millions of dollars have been spent on the Land Bank and Crown corporations which are unnecessary and should never have been created.

Millions are also being spent on Government advertising, propaganda designed to win votes. Since the NDP have taken office, advertising by the Government in newspapers has more than doubled, topping the million dollar a year mark. Radio and television advertising has increased even more. This administration would far rather spend its money telling voters how wonderful they are than actually doing something worthwhile for senior citizens or other disadvantaged groups. It is also interesting to note that the NDP advertising increases in direct proportion to how close we are to the election. They are wasting the public's money because no amount of these public relations will save Members opposite from defeat at the polls whenever the next election might come.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the worst aspect of the Government's agricultural program is the Land Bank. We have continually told the Government that it is not enough for the state to buy up farm land and lease it to farmers. Saskatchewan farmers want to own their own land. The Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture has made this clear. The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities has said the same thing. The Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) and his Cabinet colleagues refuse to listen. The Budget contains an additional \$12 million to buy up more farm land and we still have no guarantee that one acre of it will ever be sold back.

The Liberal Party has committed itself to providing a workable land transfer system that will give farmers ready to retire a market for their land and by putting the credit of the Government behind them, allow young farmers to buy this land. This is what Saskatchewan farmers want but since the NDP refuses to believe it we will let the election results speak for themselves.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Loken: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Government's Cow-Calf Cash Advance program has been a dismal failure and has in no way solved the problems facing the cattle industry. For many producers it is really postponing the day of retribution and in fact made that day more difficult to face. The Cash Advance program encouraged producers to hold on to their cattle last fall and sell them this spring. Unfortunately cattle prices are falling and have fallen during this period and many of our livestock producers stand to lose more than if they had sold last fall.

Mr. Speaker, the FarmStart program is one which Members on this side of the House have no difficulty in supporting. However, I am disappointed that the Government chose not to increase the income limit of the program so that more of our farmers would be able to participate in FarmStart. The money was available but the strange priorities of the Members opposite seem to have made it impossible.

The Government's confused attitude towards the Grain Stabilization Bill is also cause for concern. We well remember how the NDP sabotaged the original Stabilization Plan when it was presented in 1972. The Agriculture Minister has a responsibility to the farmers in Saskatchewan to stand up and be counted and among those supporting the Federal Government's Stabilization Plan. For years western farmers have fought for such a plan that would guarantee income security even when the prices for agricultural products went down. The Minister should quit his political criticism to ensure the Stabilization Bill receives the support it deserves.

The NDP have proven their inability to manage the economy of our province in such a way that we can not be assured of continued prosperity. They have reacted to circumstances in an unimaginative manner and the result will be that our economic base will not be broadened.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I cannot support this Budget and will vote for the amendment.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J.A. Pepper (Weyburn): — Mr. Speaker, it certainly gives me a great deal of pleasure to have this opportunity to participate in this Budget Debate, however, since listening to the Hon. Member for Rosetown I find that I have a very lengthy address to give on this Budget Debate now and I have not negotiated with the Whip on the other side to stop the clock, so I wonder if at this time I might beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

MOTIONS FOR RETURNS

Return No. 55

Mr. J.G. Lane (Lumsden) moved that an Order of the Assembly do issue for Return No. 55 showing:

(1) Whether any overpayments of funds were made to any individuals, groups, municipalities or local governments

under the Saskatchewan Flood Assistance program during the calendar year 1974. (2) If so, (a) the number of such overpayments that were made; (b) to whom and the amounts in each case the overpayments were made.

Mr. D.W. Cody (Minister of Co-operatives): — Mr. Speaker, before I move an amendment to this motion I want to say a few words about the program and give the Members opposite a little bit of information which I am sure that they are asking for and would like this House to know and the people of Saskatchewan to know as well. As everybody, Mr. Speaker, is well aware, last year we had an extremely critical situation in Saskatchewan and, of course, this Government acted quickly to meet the flood problem needs of the people. We set up a flood assistance agency within a matter of hours and started making adjustments and payments to people who had real problems in this province. I am sure that it will be of interest to all Members of the House to know just what form this action took and what we had and have been doing by way of results today.

As of March 10th, Mr. Speaker, 1,764 claims totalling more than \$4.5 million dollars have been paid. A breakdown of the claims reveals that the following are the claims paid.: Individuals — 1,080 of them received about \$1.4 million. Small business totalling 211 received almost \$600,000. Hospitals and charitable organizations, 28 claims for almost \$65,000. Local Governments — 76 claims, more than \$1.7 million. Provincial Government departments which helped in the flood, four claims of almost \$700,000. Farms, 365 claims, Mr. Speaker, and I think that bears noting that we did pay 365 claims in the farming sector in spite of the claims made by the Opposition that we did not pay farmers under this program. They received approximately \$400,000.

I should point out that the \$700,000 paid to Government departments by far the largest amount over \$500,000 was spent by the Department of Highways in the containment of flood waters at Lumsden and Moose Jaw. The average claim, Mr. Speaker, per individual amounts to more than \$1,290, while payments to small businesses averaged \$2,800; municipal claims averaged \$22,800. Now I can assure you that the taxpayers of Saskatchewan will certainly think and will know that this program was well worth the efforts that were put into it by the Flood Assistance Agency . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — . . . because I can assure you that \$22,800 to municipalities certainly has meant a great deal. Mr. Speaker, we estimate that the claims amounting to \$1.5 million to \$2 million are still outstanding. The majority of these are municipal and provincial government claims and we hope to have the bulk of these settled by the end of the fiscal year. We have received assurance from the Federal Government that they will assist in meeting the costs incurred under the Flood Assistance program. When I say that the Federal Government will assist I mean that they will give the same kind of share to Saskatchewan that every other citizen of Canada receives in peacetime flooding. However, to date, every dollar that has been spent has been a provincial dollar. We did not wait

until we had the Federal Government dollar before we acted to help people in distress and the people of Saskatchewan have been the beneficiaries.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the manner in which this Government has acted to cope with this serious problem. The problem is solid evidence of this Government's concern for people. It is a continuing source of embarrassment of course, to the Opposition Members whose full concern is for votes and not for people. And, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that when I have been going throughout the country and down to Moose Jaw and around the Lumsden area that people have very much appreciated this program.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody: — Mr. Speaker, with those few words I want to move the following amendment. I should like to amend Return 55, seconded by my seatmate, Mr. Robbins (Minister of Finance) so that:

All the words after the word 'showing' be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

(1)The total number of claims paid under the 1974 Saskatchewan Flood Assistance Program. (2) The total dollar value of claims paid under the 1974 Saskatchewan Flood Assistance Program. (3) The dollar value of overpayment under the program. (4) The overpayment as a percentage of total payments under the program. (5)The dollars overpaid under the 1974 Saskatchewan Flood Assistance Program as an average overpayment per claim.

Mr. A.R. Guy (Athabasca): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just want to say a few words on this. We haven't had a copy of the amendment yet so I will be adjourning it so that we have time to study it. I think we all recognize that there was a serious problem of flooding last spring and that there was a great deal of damage done. It is true as the Minister has stated that there were some 1,764 claims paid. But I wish to remind the Minister that there were probably a considerable number more claims that should have been paid. I think that it was quite obvious that the program that the Government claims to have developed so carefully and so cautiously was really a patchwork affair. It depended on whether the rain came on a Sunday or whether it came on a Monday. It depended whether it came on the week or the first of the week. I know of one major example and that was a very severe flood in Prince Albert and they never received one nickel. Now surely to goodness if the people in Saskatoon and the people in Lumsden and the people in Regina received compensation, which I say they had a right to receive, surely to goodness anybody else in the province should have had the right to receive compensation for flooding. And yet this didn't occur. So I say it was a patchwork effort on the part of the Government.

I would ask them in the future that if they are going to pay claims on flooding to come up with a provincial policy that will apply to every one. Let's not treat some parts of the province as second class citizens and refuse to pay claims when there has been flood damage and then overpay, as the Minister admits has been done in other areas of the province. One can't help but be concerned about the fact that there have been over— payments when it comes to the settling of claims. And there

appears to be only one reason for an overpayment and that is perhaps he is trying to make some political advantage out of a very serious and unfortunate situation. Surely, if there are overpayments it bears out what I started out to say, that they had no plan, they did it in a patchwork manner, they developed their formulas as they went along. They had a formula for Lumsden, then they had a formula for Saskatoon. They didn't have any formula at all for Prince Albert because they never got a nickel out of it. When the formula changed according to which constituency it happened to be in . . .

Mr. Lane: — That won't last long.

Mr. Guy: — No, perhaps it won't last long but it is interesting to note that the largest proportion went to the Lumsden constituency in which the Minister is trying to seek election or at least a good part of it. If there had been a formula that had been fair to everybody rather than this patchwork arrangement there shouldn't have been a requirement of overpayment. I say again, that if the Government is going to develop a policy for flooding, let's make it a fair one so that everybody in the Province of Saskatchewan is eligible. No one complains or takes exception to the fact that these claims were paid, in fact, we are glad that the Government did come to their assistance and we hope that the Federal Government will pay a share of these claims. But we do regret and we do take exception to the fact that the Government saw fit not to treat everyone alike in this particular matter.

Mr. Speaker, I have some other words that I should like to say after I have had a chance to read the amendment, so I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

RESOLUTIONS

Resolution No. 8 - Financial Account of Intercontinental Packers

Mr. T. Weatherald (Cannington) moved, seconded by Mr. Lane (Lumsden):

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to provide a full annual accounting to this Assembly of all financial aspects of its investment in Intercontinental Packers Limited.

He said: Mr. Speaker, before moving this Resolution I should just like to say a few words about the resolution. It asks that the Government opposite provide the information regarding all financial aspects of Intercontinental Packers. It is approximately two years since the Government first announced that they paid \$10.2 million for a 45 per cent interest in Intercontinental Packers. I am not going to spend a lot of time going over why we said at that time and why it has been proven since that the Government threw away probably in the excess of \$6 million in that purchase. By all calculations according to price earnings ratio and financial statements the Government actually threw away approximately \$6 million in that purchase. Since that time we have had no accounting from the Government opposite as to how Intercontinental Packers has been doing. Two years have passed

sand this Assembly, the Members and the people of Saskatchewan have not received any information as to what the status of our 45 per cent interest is in that company. So what I am saying now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the Government opposite provide to this Assembly and the public of Saskatchewan all the relevant information as to how our 45 per cent interest is doing as far as an investment is concerned. How the company is doing and I think that if I may speculate as to what may well be said after I take my place, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do not think it will be a satisfactory answer to have the Members of this Assembly and the public of Saskatchewan told that the business of the Company is so confidential that it would be difficult for the Company to disclose this type of information. I don't think that that is a satisfactory answer.

Certainly when the Government invested this amount of money, over \$10 million into this Company, the owners of Intercontinental Packers, Mr. Mendel, at that time, should have been well aware that the Members of the Legislature would ask for all pertinent, relevant financial information regarding that Company. We have been told in the past that because of competition and because Mr. Mendel still owned the majority part of the Company that that information could not be provided. I don't think that is a valid reason and I don't believe that any other Members of this Legislature including many of the Members opposite think it is a valid reason. It is most certainly true than when he sold he should have been aware that the people and the Members here would be demanding a full financial disclosure and of course that is what we are asking for now.

I think with those few words, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Resolution is self-explanatory and I do now move Resolution No. 8.

Hon. K. Thorson (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I say that I agree almost entirely with everything that the Member for Cannington has said about the need for public information about the investments of the Crown in various business ventures. He is wrong when he says we paid too much but I agree with him in the general thrust of this resolution that there should be public information available. The only problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the method by which the reporting should be done. Therefore, I move, seconded by the Hon. Attorney General (Mr. Romanow):

That Resolution No. 8 be amended by deleting all words after the word 'Assembly' and the following substituted therefore:

recommend that the equity investments of the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation be reviewed by the Select Standing Committee on Crown Corporations during the course of considering the latest annual report of the said Corporation.

Mr. Guy: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I see the intent of what the Minister is trying to do here with this regard, however, I would have to remind him and other Members of the Committee that in the past in Crown corporations the Government Minister has always, in fact, I think he has always refused to give this type of information regarding companies which have received money from SEDCO. So, unless it is his intent to change his attitude

towards providing this type of information, I am afraid we will get into Crown corporations, have the SEDCO Corporation before us and then this information that my Hon. colleague has requested will be denied the Committee. So I hope perhaps when the Minister closes the debate he would assure us that this type of information will be provided. Because unless I am mistaken, in the past this has not been the case. So we should get this information which I believe the public of Saskatchewan certainly wish to receive because we have invested a large sum of money in the purchase of these shares.

I think that unless he is prepared to give us that commitment perhaps we had better debate it further in this Chamber.

Mr. G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it seems to me that, in light of the past practice of the Minister not giving this information before Crown corporations committee, the amendment he has given would seemingly be an abuse to the process of this House. All he is simply doing is trying to finesse the matter and put it into Crown corporations where he will bury and hide the very information that this House and the people of Saskatchewan are entitled to. Unless we are going to get some pretty definite assurances from the Minister responsible that we are going to get the financial details of the Intercontinental purchase, then this House is just a sham and the actions of the Minister are just a sham, and that is wrong. I would hope that the Minister opposite will give the Opposition, in writing, his assurance that the full financial transaction and the information requested by the Members opposite and asked for by the people of Saskatchewan will be given. If the members of the Crown Corporations Committee are now forced to go into the Committee with this amendment and turn around and be stonewalled in this particular case, as I say it is making a sham out of this House, it is making a sham out of the democratic process and it is making a sham out of the rights and the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. R. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Resolution No. 10 - International Women's Year

Mr. B.M. Dyck (Saskatoon City Park) moved, seconded by Mr. Mostoway (Hanley):

That this Assembly adopt the principles incorporated in the International Women's Year as set out by the United Nations and urges the Government of Saskatchewan to continue taking actions to improve the status of women in this province.

He said: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you are aware, this year, 1975 is International Women's Year as declared by the United Nations. It is a year for countries to undertake intensified action to promote equality between men and women to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort and to recognize the importance of women's increasing contribution to the strengthening of world peace.

Mr. Speaker, our Government recognizes International Women's Year and its principles as being of great importance and significance. It is a year that has a great deal of potential, a potential for moving societies closer to those principles established by the United Nations. More importantly it has a potential for bringing a general awareness of the inequalities which face women today. Too often ridicule and derisiveness are cast upon efforts to achieve the goal of equality between men and women.

Our Government believes, firmly, that there should be equality of opportunity for all individuals, whether they be male or female. It is a principle of which we are proud, it is a goal we have in the past and are at the present working towards. This Government is pleased to be undertaking some special activities for International Women's Year. A grant program has been implemented so that the people of the province may pursue projects of their own choosing to mark this year. A literary and creative arts contest will be run in every school and will be open to every student in the province. In addition, we are co-operating with the Federal Government in special activities they are undertaking for this year. As I mentioned previously, these are special activities which we are undertaking to mark this year.

However, the efforts of this Government to improve the status of women commenced before 1975. In 1971 when this Government promised a New Deal for People, we meant just that, a New Deal for People. Not a new deal for one particular nationality or for one particular age group or for one particular sex but a new deal for people. This Government has demonstrated over and over again that it is a Government for the people. Not only have we fulfilled our promises of 1971, but we have demonstrated that we listened to the people and we respond to their concerns. It is a concern, a very real concern of numerous individuals and groups in this province that there is not equality of opportunity for women. What is a concern for the people is a concern for this Government.

Since being elected this Government has made a steady and significant progress in its efforts to improve opportunities for women. Amendments have been made to The Fair Employment Practices Act and The Fair Accommodation Act. These amendments legislatively prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex in employment, employment advertising and accommodation. We have established a Human Rights Commission for which part of its responsibility is to administer the aforementioned legislation.

The Labour Standards Act of 1969 has been amended. Women in the labour force are now entitled to a maximum of 18 weeks maternity leave. It is now mandatory that women receive equal pay to that of men for the performance of work of a similar nature.

A Workers' Compensation Act has been passed by this Government under which benefits for females and males are equated. Legislation has been introduced to amend The Married Women's Property Act. This Legislation which is intended to provide for an equitable distribution of property upon marriage break up is an interim measure only. This Government intends to bring about total reform of Marital Property Law pending the final recommendation of the Saskatchewan Law Reform Commission which is currently studying this area of the Law.

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Mr. Speaker, these are just some of the legislative actions that this Government has taken to improve opportunities for women. But change in legislation cannot alone solve the problem. For this reason the Government has proceeded with a number of other activities.

An Advisory Council on the Status of Women has been established, one of only three in existence at the provincial level in this country.

This Government has introduced major changes in day care programming in the province. A Day Care Branch has been established in the Department of Social Services along with a Day Care Board to advise that Branch on its programming. In addition, subsidies based on income have been made available to parents to help them meet the cost of day care services.

We have taken steps in regard to educational opportunities. Pilot projects to improve career counselling for young women and men are now under way. A Family Life Education Advisory Council, established by this Government in 1975 has recently presented its final recommendations regarding Family Life Education in the schools.

A new school program for physical education has been developed and was introduced into Divisions I and II in the fall of 1974. This program stresses participation in physical activity for both sexes.

A study of bias in social studies and basic readers textbooks has been completed. As a result of this study some textbooks have been deleted from the curriculum, addenda have been added to some books, and guidelines regarding bias have been developed for use in curriculum activities.

In addition, a study is under way to determine the need for part-time student loans.

Action has been taken in other areas. Insurance benefits for Saskatchewan civil servants no longer discriminate on the basis of sex. A study has been undertaken of all Acts administered by the Department of Labour, with a view to determining those which contain protective measure clauses. A Family Planning Advisory Committee has been established which will be making recommendations to the Government on Family Planning programs.

Mr. Speaker, in 1975, a Task Force was commissioned by this Government to review the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The Report of the Task Force revealed that indeed, substantial progress had been made in implementing those recommendations in our province. This past year has seen even greater activity and progress.

However, the very fact that there is an International Women's Year, makes it quite clear that equal privileges and responsibilities for women are not a reality in many societies, including ours.

We have long viewed women and men as having traditional roles in our society. For many reasons this traditional delineation of roles is changing. I view this change as a positive thing. Surely it is in the best interest of society to open the doors of opportunity to all individuals. Only the

individual can determine the extent to which the opportunity is used, but the doors must be opened. And no matter how individuals decide to contribute to society - whether as homemakers, as lawyers, farmers, engineers or nurses, those contributions must be recognized and valued.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that it is the responsibility of governments to remove those barriers that stand in the way of equality between men and women. This Government has indicated by its actions that it is prepared and willing to accept this responsibility.

The International Women's Year principles - equality between man and woman, the full integration of women in the total development effort, recognition of the importance of women's increasing contribution to the strengthening of world peace - they are worthy principles and desirable goals.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all levels of Government, I urge all private business, I urge community groups to educate and to promote the cause of equal rights for men and women in our society. And I say this because sometimes the discrimination that may exist against women in the workplace or in other spheres is often not one of design. It is one that is frequently unintentional and this is true because the root causes of many differences that are made between the sexes lie deep within the long history of the role of women in the society of the western world. The role that the women are asked to play in our society commences with the conditioning process by the family unit at a very early age. This conditioning process is later reinforced by the society at large in the later life of the individual.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that overt changes in things like fair employment practices and so on are only a part of the process of change. Along with this there needs to be a reshaping of the attitudes of society towards the role of the woman. The necessary prerequisite to this reshaping of attitudes is an educative process. I urge all interested groups and organizations to assume some responsibility in carrying out this educative process. And I urge the individual to examine his own attitudes carefully in this context.

Additionally, Mr. Speaker, may I, at this juncture, issue a warning. The educative process is not accomplished overnight. It will take time. And there are inherent dangers in attempting to bring about these deep psychological changes too rapidly. Nevertheless, I am confident they should and will occur because, Mr. Speaker, if we preclude women from making their rightful contribution in the sciences, in the arts, in medicine, in politics, in education and in the work force, then indeed, we are all the losers.

I therefore move, seconded by my colleague, the Member for Hanley, that this Assembly adopt the principles incorporated in the International Women's Year as set out by the United Nations and urge the Government of Saskatchewan to continue taking actions to improve the status of women in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J. G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Sneaker, the Liberal Party was somewhat surprised to see the resolution of the Members opposite. They seemingly have taken ‘Johnny come lately’ approach to the fair treatment of women and also the equality of women. I think in this Legislature it is interesting to note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it was the Liberal Opposition which recommended that this province adopt provisions to the Status of Women Report and not the Government.

It is interesting to note, too, for comparisons sake, a review of the Liberal Government’s record in Ottawa as to its position about equality for women. In 1971 the Federal Government passed amendments to the Canada Labour Code requiring equal pay for equal work. The Unemployment Insurance Act has been changed so that the assumption of the man as breadwinner no longer applies. The National Housing Loan Regulations have been amended. The National Housing Act has been amended so that either the husband or the wife can be considered the homeowner and a hundred per cent of the wife’s income can now be included to qualify for a National Housing Act loan. The Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation is providing funds for the construction of day care centres and a National Day Care Information Centre has been established. Under a Federal Liberal Government, child care expenses are now tax deductible. The Federal Liberal Government has appointed the first woman Speaker of the Senate, the first woman Lieutenant-Governor, the first woman Deputy Minister, six federal female judges are on the Superior Court level and five women Senators, all in the very, very recent past.

An Hon. Member: — Play on, Paul, play on!

Mr. Lane: — I think that the Hon. Member for Hanley has certainly recognized that the female appointees of the Federal Liberal Government are qualified. Certainly the best source of qualified women is the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan. And it’s interesting to note that the record of the Government opposite, when it comes to women candidates they have not nominated one female candidate in a seat they could even think of winning and they’ve got token candidates, token female candidates in the seats they will lose in the next provincial election whereas the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan has female candidates who will win their seats and are in seats that are considered good Liberal seats and we’re proud, we’re proud to welcome them, not as token candidates as the Government Members opposite do, but as sincere concerned politicians who are trying to contribute to the general betterment of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Romanow: — Have you talked to Tony Merchant lately? It’s coming up fast.

Mr. Lane: — I think it’s interesting, I think it’s . . . Well, you wouldn’t know it by the activity in the seat, she is coming on fast.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — It’s very interesting to note that the positive proposals that are coming out of this Session as to women’s rights

and the equality of women are coming from the Liberal caucus and the Liberal Opposition and the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan.

A Liberal administration, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will immediately implement a policy to eliminate discrimination against women within the Government itself and within provincial statutes. We will amend laws under the provincial jurisdiction to recognize the changing role of women in society. It is interesting to note that under an NDP Government and under the regulations of SGIO, housewives that are disabled by automobile accidents are only entitled to a maximum of 12 weeks of disability payments while other individuals are entitled to up to 104 weeks of payments. A Liberal Government will enact a United Family Court Act placing all marital disputes in one court.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I realize that it may be your last Session but if you could control the Members in the front benches to your right, obviously the level of debate is too high for them. Mr. Speaker, they're trying to . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — . . . trying to get by, by their usual amenities that come out of there.

The Liberal Government secondly will enact the United Family Court Act placing all marital disputes in one court so that spouses, on the dissolution of their marriage need not become entangled in several different courts, before several different judges trying to resolve in a piecemeal fashion, their disputes over custody and access to children, the terms of support, the rights to property and the family home.

Mr. Speaker, a Liberal Government will attempt to tap the labour resource presently unused by the Government opposite by making greater use of women's volunteer organizations and will provide them with the necessary financial support to continue their role.

Mr. Speaker, the Resolution certainly will be supported by the Members opposite and it should be made clear in this Legislature that the Government opposite is merely taking the position that it will jump on an issue that has developed. It has shown no leadership on this issue. It's been the Liberal Opposition that's taken the initiative since 1971 to get this issue before this Legislature. Our Members will have more to say on this particular motion, and beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Resolution No. 11 - Elimination of Section 8 of The Consumer Affairs Act

Mr. G.B. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park) moved, seconded by Mr. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition):

That this Assembly recommends to the consideration of the Government of Saskatchewan that Section 8 of the Consumer Affairs Act be eliminated, due to its provision of excessive discretionary power to the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

He said: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a number of occasions in this House I have suggested that, while the Government opposite may have 117 people in the Industry and Commerce Branch trying to promote business and make Saskatchewan attractive as an investment centre, on the other hand many other departments and branches of the Government are doing their level best to offset what the Industry Department is trying to do and as a result are damaging the image of Saskatchewan in the eyes of the possible newcomers and making it more and more difficult for businessmen to carry on.

I refer to Section 8 of the Consumer Affairs Act and this particular section, in case you don't recall what it is about, is the one whereby sole right of decision is given to the Minister, where, in his opinion, certain actions by business is such that it would justify to close them down for a period not exceeding five days. These offences might involve a form of advertising. It might involve a form of contract they're using. It might involve and this is the catchall, selling or offering for sale, advertising for sale or distributing any goods or services in any business or undertaking. I suppose that could be construed to include Crown corporations and agencies in the Government, Intercontinental Packers, SaskOil and all the rest because it seems to be all-inclusive.

Now what happens after this great decision is made by the Minister? Well, nothing need be done by the Government or the Minister until the expiration of five days. There's no appeal allowed. The edict can be let stand for five days regardless of the merit or demerit of it, regardless of the damage it might do to the business or the businessman. On the fifth day, before the expiration of the fifth day, by making application to a judge of the Court of Queen's Bench it can be extended for an additional period ad infinitum. It could go on and on and on.

There is provision, of course, when this does happen that the injured party or the guilty party has the right of appeal which is a little relief but by this time the damage could be quite extensive.

I feel that this legislation was never required in the first place. The rest of the Bill is pretty acceptable. I don't think anybody can take much exception to the rest of the Bill. I don't know why a good Bill had to be cluttered up with such an undesirable section. I'm given to understand and I hope I'm right that no other province in Canada has legislation quite as severe as this in its Consumer Affairs Legislation. I'm also given to understand that it's never been used by the Minister since it was enacted. I don't know whether that was because, in his opinion, there's been no infraction that would compel him to do it or whether he is afraid to use it. I think maybe it's the latter because I doubt very much whether the Government has the nerve to use this particular section and I dare them to use it in the next 60 days particularly.

Now let's look at just what's involved. Under section, Section 8, subsection 6, part (b) where it sets forth the circumstances under which the judge of the Court of Appeal can extend it and grant an order. It can even go down to the size of print of any words, letters, signs or symbols in the contract. I presume, though, I haven't read the rest of that section that the same could apply probably to advertising. I suggest that possibly all the service stations on Albert Street are guilty of

an infraction here because they have some pretty fine print up there beside the major price. When you look at it quickly you think it's 58 cents but when you get up closer you find it is closer to 59 cents than 58 cents. I don't know whether this is the type of advertising that was kept in mind when the Act was drafted. If it is, I wonder why the Minister hasn't moved on it to close down some operations for this type of advertising. I see that the advertising has to be related to the cost of credit disclosure but Section (c) under 8(1) the catchall clause I think would cover the advertising I spoke of.

I would ask the Minister to tell this House whether he has had any occasion to use the Section, whether in his opinion the Section is warranted considering the fact that it does make a reflection on the legitimate business operators of the province, it's just like a guillotine hanging over the necks of all business people in Saskatchewan. The blade may never drop on them but, nevertheless, it's there. So, if that is the purpose of the Section to act as a scare section to keep people from stepping over the line, I dare say there are many other cases where such sections might be included in legislation to act as a deterrent to any section of our populace.

To sum up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I feel that this is a very bad Section. There are many others in our legislation. I can recall, no end of sections where, if a person doesn't pay his fines he is subject to a jail term. I hope some day the Attorney General's Department gets around to removing all those sections from all the legislation in this province because I don't think anybody should be put in jail because he can't pay a fine.

This Section almost falls in the same category as cluttering up our books with unnecessary legislation and worst of all, it is another thorn in the side of business to have this hanging over their heads and I would sincerely trust that the House would consider this Resolution.

Mr. E.L. Tchorzewski (Minister of Consumer Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, I think a few comments are in order on this resolution to eliminate Section 8 of the Department of Consumer Affairs Act. As usual, Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite have persisted in taking this Section out of context and totally distorting its meaning and intent and I should like to set the record straight at this time.

In the process of my remarks I am sure that I will answer the questions raised by the mover of this Resolution and I invite him to listen carefully to some of the things which I have to say. Section 8 of the Consumer Affairs Act gives the Minister of Consumer Affairs the right to issue a cease order under certain limited circumstances when consumers are being victimized and it is in the public interest to stop the practice quickly. Mr. Speaker, before I go into the details of this Section, I should like to take a few moments to put this issue in perspective.

Now, the Members opposite have never overcome their tunnel vision on this Section or indeed on consumer protection as a whole. Perhaps I can broaden their tunnel and if they pay attention, they may see a glimmer of light at the end of their carefully constructed tunnel, a glimmer of light as to what consumer protection is all about.

Mr. Speaker, it was early apparent to our Government in 1971 that consumers had been almost totally neglected during the seven-year drought of Liberal administration. And I think that they recognize that there was something wrong with the way consumers were being treated. The Liberal solution was to pass some piecemeal legislation to deal with very narrow problems but their tunnel vision prevented them from seeing the broader solutions, solutions which would help a great many consumers and those broader solutions were pretty obvious, Mr. Speaker.

Now even the Members opposite must have noticed that Consumer Affairs departments were being set up across the country to provide a broader solution to consumer problems. The Federal Government, even a Liberal Federal Government had established a department to look after the consumers' interests, and several provincial governments had done the same thing.

Mr. Steuart: — Does that make it right?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well maybe that did not make it right, Mr. Leader of the Opposition. There was a commission that your government was involved in establishing and that Batten Commission in 1968 recommended that the three prairie provinces each establish consumer affairs departments with sufficient power to do something for the consumer. I can only conclude, Mr. Speaker, that the Members opposite have never believed in the Consumer Affairs Department and even worse they don't believe in helping the consumer today. But our Government, Mr. Speaker, did realize the plight of the consumer and we did something about it and this Government should be commended for establishing a Consumer Affairs Department with enough authority really to help the consumer. In the two and one-half year history of the Department it has made great strides in protecting the consumers interests. During that two and one-half years the Department has received nearly 10,000 complaints from consumers and the great majority of those have been successfully resolved. I think it is interesting to recall that when the Bill to establish the Department was proposed, just two and one-half years ago the Member for Regina Whitmore Park stated that:

This type of legislation is just another type of hatchet hanging over the neck of the businessman.

I don't believe his attitude has changed much since that time and he indicated that this evening in his remarks. The Member opposite should be pleased to hear the businessmen in this province have not looked upon the Department as holding a hatchet. In fact, we have found Saskatchewan merchants very co-operative in resolving legitimate complaints from consumers. Mr. Speaker, merchants know. Let me tell you why they have been co-operative. They are co-operative because merchants know that bad practices are not only bad for the consumer but they are bad for the business community as a whole. Our Government has had a healthy relationship with the business community because both are vitally interested in eliminating undesirable practices and elements in the marketplace.

For example, Mr. Speaker, in 1971, my colleagues and I realized that there were certain ills in the market place which had to be corrected immediately. There was a great variety of training courses being sold by correspondence which were not providing the career opportunities that they promised. Persons buying these courses were having severe difficulties getting

refunds of the large sums of money that they had paid. We, therefore, passed The Sales of Training Courses Act in 1972 and this Act has been extremely successful in assuring that purchasers of training courses get the refunds they are entitled to.

Another example, Mr. Speaker. Pyramid selling was also running rampant when we took over in 1971 and we passed an Act which strictly regulates such activities and I am pleased to advise, Mr. Speaker, that today pyramid sellers are not victimizing Saskatchewan people any more.

Collection agents were also creating some problems, problems which The Collection Agents Act couldn't cure. Debtors and their families were being harassed in some cases, sometimes to the extent that the debtor would lose his job as a result of the action of the collection agent. We, therefore, amended The Collection Agents Act to prevent harassment of debtors by collection agents.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the Department's short history, major strides have been made in enforcing the existing consumer protection legislation and intensive effort has been made to ensure that all those who are supposed to be licensed are in fact licensed under the applicable act. Audits and investigations have been done on various businesses and agents to ensure that they know the law and are abiding by it. In several cases bonds held by the Department for certain vendors have been forfeited and the proceeds paid out to the consumer having valid claims against the vendor.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has made it possible to provide through an effective administration of consumer protection laws to the benefit of consumers and legitimate businessmen. Now the Liberal approach was to pass the laws and then see that they operate effectively and without a department this would be very difficult and in some cases impossible.

The Government of Saskatchewan has realized that it is not enough to pass legislation on particular problem areas or to help consumers resolve their problems after the fact. We have realized that a broader approach has to be taken for consumer protection and consumers need help in avoiding problems before they occur, and the Department has done a great deal to help consumers in this regard as well. Consumers have come to realize, partly through the Department's efforts, that they should be better informed before they make a purchase. The Department has been able to answer nearly 8,000 inquiries from consumers seeking information on products and services. We have encouraged consumers to use this service and the resulting demand for information has been growing tremendously during the past year.

But a Department of Consumer Affairs has an even broader responsibility than protecting the consumer through a legislation and a complaint and inquiry service. The Members opposite believe that consumer protection should be limited to a few, as I said, a few very narrow laws and a few very narrow problems. They have failed to realize the broader spectrum of consumer affairs. The broader spectrum must include developing the consumer's awareness of his position in the market place, how that market place operates and how the consumer can operate more effectively in his or her best interest.

Mr. Speaker, this can be done through a comprehensive education program. The Department of Consumer Affairs has developed and implemented such a program and already, in a short period of time, has done a great deal in the area of consumer education. The Department has worked with the Department of Education, the Community Colleges, low income groups, adult upgrading programs and community groups in developing and presenting consumer education programs.

The Department has also recognized that consumers as a group rather than as individuals, are often victimized in the market place. And we have done something about it, Mr. Speaker. For example, last fall there was an antifreeze scare across Canada. Manufacturers and suppliers were, with the help of some of the media, panicking the public into believing that there would be a shortage of antifreeze for the current winter. The result was that consumers were buying antifreeze anywhere at any price and prices were being driven beyond reasonable levels. My department investigated the situation and found that the shortage was largely contrived in order to drive prices up and in fact, while supplies were tight, they were adequate. By informing consumers of this the scare ended and the prices began to drop somewhat.

We also took a firm stand when it appeared that grocery stores might be leaning towards accepting credit cards for grocery purchases and I personally opposed such measures as they would lead to higher food costs, encourage impulse buying and result in even more over-committed debtors. I, therefore, wrote to the food retailers in Saskatchewan advising them of my aversion to such measures and discouraging them from adopting these practices. The replies we have received have been encouraging and hopefully we will not be faced with the use of credit cards for grocery purchases in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hope that these few comments will enlighten the Members opposite on the broad scope of Consumer Affairs programs. Our Government has recognized the need to assist consumers and we have done something about it. Caveat emptor, or let the buyer beware, is no longer the sole ruling for us in the Saskatchewan market place thanks to the efforts of this New Democratic Party Government.

Now, the Members opposite have harped away about Section 8 of the Consumers Affairs Act for about two and one-half years because they realize that they missed the boat in not establishing a department when they were in power. They had a chance to help consumers in this province and they missed it. Mr. Speaker, their chagrin is obvious. This constant niggling about Section 8 is evidence that the Members opposite are still back in the dark ages. They still do not realize the consumer is at a disadvantage in the market place. The consumer does not have an equal bargaining position in the market place and my colleagues have recognized this. The Department of Consumer Affairs Act was proposed because we knew that consumers were at a disadvantage and the department has helped to restore some balance in that market place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I should like to refer specifically again to Section 8, the cease order section, of the Department of Consumer Affairs Act as the Member for Whitmore Park insists on misrepresenting this Section and its scope. And I should like to emphasize that this is an emergency procedure only whereby the Minister is given the authority to issue an order only

when such action is in the public interest that this order must come before the Court of Queen's Bench within the maximum of five days. Now without these provisions the Saskatchewan consumer could be victimized before any legal action could be pursued and if a cease order is not issued the company or vendors involved could escape our jurisdiction and the consumer would be left without legal redress.

Now, the Minister's authority is limited under this legislation. Section 8 of The Consumer Affairs Act is intended solely as an emergency measure as I have said. Under this Section the Minister has the power to issue a cease order to any person to cease any form of advertising, to cease any form of contract, and to cease selling any goods and services. Now this is an interim step taken in the public interest to protect the consumer until the time a prima facie case is established until such time as it can be taken before the Court of Queen's Bench. This order may last for a maximum of only five days.

Mr. Speaker, it should also like to take this opportunity to strongly emphasize that this procedure is not a wide departure from the usual judicial process. It is an interim procedure that allows a cease order to be given as an emergency measure and in the public interest and therefore, it would only be necessary to follow the procedure in instances where the vendor or operators of a particular scheme may in all likelihood be leaving this jurisdiction which would necessitate action under this Section and it would be in the public interest. Otherwise the usual judicial procedure could be followed. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I must stress once again that this Section is intended solely as an emergency measure and is merely an interim step taken in the public interest to the consumer. To date it has not been found necessary to invoke the provision of this Section of the Consumer Affairs Act in answer to the Member opposite. It is a very necessary provision for the protection of the consumer in certain instances and is, of course, subject to judicial review.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I realize that while Section 8 has served a useful purpose in preventing certain unscrupulous schemes from getting going in this province through its deterrent effect, perhaps the time has come to take a broader look at undesirable business practices. Section 8 is, after all, a very limited section covering very limited circumstances for a very limited period of time. The field of consumer protection has expanded rapidly in the past two and one-half years and many agencies to protect consumers have been established during this time period, both in Canada and in the United States, and these agencies have all added new insights to the consumer problems and how those problems can best be solved and better ways of protecting the consumer have evolved. One of these has been the introduction of Fair Trades Practices legislation in the United States and in some provinces in Canada. Fair Trades Practices legislation has been developed in recognition that there are in some cases uses of unfair deceptive or unconscionable practices. Legislation has been developed to stop such practices and to provide redress to the consumer.

Section 8 of the Department of Consumer Affairs Act was drafted in recognition that these deceptive and unfair practices could arise and could cause great harm to consumers. But the section may have its limitations. It is limited in scope, authority and duration. It does not provide for detailed measure of redress for the consumer. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I

believe that the time has come to consider more comprehensive legislation than exists under Section 8. More comprehensive legislation to stop unfair, deceptive, or unconscionable practices when they arise and to provide consumers with the means of redress for the wrongs that they may have suffered. I submit, Mr. Speaker, that this would be good not only for the consumer but also for the merchant. It would prevent one unscrupulous merchant from tarnishing the reputation of many other honest merchants.

Mr. Speaker, I will be proposing an amendment to the resolution encouraging the Government to consider such Fair Trades Practices legislation as a better means of achieving what Section 8 was intended to do. If Members opposite support the motion it would indicate their interest to the needs of consumers. If they vote against it they will have clearly said to Saskatchewan people that Liberals are not in the least interested in the needs and the concerns of consumer in this province. They have an opportunity to show clearly their position on consumerism. Therefore, with those words, Mr. Speaker, I want to move, seconded by Mr. Robbins:

That all the words after the word "Assembly" be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

Commend the Government of Saskatchewan for establishing a Department of Consumer Affairs to look after the interests and concerns of the consumer and recommend that consideration be given to replacing Section 8 of the Department of Consumer Affairs Act by comprehensive Fair Trades Practices legislation to create sanctions against and prohibit undesirable business practices.

Mr. G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, we are a little surprised at the amendment just introduced by the Minister because it is proof that Section 8 was drafted in haste and that he hadn't taken the time properly to consider the problem when he brought Section 8 in in the first place. Surely if the Minister had been doing a responsible job that he would have taken the time to look into the problem of supposed unfair or undesirable, to use his words, business practices, and then consider what the problems were. There is no justification in a democratic society for a cease and desist order as blanket as you have done it and the proposed resolution by the Member for Regina Whitmore Park is certainly in order and is certainly a condemnation of your party's policy and the Government policy to date.

We had a slight overview of the departmental position from the Member opposite. It is interesting to see the hypocritical position of the Government opposite when it comes to labour, when it comes to the matter of labour and strikes which sometimes affect the public and sometimes very, very greatly, its government policy and perhaps quite proper that there be no blanket law allowing a stop to this particular practice. But when it comes to the small Saskatchewan businessman, one of the first Acts of the Government opposite is a blanket cease and desist order. Like a guillotine placed over the small business man of this province, you say you have got co-operation. You bet you have co-operation. You have got a gun in their backs and if they don't do what you say you are going to shoot them. And that is precisely what you have done with this, improperly drafted and I say hastily drafted and ill-thought out Section 8

of The Consumer Affairs Act.

I think it is quite clear the fact that the order has not been used that the whole thing was unnecessary and that you did it for political posturing. That you didn't do it to solve a problem, you didn't do it to look at legitimate concerns, and legitimate problems but did it merely to threaten Saskatchewan businessmen and for no other reason your amendment proves that tonight.

It is interesting when the Member opposite talks about the consumer affairs and the record. I am just taking a look at a report that was tabled on the Department of Consumer Affairs. Several Acts were listed. It is interesting: Cost of Credit Disclosure Act, 1967 under a Liberal Government. The Collection Agents Act under a Liberal Government. The Unsolicited Goods and Credit Card Act, under a Liberal Government. The Motor Dealers Act, under a Liberal Government; and a Direct Sellers Act under a Liberal Government.

It is interesting to note that one of the highlights of the Government and one of the great flagships of their Consumer Affairs Department is The Auctioneers Act. I am sure that there was overwhelming public demand for that particular piece of legislation and the Minister responsible is to be congratulated by every Saskatchewan citizen for bringing that very timely, very important and vital piece of social and business legislation, The Auctioneers Act before the Legislature.

I don't think that the report of the Department of Consumer Affairs referred to by the Minister can lead to any conclusion but the fact that the Department is no longer solving problems and has merely become a promotional arm of the Government.

The matter of promotion, education, so-called under this particular report and under this particular Department is interesting to say the least. I think some of the highlights in the report are worth reading. I am sure that the public and the people of Saskatchewan would be more than interested to note the highlights of the Department of Consumer Affairs in the previous year. It is interesting that a series of consumer education classes was presented each Tuesday for four weeks to the Buffalo Flats Recreation Community group. I am sure that it justified the \$210,000 being spent on education. A two-day seminar on the use of simulation techniques and consumer education. I am sure it would be very interesting to find out what that particular program was about and whether it was even under the proper department.

One of the interest sessions at the Southeast Saskatchewan Teachers' Convention was conducted by branch personnel. A series of consumer education classes was presented throughout December to approximately 210 students which the Wascana Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences had on their upgrading program. A two-day seminar was presented to the participants of the Life Skills and Adult Eleven Education Program in Estevan.

That's the public relations program of the Department of Consumer Affairs in the Province of Saskatchewan and how the Minister could stand up and laud the program that he had presented and the direction that the Department is taking, I think is shameful and in reality disgraceful.

There were some other interesting aspects on the report that seemingly were ignored by the Minister. And it is interesting to note just how sincere he is when it comes to dealing with consumer problems. According to the report of his Department 19 per cent of the complaints received related to motor vehicles and accessories. I don't see any Bills before the Legislature to deal with that problem and to solve it. I suppose the Minister at some point would be prepared to give us the reasons for that. Nine per cent relate to personal goods. Nothing before the Legislature to solve that particular problem. Eight per cent of the complaints related to entertainment products and accessories. Nothing before the Legislature to deal with that particular problem. Eight per cent to houses and mobile homes. Nothing before the Legislature to deal with that problem. As a matter of fact, the Minister states in his report, I believe, that approximately 76 per cent of the complaints forwarded to the Department were successfully resolved which does not necessarily indicate a great effort on the part of the Department but it certainly indicates that 25 per cent of the consumer complaints have not been solved and that your failure rate is 25 per cent and you are not solving the problems. I don't think that the educational approach that you have taken is right and I don't think that the educational approach you have taken as being the main direction of your Department is going to solve any consumer problems. I don't think it is the primary direction that your Department should be taking.

There are imaginative aspects in other jurisdictions that are totally ignored by the Government opposite. I think that all that this Government has done in the field of consumer affairs is put out more press releases, press releases which simply duplicates what is coming from the Federal Department of Consumer Affairs on hazardous products. Nothing of which is new. That is a waste of money. The first thing that the Department of Consumer Affairs should do is check into its own Department, because it is not solving the problems of the consumers of Saskatchewan; it is not doing its job. It is unfortunately under the direction of the Minister becoming one of the weakest departments of the government in the Province of Saskatchewan. It is not protecting the consumer. Mr. Speaker, I will have more to say in this debate and I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:00 o'clock p.m.