

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Second Session — Eighteenth Legislature**  
**15th Day**

**Thursday, April 1, 1976**

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

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**HON. J.E. BROCKELBANK: (Saskatoon Westmount)** — I have some very important guests to introduce and I will call on other members in a moment.

Today with us we have two groups of students from the constituency of Saskatoon Westmount. They are located in the Speaker's Gallery, directly opposite me. The first group is from Estey School, 32 in number and they are Grade Seven students. They are accompanied by two of their teachers, Mr. Kowalko and Mrs. Allan.

The second group of students is from Westmount School. They are 53 in number and they are Grade Eight students. They are here with two of their teachers, Mr. Coroy and Mrs. Wallace.

I know that these are both very good schools. I am personally aware of the fact that Saskatoon Westmount is a very good school, because both of my sons attended that school and did very well there.

I know that all Members will join with me in welcoming these students from Saskatoon, in particular from Saskatoon Westmount constituency and I wish them a safe journey back to Saskatoon.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT: (Regina Wascana)** — Mr. Speaker, I also have two groups from my constituency joining us today. A group from Miller High School with Miss Majkut and a group of students from St. Andrew's with John Stockmal and with the wife of one of my law partners, Kathy Morris. I am sure that in your name and on behalf of the House they are welcome here today.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. J.A. PEPPER: (Weyburn)** — Mr. Speaker, again today it gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the Members of the House, another group of some 54 Grade Eight students from the Weyburn Junior High. They are sitting in the west gallery. They are accompanied by their teachers, Jim Nedelcov and Mr. William Bryson. I should also like to, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Hon. Minister of Finance, Walter Smishek, extend a personal welcome to a niece of his who is with that group, Carla Heebner.

I know I am speaking on behalf of all Members when I say

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that we wish them a cordial welcome. We hope that their stay here proves pleasant and educational and that they will have a safe journey back home.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, Hear!

## **QUESTIONS**

### **AVERAGE PER CHILD COST — DENTAL PROGRAM**

**MR. G.H. PENNER: (Saskatoon Eastview)** — Mr. Speaker, I was going to direct a question to the Minister of Health, and in his absence I will direct it to the Minister of Finance since he has been the Minister of Health. I wonder if he could tell me the average cost of the Dental Program, the average per child cost of the Dental Program?

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK: (Minister of Finance)** — Mr. Speaker, I'll take it as notice.

**MR. PENNER:** — Are there supplementary questions when a question is taken as notice?

**MR. SPEAKER:** — It puts the House in a difficult position because the Minister cannot answer for the Department, agreed he was the Minister recently, but I think he can take it as notice. If you think a supplementary can be answered without the question, go ahead.

**MR. PENNER:** — I'm prepared to suggest to the Minister, Mr. Speaker, that the cost in the study which was provided to us yesterday was indicated at \$158. I am wondering if the Minister wouldn't agree that that cost is really an extremely high cost and yet at the same time doesn't include all of the factors, like transportation, heating and lighting that go into making up the total cost.

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, first of all I have not read the report. I am sure that the Hon. Member couldn't expect that all the reports that come out and are tabled to be read in a day or so. But I am sure that during the period of Estimates and I appreciate the Hon. Member is new and he is green and he is inexperienced, that there will be every opportunity during the period of Estimates and the estimates are tabled to ask all kinds of questions when the Department estimates are before us.

**MR. PENNER:** — I may be green and I may be a little new, Mr. Speaker, but not so green and not so new to realize that a cost of \$158 per student is an exorbitant price.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## INTERCONTINENTAL PACKERS ONE DAY A WEEK SHUTDOWN

**MR. J. WIEBE: (Morse)** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture. The announcement at noon today that the Intercontinental Packing Plants at Regina and Saskatoon will be closing one day a week, could the Minister advise how many employees this involves and how many employees will be laid off because of this shutdown?

**HON. E. KAEDING: Minister of Agriculture)** — I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of that announcement, I haven't seen it or heard it. I will take that as notice and try to give you an answer later.

## LEGISLATIVE SECRETARIES APPOINTED TO CABINET

**MR. D. HAM: (Swift Current)** — In light of the so-called restraint program in the Budget Speech, Mr. Premier, how many NDP backbenchers have been appointed or are going to be appointed as legislative secretaries to the Cabinet?

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY: (Premier)** — Mr. Speaker, the number that have been appointed are the same ones that have been set out in the Orders in Council for some considerable period of time. There have been no new appointments in the last month or two and since we have a well informed Opposition I needn't take their time to tell you what has happened. There are in fact, two. And there are no additional ones contemplated at this time.

**MR. HAM:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I am wondering if the Premier might tell me and tell this House the average salary these Members are being paid?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The average salary, is that which is set out in The Legislative Assembly Act, which is \$3,000 a year.

## RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES ACT

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, I directed a question the other day to the Attorney General, he took notice. The answer has now come out in the Saskatchewan Gazette which we received a day or so ago. I wonder if I might direct some questions to the Minister in charge of The Residential Tenancies Act. The notice simply says that all Central Mortgage and Housing assisted programs are no longer under The Residential Tenancies Act, and that includes places like Gladmer Park and a great number of apartment buildings. I take it, Mr. Minister that that now means that if The Residential Tenancies Act doesn't apply at all, that those landlords may go in and seize furniture as they always could under the old law and then secondly, increase rents without notice, at most with one month's notice, because the other rules of The Residential Tenancies Act no longer apply.

**HON. N. SHILLINGTON: Minister of Consumer Affairs)** — You directed your question to the Attorney General. I think he said the Attorney General. My attention was

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momentarily diverted and I am not sure I got all your question. I thought you were directing it to the Attorney General.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — The question simply is, that since The Residential Tenancies Act no longer applies to limited dividend programs like Gladmer Park and Marathon Realty, does that not also mean that they can seize furniture for rent. They can give one month's notices of increases, they can kick tenants out on very short notice, that now you have put them back in a situation of the old landlord and tenant law and I wonder whether that was really your intention.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — I'm not sure that that in fact will be the result as I can tell you that that was not our intention. The intention was to exempt it from the rent control provisions and I don't have a copy of the Saskatchewan Gazette before me. It was our intention to exempt them entirely from the exemption.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Minister who was no doubt a better student at the law school than I was, will agree that taking these apartment buildings out from under the control of The Residential Tenancies Act, means that they are under no control whatsoever regarding rental increases, throwing tenants out, that you have just completely opened the door for abuses by some of these landlords.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Well, perhaps the best response to the Member for Wascana would be that the matter will be looked into.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — By way of a supplementary. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would indicate whether you are wrong in bringing limited dividend projects under The Residential Tenancies Act in the first place, or when you changed your mind and decided to take them out from under the program?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — The first one.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Then when did the Government change its mind and decide that these tenants were not entitled to the protection of rent control?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — I think I indicated earlier to the Member for Wascana that that was not our intention. Now if that has been the result then it is a matter that we should be looking at. It was not our intention to take them entirely out of the Act.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, is the Minister then saying — well the words are very clear in the Gazette — are you saying that you intended to take them out from under the control of rent control but not all of the other requirements of The Residential Tenancies Act?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — That is correct.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, one last question. I wonder why the Minister would not have exempted them in the first place if you

say that it was not that there has been no change in policy. And I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, that if we had known the Act would be this bad we would never have supported the Act in the first place.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — We think the Act is operating well, it is operating better than the rent control legislation is in most other provinces.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You are the only one who thinks so.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Well I think a number of the landlords think so too if you listened to their comments. They may be angry and upset here but not half as badly as they are in other provinces.

### **HOG PROCESSING PLANT**

**MR. L.W. BIRKBECK: (Moosomin)** — Mr. Speaker, to the minister of Agriculture. Does the Hog Marketing Commission in the province plan to make the processing plant here in Regina only a collection depot, therefore requiring hog producers to haul their hogs all the way up to Saskatoon?

**MR. KAEDING:** — I am not aware of that as being a policy of the Hog Marketing Commission, but if there should happen to be a situation where the volume of kill in Regina wasn't large enough to support the operation, then it might make economic sense, but I don't know that that is the case.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Then would the farmers be subject to the losses incurred in having hogs held over in the city of Regina for a day or two until they could be transported by semi or whatever to Saskatoon?

**MR. KAEDING:** — I presume they would be under the regular collection system and if they were delivered on time they would either be killed on the day they were designated to be killed or there would be a delay penalty assessed against the packer.

### **INCREASE OF RATES IN SASKATCHEWAN TRANSPORT COMPANY**

**MR. S.J. CAMERON: (Regina South)** — Mr. Speaker, a question of the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

He indicated to us in Crown Corporations yesterday that the Saskatchewan Transportation Company had applied recently for increases in its rates of 15 and 25 per cent respectively. Has there been a recent increase in Saskatchewan Transportation Company bus rates and if so, when and to what extent?

**HON. G. MacMURCHY: (Minister of Municipal Affairs)** — No, there has not as yet.

**MR. CAMERON:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the application by Saskatchewan Transportation Company for an increase to the Highway Traffic Board been approved?

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**MR. MacMURCHY:** — The application has been placed before the Highway Traffic Board for which there has been a response from the Highway Traffic Board, which has been forwarded to the Prices and Compensation Board for their approval.

**MR. CAMERON:** — A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What rate in increases did the Highway Traffic Board approve at the request of STC?

**MR. MacMURCHY:** — Mr. Speaker, in reply to the question, our intention was to announce the increases once we had, and I think it is appropriate that it be this way, the report back, if there are to be increases, once the report is back from the Prices and Compensation Board.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question of the Premier. Is it the policy of the Government that it will not announce any increases it initiates until they have first been submitted to and had some decision from the Anti-inflation Board?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the Government has any general policy with regard to prices or increases in prices charged by public sector bodies. I think each one will be considered. It will depend on all of the circumstances. I don't think it is the sort of thing that lends itself to an overall policy nor is one necessary.

**MR. CAMERON:** — A last supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What special circumstances exist for not disclosing at this time what the STC rate increases are going to be or that have been submitted to the Board?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — This is an assumption on the Member's part that special circumstances require to be present before such and such an event takes place. I think that it just seemed appropriate, one can argue with it, it is not a great issue one way or another. It just seemed appropriate not to be promulgating figures which, if they are not approved would need to be, as you might say, counteracted in the public mind. It is simply a matter of . . .

**MR. STEUART:** — Weaseling out.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Member for Prince Albert suggests that it is weaseling out. In my judgement it just seems to make good sense in this case to await the result of the Prices and Compensation Board before announcements are made. It may well be unwise. I note that at Ottawa the Prices and Compensation Board have made a practice of not making any announcements with respect to prices, time after time. I don't know whether that is a good idea or not, but it is one that they follow.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Mr. Speaker, one last supplementary of the Premier. Are you prepared to give the House the increases which were

approved by STC and submitted to the Board, or do you refuse to give us that information?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I will take the question under advisement.

### **REDUCTION OF CANADIAN BEEF TO USA**

**MR. R.L. COLLVER: (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives)** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday in this Assembly I was also answered in that fashion by the Premier of Saskatchewan and I should like to redirect the question. I am sure that he now has had time to investigate the question regarding the reduction in the United States' quota for Canadian beef and I am certain that he would have an answer for us today, either as to whether or not the Saskatchewan Government is going to protest, through the Canadian Government, to the United States Government, or conversely, why the Premier of Saskatchewan is not aware of such an important thing to the citizens of Saskatchewan.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member will take the trouble to read yesterday's Hansard he will find that what I said was that I would take the matter under consideration and ask the Minister of Agriculture whether he would reply and that is precisely what I intended to do, and with the permission of the House I will ask the Minister of Agriculture to make a brief statement.

**MR. KAEDING:** — Mr. Speaker, the question that was asked by the Member for Nipawin, I was checking on that yesterday and find there is no verification for the news report whatsoever. As far as Agriculture Canada is aware their quota is at 70 million pounds for this year and that is about four times what the quota was last year at this time. It is unlikely that we will be meeting that quota and we have no information whatsoever from Ottawa that the quota is being reduced.

They have advised us that at any time that there will be any further developments they will be indicating that to us.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### **RESIGNATION OF MR. DOWDELL**

**MR. E.C. MALONE: (Regina Lakeview)** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question I should like to direct to the Minister of Finance. I can't help but notice with a sense of foreboding that he is wearing his black suit today and we may be getting some more bad news later on.

Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister on Tuesday last to bring a report to this House about the circumstances surrounding the negotiations between the Government and Mr. Dowdell as to the money that was to be paid to him as a result of his leaving the employment of the Government. Is the Minister prepared to give us that information today?

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK: (Minister of Finance)** — Mr. Speaker, in the case of my suit I don't think it is

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foreboding. The Hon. Member for Lakeview is trying to set styles and some of us may be trying to keep up with them a little bit.

**MR. STEUART:** — If the union boys see you now . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — I'm just . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Who knows one of these days I may be able to say move over.

Mr. Speaker, as the Hon. Member noted I think that I did answer that I am going to investigate and report in due time. Among the problems that I have had is that our officials have been involved in meetings in Ottawa at the Federal-Provincial Conference and until they return I am not able to get a report. As soon as I get that I will be reporting.

**MR. MALONE:** — When do you expect that to be, Mr. Minister?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I cannot give a specific date, I said in due time and I will be reporting in due time.

**MR. MALONE:** — I suggest that the Minister check with one Mr. Holtzman in the Attorney General's Department. I am sure he is well aware of the facts.

### **WELFARE CHEQUES NOT PICKED UP**

**MR. J.G. LANE: (Qu'Appelle)** — A question to the Minister of Social Services. I brought to the attention of this House that at the end of the postal strike there were 105 SAP cheques not picked up in the city of Regina. You indicated at that time, (1) that you did not believe my information if I remember correctly, and (2) you did not accept the information. I know from your reply that my information was correct. It is interesting and I would like to ask the Minister, several of the indications from your report are that many recipients had been long dead. I am wondering how long this cemetery welfare system has been going on and how many . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! The Member is embellishing his question so much that it is verging on debate. I wonder if the Member could get to the point of the question.

**MR. LANE:** — With all respect, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister's report indicates that some people had been dead who got the cheques. Now can you tell me how long they had been dead while they were getting their welfare cheques?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!



**HON. H.H. ROLFES: (Minister of Social Services)** — Mr. Speaker, first of all I can tell the Member that he was dead wrong in his question the other day, as he usually is. He asked me whether I would accept his word, this myth that there were many people receiving social assistance that should not be receiving it, and my answer simply to him was, no, I did not accept that. I also said to him that I did not place any more credence in his information than I did in the Leader of the Opposition's. On those two accounts I was correct.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is known that from the first of the month to the end of the month people do happen to die. If you don't recognize that fact then you will also not recognize the fact that the staff of the Department of Social Services is not notified all the time of these deaths and the cheques, therefore, go out to these people and then the cheques are returned. Further, Mr. Speaker, I talked to my officials this morning and I want to make a correction in the statement that I made. There were no successful prosecutions made on the Regina ones. That was an error made by the officials, there are five pending ones, not on the mail strike but there are five pending ones right now.

**MR. LANE:** — I believe, by way of supplementary, my question was, how long they had been dead and I would like to know the results of your investigation on that. My further supplementary is, I notice that you pointedly in your answer the other day say that they were subsequently cancelled by reason of having died, so my question as I asked earlier is, how long have they been dead? Secondly, I would like to know if some of these recipients had left the province, another problem that you indicate that they had been getting cheques although they have moved away?

**MR. ROLFES:** — Mr. Speaker, the answer that I gave very specifically said that when the mail strike occurred and recipients were asked to pick up their cheques there was a 234 total that were not picked up in the province, out of a total of 19,000. Certainly this should not come as a surprise. Some of the people had died, that is correct. Some of the people did move out of the province, those cheques were returned to our office and they were checked into and these were cancelled. That happens every month and that shouldn't come as a surprise.

**MR. LANE:** — By way of further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to know the dead are returning their welfare cheques, I think that is admirable. My question is, has the Department of Social Services instituted an internal audit system or an internal audit committee to check the veracity of the application forms made by social assistance applicants?

**MR. ROLFES:** — Mr. Speaker, the Department of Social Services I believe in the last two or three months has discussed with the auditor and with the comptrollers the profitability of setting up a verification unit. This process is going on and I am hoping that in this fiscal year possibly before September, we can set up such a verification unit. But again let me repeat that 234 out of 19,000 cheques, I think this is a very, very small number and

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that certainly shows that the Department of Social Services is doing a pretty good job.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister not admit that the several years since the institution of the Department of Social Services that we are finally getting around to a verification unit is, one, an extremely long period of time and, second, an irresponsibly long period of time?

**MR. ROLFES:** — I don't think it is such a very long time. If a verification unit was needed in this last few years, it was also needed in the seven years when you were the Government. So I don't think it was irresponsible on our part and I think we are acting now and I think next year you will find that the verification unit will do its job.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### **GREATER RISK NOW FOR POTASH INDUSTRY**

**MR. G.H. PENNER: (Saskatoon Eastview)** — The question is, I notice that the Member in charge of the Potash Corporation is in the House for a change and I wouldn't want to . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. PENNER:** — Since it has been announced that Cominco has laid off 70 workers and has joined IMC in cutting back on production, would the Minister not agree that for the Government to be getting into the potash industry there is a much greater risk now than there was even a couple of months ago?

**MR. E.L. COWLEY: (Minister in charge of Potash Corporation)** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I first of all want to indicate to the Member that I think if he reads the news reports carefully that Cominco has not laid off 70 employees. It is true that they have 70 employees less now than they did as of the 1st of January. What has happened is that as a result of attrition they simply haven't been rehiring people. I think there is somewhat of a difference, it may be a slight difference.

Mr. Speaker, obviously I would not say there is any difference now in terms of acquiring part of the potash industry than there was two months ago. Whether you acquired it today or two months ago you would obviously be in the same position today if you owned a part of it. I have indicated to the Members — the Leader of the opposition is an expert on myths having created so many himself — Mr. Speaker, I indicated before that obviously anyone entering the potash business, be they private or public, are not going to be looking at circumstances over one, two or three months but over several years on the rate of return. Consequently, our policy has not changed.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### BUDGET DEBATE

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Smishek (Minister of Finance) that this Assembly do now resolve itself into a Committee of Finance and the amendment thereto by Mr. MacDonald (Indian Head-Wolseley)

**MR. R.H. BAILEY: (Rosetown-Elrose)** — Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased at this time to enter into the Budget Debate and since my time is very limited, I will have to make my remarks very concise and to only a limited number of topics that are found within the Budget itself.

Mr. Speaker, the comments from my caucus has not been along the line that the Government is spending too much or that the Government is spending too little, but rather that the Government should get its priorities in a proper order and in a proper prospective.

Mr. Speaker, during the Budget Debate to this point the Members opposite have taken the opportunity to criticize my caucus and I should like to clarify some of the statements that have been made before I get into some comments on the Budget itself. The Minister of Labour, in his speech on the Budget mentioned that this caucus did not know how to ask questions. I challenge that Minister to go back to the Hansard from the beginning, take the questions that I have asked as just one Member of this caucus and then show this House that they were poor questions. Mr. Speaker, I should like to suggest that the Opposition is asking good questions; the difficulty is getting good answers from the Government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — The Minister of Health referred to us the other day as the 'silent seven'. He tried to intimate to the people of this House and to the people of Saskatchewan that the Conservatives are a quiet group. I want to ask the Minister of Health who is not in his seat at this time, how many speeches has he made to this Assembly to support the potash takeover? How many? How many speeches did the Premier make? How many speeches did the Minister in charge of potash make? How many speeches did the Minister of Finance make? How many speeches did anyone opposite make in defense of potash last fall, with the exception of the Attorney General? Now, Mr. Speaker, let's make it clear to the people of Saskatchewan who the silent people are. You know it's very strange that shortly after the Minister of Health referred to me as one of the 'silent seven' the Minister of Environment gets up and says that the Member for Rosetown-Elrose talks too much in the House. You can easily see that they are a mixed up group.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — Mr. Speaker, it was disappointing to me that in the day in which the Minister of Finance brought the Budget down, that he did not pay tribute to those people who have produced the wealth of Saskatchewan today. It was disappointing

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to me that he did not mention the fact that this province is riding on a crest of prosperity brought on by a sound agricultural industry.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — But what did the Minister do in recognizing this important point, or, indeed, what have other Ministers done to recognize this condition. As a matter of fact the Minister of Transport to recognize the contribution made by farmers, moved out and made some weight restrictions to hinder the hauling of grain and now he admits to the House that he is going to have to make some changes.

Nowhere in the Budget address of this House, unless you went searching in the Budget Speech itself in its printed form did the Minister mention the millions of dollars that have been poured into this Budget by the potash industry nor did he mention the amount in his address of the money that comes from Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, this Government needs to get its spending priorities straightened out. This Government needs to get its priorities straightened out so that the people can get some answers to their questions. Let me cite to you a few examples. We see across Saskatchewan multimillion dollar government office buildings going up. We see them in the Swift Current area where they are making a mess of it and we'll have to pick up that cost, I'm quite sure of that, but I was disappointed not only in the Minister of Finance's speech but with the Minister in charge of Social Services that there is no indication, whatsoever, given that in the rural areas such as Rosetown-Elrose that there are plans to build some homes to house our aged. You have to get your priorities straightened out. To you it is more important to build a multimillion government building than it is to look after homes for the aged people in Saskatchewan. That's your priority and that's where you are spending the money. What I am saying is that your priorities need to be straightened out.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — Mr. Speaker, we have the announcement of cutbacks in hospitals and health care. That's the priority of the Government, at the same time this Government is increasing the number of civil servants. Their priority is to build an empire; their priority is to build a bureaucracy and that's the priority they have established. I want to assure this House, that is not the priority of my party.

Mr. Speaker, some of the cutbacks that we are being forced to make in the staffing of our hospitals, in the staffing of our schools are a direct result of the priorities of this Government looking after power before they do people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned my time is limited and so I want to deal specifically with a portion of the Budget and that is education. In 1971, Mr. Speaker, when this

Government took over they set out to do one specific job in education and I want to congratulate them because to this point in time they have succeeded very well. They set out to destroy the local elected trustee bodies in Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — There is no question about that and I want to congratulate them because to this point they have done a good job. The former Minister of Education went out on his fall conferences and he decided that he was going to bring in school councils and when it ran up against a brick wall of opposition he withdrew from that. Mr. Speaker, all one has to do is look at the provincial negotiations with teachers' salaries today to see that the Government has decided that they will control and they only will have a say.

Mr. Speaker, I want to go into another area of a new corporation of this Government, SaskMedia. Now, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding, and I wanted to ask this question in the House today but time did not permit, that SaskMedia is designed to provide a service to education in Saskatchewan and yet, Mr. Speaker, when the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association wrote to SaskMedia to ask if they could have a representative on the board of directors of that Corporation they were denied that right; they were denied having an input into the educational programming in Saskatchewan. That is one example, Mr. Speaker. Through this Budget and through the policies of this Government that they are out to destroy local control in Saskatchewan. Now the Minister of Environment says that I talk too much about this in the House. Mr. Speaker, I want to inform the Members opposite that I will continue to talk about the program of the Government to destroy local government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the Finance Minister followed by a number of other Ministers and then the Minister of Social Services stands in this House and he talks about the increase of 20 per cent in school grants. Again this Government needs to get its priorities straightened out.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency I have parts of three school units. Rosetown School Unit, not 20 per cent increase in grants, not 15 per cent increase in grants, but 10 per cent increase in grants. Mr. Speaker, I have with me today a budget of my own. We didn't get a 20 per cent increase in grants, we didn't get a 15 per cent increase in grants, we didn't get a 10 per cent increase in grants, we got an 8.15 per cent increase. Where are your priorities? Where are your priorities? Mr. Speaker . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . your students . . .

**MR. BAILEY:** — My students are there, Mr. Premier, don't worry about it, the students are there.

Mr. Speaker, I want to show this Assembly that the priority of this Government is based on something else than for the people of this province. In the budget in which I have, the

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total increase in grant amounted to \$61,000. That's it. \$61, \$61,000. Now I'd like the Hon. Members opposite to listen to this. Of that \$61,000 with the increase of Sask Power in light and gas, that took \$14,000 budgeted of that increase. Sask Tel and insurance took another additional amount and then to honor the people who get our students to school who need and deserve a modest increase that took the rest of the \$61,000 and not one red cent of the grant even begins to cover the increase that is necessary in future salaries. Not one cent.

Now, Mr. Speaker, where do we go with the Government controls? Where do we go when the Government controls? Well we can only go to the taxpayers. We went to the taxpayers last Monday and a group of municipal officials said to me that they were extremely worried. What happens next year? We had to go for a six mill increase. By the way I'd like the Members opposite to listen very, very carefully to this. In 1971, Mr. Speaker, our mill rate was 36 mills. In 1976 it was necessary to strike a 52 mill rate, 52, an increase of 16 mills.

Mr. Speaker, where do we go? What happens in this province when the agricultural booms run into difficulty? Where do we go? We continue to have to go to the taxpayers who help support the Government which hasn't got its priorities straightened out.

Mr. Speaker, in meeting with a group which included members of the RMs, members of the towns and members of the village councils, their concern, Mr. Speaker, was not so much in 1976. In looking at the Budget of Saskatchewan at some of its main sources of revenue, the five per cent sales tax, the exceptionally high personal income tax, these are two sources. What happens when the agricultural economy goes the other way so that the amount of purchasing power goes down, income goes down? They are worried, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you the local governments are worried about the future under this Government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I should like to just go on for a little bit, but I have mentioned only one area because that is the time that is allotted to me. I'd like to go for an hour, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure some of the Members opposite could get an education.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BAILEY:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned only one area of local governments and that is school boards and I want to give warning here and now to the Government sitting opposite and I wish the- Minister of Education was sitting in his seat, when they bring in one more blow which I expect they may do in the current Session to introduce the new tenure legislation by which school boards will have to abide, I want to forewarn them now that I will oppose that legislation all the way. I am not going to be a Member of this Legislative Assembly and watch you strip local school boards of all their power.

Mr. Speaker, I see now that my time is up. I want to say that my conscience above everything else would not allow or

permit me in any way to support this motion but I will definitely be supporting the amendment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. R.N. NELSON: (Yorkton)** — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise to speak in this Budget Debate but before I commence I should like to say that my good wife, Mrs. Nelson, is in the Speaker's Gallery and through you I would like to welcome her here.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. NELSON:** — I noticed, Mr. Speaker, that my good wife got an ovation from the Opposition which is something I can't seem to figure out so maybe she should be sitting here instead of me.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. NELSON:** — I was very much interested, Mr. Speaker, to hear the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose talking about the cutbacks to the hospitals especially when we find that there were ten whole hospitals cut out of Conservative Ontario. Would he call that just restraint or would he call that hacking? I was also surprised to hear him talk about the power grab, the bogey-man of power grab that he constantly talks about. I was surprised to hear him talk about the 16 mill increase that came over a period of seven years. Let me inform him, Mr. Speaker, that in one year in Yorkton there was an increase of 14.6 mills or 21.6 per cent which was under the Liberal regime just past. I would say, Mr. Speaker, that our priorities are very well arranged and I would like to deal with this power grab situation a little later.

I, too, would like to congratulate the Minister of Finance for his superb job that he has done in directing the preparation of this Budget. I must say that it was delivered in a clear concise style that even most Members of the Opposition understood. I should also like to congratulate the hard working civil servants whose capable advice and research provided the Minister with top level financial expertise that makes governments across the land envious. Mr. Speaker, although I would have preferred a document that would have covered all local expenses, I would have preferred if he could have greatly expanded such programs as the Drug Program, the Dental Program but I would also have preferred that we should not be caught in this explosive inflationary condition in our economy. I would very, very much have preferred that the Federal Government would have put selective controls on such things as steel, cement and fertilizer, as long ago as two years. If that Federal Liberal Government had taken such strong action it's very possible that many of our present inflationary problems would not be nearly as severe as they are now. It would have helped to break the inflationary psychology that was building up at that time. Besides, Mr. Speaker, it would have got at one of the contributors, one of the major contributors of the inflationary tendencies. Further, Mr. Speaker, since our national financial situation was allowed to deteriorate to the serious inflationary situation that we are now in, I would also very, very much prefer that the Federal Government would have seen fit to apply the anti-inflation program so that all the people of the country would have been forced to sacrifice

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equally to prevent a financial disaster in our land. To make all of us have a share in controlling inflation we still say that the Federal Government should levy a comprehensive excess profits tax. Further controls should be applied to the incomes of self-employed professionals by applying an income surtax there that would effectively deal with excessive increases that have taken place in the past.

I am rather amused at the Opposition efforts to carpingly criticize this Budget. In typical style, both old line parties went into the joint line that they both use — a power grab they say. And well they should object to the power grab that is going on in this province for it takes the power from their friends. Consider the power that was grabbed or wrestled from their friends the corporations, consider the power that was grabbed from the potash mining companies. The last Liberal government taxed the potash mining companies to the tune of \$3 million in their last year of office. In the last full year of NDP Government, we took \$120 million from the same ten potash mining companies — \$120 million grabbed for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Consider the power grab in sodium sulphate. The Government of the people of Saskatchewan started sodium sulphate mines in Saskatchewan in 1948 I believe it was, at a cost of \$1 million. Last year, we, the people of this province received \$5,319,229 in profits on the sale of that sodium sulphate. Another \$5 million grab for the people of Saskatchewan.

Compare this action to what happened in the sodium sulphate field under the last Liberal regime. The rights to mine sodium sulphate in Saskatchewan were sold to private companies at a rate of one cent a ton. Those private companies now sell nearly 50 per cent of the sodium sulphate in this province. In other words, nearly \$5 million in the last year alone was grabbed from the people of this province. A power grab, Mr. Speaker. Buying power that could have remained in the hands of the Saskatchewan taxpayer if the Liberal Government of the day hadn't been so eager to help their corporate friends.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. NELSON:** — To help their corporate friends grab power, spending power, from the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, instead of trying to find fault with the philosophy and the real points of contention that might be found in the Budget, the Progressive Conservative Leader chose instead to attack the civil servants who helped prepare the Budget. Do you suppose, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Finance himself personally calculated the amount of increase in the hospital and education tax in the coming fiscal year? I would like to inform the Hon. Member for Nipawin that tax levels are arranged only after careful consideration given by some of the best financial brains in the land, the provincial financial advisors.

Liberals then, finding it hard to put a finger on faults in the Budget, have found one main word to show their inability to criticize it effectively. Deception. A deceitful Budget they say — the Leader-Post, the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix and the Chambers of Commerce are all deceived, Mr. Speaker. Out of all the financial experts in the country, only Liberals and Conservatives find that the Budget is not a good, responsible



restrained document.

I am again surprised at the rather loose criticisms of the school budgets by the Hon. Member for Saskatoon Eastview. Speaking last Monday, the Hon. Member said that the provincial NDP Government took over the salary negotiations so that they could control teachers' salaries. Does the Hon. Member belong to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation or did he? I believe he did. I believe also that he should check the brief that the STF handed in to the Blakeney Government before the new Salary Negotiation Act was set up. The Hon. Member for Saskatoon Eastview and the Hon. Member for Assiniboia also would find that the STF requested provincial bargaining. A typical Liberal-Conservative bogey man — control of salaries — nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support this Budget because it is people centred. In proving this point, I need only examine one department, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. Just this one department will show that our priorities are in the correct place, Mr. Speaker. For three centuries, since the arrival of the white man in Canada, the natives of this land have been cheated and deceived to the advantage of the trading corporations. Many times we have heard of the Indian trapper who bought a rifle from the Hudson's Bay Company with a pile of beavers as high as the rifle stood on its end. We have heard countless other stories of rip-offs perpetrated on the native people of this land. And those rip-offs continue into the present time.

The Hon. Member for Cumberland tells of a native trapper who, when he was short of money, got only \$8 for a pair of blanket beaver hides in one northern Hudson's Bay Company trading post when he could have got nearly \$30 for each pelt from the Saskatchewan Fur Marketing Service. Such is the way that the large corporations rip off our native people to this day. Small wonder the native people feel rejected in their own land. And through the years everyone has seen the Opposition Members of both stripes, come roaring to the defence of those large corporations.

Contrast the performance of the Blakeney Government in our North with that of the last Liberal Government. In 1970-71 the former administration provided just over \$2 million in operating grants to northern schools. This year we have budgeted more than \$6.5 million for this purpose. Three times as much money for northern education.

In 1970-71 that administration spent \$1 million in capital construction for education facilities in the North. This year about \$6 million will be required. Six times as much for capital construction of educational facilities.

We constantly hear Opposition Members decrying the use of social assistance. Another example of how those Members use unfortunate people to further their own political ends. Let us look at the constant reduction of the northern social welfare bill and the comparable increase in people who are gainfully employed. In 1973 we were still spending \$3.9 million on Saskatchewan social assistance payments in the North. A year later that social assistance bill was cut to \$2 million. In the next year coming the Legislature will be asked to approve \$1.8 million for northern social assistance. Less than one-third the cost to the taxpayer as compared to three years ago.

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I could continue to describe the advances in the North in the fields of housing, the construction of sewer and water systems, road, airfields, health centres and so on. Suffice it to say that the people of the North saw the value of the northern program of the Blakeney Government. They elected two excellent NDP Members for the North to show that they appreciated the work of the Minister . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. NELSON:** — . . . and to show and to demonstrate the support of those people.

The concern for people as evidenced by its work for northern people is just one reason why I support this Budget. There are many more.

I would like to dwell for a few minutes to speak on Crown corporations. Step by step, year by year, corporation by corporation, the Liberal Opposition Members have fought the establishment of Crown corporations. Liberal opposition to NDP initiated Crown corporations started with the expansion of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation in 1948 when the Liberal Members of the day laughed and said that the power grid envisioned by the Government of the day was an impossible dream. Ten short years later the power grid covered almost the whole southern part of the province. And Liberal and Conservative opposition to Crown corporations continues unabated even to this day. Never before have the Opposition Members shown their opposition to Crown corporations more clearly than they did last fall in the potash debate.

We saw both Opposition parties together defending vigorously the corporations that refused to obey the laws of this province. Both old line parties vigorously defended the mining companies that refused to pay their fair share of taxes as ordinary citizens must. Both old line parties vigorously defended the desire of the multinational corporations to dictate the amount of taxes that these companies would pay to the province. Both old line parties vigorously defend the mining companies' desire to conceal their financial picture from provincial authorities although the CPR gives its financial statements to the Federal Government that runs the CNR, an identical operation.

We must look to see why the two old line parties defend these corporations. And you really begin to wonder about the defence of the corporations when you see that the Crown corporations have already turned \$350 million dollars over to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. Then you examine the Budget and you see that taxpayers can expect another \$111.1 million in the future.

Mr. Speaker, those two old idea parties fought the development of the Potash Corporation for the same reason they have fought so many other Crown corporations in the past. They want those profits to go to these large multinational corporations. There will be profits that will come from the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and the two old idea parties want the people of this province to pay in taxes that would have gone to those mining companies in profits.

Mr. Speaker, we in the NDP want the profits and the control of that potash to rest in the hands of the people of this province, through their elected representatives.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. NELSON:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue more. I have a few other points that I should like to develop but I see my time is running short. Needless to say I find this Budget to be something to help in the development of this province and I will be voting against the amendment and supporting the main motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. D.H. LANGE: (Bengough-Milestone)** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be rising in support of the motion. Throughout this debate on the Budget Speech and indeed throughout the fall session and throughout the election campaign of last summer there has been one consistent position forwarded by the Opposition parties but particularly by the Leader of the Conservative Party and the Conservative Party in Saskatchewan.

They have suggested throughout the election, throughout the fall session and throughout the Throne and Budget Debates that there should be no direct government involvement in the lives of Saskatchewan people. In fact that government should act only as a referee and should not be directly involved but only be a referee in the affairs of people in society. That government involvement destroys personal rights and freedoms of the individual and in fact personal initiative is jeopardized by direct government involvement in our society.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Furthermore they state that government because of their bureaucracy are incompetent and inefficient and cannot compete with private sectors in society.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize from what basis this thinking comes. This thinking is based upon the original philosophy of John Locke of the 17th century, who suggested that government governs best which governs least and that peace, security and well being of the individual can be maintained by a government which does not become directly involved in that individual's life. Now very few people would disagree that only a certain amount of government involvement is necessary in people's lives and that perhaps too much government involvement can cause trouble. In fact, the very basis of our North American society is based upon the initiative of the individual and the individual allowed to have personal rights and freedom. Not only is the basis of the North American society John Locke's philosophy but moreover, Liberal and Conservative partisan politics in Canada is based upon that same theory of individuality. Few people would disagree with that.

But the fact is that times have changed since the 17th century, and much unlike the time when John Locke wrote his speeches on the individual, we no longer have a society that has unlimited resources with many small businesses in very small communities where, "the barefoot boy with cheeks of tan"

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could rise from rags to riches simply through his own personal initiative and the sweat of his brow. We do not have that kind of a situation today. We have rather than unlimited resources, very stringent limitations upon the resources which society has to use. And moreover we have something which didn't exist in the 17th century and that is the presence of very large international, multinational corporations and megalopolies, corporations and megalopolies which are treated by many governments as individuals in society.

Now the Leader of the Conservative Party suggests that government should simply be a referee and should not become directly involved in the operations of large corporations. That in fact they should allow the individual citizen in society to compete with 'individual' multinational corporations and that government should only be a referee but not become directly involved. Now since Locke, reality has changed. We no longer have a society of small businesses based in small communities where there was little need for government regulation but we now have a society with a new reality. A society dominated by international corporations and megalopolies, some corporations with incomes larger than the total budget of the Government of Canada. Those corporations have enough power to not only direct the individual lives of people in society but also to direct the total economies and governments of countries.

Yet the Leader of the Conservative Party is suggesting that government should only be a referee and that it should not become directly involved in the activities of people in society. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Conservative Party even though it is 40 years since the Conservative Party has been in this Chamber as official Opposition in any capacity, has not yet moved into reality; that the theories, policies and programs suggested by the Leader of the Conservative Party and indeed the programs suggested by his party during last summer's campaign are tailored to 17th century thinking. In spite of the fact that there are social pressures in society which have changed the world in which we live, they are still suggesting policies and programs which are tailored to the thinking of 300 years ago.

The Leader of the Conservative Party suggests that there should be no direct government involvement and that government should only be a referee (whether it be a Cargill Grain Company moving in to monopolize the agricultural sector and to destroy the individual rights and freedoms of farmers who live in rural Saskatchewan, or whether it might be the potash companies which are moving in to make a profit through windfall money to the tune of \$200 million) that they should not be regulated, that there should be no direct government involvement, that in fact government should only act as a referee.

The Leader of the Conservative Party suggests that somehow without direct government involvement; with government as a referee, individual rights and freedoms in society will be preserved in the face of the pressures from large multinational corporations and megalopolies. Mr. Speaker, shortly put, the Leader of the Conservative Party suggests that the individual suffers if there is government involvement in our society. Well, I would like to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the New Democratic Party believes that the individual in society suffers if there is no government involvement in our society. That government involvement is absolutely essential for individual rights and for individual freedoms to be preserved.

Now in Saskatchewan we have a good understanding of what individuality means. We have an agrarian based economy where farmers are free to do more or less as they please which is one of the reasons that they love farming as they do. They can be their own man, no one tells the farmer how to farm except Otto Lang when he tells them not to farm.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — It is from that individual initiative which a farmer can demonstrate that he obtains confidence in doing his own work in his own way in his own time. It is this element of individual initiative so prevalent in farming which makes farming such a healthy industry today.

Now let us review where those individual farmers would be had it not been for government involvement through the past many years in the farm economy. Where would individual farmers in society be right now had it not been for the Canadian Wheat Board, direct government involvement in their lives? Where would farmers have been in the last few years if it had not been for the establishment of the Hog Marketing Commission in Saskatchewan, direct involvement of government in farmers' lives? And furthermore where will those farmers and their individuality be in the future if Cargill Grain Company is allowed to monopolize the grain industry and eliminate smaller rural farmers? And if the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways have their way in eliminating the rural life style? Where will those farmers be if the Government does not step in and impose weight restrictions to try and deter the advent of inland terminals and elimination of small farmers in Saskatchewan? Direct government involvement is absolutely essential in the farm economy of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Mr. Speaker, furthermore, let us review the history of government involvement in Saskatchewan as a province. Let us see how much individual freedom has been given to the people of this province through direct government involvement in their lives. Let's talk about programs like Saskatchewan's Government Insurance Office which gives us the cheapest insurance rate on the whole continent of North American.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Where would people be if it had not been for direct government involvement in the establishment of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company providing bus service to communities in rural Saskatchewan? Where would the rural communities be today if it had not been for Saskatchewan Power Corporation electrifying all of rural Saskatchewan?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Where would the people in rural Saskatchewan be in general had it not been for the Saskatchewan Government forming the corporation known as Saskatchewan Telecommunications? Where would the people of Saskatchewan be if there had not been

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direct government involvement in the medicare program which has given people so much extra individual freedom in our society?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Saskatchewan has a long history of direct government involvement in the individual lives of the people of Saskatchewan and this has given those people individual freedom, individual rights and personal initiative in our society.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — More than that, direct involvement in the lives of Saskatchewan people by the Government of Saskatchewan has given Saskatchewan citizens one of the highest standards of living in North America and one of the very highest standards of living in all of the world.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, we might want to ask, why has this happened in Saskatchewan of all places? Saskatchewan, which was supposed to be destitute of all resources? Well, it happened in Saskatchewan because of the tradition of Saskatchewan — the tradition of co-operation and sharing. No one else would do for Saskatchewan citizens what we wanted, so in the tradition of Saskatchewan farmers, much as when they did not have a disc harrow or a deep tillage cultivator or a swather, they built their own. All of those were invented in Saskatchewan. And when we did not have a social system that was tailored to our needs, we built our own. And this is not only a phenomenon within our Government but it is also evident in our pools and co-operatives and credit unions and organizations like the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, all of which have a long history of government regulation and involvement in people's lives for the benefit of individual rights and freedoms.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservatives will say, well of course, now that those programs are all in place, functioning effectively and performing a service to society, that it is all very nice for government to be involved in social programs, or programs that perform a service to society. And, of course, they will do all right because it is a monopoly and you can always do all right in a monopoly. But he will say that we shouldn't be involved as a government in competition in individual private industries; that there is something sacrosanct about private industries and that only private industries can operate efficiently and effectively; that in fact through government involvement in the potash industry, the investment climate in Saskatchewan will be destroyed, and because of the potential bureaucracy and red tape the government operated potash industry will be inefficient and incompetence will arise.

Is he suggesting that we should not have gone into Saskoil, that we should not have Saskatchewan Timber Production or that we should not go into the potash industry; is he suggesting

that we should have no direct government involvement, that government should only be a referee, to simply sit back and watch oil rise from \$3.50 a barrel to \$12.50 a barrel and not have the Saskatchewan citizens pick up any of that extra profit? Is he suggesting that large companies should be allowed to waste our timber resources any way they please? Is he suggesting that the potash companies' windfall, a few hundred million a year, should simply go out of the province into large private American conglomerates?

Well, of course, he will say governments should be involved to some extent but they should not be in direct government competition, because bureaucracy and red tape will cause incompetence and inefficiency. He will suggest that the Saskatchewan people cannot operate; he will reflect a neo-colonial attitude that says, somehow only large private foreign corporations can operate Saskatchewan resources for the profit of Saskatchewan people and that Saskatchewan people cannot and do not have the ability to operate their own industries.

Well, I should like to suggest to the Leader of the Conservative Party that he should tell some of the Saskatchewan Government employees that they are inefficient and that they are incompetent because they work for a government. The next time that power has failed in rural Saskatchewan and a Saskatchewan Power employee is fixing the power lines and attempting to restore power to rural residents at three o'clock in the morning, in the middle of a blizzard, I would suggest that he tell that employee that somehow he is inefficient or incompetent because he happens to work for a government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — I would hope that in a few years the Leader of the Conservative Party could go into the bottom of a potash mine which would then be owned by the people of Saskatchewan and tell one of those mine employees that he is inefficient or incompetent because he happens to be one of 12,000 or 14,000 Saskatchewan Government employees. But that on the other hand an employee working in a potash mine for Noranda Canada, is not inefficient and not incompetent because he happens to work for a private company which has a bureaucracy of only 35,000. Or that perhaps a Cominco employee is not inefficient or not incompetent because he happens to be part of the bureaucracy of Canadian Pacific Limited of only 90,000 employees. And yet he will suggest that he has no faith in the ability of the Saskatchewan people to operate the potash industry.

Mr. Speaker, if we have no faith in the ability to operate our own industries, we must ask why are Saskatchewan farmers some of the most efficient farmers in the North American continent. If we have no ability to operate our own businesses why, in Saskatchewan, have we developed organizations like the pools and the co-operatives or credit unions? And, why in Saskatchewan, have we pioneered social programs which have raised the standard of living, through direct government involvement, to be one of the highest in North America and in the world?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANGE:** — Why, in Saskatchewan, have we persistently come forward

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with an avant garde approach of government involvement in people's lives which has given us a high standard of living and yet consistently come forward also with a balanced budget to be able to pay for those programs.

I would suggest that the Leader of the Conservative Party is treading on thin ice when he suggests that the people of Saskatchewan have not got the competence to operate their own industries. Nobody tells Saskatchewan farmers how to operate their industry, and nobody should tell Saskatchewan people how to operate their potash industry, particularly not 12 foreign-owned multinational corporations. Saskatchewan people can do a good job of managing their own resources.

I support government involvement in industry in society. I support it because it restores individual rights and freedoms and I support it moreover because it is very healthy for Saskatchewan to be involved in its own industry. Because much like farmers gain confidence from doing things themselves, so Saskatchewan as a whole will gain confidence from operating our own potash industry rather than having it operated by someone else.

Saskatchewan has shown that government involvement can do many, many things to help the individual raise his standard of living; that government involvement in people's lives is not stifling, not destructive, not constricting; that government involvement does not destroy individual rights and freedoms; that government involvement does not usurp power from the individual; that government involvement does not threaten individual initiative. But rather that government involvement in people's lives can be creative and exciting, both for the individual and for the society in which that individual lives.

Mr. Speaker, direct government involvement in people's lives is a means to individual freedom through co-operation, much in the tradition of Saskatchewan living.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. M. FESCHUK: (Prince Albert)** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in this debate and to support this Government and to support this Budget.

Like the previous four budgets presented to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, it is a responsible document and, taken together with the Throne Speeches we heard in November and on March 12th, it outlines to the people of the province and to the continued bafflement of the people sitting opposite, that the Blakeney Government is a government the people of this province can trust, the Blakeney Government is a government that keeps its promises, and the Blakeney Government and the New Democratic Party are the people who deliver.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FESCHUK:** — Mr. Speaker, I said that this was baffling to the Members opposite and well it might be. Because in 1971 the former Premier of this province and his followers went up and down this province telling people that our promises would bankrupt this province. Mr. Speaker, the record of four years speaks for itself, a record of promises kept and a record of unprecedented



progress and growth, progress in our social programs and growth in the development and diversification of our economy. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that this Budget represents more of the same. It is a responsible and a responsive Budget. Now that may not be good for the people opposite, Mr. Speaker, but it is healthy for the economy of our province and that is good for the people of the province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FESCHUK:** — In taking part in this debate, Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to a couple of myths which are promoted by our friends opposite, myths which have been their stock in trade for at least a generation now and I want to say a few words about government programs as they affect the fine people of Prince Albert.

Before doing that, Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment my colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) on a very fine job that he did in preparing and presenting this Budget. Some Members will know, and those who don't know, I will tell them, my background doesn't include participation in any kind of debating societies or the like. And so I admire a job of public speaking or debating that is well done, and that observation applies to all my colleagues who have spoken in this debate. The superior job they have done, Mr. Speaker, probably has a lot to do with the material they had to work with. Our friends across the way have admittedly been working with a severe handicap.

Mr. Speaker, our friends across the way like to complain about the policies of this Government and this party scaring away investment from this province. They have been doing it for at least a generation now. Doom and gloom, Mr. Speaker, why to some of them in days gone by, it was even socialist stagnation. If only they were the Government, they say, their private enterprise approach, this brand new 18th century approach, why it would revolutionize things and investment would pour into the province. And probably with the help of the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) they would be able to keep track of it in an acceptable manner. Nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, you will remember that some of these same people in times past got so carried away they even said they would create 80,000 new jobs with this brand new 18th century approach.

Well, Mr. Speaker, a couple of elections have come and gone and a lot of the people who were the biggest and the loudest promoters of that myth are gone. Now we have something that the Attorney General calls the "New Look Liberals." New look, Mr. Speaker, but any new ideas? Well, I thought that I would examine the record a bit just to see if they had forgotten the 18th century myth about investment in this province, to see if these so-called "New Look Liberals" had any new ideas.

And what did I find, Mr. Speaker? First, I wanted to see if the new look Leader had changed his tack and how successful has the re-treading been? Well, on the fourth day of the last session, November 18th, he had something to say about investment, in fact he moved a motion. I want to quote the Leader:

It is a threat . . .

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and he is referring to the Throne Speech.

. . . to nationalize all or part of the potash industry and will, 1. Seriously damage the investment climate in the province . . .

And here is a dandy, Mr. Speaker, taken from the same day's Hansard on page 23 and I quote:

I tell you, if you give the potash people the same kind of deal they will have to hire huge trucks to cart the money away from Saskatchewan, back to the United States or wherever they came from.

Obviously a new look Leader but no new ideas, Mr. Speaker. Next, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to check further on that re-treading plant here in Regina and so I wanted to see what the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) was saying these days. Well, on the ninth day of this Session, March 24, he had something to say about investment in replying to the Budget Address. He said and I quote:

Normally, investment is considered an economic indicator in most of the provinces in Canada. The Minister very conveniently omitted it this year because in Saskatchewan it is a very misleading economic indicator. Because in most cases it is an indication of growth and expansion and jobs. In the Province of Saskatchewan it is the opposite. It is an indication of capital leaving our province, of jobs that are not being developed in our province.

Still peddling the myth, Mr. Speaker.

Next, Mr. Speaker, I decided to look at some of the real "New Look Liberals", is there any hope elsewhere? Most of them are a little more careful, Mr. Speaker, but the underlying attitude in their slavish commitment to this 18th century approach, this myth about attracting investment is the same. I looked to the first and most obvious person, the Member for Regina South (Mr. Cameron). On November 25th last he said something on the subject and I quote:

Financial risk alone is enormous. We face a veritable constitutional minefield ahead of us. We shall have grave problems in the future enticing substantial investment to our province.

Said like a lawyer, Mr. Speaker, but evidence nevertheless.

What about his friend, close friend from Maple Creek (Mr. Stodalka). He says some things that are at least 19th century in their origin. But what about investment? Well, Mr. Speaker, on November 25th, the same day, he also had something to say and I quote:

But, Mr. Speaker, how do you expect investment when your policies do not approach those that are offered in Alberta.

Evidence, I submit of the same enslavement, Mr. Speaker.

What about the Member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg (Mr. Nelson), Mr. Speaker. Well, I find he got into the act a

little earlier and on November 21st and I quote:

It would seem naive to suggest that private industry capital would consider entering a province where steps are now being taken to nationalize and to take over oil companies.

More evidence, Mr. Speaker, of the same enslavement.

Next, Mr. Speaker, and at the risk of sounding chauvinistic there is a saying still used by some that suggests, ladies first and sure enough the new look Liberal Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mrs. Edwards) had her say on November 20th and I quote:

What investor will now risk coming to this province as long as there is an NDP Government in power? Over the past four years and in the Throne Speech there has been such a negative and hostile attitude to business and industrial development . . .

More evidence, Mr. Speaker, more evidence of this enslavement to some 18th century notion, to this myth that this so-called private enterprise giveaway approach would somehow accidentally result in more investment in the province of Saskatchewan.

Suffice it to say, Mr. Speaker, everyone of them still believes the myth, still thinks the same, still has no new ideas. Suffice it to say that everyone of them still thinks this 18th century private enterprise giveaway approach to the development in this province is what is needed. And as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, the only new wrinkle is that they might have the Member for Nipawin to consult with and he could advise them on how to keep account of any bonanza.

I say it was a myth, Mr. Speaker, and the facts prove it is a myth. The Member for Indian Head-Wolseley suggested the opposite was the case and glossed over the subject with a lot of tripe that we are used to hearing from that source; the same kind of doom and gloom, the same kind of uncalled for degrading of respected civil servants; the same kind of muckraking that has characterized too much of his contributions to any civilized discussion of public affairs in this province.

What are the facts about investment in this province, Mr. Speaker? What is the record? I invite Members to turn to page 42 of the Budget Speech. As in previous years the document contains a chart and a statistical table providing information of public and private investment in Saskatchewan. I was able to use previous budget speeches to obtain this same information dating back to 1954, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure that it wouldn't be too difficult to go back beyond that if Members wished to do so and I further point out to the Members that the source of the information is Statistics Canada, even the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) should believe the statistics.

Let's compare the record, Mr. Speaker. In 1957, seven years before we left office, total investment in that year was \$603 million. In 1964 when we left office, total investment in that year was \$844 million. Mr. Speaker, if you compare 1957 to 1964, make a straight comparison, total investment taking place

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in the province in the course of one year, total investment had increased by approximately 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Let's look at the Liberal private enterprise, let's look at their giveaway record, Mr. Speaker. In 1964 when they came into office, total investment in that year, \$844 million. In 1971, again seven years later, and after giveaway policies the likes of which we had never seen and aren't likely to be seen again, in 1971 total investment in that year of \$963 million. Mr. Speaker, if you compare 1964 to 1971, a straight comparison, the total investment taking place in the province in the course of one year, total investment had increased by slightly over 14 per cent. The last year of the CCF Government, Mr. Speaker, a 40 per cent increase over seven years earlier; the last year of the Liberals, Mr. Speaker, a 14 per cent increase over seven years earlier.

Mr. Speaker, before we hear any more about the years in between, I want to deal with them as well. The last seven years of CCF Government between 1957 and 1964, if you calculate the percentage increase in total investment each year over the year previous and average those percentage increases over the seven years you will find a 4.78 per cent average increase in total investment over the seven years. What about the seven years of Liberal giveaways, Mr. Speaker? Using the same method of calculation, namely calculating the percentage increase or decrease, as the case may be, since they were Liberal years, calculating the percentage increase in total investment each year over the year previous and averaging those percentage increases over the seven years you will find a 2.71 per cent average increase in total investment over the seven years.

Mr. Speaker, the CCF years, 4.78 per cent on average; the Liberal giveaway years, 2.71 per cent on average. Mr. Speaker, almost twice the average improvement in the total investment in the CCF years as compared to the Liberal giveaway years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. FESCHUK:** — What about the years since that gang was unceremoniously booted out of office, Mr. Speaker. If you average the increase in investment in the same manner you arrive at a figure of 22.05 per cent, Mr. Speaker, an average annual increase of 22.05 per cent in total investment based on the figures available to me, 22.05 as compared to 2.71, eight times the performance, Mr. Speaker, and done without the giveaways, done without the excessive damage to the environment and without a lot of hot air that characterized the seven years between 1964 to 1971.

I say to the Members opposite, and particularly to the New Look Liberals, it's time you got your heads out of the sand, it's time you discarded the kind of rhetoric that is characterized by 18th century thought. I think you will conclude from my remarks, Mr. Speaker, that I am proud of our record and I am confident that this Budget continues to have my confidence and therefore I will be supporting the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to add a few words to this debate. I won't detain the House over-long, but I do want to make

some comments on some remarks of previous speakers and to add some new information to a Budget Debate which has seen little new information since the Minister of Finance delivered his excellent speech.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I make this speech, as I spoke in the Speech from the Throne Debate in the last session in November on the issue of potash and as I spoke on the potash legislation during the last session. I gathered that each of those speeches had been missed by the Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey) but for those of you who can read, perhaps someone would undertake to read the speech to the Member.

Members opposite have, during the course of this debate, been criticizing the Budget Speech. They have offered their comments, all of them critical. They have said that we are spending too little on health, too little on education, too little on agriculture, and they're saying, too little on social services.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** . . . oh, no. . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Oh yes, speaker after speaker has said, "Not enough money for senior citizens." The Member for Rosetown just an hour ago said, "Not enough money for homes for the aged." That's all social services. So there's not enough for social services, not enough for education, not enough for health, not enough for agriculture, yet the Budget is too big. The Budget is too big!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — You've got too many public servants and you . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . and you're making too many staff cuts. Oh, yes, they're saying too many staff cuts in the area of health, but too many public servants . . .

**MR. PENNER:** — Since when are nurses . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Member for Saskatoon asks, "Since when are nurses in the public service?" I can only say I've only been around this government for 25 years and we've had many, many nurses in the public service, the public health nurses, nurses in the mental hospitals — all contrary, I think, to the information which the Member for Saskatoon has. But in due course he will find there are nurses all through the public service and they do a splendid job.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Now this type of criticism has been characterized by its totally negative quality.

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**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — It's criticism for the sake of criticism — irresponsible, completely devoid of any alternatives. Now it's the job of the Opposition to oppose. They've certainly done that. It's also the job of an Opposition to propose constructive alternatives.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — And this they have not done. They have offered negative criticism; they have offered no positive alternative.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party has talked in this debate about the need for leadership, the need for integrity in public affairs. Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal of sympathy for his words and I look forward with anticipation to the day when he and his followers will take their opportunity to make their contributions to adding to the leadership and integrity of this House. In the case of the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver), I think there is every sign that he is doing his best, but at times his best is surprisingly, even distressingly, inadequate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Let me deal with one or two specific things he said in this debate. I don't feel it is necessary to point out all the more obvious errors, but I think some ought to be brought to the attention of this House. I think it is fair to put these errors down to inexperience rather than to any lack of integrity.

The Member for Nipawin said, "Since this Government took office, government spending has increased by over 300 per cent." And that is wrong. It isn't even close. It's not even in the ball park. It's wrong any way you calculate it, with or without integrity. Those who have a grasp on figures will have noted that on page 51 of the printed Budget Speech is a table summarizing budget figures since 1966. It shows that in the first NDP budget the figure was \$565 million. This year's Budget, five years later, \$1,328 million. 565 — 1328, that's roughly an increase of 135 per cent, and that's true when calculated by generally accepted accounting methods or by grade six arithmetic.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Member for Nipawin says that's 300 per cent. I say by any calculation it's under 150 per cent. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, that every cent of that increase has come without substantial income tax increases, with some reduced taxes such as the abolition of medicare premiums. Large sums have come from resource taxes and these taxes have allowed us to increase our services and keep other taxes down.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — It was a pleasure for us to see the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) assume the role of financial critic for his party.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — For some of us it brought back days long past when he sat on the Treasury Benches along with the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Steuart) on that dark day, that dark Friday in March of 1968 when they brought in the budget which has ever since been known as the 'Black Friday Budget.'

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — That budget heaped hundreds of new taxes on Saskatchewan people. By contrast, this year's Budget continues the \$100 across the board income tax cut introduced last year by the NDP Government. By further contrast, NDP governments since the last Liberal years of 1971 have increased tax benefits to a family making about \$10,000 by more than \$600 per year in their pockets. That 1968 budget, Mr. Speaker, imposed a tax on the sick in the form of deterrent fees. This Budget provides for a continuation and expansion of health programs. In 1968 I well remember the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake saying that it was, perhaps, the first time that a provincial treasurer in this House had ever delivered the budget speech from under the desk. That was the appropriate place from which to deliver that speech. The Member for Regina North East (Mr. Smishek), the Minister of Finance, delivered his Budget standing four square facing the House . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . indicating that he was continuing to expand health programs without increases in taxes, without deterrent fees. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, if being a member of a cabinet which put together Saskatchewan's worst budget is good training, then the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley has impeccable qualifications.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — He follows some pretty illustrious predecessors. I wish him well. We ask him to look back and be encouraged. The last financial critic, I believe, was a Mr. Ken MacLeod and he's been elevated to the Bench. And then there was Mr. McIsaac before that and he has been elevated to the House of Commons. Then there was the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake. He was financial critic last year and he shortly, presumably, will fill all the necessary qualifications for elevation to the Senate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — We can only wonder what fate awaits the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley. Being a financial critic for the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan seems to be a one-way ticket out of the

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House. We are told he is a travelling man; we wonder where his next destination will be.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's not only Liberal budgets that can't bear comparison with the one presented by the Minister of Finance. Let's look at comparisons all across this nation. It has been suggested that Saskatchewan's Budget is extravagant and unreasonable compared to other provinces. There has also been the suggestion that this extravagance is due entirely to the fact that we have an NDP Government. One Member opposite spoke of the Budget as spending \$2,000 or \$3,000 for every family in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we may be spending that much for a family but a great deal of that money is coming into the Budget from other sources, particularly resource revenues. Our potash and our oil are contributing to that \$3,000. And when we consider the services made available to every family from roads and highways to swimming pools and skating rinks, from property improvement grants, hospital, medical and drug services, I think the people of Saskatchewan will be well pleased with their investment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — But how does this supposedly spendthrift government in Saskatchewan compare with other provinces where we must assume they're run by governments which are prudent Liberal and Conservative governments? Let's look at Quebec's budget as Quebec is one of the few remaining provinces to allow the Liberal Party to practice in fiscal restraint. Quebec has a population of about 6.2 million. Their new budget is \$9.75 billion and that's \$1,569 for every person in the province. Consider Alberta. Alberta certainly isn't being run by the NDP. Its recent budget was \$2.96 billion. Divide it by its population and that's \$1,657 per capita. New Brunswick is \$1,709; Newfoundland, \$1,720 per capita, and that tough budget in British Columbia, \$1,456 per capita. Now where does Saskatchewan stand? One would have thought that we must be \$2,000 per capita to hear Members opposite. I don't know what the budget is in Ontario, it hasn't come down yet. I haven't had the opportunity to review the Manitoba figures, but our Budget is \$1.32 billion. We have 930,000 people and that's \$1,436 per capita.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Tory Newfoundland, \$1,720; Tory New Brunswick, \$1,709, Tory Alberta, \$1,657; Liberal Quebec \$1,569; Socred B.C. \$1,456; NDP Saskatchewan \$1,436. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that our Government is showing restraint without austerity. We have shown responsibility. We have brought in a budget which will stand comparison with the performance of any government of any political stripe in Canada. The figures speak for themselves.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, there may not be any exciting tax cuts but there are solid evidences of progress — expanding the dental program for children, implementing the prescription drug program. There have been some modest tax increases but you've been hearing the details of what's been going on in some of the



other free enterprise provinces. Let's take B.C. The free enterprisers there have come to power and, believe you me, they're hard at it. Because they want to hand back hundreds of millions of dollars to the resource companies, they are socking it to the ordinary people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Because they want to widen the gates to let the private insurance companies in, they are socking it to the motorists.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Auto insurance — three or four times Saskatchewan rates. Hospital and medical premiums — up from \$12.50 per month to \$18.75 a month. That is over \$200 a year. The hospital deterrent fee — up from \$1 to \$4 and in some cases \$7 per day. The sales tax — up from five per cent to seven per cent. And, mark my words, in the course of “cleaning up the mess” in the next 12 months they will be lowering the resource royalties.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — In Tory New Brunswick, a huge deficit of over \$80 million. In Tory Newfoundland, another big deficit. In Tory Ontario, a deficit measured not in millions but in billions. Even Alberta, I am told, has a \$30 million deficit this year.

Mr. Speaker, it is a pretty simple problem. If you are willing to tax resources, you can have good services, a balanced budget and fair taxation. But if you are not willing to tax resources, you have to have a huge deficit, like Ontario, or savage taxes on ordinary people, like British Columbia.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, it was a leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party some years ago who put forward the proposition that population was the “acid test” of government performance. I don't agree with that proposition. I never did and I don't now. I am much more interested in improving the quality of life for the people who are here than playing the numbers game. And if we can achieve, as I think we are achieving, solid growth and diversification of our economy, the numbers will take care of themselves. But since the Liberals are so fond of population as a measure of performance, let's make a few comparisons.

From 1968 to 1971, the last three Liberal years, Saskatchewan's population dropped every year — a total drop of over 34,000 . . .

**MR. MacDONALD:** — How about 1964?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — We will come to 1964 in a moment. That was bad enough, but between 1966 and 1971 our rural population dropped by nearly 11 per cent. The population continued to decline after we

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assumed office. It went down by 10,000 (which was much less than the year before) in our first year of office; by 8,000 (which was much less than the year before) in our second year of office; and by 2,000 in the third year, bottoming out in 1974. And in 1974 we turned the corner. By January 1975, we were up 6,000 — an increase of 6,000 people in one year. The latest figures we have before us show that our population is up to 929,000 — an increase of 17,000 in one year.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Did we ever have an increase of 17,000 in one year during those lean gaunt years between 1964 and 1971? Members opposite laugh uproariously. It is too bad that they did not devote their great good humour to solving the population problem that beset this province between 1964 and 1971.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Do you know that in no year since 1964 has this province ever retained all its people? By that I mean, has this province achieved the result of having the population gain exceed the natural increase? It did not happen in any one year when the Liberals sat on the Treasury Benches, but it happened this year. We are on the upswing.

Now so much for the “acid test.” The Liberals’ own performance, by their own measure, by their own “acid test,” left a sour taste in the mouths of the people of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — As I said a moment ago, if we take care of our economy, the numbers will take care of themselves. The fact that we have turned the corner on population reflects the solid performance of our economy in creating jobs. Some may remember that great Liberal promise of creating 80,000 new jobs for Saskatchewan young people in four years. But did they create 80,000 in four years? Did they even create 8,000 in four years, or 8,000 in seven years? And the answer is, “No.” In fact, in seven years they created about 5,000 jobs; two jobs a day on the average.

Now what has happened since 1971? Well, according to Statistics Canada there were 335,000 jobs in 1971 and 370,000 jobs now — 35,000 new jobs in four years. That is an average of 9,000 new jobs a year. That is 24 new jobs a day. Two jobs a day under the Liberals, 24 jobs a day under the New Democrats.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Members opposite will continue to ignore the facts, will continue to go around the province talking doom and gloom, saying that the New Democratic Government is casting a pall over this province, or whatever particular phrase they wish to use at the moment. Well, all I can say is when you have to compare two jobs a day under the Liberals and 24 jobs a day under New Democrats there are a lot of people who would like to see that pall.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I note that both Opposition Parties are beginning to attack SEDCO, not only how SEDCO is managed, but the whole principle of SEDCO loans. I ask you to read Hansard and I ask you to listen to what those people are saying. They are saying that SEDCO should not be making loans to private business. I want small businessmen in this province to mark that and mark that well. I want small businessmen to note that those people are saying, “Don’t make SEDCO loans.” I note that both those old line parties are saying to the small businessman, “If you need some money, go and get it from the banks. If you need some money, go and get it from the insurance companies. And if you can’t get money from the banks and the insurance companies, well, tough.” That may be their policy, Mr. Speaker, but it is not the policy of this Government and we will continue to help our small businessmen grow and expand.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I am proud of what SEDCO has done in the Nipawin constituency at Zenon Park. I am proud of what SEDCO has done in the Prince Albert-Duck Lake constituency in Prince Albert City.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — And if it means that we should make more SEDCO loans to get similar results then we will make more loans. Certainly we will try to be prudent, but we will not be deterred by any 19th century ideology which says that governments should not participate in business by making loans to small businessmen.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — That is an ideology which in Western Canada we know would leave us at the mercy of the banks and the mortgage companies and the stock exchange. That may well be the doctrine preached by members opposite, but it is not the doctrine of this Party.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I should like to deal for one moment with health services in Saskatchewan. I do so with great pride because I believe that our record in health services is unmatched in Canada. It is unmatched in the scope, unmatched in the comprehensiveness of the services we offer to the people of Saskatchewan. It is unmatched in its leadership in opening up new areas and new concepts in health programs. Indeed, I would think that looking back for more than 30 years, aside from an unfortunate period of about seven years, we have been consistent leaders in health care in North America.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, it is unmatched in another way. It is

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unmatched in the efficiency of its operation. It is a model of competent service, with effective administration. We are not suggesting that it is perfect, but it is certainly a model. I think no one denies the effectiveness of our health program — medical and hospital services without cost at the time of service; more hospital beds per capita than any other province in Canada; a dental program for children; the Aware Program; pioneering work in treating mental illness. No doubt we could make our program more efficient.

I know that the Opposition parties will fight these new programs, tooth and nail, as they have consistently fought health programs in the past. It is always said, “Oh, yes, it is a great idea but it is badly administered and it will cost too much and it will do this or that,” whatever their excuse is today. But we will increase health spending in the future. I am predicting now that Opposition parties will criticize us for our increases just as they criticize us now for not spending enough.

Mr. Speaker, I think most people in Saskatchewan are proud of our health programs, proud of the public servants who run the public health programs, proud of the hospital boards and hospital administrators who administer our private hospitals, proud of the doctors who carry on our Medical Care Program.

We are, of course, aware that there could be improvements, but we have a level of health service equal to anywhere in Canada and we do not spend as much money to get it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I accept as a sincere form of flattery the Opposition criticisms that we are somehow more efficient than we should be. I think we are getting top value for our health dollar and I thank the Opposition for bringing to the public attention the fact that we get top value for our health dollar in Saskatchewan.

Certainly we can make improvements, but we cannot make improvements by comparing ourselves with any Liberally-run province. We cannot make improvements by comparing ourselves with any province operated by the Progressive Conservative Party.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I know that many people are anxious to get into this debate. However, the rules of the House tell me, at least, that we must do it in an orderly fashion and those who still have an opportunity to get into the debate will be able to get in and I think we should have a little more decorum and attention to the speaker who is speaking

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I will refrain from . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . provoking.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, I obviously cannot refrain from provoking Members opposite because the recital of the truth appears to be the greatest provocation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I will attempt to lower my voice and to put the proposition very clearly and I hope very dispassionately, that we do, in fact, get very good value for our health dollar. We think that it is wrong for members opposite to suggest somehow that the people in the health services are not giving good value for the dollar. We think that it is wrong to suggest that our level of care in Saskatchewan is less adequate than that provided in other provinces. It is simply not the case.

We are told to be efficient; we have developed efficiency and now we are being criticized because we are efficient. We are told that we should spend more money on health, presumably by lowering our standards and just ladling out money as I suspect is done in some other provinces. We say, “No.” We say we provide good quality health services, efficiently, and we will continue to do so.

One of the weakest claims of the Opposition is that this Government has neglected municipal governments. Consider my constituency of Regina. In the last budget of the previous government, Regina received in unconditional grants, capital project grants, equalization grants, police grants, library grants, recreation grants — do you know what they got under the last government, under all those headings combined? Less than \$150,000 a year.

In 1975-76 the figure is at least \$6 million. Unconditional grants in 1975 — \$2,800,000 and as far as I know the largest unconditional grant in Canada, on a per capita basis. In 1970 — nil. Police grants in 1975 — \$1,700,000; 1970 — \$71,000; library grants — \$190,000; in 1970 — \$42,000. And added to all this is a capital grant fund of over \$10 million, spendable over a five year period. Grants to Regina schools have gone up dramatically. As a result mill rate increases have averaged less than eight per cent during the last two years. And even with increases that may come this year, I predict that the average increase in mill rates will be very much less than the increase in school costs, very much less than the increase in municipal costs. And all this is without taking into account the Property Improvement Grant.

Many taxpayers in Regina are on a net basis paying very, very little more than they did five years ago. But this is a far cry from what happened when the Liberals were in power. If my information is correct, it is very different from what is happening now in provinces such as Alberta. It is a good record. The people of Regina know it. They see a new City Hall; they see a new Lawson Swimming Pool; they see a new Agridome — all financed in part by provincial funds. They see rapid growth in the private sector; they see a record-breaking house building program; they see more progress and more opportunities in their city. When they consider the past they want no part of promises from the parties opposite.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — They know well that Liberal and Conservative speeches buy nothing. They know that the hard cash from this Government buys better services for all of the people of Saskatchewan.

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**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, last October the Federal Government launched its anti-inflation program. Our Government supported and continues to support the program in principle. We have many reservations about the details of this program. We voiced them early and often and we are now being joined by others, many echoing the criticisms we had earlier expressed. The call for effective action on prices has literally become a chorus. But in spite of the shortcomings in the federal program we believe the Government of Saskatchewan should play its part in controlling inflation. And we have accordingly acted. We have not yet signed an agreement with the Federal Government, but that in our judgement is of no consequence. In our judgement an agreement adds nothing to the efforts of either government. It doesn't matter whether we sign an agreement. The Federal Government gets no support from that; we get no support from it.

Mr. Speaker, we have set up our own board, a board of distinguished citizens. It is at work. There will certainly be problems, but we appeal for patience and co-operation. We believe that with patience and co-operation and a consideration of the facts, we can arrive at appropriate solutions. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) is giving sensitive and courageous leadership in a difficult situation and I think we are all indebted to him.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — If the policies of our Government are right, then we all can take the credit. If our policies are not right, then we all must take the blame. I very much regret a growing tendency to engage in personal criticism of any particular Member of a Government or an Opposition. It is as foolish as when, out in the world, opposition to a corporation or a union is personified as all due to the acts of some bloated plutocrat company president or some vicious union boss. We know that is a gross over-simplification, a childish personification. I believe we have passed this stage of political debate in Saskatchewan.

With our program we believe we can achieve a major restraint and still permit employees in Saskatchewan to have wages and salaries reasonably comparable to those of similar employees in Manitoba and Alberta. We believe that this is fair, reasonable and fully consistent with our commitment to a nationwide program. We believe it will be accepted as such by the people of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I return to my opening remarks. The Opposition have opposed the Budget. They have attacked. They have offered no alternatives. They have said they could do more. They said we should do something with less. But we know all about Liberal budgets of short years ago in this province. We know about Liberal budgets today at Ottawa and Quebec. We know what Liberals do when they budget and we know about Tory budgets. Everywhere they are characterized by heavy spending, huge deficits and strident calls for fiscal responsibility.

Measured against these performances our Budget is sound, prudent and responsible. It's a credit to the Minister of Finance who prepared it. It's a credit to the people of Saskatchewan who are accepting this Budget for what it is — a responsible budget. Because it is a responsible budget I will be opposing the amendment and supporting the Motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. J.G. LANE: (Qu'Appelle)** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to follow one intelligent voice this afternoon, the Member for Prince Albert (Mr. Feschuk). I think that I'd like to congratulate him first, he's the first Member in this House to get a haircut before he went on the radio.

The last speaker, Mr. Speaker, talked an awful lot about integrity. Integrity in politics. I didn't hear the last Member talk about integrity of a government that spends thousands of dollars of taxpayers' money to promote a program, a potash nationalization, because it's hated and not liked by the people of this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — And I didn't hear anything about the integrity of a politician that has to pay interviewers to try and draw a crowd for his television programs. I didn't hear anything about integrity of the man who's now leaving the Chamber, when he talks about his political party that has to spend thousands of dollars on TV ads to try and promote an unwanted program, and it . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — . . . and refused to allow that to be an election expense from the next election. If that's integrity I think they've got the morals of a housecat and I'm not sure that the Leader of the party opposite has got any right or any justification to come into this Assembly and talk about integrity based on the record of the Government opposite. We'll talk about integrity when we go back to Delta Systems and a corrupt program and buying and selling of individuals that you did in northern Saskatchewan through your own party hacks and Delta Systems, if you want to talk about integrity.

It's a pretty sad record, pretty sad and sorry record when we want to talk about integrity and the only advice that I can give to the Members opposite is stay out of that deal and stay off that subject because your record leaves you open for fair and justifiable attack.

It's interesting that the last Member talked about SEDCO and how proud he was about SEDCO. About how proud he was about the fiasco and the farce of mismanagement in Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan. How proud he is of a situation in government of a program which causes dislocation of families, as they bring them into one area and then because of mismanagement and poor planning it goes bankrupt and belly-up and families have to move again. About the dislocation it causes to towns as with a great flourish they announce a SEDCO program and new

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industries, six and eight months later it goes belly-up and bankrupt because you don't have the management or the capability of management to set in sound economic development in the communities of this province.

He's proud, he's proud of the fact that Fleury Mobile Homes has gone bankrupt because notwithstanding the hundreds of buses that the Government bought it was a bad idea at the beginning and SEDCO should never have gone into it and yet he's proud of the hundreds of people who have been put out of work and he's proud of the fact that hundreds of small businessmen in this community have unpaid debts. That's what he's proud of with SEDCO. That's his record. He can have it. We're not proud of it and I don't think most of the people of this province are proud of it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — He's proud of the population increase, that he's talked about since 1971. Sure there's bound to be a population increase when you double the number of civil servants in the last five years. But that's an artificial and a backward and a regressive step in government. When he talks about efficiency certainly his record stands up poorly to the public scrutiny that has been given it. When he talks about B.C. and the need for the great tax increases, sure there are tax increases in B.C. They are necessary because of an inefficient, mismanaged, incompetent government of Dave Barrett and his New Democratic Party in B.C. and that's why they've got tax increases. I wouldn't be at all surprised if fiscal responsibility is ever brought to this province, that there will have to be tax increases and tax increases will be better than mortgaging the future of this province as you are doing with your potash takeover and your ineffective and poor control of SEDCO and the harm that it is causing.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — He talks about efficiency and yet year after year after year, DNS comes before Public Accounts as being another example of waste and mismanagement and poor government planning. He talks about efficiency when the happy little Minister of Social Services is running around dropping cheques off in the graveyards of the province. Now how is that for efficiency? The only person in social services that isn't running around with money falling out of his pockets is the Minister and that's only because the Premier cut his allowance. The fact is that the misguided guidance counsellor shouldn't be in that department, because what that department needs is someone with a strong hand to clean house and turn that department around and make it administratively effective and that we haven't seen. I venture to guess that over the next four years that on a pretty regular basis we're going to be bringing to the public's attention further examples of the waste and mismanagement of that particular department. That's the efficiency that the Premier opposite is proud of.

Mr. Speaker, I don't like to interrupt the Minister of Social Services when he finally participates in the Budget Speech, but I'm afraid that one of us may have to.



I'd like to turn, Mr. Speaker, to my prepared comments on the Budget Speech. The Premier has asked for some positive and constructive proposals and I will give him some this afternoon and I'll give some examples of the true inefficiencies of the Government opposite. The inefficiencies in concept and inefficiencies in implementation.

We've heard a great deal in the Budget about the talk for restraint and I think we can forget whether it's 11 per cent increase or 16 per cent increase when we talk about integrity and the Minister of Finance is playing with figures. I think all Members agree that except for the Mayor of Regina that there is a need for restraint. I think pretty well all responsible people accept that need for restraint. But surely restraint must mean more than simply limiting government spending increases to levels of increases, smaller than past levels of increases. The dramatic increase in government spending is undoubtedly a major cause of inflation. Government, without reference to any question of efficiency or personal incentives or effectiveness, governments have gone on spending sprees without regard to the question of fiscal responsibility.

The Federal Government unwisely enters into cost-shared programs with provinces, which programs only encourage the provinces to spend moneys on more programs. Cost-shared programs, the provinces are only spending 50 cent dollars or 25 cent dollars, depending on the amount of the federal contribution.

The Federal Government has instituted an equalization formula which is a disincentive for provinces to lose their so-called have-not status. If a province grows and expands and develops it loses its equalization grant. Governments which continue to waste money or spend money on ineffective programs or refuse to develop economically, like Saskatchewan, still receive equalization grants for their poor efforts. It's a bad program in concept and I think that it has to be reassessed and redeveloped to force governments like the one opposite, to try and develop substantially, economic development within the province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — It's interesting that one can criticize the Federal Government for its lack of political or economic wisdom, but in the fiscal year, 1975-76, nine out of the ten provinces are increasing their spending at a faster rate than Ottawa is. Only Nova Scotia expenditures of all provinces are less than the Federal Government's projected 13 per cent target for itself.

According to a report in the Financial Times News Service, from Peter Cook, in fact when it comes to practising restraint, the provinces have a poorer record than Ottawa. And in fact, it is the Tory Government, he says, in Ontario that is most committed to wanton spending it's way out of recession and inflation.

I say that the philosophical tragedy of this Budget is the failure of the New Democratic Party to reassess its programs and to begin to look at their effectiveness and their costs. I think it may be in North America trite to say that it's obvious that the great failure of social democratic governments of any name, is to truly solve the social programs that these

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governments set out to tackle. More and more dollars are being spent, but the problems don't go away. Welfare expenditures in the hundreds of billions of dollars in North America have not improved in any substantive or real way the economic position of the poor. Serious questions are being asked by reasonable people about the effectiveness of the billions of dollars being spent on education. Health costs are escalating at nearly uncontrollable rates in every jurisdiction in North America. It may be interesting to look at the records of the political parties in this particular province.

The NDP say quite simply that they will continue to implement new programs. They say that more and more programs will solve the problems. Welfare for example in 1971, with a budget of \$50 million, with 13 programs, not including correction centres and boys' homes, etc, in 1976-77 has an estimated budget of \$115 million, 15 programs and many others were put into other areas that had been in the budget in 1971.

Our poor — and perhaps the Minister might want to listen to this — since 1971 are our poor better off today in real or relative terms than they were in 1971? Certainly they are not.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — And all the money spent on that program, you know if you had the guts to admit it to yourself, and it is a fact that relatively you haven't solved one problem of the poor and the economic underdevelopment in this province. Because you failed to look at the real problem, you failed to use real and effective solutions to these problems. No one in your party, and it's not just the minister of Social Services, can really begin, can really grasp the need for program effectiveness and cost restraints. The Conservatives on the other hand and I'm sorry most of them are not in the House, say publicly that they will stop further programs. They will in effect freeze government and its services.

It's also obviously a ridiculous and irrational approach. The question is, who will be cut off, what programs are we going to end. What new problems will fail to be solved. The Conservatives, Mr. Speaker, are so narrow and negative in their stated Collver philosophy that without doubt it will fold up under public scrutiny. It is too simplistic for rational discussion.

We, the Liberal Party are in the throes of change. We will have to develop a direction or policy if we are to govern in 1979, we admit it publicly and we know it. The obvious positions of the Conservatives and the NDP, however, open an area for some pretty serious discussions.

It is becoming more and more obvious to reasonable people that the concept of more and more programs will not solve any more problems. The effectiveness of a freeze is not even worth commenting on. I say, Mr. Speaker, it is time for government, federal and provincial to begin to look at the effectiveness of its programs. The Federal Government has failed and so has every provincial government failed to take this approach. It is time for governments to ask themselves, are our programs really doing the job we set them up to do? And if not, if they are failing, let's get rid of them and try something new. Politicians

must in fact begin to apply the private sector management capabilities in its management concepts to social programs.

We must begin to look at the cost effectiveness of social programs, and end the philosophy of governments like the NDP which have government for government's sake. There is no doubt in many areas of North America that the people are becoming sick and tired of having their hopes and expectations dashed on the rocks of bureaucracy. The people cannot afford the social and the mental costs of programs that are a disincentive to self-sufficiency. The questions in the future must be, does it work, or what will work?

The great crush of inflation is convincing more and more people that the philosophy of government should be based on effectiveness and truly trying to solve the problems and not simply glossing over the problems with more and more money. Let's look at this particular Budget for example. There is a call for restraint. The Minister of Health says that governments can no longer afford escalating health costs. He goes on and he is quoted in the Leader-Post:

Since government clearly cannot absorb the increasing costs of health care, an increasing emphasis will be placed on teaching people how to take care of themselves through preventive medicine.

That is the Minister of Health.

I think that that is a fair recognition of the problem. I think, too, that it is an admission that the past programs have failed in the fields of preventive medicine. I think it is a fair statement of what must be done. But let's look at what this Budget does to attain the change in policy as set out by the Minister of Health.

Health research projects, no change from last year. And yet we call for more emphasis on preventive health care. City health department, leaders in preventive health care, their grants are cut. The health services program is reduced \$300,000. Research and planning, same staff, no increase. Health promotion branch, which should be leading the matter of preventive health care has in fact its staff reduced and its budget cut over \$100,000. The very areas, Mr. Speaker, of the Department which would be most likely to lead any development in the field of preventive medicine are in fact curtailed by the Government opposite in this particular Budget.

The reason I suspect is the inability of the NDP Government and particularly the new Minister of Health to really come to grips with concept of effectiveness of programs. Program after program was introduced over the last four years. For example, we have a drug program, already being questioned by the very Minister of Health. A drug program that has no built-in restraints and is open-ended in concept. In fact a much cheaper and more effective plan was introduced in Manitoba. But because it meant less government involvement and less government control, that program and that concept was rejected by the NDP.

A Hearing Aid Plan which was introduced with an estimated staff of 26 persons with a budget of \$952,000, already there are more people hired by the New Democratic Government than were working under the eight private hearing aid companies. The NDP could have used the existing private sector and private

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structure to supply the subsidized hearing aids to those who needed them. The NDP not only drove out private business, it implemented a more costly and bigger bureaucracy. The program could have been implemented much more cheaply.

The Saskatchewan Dental Plan will employ 322 people in addition to the existing number of private dentists and their staffs in the province. Saskatchewan dentists offered to supply the program for \$171 per student. It is costing the NDP nearly \$400 a student to supply exactly the same service that the dentists proposed. Obviously the Government, Allan Blakeney, the health field is afraid of or ignorant of, or refuses to look at the cost effectiveness of programs. Other jurisdictions, however, notwithstanding the words of the Premier, are looking at new directions and new fields, new areas, cost effectiveness in the fields of public health.

I have detailed them in my remarks, Mr. Speaker, due to time I am just going to list for the Premier some areas that he very pointedly overlooked. California Blue Cross has brought an incentive payment to each hospital in an experimental program. In Saskatchewan if a hospital becomes efficient and effective it gets its grant cut. There is no incentive for it to improve. It creates the services . . .

**MR. ROLFES:** — Why didn't you do . . .

**MR. LANE:** — You are the Government now, Mr. Minister. It is about time you started showing some responsibility. Because if you do exactly what we did for seven years, the same thing is going to happen to you that happened to us. I hope you keep going. When we form the government in 1979, the first thing we will do is start to bring some responsibility to the government services, something that you pointedly ignored in your personal records of ineffectiveness in government services. Certainly that should lead you to be silent in this debate and start to listen instead of rapping on as you are.

Integrated hospitals in Phoenix, Arizona have resulted in massive savings to the people of that state. In Tennessee industrial engineering techniques are applied to hospitals. The first year of operation the program saved \$1,370,000 simply by eliminating unnecessary expenses.

**MR. ROLFES:** — . . . New York. . .

**MR. LANE:** — I could document . . . I am going to tell you about New York very quickly. If the Minister of Social Services would look at New York and do as well as the state of New York has done and the city pointedly stayed out of the program, that state saved a billion dollars on welfare reform in its first year of operation. It cleaned house of the civil servants who couldn't administer the program. Increased welfare benefits were 30 per cent in the first year while saving that billions of dollars implementing such imaginative programs as the welfare ombudsman so that the people would have someone who could do investigating if they had complaints. And it eliminated 400,000 people from the welfare rolls.

Let's look at New York. You would be well advised to start to look at New York and get your own house in order because the record in that state and the record in California is

something you should look at. Not something you should pointedly ignore. Your record is pretty sorry. I am glad you suggested New York. As a matter of fact one of the best things you could do for the people is get a little handout from the Premier and you go to New York. I prefer it to be a one-way trip but if you learn anything when you get there, when you come back maybe the people will be a little better off. I doubt it, but maybe they will.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — The Minister of Public Health has admitted publicly his failure to get his priorities through Cabinet. I think that indicates his inability to handle his Department and his inability to persuade his colleagues to get a grasp of the great problem of escalating health costs. I think that you wanted some positive examples of what you could do in the Budget, you are getting them. Obviously the Minister is not listening. I believe that a situation that develops when the Minister of Social Services allows a Family Income Plan to be set up without even an audit branch for 18 months after it is going or a system that has developed in the Family Income Plan, and your predecessor said, oh, it is not to go to those on social assistance. It is not to go to SAP payments. When in fact, literally thousands of dollars are going to SAP recipients, you know it, we know it and I am sure your departmental officials know it. Something that you misled and your predecessor misled the people of this province. It was supposed to help the working poor, not to penalize the working people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, turning to the area of municipal and local government, Municipal Affairs. The Government has a well-publicized record of cost share programs with local governments. And we have heard many references to these programs during this debate. It is obvious for every dollar spent a certain percentage is put up by local government. This also I think obviously creates a situation where policy decisions as to local government programs are made by the Provincial Government. Local governments because of the cost sharing nature are required politically to participate. Yet, what this Government does in this Budget, is practise restraint in Regina but the maintenance and operating costs of these programs devised by Regina, are being carried by local governments.

We know that these operating and maintenance grants are most affected by inflation. The burden of inflation because of the management of the Government opposite in the field of municipal affairs is being carried by local governments and the need for programs or the great increase in programs in local governments are further affected by inflation because of rapidly escalating maintenance and operating costs. Yet the Minister of Health when he was complaining about Ottawa's cutback or restraint on contributions to the cost-shared medicare program, he said, it is unfair for Ottawa to do that. It is forcing the provinces to carry the burden of inflation. That is what the Minister of Finance says when Ottawa, I think responsibly, cuts back on health costs, medicare expenditures. But when this Government does it to local governments across this province, it is so-called restraint, so-called bringing a budget within the inflation guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, I could comment further about the

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anti-inflation program of the Government opposite is a political weapon and not a restraint program. There hasn't been one provincial settlement within the federal guidelines. As a matter of fact the Minister of Finance has publicly encouraged the unions to go on strike by saying that if the strike is affecting essential services, the guidelines will be broken by the Blakeney Government.

I predicted in the past and other Members have said so that the anti-inflation program would be used by the NDP to get their traditional enemies. We've seen it with rent controls against landlords, we see it against professions with this so-called tax on professional incomes. It is interesting of course that the traditional friends of the NDP are exempted from the guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, I pointed out a very few examples. I think that the failure of this Budget is a failure to grasp the opportunity to take a long serious look at many Government programs and to see if in fact they are working and if in fact they are truly solving the problems that they were set out to do. This Government has in fact failed to come to grips with the escalating cost of government. It leaves local governments out on a limb and continues the typical NDP ploy of picking on minorities like landlords, farmers with shares in inland terminals through its trucking proposals or its weight restrictions, the professions. It actually, I think, can be summed up pretty succinctly, this is a petty approach to government by what has become a pretty petty government, and the Premier in his remarks boldly proved that today.

Mr. Speaker, obviously I will not be supporting the Motion, I will be supporting the amendment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT: (Regina Wascana)** — Mr. Speaker, by leave before I begin my address, I wonder if I might mention to the House that we have with us in the east gallery a man who, in my opinion, has contributed a great deal to the politics of Saskatchewan, Lionel Coderre, a former Cabinet Minister.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A man I think who is respected by both sides of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I don't intend to speak in the usual manner, particularly about my departments. That doesn't mean the departments upon which I choose to comment from time to time, or departments that are delighting me by any means. But I propose in the brief comments that I will be making today to make two suggestions to the Government, which I think are germane to the way the Budget is handled and the way the Government operates in general in this province.

The first proposal, Mr. Speaker, has to do with the absence of a mechanism of control, a mechanism to stop an over-spending by government, a mechanism for pruning government spending. Spending in Saskatchewan now exceeds a billion dollars. I think we are all aware of the tendency of public servants to protect

their empires, to protect and justify growth where growth is not needed. It is difficult for all elected officials to separate the wheat from the chaff. I believe that the NDP elected officials have more trouble solving that problem than most. But it is a difficulty that is true across the country. It is a problem caused by the growth of government and I suggest that all politicians have trouble protecting the public purse even if they are well-intentioned.

What we need, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan is a Minister specifically working to protect that public purse. One of the things that the Saskatchewan political arrangement in our Cabinet lacks is a policeman and that is the function of the President of the Treasury Board in the National Government and it's a function that is lacking here. Jean Chretien explains . . .

**MR. ROLFES:** . . . is doing a good job.

**MR. MERCHANT:** Well, he is doing a good job. He explained the political realities of his position very well before a senate committee a few weeks ago. He said that he scored his political points personally and for his department by the things that he can cut back and by tearing out of Government expenditure.

**MR. ROLFES:** — Family allowance.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — All right, Herman Rolfes. Now you go back to your constituency, you go back to Saskatoon and you are apt to indicate that you have been successful because of the Government program that you brought into your department. You are apt to indicate that you have been successful because spending has gone up in your department. That is the way you report back to your department, that is the way you justify yourself to your department and that is the way you justify yourself to your own people. You would hardly make a political speech boasting that you had done a great job because you had cancelled one of your programs. You would hardly make a political speech boasting because you had cut nine or ten or 50 people out of your projects or one of the things of the Department of Social Services. I choose Herman Rolfes because he was kind enough to raise his ugly head while I was looking for someone to choose.

But, also, Mr. Speaker, and I . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! I think occasionally we stray too far into this business of referring to Members personally and in fact attacking him personally. The Member for Wascana is not the only one that has done it recently in the Budget. I just caution all Members.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, in fact he is a good choice because of the large department that he handles. I, frankly, don't know whether that Member is doing a good job or a bad job. I have my suspicions but I frankly don't know. But the point is that he, like every other Minister, scores political points and personal points for himself not by cutting back but by moving forward, and moving forward means spending more.

Mr. Speaker, a President of the Treasury Board scores his political points, as Mr. Chretien put it, by cutting back. His

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job is to be the policeman, his job is to find ways to find ways to save. He goes to Cabinet and to his constituency and perhaps to his wife at night, and says, I did a good job because I cut out \$50,000; or I did a good job because I pared back on that department. It is a function, Mr. Speaker, that should be performed by the Minister of Finance and I am sure, indeed, that the present Minister of Finance is trying his best to perform that function. But I suggest that one ministry combining the two functions of finance is too much to ask, and the two functions of finance are in some ways contradictory. How, for instance, is the system working with our present Minister of Finance.

I view him, it may sound curious coming from this side of the House, with a certain amount of respect, a great deal of respect in some ways but I believe him to be more of an innovator than a conserver, more the type of person who wants to move forward and spend more. I can think of people in the Cabinet who would be doing a better job of the policeman function, a better cutter-man. Now the Premier may have him in that position for some purpose because he thinks that he better combines the two roles, but the fact is that when you have to combine the two roles it is setting up a bad organization chart, a bad pattern within the Cabinet. I think of times when the man in Finance fitted better the role of a policeman. Both kinds of examples, however, don't take away from the facts that we would have a better system if the organization of Cabinet were realigned and those functions were split.

Mr. Steuart, for instance, the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake, tells me that he was the Provincial Treasurer, as it was then called, he used to send queries from Treasury Board into various departments. That was something that turned on the then Minister of Finance, the Provincial Treasurer. Perhaps that practice still remains. Perhaps part of the reason we had a frugal government was because the two top men in that Government were concerned about government spending. But it doesn't change the fact that the Government should be realigned and that that realignment might, in an organizational way, improve our ability to control spending.

But, a Budget of over \$1 billion, I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it is time that the Premier considered dividing the functions of the Ministry of Finance. A Minister in charge of revenue, in charge of over-all planning perhaps, in charge of collecting and working with the Premier on the direction of Government, but a second separate position, the cutter-man function, the policeman function, I suggest there should be a second Minister, a president of the treasury board.

If that Minister just found five unnecessary jobs he would be worth his salt as a Minister. If that ministry just cut back 50 or 100 or \$200,000 a year, that wouldn't go on being wasted year after year, that ministry would be a justifiable ministry.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, we are on the brink of losing control completely over government spending. Government spending both nationally and provincially and if this province is worse than most, and I believe it is worse than most, it still doesn't



change the fact . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Who . . .

**MR. MERCHANT:** Well, I get the impression that Allan Blakeney either doesn't believe that or doesn't care whether he believes that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — It's the largest business in Saskatchewan and it is time we started to find ways to run the largest business in Saskatchewan in a businesslike way. I think that the control or function in the Cabinet, capable of dealing at the top level with that cutter-man function, getting his kudos with the Premier and his own personal political accomplishment by what he can pare down, I think it is time when the Budget goes well over a billion that this Government looked at that change.

Now my second thought in the Budget Debate is again not of a specific nature in relation to a department. Inflation has been very good for provincial governments, it has been very bad for municipal governments. Provincial governments have raised increasingly larger amounts of money very painlessly. They just sit back and let the Federal Government collect it and the money flows in and corporate incomes go up. Inflation on the other hand has affected municipalities very drastically. They have had to struggle for every nickel. The cities and towns are taxing directly and they look directly to the property owners. We have said that part of what this Budget has done is put the burden for increased taxes on the municipalities. Call that political talk, maybe, we believe it. But there is a way that municipalities could and should be guaranteed a firmer, better piece of the tax takes on a firm and guaranteed basis. Initial budget estimates for Saskatoon and Regina are talking about 20 per cent increases in the municipal tax rates. The 1976 budget in Regina will see a doubling of civic spending here in five years — \$800, \$1100, \$1300, those kinds of tax bills are not uncommon in the municipal field today. I suggest to this House and to the Government that there must be a new sharing of the tax base. Unconditional grants was a right step, a step in the right direction.

Indeed, in fairness, the Premier made some comments about it, as far as I know our unconditional grants are the largest in the country, \$20. The highest unconditional grants to municipalities in the municipalities in the country. But I believe that although unconditional grants may have been a step in the right direction, it is still government doling out the money on a piece meal basis.

Municipalities should have a part of the tax increases automatically and the only reasonable way to implement that goal is to give to the municipalities part of the income tax base which the provinces have. The idea isn't new, most large cities in the United States take a piece of the tax bite. Most large cities in the United States impose tax and income tax rates and that is collected by their state governments and turned over to them. Indeed the idea isn't brand new to Canada. Last year the Manitoba NDP Government took the first step towards giving to municipalities there some share of the income tax base. Manitoba rebates two points, two of their 32 1/2 points to the

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municipalities from income tax and they rebate one of their 15 corporate points to the municipalities. That will work out there to about \$17. They divide the global amount and the money is returned to the municipalities on a per capita basis. This practice replaces the unconditional grants and comes to them in an unconditional way. Slightly more money is paid in Manitoba, \$17 this year than the \$15 that they gave in unconditional grants last year. But that's not really the point. The point of the change that I suggest is not a means of getting slightly more money or slightly less to municipalities. The proposal is to get the municipalities some growth in their tax base. If inflation eats away at our dollars then municipalities will be guaranteed a growth in the amount of money that they receive, as they deserve and as they have been demanding for years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, I have no fixed view, frankly, on the number of tax points that should be given to the municipalities, the point is that they should have some room for growth in their tax base. By way of an example, if this Government had followed this proposal and I am sure it is not new to them that they must have thought of it, and give municipal governments three points from personal income tax and one of the corporate tax points on a per capita basis to municipalities, then the municipalities would have been able to keep up with inflation and the Government wouldn't be able to in a period of so-called restraint, appear to be restraining themselves while merely passing the tax burden to the people through the municipalities. Three income tax points of the 30 and one of our 15 corporate points would have paid the rather modest \$5.45 in 1966-67. That would have increased, however, in the better years, 1966 and onward, 1967-68 — \$6.10; 1968-69 — \$6.48; 1969-70 — \$8.20; then in the restrictive years when municipalities should have been cutting their costs in accordance with the ability of the province to provide the funds, in those restrictive years there would have been a cutback. In 1971-72 — \$6.99; \$6.09 in the following year. In the most recent years with raging inflation, in 1972-73 three personal tax points and one corporate, would have paid \$8.69 per capita; 1973-74 — \$11.34; 1974-75 — \$17.40; \$17.79 the next year; and in this year \$24.72.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I stress again that those numbers are the consequential point of the position. The point of the position is that when the Premier comes before this House and boasts about his piddling little police grants and his library grants and his capital improvement grants and his unconditional grants which the Government can jockey up or down or deal with as they see fit for their political purposes, then they are taking away from the municipalities the opportunity to be fiscally responsible and know that their income will rise and fall with the results and the profitability, if you like, of the province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — They should know that their tax base would grow with inflation and that their tax base would keep up with inflation which strikes the municipalities harder than provincial governments. It strikes the municipalities harder because they are a

labor intensive kind of government.

The important point with this and with the other suggestion is that if the Government thought about a better system instead of occupying themselves with speeches which, with respect to the Premier, are completely politically motivated. If they were occupying themselves with thoughts of a better system for a better government, perhaps it wouldn't be necessary for an Opposition to do what we do. We criticize and pick on little things that this Government does badly. Both suggestions would make the system of taxing and providing for the people of Saskatchewan more responsible and more responsive.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. MERCHANT:** — I will support the amendment and not the Motion.

**MR. L.W. BIRKBECK: (Moosomin)** — Mr. Speaker, it is with pride that I rise on behalf of my constituents and the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan to enter this Budget Debate and discuss the good, bad and the ugly.

I would first like to congratulate the mover and the seconder on the Budget Address. I realize it must have been a very difficult task under the circumstances for them to praise the Budget Speech when their hearts could not have been in it. They must have been tempted to criticize some of the shortcomings just like their colleagues from Regina Victoria (Mr. Baker) and the Member for Saskatoon Centre (Mr. Mostoway).

Mr. Speaker, my first reaction to the printed Budget Speech was that it was very well done, the printing job, I mean. I just hope that the picture of the barren rolling hills of Maple Creek, which in itself is beautiful, is not the forecast of what our beloved province will look like in the future. In a time of restraint it does not look as if any money has been spared to dress up an otherwise dull and deceiving document.

Time does not permit me to go into too much detail on the Budget, but perhaps I should use the Hon. Minister of Finance's (Mr. Smishek) own words, that a budget is simply not an accounting exercise, it is the financial expression of a plan. That plan must provide leadership, not only in meeting the needs of today, but also in anticipating the needs of tomorrow. In these times of trouble we do need leadership, but we do need responsible leadership, which can rise above dogmatic preoccupation, big brother attitudes and that phoney self-styled attitude of being the champion of the little people. It has not been the little people who made our province what it is today.

Our pioneer forefathers had a dream and through hard work and endurance did they build this province. If it had not been for the hard work and the initiative of these people, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister of Finance could not have presented us with a budget and proposed to spend \$1,328.2 billion. If the self proclaimed leader of the budgetary affairs, in his wisdom, would have chosen to set the right priorities, Saskatchewan would be on the way to a bright future and progress would be almost unlimited. But because of narrow-minded, short-sighted and politically biased planning many of the good programs will be put in jeopardy and the people of Saskatchewan

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will be the losers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Now, before I go any further let me comment on the remarks by the Member for Bengough-Milestone (Mr. Lange) as he expanded on his wild ideas in the debate on the Budget. I am sorry to see that he is not in his seat but I am sure the Members opposite could convey my comments to him.

First, he claims no one tells farmers what to do, but Otto Lang. Let me remind the Hon. Members opposite that farmers in Saskatchewan do not do too much without this province's Minister of Agriculture's stamp of approval. Let me remind the Member that it was the Progressive Conservatives who established and brought in the Canadian Wheat Board. Let me remind the Member that it was a Progressive Conservative Government who established the first power corporation in Canada. And let me remind the Member that it was a Progressive Conservative Government in Saskatchewan that saved the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool from bankruptcy.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this Member should get a good night's sleep and get his facts straight.

Finally, I would like to thank the Member for Bengough-Milestone for expounding on so many of the Progressive Conservative policies of freedom for the individual.

Mr. Speaker, let me get back to the Budget. During the course of any given year I don't know of any piece of information a government could table before the Legislature that would outline the course that it has taken as a government, its shortcomings and the course it is presently on and intends to take in the future. It is true, I should hope, to improve itself as a government, dedicated to serving the people. These are the things that I should like to make clear to the Members of the Legislature as I debate this Budget Speech.

With regard to inflation, this Government of Saskatchewan tries to lay the responsibility for inflation in Saskatchewan on the backs of the Federal Liberal Government. Agreed, they should be bearing some of it, but not all of it. You agree that nation-wide effort is necessary, as the Liberals say, to wrestle inflation to the ground. You say we must all bear our fair share, but not to penalize the poor. Is it all right to penalize those who succeed as you do in your proposal of a provincial income surtax? It looks that way to me. If at first you don't succeed then tear down those who have succeeded or may.

Yes, the consumer price index rose by 11 per cent. This was, to quite an extent, the effect of higher returns to farmers for their produce. We have set a new high of 6.2 billion in terms of our gross provincial product. Our farmers were heavy contributors to this new record. Now, quite simply, you can't have your farmer and expect to use him too.

All too often I see the people who succeed as being the targets of this NDP firing squad. Multinational corporations and professional people are your main target. But you will get around to the rest of, I am sure, as your aim improves.

I should like to comment on five points that the Government makes with regard to our economy in the Budget.

In dollar terms our gross provincial product in 1975 was \$6.5 million, 10.7 per cent above 1974. I hardly think that is a lot to brag about during times, good times, when crops have been good and potash sales have been up. Our population increased by 18,000 from June 1974 to the end of 1975. What was your net population increase from June 1, 1971 to June 1975?

Our labor force increased by 12,000 to 375,000 in 1975. What was the per cent increase in relation to our population? Our unemployment rate was 2.9 per cent on the average, the lowest in Canada. Not hard to achieve considering our population. What would happen if all our young Saskatchewan men and women that left this province during the past five years should return? And we set a new record in housing starts, with 10,250 in 1975. Government housing — the Government getting into the housing industry in this province and driving the private sector out. You believe in restraint, you say. How does the Saskatchewan public sector Price and Compensation Board work in justifying huge increases in SPC rates?

You claim Opposition parties fail in its service to the need for restraint to combat inflation. Let me remind you of the part that the Progressive Conservative Party played in bringing about fair rent control legislation.

Mr. Speaker, a word about Opposition resolutions, the Government mentioned on page six in the Budget. You claim them to be hypocritical; you speak of 25 resolutions proposed and that this would add up to three or four hundred million. I say that you are the ones who are hypocritical to suggest that you would accept 25 resolutions from this side of the House. You would be more hypocritical and I can believe that, if you accepted even one resolution from this side of the House. Your intent with regard to inflation, that it must be curtailed, is good. I only worry about how you will go about it.

With regard to agriculture, the Minister drew comparisons between the NDP and the Liberal administrations. What a hopeless approach by the Minister to justify the small amount of money budgeted to agriculture. It was strictly a political tactic in opposition to a party that has no more hope of defeating this Government than this Government has of defending itself from the Progressive Conservative tidal wave which will overcome them and wash them from this province until the electorates allow themselves to be misled, like they are at the present time. Maybe with any luck at all you will be out in the Pacific somewhere with the rest of those British Columbia socialists.

The Minister of Agriculture also claims that increased farm profits have been taken in by increased farm land prices. Surely there are other areas like increases in operating expenses, which includes things like parts, fuel, telephone, electricity, heating and feeding and building costs. Over none of which this Government seems to have any effective control. And still they wonder why the Federal Liberals cannot control inflation. Do you still not realize that you and the Liberals are holding hands?

This Government speaks of restraint, keep the cost down

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and put the lid on inflation. How does this Government account for its lack of control in allowing Dairy Herd Improvement Service rates to rise to an all time high of \$14 per cow on the supervised plan. Especially now at a time when the dairy industry, in particular, is in enough trouble because of federal and provincial government involvement.

Agriculture was drastically short-changed in this Budget and the Minister of Agriculture thinks it is all right. A restraint Budget, to a large extent, on the back of agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, if time permitted I should like to expand in some detail on the Progressive Conservative Party's proposals that would serve as an alternative to this Government and its policies, but I haven't got the time.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the Motion, I will support the amendment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. S.J. CAMERON: (Regina South)** — Mr. Speaker, the last time I had the opportunity to follow the Member who just spoke in debate, I was in Saskatoon with him addressing ourselves to the Land Bank in a debate which had been arranged there for us against a couple of spokesmen from the Waffle, in the persons of Don Mitchell, known to Members opposite as the leader of the Saskatchewan Waffle, and Dave Miner the Commissioner of the Land Bank Commission.

I am glad, indeed, to see the Attorney General return. We have been wondering, Mr. Speaker, for these last several days since we began this Session, why he has been so quiet. Indeed, I don't think that he has participated in a debate. Apart from some routine business in the House we haven't heard from him. I can tell him that we have been missing his contributions and we are wondering why he has been so quiet. I made some effort a few days ago, as a matter of fact, which I confessed to him later, to try to draw him out into debate, and I failed. I must say I felt a little inadequate in having failed to do it. I am going to see tonight if we can finally draw him into some debate by talking particularly about his Department of Government, which is one of those many departments which is being so very neglected.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address myself in total and exclusively to that particular department of government. I want to invite Members to specifically consider what this Budget does or what it fails to do in respect of that particular department. It is a pretty vital area of government activity which the Attorney General himself will concede occasionally when he has time from his potash duties to look at it.

The Premier indicated this afternoon that he was finding, although I must say I was rather surprised at his comment, a lack of constructive criticism coming from this side of the House. He must have tremendous extra-sensory perception to be able to hear the debates in the House all the way from Florida. He invited us, particularly, to make constructive criticisms and positive suggestions for alternatives and I intend to do that too and I intend to see how the Attorney General is prepared to accept them. We ought to, I think, occasionally, Mr. Speaker, remind ourselves about the basic function of the

Attorney General's Department. Too often we tend to think of it in terms of a department which provides legal advice to government, which appoints magistrates, which drafts legislation and each January 1 which indulges in that archaic practice of appointing Queen's Counsel. We are inclined to see it as a kind of legalistic spectacle, a rather dry and sexless department and I don't refer on that last remark to the minister, I refer to his Department.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — To a large extent, Mr. Speaker, we have begun to think in those terms about the Attorney General's Department because that is exactly the kind of role that it is beginning to play.

I say that this is a mistake. This Department of Government should be playing, indeed, an active and innovative and reformist role, not that drab, quiet, behind-the-scene role that it is currently playing. Because we have growing in this province a very serious social concern that we ought to be having a look at. I say, Mr. Speaker, that his Department ought to be caught up in a spirit of reform. Indeed, it should be daily attacking some of the social problems which this Government isn't even beginning to address itself to.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — In other words, I invite the Attorney General and his Department to begin now to come out from its ivory tower and to get down into the street where they are going to find a lot of problems.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — We have not been getting that sort of attention from this Government or from this Department.

Mr. Speaker, I want to underline the points that I make about genuine social problems that are the responsibility of that Department, but in respect of which the Government has been shirking its duty these last four years. Mr. Speaker, we are treated regularly on the National News to the most sordid accounts of violent crime coming from other parts of the country, particularly in the Province of Quebec.

**MR. COWLEY:** — . . . how about . . .

**MR. CAMERON:** — I will come to that, too, Mr. Provincial Secretary. I am going to ask the Provincial Secretary, as I have asked other people, to name this province in Canada that has the highest violent crime rate and invariably the answer comes back, the Province of Quebec. I am going to examine that in terms of Saskatchewan and in terms of this Budget.

Indeed, from time to time we are driven, Mr. Speaker, to shake our heads with some bewilderment when we see those news broadcasts coming from the Province of Quebec about their violent crime rate. But, of course, we have been taught in this province to content ourselves with the so-called Saskatchewan option.

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That myth that has been perpetuated by the Premier, that thank goodness we in Saskatchewan are spared the kind of social chaos and upheaval that applies in other parts of the country more heavily populated than ours. The Saskatchewan option myth, a “cocoon myth” that we live somehow insulated and isolated from those kinds of social problems that exist in other parts of the country and particularly in Quebec. As I said, ask anyone in this province where the highest violent crime rate is and they invariably say the Province of Quebec.

I want to examine that a bit. In 1972, Mr. Speaker, the murder and the attempted murder rate in the Province of Quebec per 100,000 population was 4.9. The national average in that same year was 4.1. The murder rate and attempted murder rate was indeed therefore 18 per cent higher than was the national average, which confirms our darkest suspicions.

Now, we say let's look at Saskatchewan in comparison and see how much better off we are under this Saskatchewan option. What about Saskatchewan's murder and attempted murder rate in the same year? Quebec's you remember I said was 4.9. Saskatchewan's was a full 30 per cent higher in 1972. We had a murder rate and an attempted murder rate in this province in 1972, 30 per cent higher than that of the Province of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, in that same year, we had a crime rate in respect of murder and attempted murder that was 80 per cent higher than that in the Province of Ontario and 40 per cent higher than the national average. That's the Saskatchewan option. Lest the Members begin to think that I use my figures selectively let me refer also to the year 1973. Again, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan led Quebec by almost 50 per cent. Again we exceeded the national average in respect of the murder and attempted murder rate by 65 per cent.

In 1974, we experienced an increase in our murder and attempted murder rate of 58 per cent in this province. And indeed we again topped the national average by 30 per cent. That is a fact. However incredible it may seem to the Provincial Secretary and other Members opposite those are facts of life in this province. Indeed that's only a small part of the total story.

Mr. Speaker, the rate of all violent crime in this province, including murder, attempted murder, rape, manslaughter, robbery, assault with violence, those kinds of crimes, again we have exceeded the national average in the violent crime rate in every single year since 1971. Therefore, if Members in this House or anyone in this province thinks that the Province of Quebec is rife with violent crime, then by the same measure, Saskatchewan is riddled with it, Mr. Speaker. These are indeed shocking facts when one looks at them.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — They are grim facts, but they are deadly accurate, I assure you.

The question that now begs a response is what are we doing to meet the problem? What are we doing in this province and in this Government on the crime deterrent front? What are we doing on the law enforcement front? What are we doing in our courts?



What are we doing to arrest the causes of the social chaos that results in crime statistics of this kind?

Mr. Speaker, most certainly as my colleague says, wasting a billion dollars in taking over a successful potash industry is not contributing one iota in meeting that social crisis. Nor indeed is buying up half-depleted oil wells. Most assuredly we are not solving the problem with the Premier's Saskatchewan option.

The essential question now before us in respect of this Budget, is how does this Budget begin to deal with that problem and how does this Attorney General begin to deal with that problem? One would think in the face of these statistics, these grim facts I outlined earlier, that we would want to mobilize our financial resources to meet this growing problem.

What part of the Budget, I would ask Members, would they consider to be appropriate on the law enforcement front and in respect to the administration of justice in this province? What part of our total financial resources in this province should we commit to that problem? Ten per cent, five per cent. Mr. Speaker, this Budget provides a paltry one and a half per cent to meet that problem.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — As a matter of fact, if the Attorney General with his pencil and budget in hand, will add up the Budget in these following respects: (1) the full budget for the administration in his department; (2) the budget for the operation of the superior courts, the Queen's Bench, the District Court in this province; (3) the Magistrates' budget; (4) the total of his criminal justice budget; (5) the full amount of the police budget and it comes, as I say, to a paltry one and a half per cent. I say that's appalling. I say it's appalling in view, particularly, of the grim facts of life which this Government fails to recognize and the social chaos in the rising violent crime rates it produces.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . more spending . . .

**MR. CAMERON:** — The Member says, more spending. I don't advocate more spending, Mr. Speaker, I say get your priorities in order.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — I speak of the violent crime rate. I want to tell Members that that is only half the story. Crime rates in every respect, in this province, that is non-violent crime rates, are running too high and the same sad story is true, exceeding regularly the national average and exceeding regularly the average in Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, recently the Toronto Star carried a story on its inside page. The heading was, "Go West, Get Mugged, Criminologist says." It reports that in the first quarter of 1975, Saskatchewan had a violent crime rate of 159. Ontario had a violent crime rate of 128. Quebec had 81. Saskatchewan's violent crime rate in the first quarter of 1975 almost doubled that of the Province of Quebec. To quote the last paragraph of

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that article, Mr. Speaker, it said and I quote:

Saskatchewan led the country on assaults on policemen. That province's rate is 6.6 compared with 4.5 in B.C. and 4.4 in Ontario.

One need not go further to describe the dimension of the social problem in this province in that respect. A problem of enormous proportion.

The incidence of crime indeed is appalling. The question is, as the Premier said, what are the solutions?

Well, let me begin by saying you don't fob off this problem on Ottawa like you do with all your other problems. That's the first . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — We are not even beginning, Mr. Speaker, in this Government to make the first step which is the recognition of the problem. As I said the Budget commits one and a half per cent of its total to coming to grips with this social problem. In each of the last four years it has not committed anything more than one and a half per cent, indeed the figures are 1.5, 1.43 and the like and not increasing in any one of the years in terms of total proportion.

What has been happening here is you have seen a government, Mr. Speaker, which has been so preoccupied with other questions, that it has not devoted itself to this one. First it was the Land Bank, then it was the oil takeover in Bill 42 and of late, of course, it's been the potash question. A government which is totally preoccupied at the moment in its most able ranks by the potash question is not accounting for the neglect that's going on in these other areas.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — Well, the Member says show me. The Premier clearly is totally preoccupied with potash. The Provincial Secretary a Minister by anybody's measurement who is one of the more able Members of the Cabinet, shares the same preoccupation. The Minister of Finance, too, is spending the bulk of his time on the potash question. Saddest of all is the Attorney General spending his time on the potash question.

I say for a moment, stop and think about this in terms of the rising crime rate in this province:

An Attorney General who until recently has had the transport function. An Attorney General who is Deputy Premier. An Attorney General who is a House Leader. An Attorney General who is the Deputy Leader and chief architect of the NDP. An Attorney General who we all saw in January and in December and November spend three months in total preoccupation in this House handling those potash bills and who for the several months before was engaged in drawing and planning legislation, which means that for that five month period he was preoccupied totally and exclusively with potash.

What I say is, and I don't level the criticism, understand me, in personal terms. I don't. What I say is no matter how able a man is, a man cannot handle that array of tasks and that kind of burden and do an adequate job of each one of them. The fact is, and this is no criticism of the Attorney General, but we have a part-time, half functioning Attorney General in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — I don't blame him, I say that sincerely, but I blame the Premier. I blame the Premier for making the Attorney General the Deputy Leader, the Deputy Premier, the House Leader, the Minister in charge of transportation and a senior officer and member of the Potash Corporation. As a matter of fact what's happening with the Attorney General, what's happening with his assignment has indeed been happening in respect of others, too.

Because if one looks at what has been happening to the Government since June, particularly, in the perspective of a newer Member, one sees again, again, again the able minds and the able people in that Cabinet being seconded to the potash fight, leaving in less able hands the essential departments, such as the Department of Highways, Social Services, Mineral Resources and others. The fact is they are being managed by men of lesser ability in that Cabinet. The ability has been seconded to the potash fight. That's the fact of life.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — We say it's an unhealthy situation. Mr. Speaker, it is not a good situation. As I say I don't raise it in a personal sense with respect to the Attorney General, I raise it though with the Premier.

Let me turn for a moment to the question of solution. As I said the best deterrent as everyone knows for crime is the assurance of catching the criminal. If we meted out justice in this province swiftly and surely, we'd see our crime rates decline. If we could raise the levels of apprehension of people committing crime, we would see our crime rates decline too.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You want a police state?

**MR. CAMERON:** — I want a full time Attorney General and I want a commitment from this Government and a recognition of a very serious problem in this province. That's what I ask.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — The fact of life is that in this province we have no assurance of swift and speedy justice. We have no assurance of a high rate of apprehension of criminals because we have been neglecting the whole area. That's the basic problem.

Well, Members ask, I know of cases, Mr. Speaker, in this province where the time between arrest and conviction has exceeded a year. I don't know how you can begin to justify a

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delay as high as a year between the time you arrest and accuse and the time you convict. I can't comment on pending cases, Mr. Speaker, but the fact is there are two cases currently in Regina of murder, that have been before the courts in excess of a year, where the time between arrest and trial, despite the fact the year has gone by, is not yet finished.

Mr. Speaker, that is not acceptable. I spoke some time ago to the Attorney General seriously about what I referred to as the dial-a-judge system. A system under which lawyers in private practice in Saskatchewan are being used by the Attorney General on a regular, growing and routine basis as acting judges. I told him of cases where one day lawyers are appearing in courts as defence counsel, the next day appearing in the same courts as judges of that court. Indeed I can cite to him examples and he knows they exist, of lawyers in private practice appearing on Monday as prosecutors, as agents of this Attorney General, only to appear in the same court on Wednesday as defence counsel and in exactly the same court on Friday as the judge. Now I leave Members to find their own description of those kinds of practices, but to use the Premier's words, which is an understatement, it's distressingly inadequate.

Mr. Speaker, this long period between arrest and trial means more work for our police forces. It means more appearance in court by the accused and by the lawyers. It means more expense, disappearing witnesses, fading memories and recollections. It generates additional pressures on judges to grant people release on bail in view of the fact they have to be held in custody so long awaiting their trial. In other words what it results in is an inferior standard of justice which is exactly what we have in this province at the moment.

Mr. Speaker, are we beginning to give our police forces the kind of support they need in this province? The answer is, no. I refer Members to tonight's Star-Phoenix which carries extensive comments by Chief Kettles on that very matter. I won't read the article but I will tell you that he expresses in terms of frustration the lack of support for the police staff that he needs in the city of Saskatoon.

Now I ask the question. What are we doing to create and maintain a first class court system in this province? The Attorney General should know, I'm sure he does, that if one asked Mr. Justice Emmett Hall how we're doing in terms of our court system, the answer comes back, not very adequately. Let me refer, Mr. Speaker, to a report which was done at the request of the Attorney General by Mr. Justice Emmett Hall and was tabled, or is dated December 23, 1974. He wrote that our Magistrates' Court is, in terms of its dealing with people, the most important court in the province. He also said and I quote:

It is the most neglected court.

He said:

The Magistrates' Courts are being treated more as a branch of the civil service in this Government than as an important component of the judicial system.

The country at the moment is perhaps more aware of the independence of the judiciary than it's been for some period of time. I think it's time the Attorney General took the words of

Mr. Justice Emmett Hall to heart when he said, our Magistrate's Court, which is a court created and staffed by this Attorney General in this province is being treated, "more as a branch of the civil service than an important component of the judicial system."

He also said . . .

**MR. SKOBERG:** — Tell us about the judges.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Tell us about the judges, the Member for Moose Jaw North says. I'll tell you about the judges' affair. Mr. Justice Emmett Hall said the Magistrates in this province are living in a "judicial ghetto," to use his words. That's what he said, "judicial ghetto." He said, the time has come that we lifted them out of this judicial ghetto. Then we look for the commitment by the Attorney General and the commitment in the Budget and it isn't there.

Federal responsibility? Not a shred of it. It is a direct responsibility of this Attorney General and his Department and it's a responsibility which I submit is not being met.

Mr. Speaker, again I want to quote briefly from Mr. Justice Emmett Hall. He talked about court facilities. He said:

Except in a few places where the court has access to facilities in some provincial court houses, the Magistrates carry on their judicial functions in an amazing variety of dance halls, legion halls, church basements and other premises which are virtual fire traps. No plumbing, no witness room, poor acoustics. All contributing, (and these are his words, not mine), to a lowering in the public mind of the administration of justice as a public function in this province.

Now, I say that is an assessment which has the highest integrity behind it.

I say to the Minister of Social Services that if you have paid any attention at all to what Mr. Justice Hall is saying about the court system you ought to be ashamed. Indeed, your whole Government ought to be ashamed of the neglect and unhappy record you have in this respect. Let me read on. Mr. Justice Hall refers to the city of Swift Current. He says and I quote:

Their health service and the Department of Agriculture occupy space in the courthouse while the Magistrate holds court in a poorly ventilated room in a building contiguous to the police station.

And, again, I quote:

The premises allocated to the Magistrates' Court in Prince Albert is an absolute disgrace.

Those, again, are his words and not my words. He says and I quote:

The starving of this traditional branch of Government must be terminated if the administration of justice at

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the people's level is to receive the confidence that it must have if we are to continue in this province to live under the rule of the law.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — Mr. Speaker, a more damning indictment I couldn't frame; an indictment of more integrity I couldn't frame either because it comes from the most respected and eminent jurist which this province has ever produced. Those are the words of Mr. Justice Emmett Hall. As I say I couldn't summon the words in the same way that he did to describe the appalling conditions in our courts in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take up the challenge which the Premier gave to us this afternoon to offer constructive criticism and to offer alternatives and I am happy to do it. What we would do if we were the Government and what we most assuredly will do when we become the Government a few years down the road is:

1. Give to our police forces in this province the moral, financial and other support that they need.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — 2. We will undertake a genuine and thorough reform of our Magistrates' Courts; we will give our judges security of tenure; judicial independence, top flight pay and other support.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — (3). We will house our courts in proper quarters and provide proper staff and facilities.

4. We will begin to attract the highest quality people we can find in this province to serve as our judges.

5. We will streamline procedures to reduce the period between arrest and trial, which has grown very long.

6. We will discontinue the dial-a-judge system that I have referred to that sees lawyers, some in their 20s with but two years of experience, serving as judges, others in their 80s serving as judges too, totally unacceptable.

7. We will tighten up, and I tell you we will, we will tighten up the administration of the bail provisions of the Criminal Code of this province.

8. We will work with the National Government to bring about the reform that is so needed in so many areas of the Criminal Code.

9. We will provide judges with assistants to handle the routine work of taking guilty pleas, scheduling appearances, collecting fines and that kind of routine work, which judges trained in the law ought not be occupied doing.

We will, Mr. Speaker, commit the resources of our government to these questions in this province; to the reduction of

crime, to the adequate punishment of criminals, to quality police effort, to first rate courts. In short, what we will do is recognize and deal with the problem which this Government is absolutely failing to do. As I said earlier it doesn't require new spending, what it requires is a shift in spending away from some of the fat, and we see it all over in this Budget, and put it into areas where it is necessary.

Let me turn, Mr. Speaker, if I may very briefly to the civil side of the administration of justice in this province. There isn't time to go into the problems that the province is currently experiencing in that area. If they aren't known to the Attorney General, they should be, because again, there is a very real problem that is crying for solutions. And it is the lack of access to the courts by people of average and modest means.

The expense is enormous; the time delays in our civil courts are legion. We haven't seen a single significant reform in this area in the last several years. We haven't even seen a recognition in the past four years of a problem. Mr. Speaker, as I say I will deal with that more extensively on another occasion.

The things that we should be looking at clearly is the amalgamation of the District and Queen's Bench Courts in our province. We should be moving on the Family Court front. We should be moving on alternative routes of access to our civil courts and we should, most assuredly, be increasing substantially the level of jurisdiction of our Magistrates.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. CAMERON:** — Again, I say that a Liberal Government would bring itself to bear down in connection with those problems in a dedicated way and in a fashion which this Government is not doing. Mr. Speaker, in short what is happening, is that this Premier, this Attorney General and this Government is in this area at least, if not other areas, completely out of tune with the reality in this province. In terms of the crime rates I spoke of, which are consistently higher than the national average and consistently higher than those in Quebec, it is out of tune with reality of the problems that confront our civil courts and people's access to them. Indeed, their obsession with the potash industry at the moment, is very seriously undermining the kind of effort we should see from the Government to face this kind of a problem, which is a very real one and is one that is on people's minds every day.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget in this respect is a reflection no better and no worse, than the generally failing guidance that this Government is providing. The war on crime in this province is not even a skirmish. Indeed, in many respects, Mr. Speaker, it can be said to be a retreat, because it is just not getting any attention from the Attorney General who has been assigned so many other burdens he can't direct his mind to it. As I said earlier, I do not blame him but I blame the Premier.

Because of a lack of understanding and recognition of the problem and because of a lack of commitment one sees in the face of those dark facts with 1.5 per cent of the Budget being committed to it, for those and a whole array of other reasons,

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needless to say, I will not support the Motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. R. ROMANOW: (Attorney General)** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise in this debate having been provoked by the Member for Regina South, as he described it at the beginning of his remarks. Before I do, I note that the father of the speaker who just sat down, Mr. Alex Cameron, is in the Speaker's Gallery and I am sure we would all welcome him.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — I want to tell you, Mr. Cameron, that I thought when you retired from politics I wouldn't have to face another Cameron in the Saskatchewan Legislature, but here it is tonight and I am in effect facing two Camerons, one directly on and one sort of observing.

**MR. MESSER:** — I like the observing one best.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — I do too and I can say, that in 1979 or thereabouts we will have two observing, I hope.

Mr. Speaker, I did not want to address too many of my remarks to the Department of the Attorney General because I really felt that this could be discussed, and do feel it can be discussed in detail during Estimates. I look forward to a discussion of this in Estimates, very much so.

When the Member for Regina South talked about the dial-a-judge system I thought for a while that we were in Ottawa, but luckily he modified that to straighten it out that he meant to say the Saskatchewan system. I guess about the only thing that I can say to the Member for Regina South is that he is only about six months behind with those specific proposals of the Liberal Party with respect to judicial reform in the Province of Saskatchewan. But you shouldn't take too much concern, because six months behind is not as far behind as the Liberal Party usually is in this particular area.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — I don't know whether the Member for Regina South has got a copy of a speech that I delivered to the Prince Albert Bar only last night on the Magistrates' Courts and the court system. I suspect that he probably has with respect to the press releases, because strangely the recommendations that he advocated are very similar to the ones that I advocated last night and, indeed . . .

**MR. CAMERON:** — Four years ago.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — No, not four years ago, indeed, not advocating it until such time that Justice Emmett Hall did table the report, a court report, that I commissioned to look into the judicial system, the Magistrate system of the Province of Saskatchewan.



I want to tell the Hon. Member, he says that the Attorney General's Department should be taking a reformist role and I am looking forward to Estimates because I should like to ask him whether or not these things — just quickly jotted down — are reformist or not. I would invite the Hon. Member for Regina South to examine the Legal Aid Plan for the Province of Saskatchewan and whether or not that is a reformist role. I tell the Hon. Member for Regina South that the Legal Aid Plan, if I may say so somewhat immodestly, is a model; our Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission Act is a model for the country. It is fashioned by Quebec. It is in the Province of Saskatchewan.

**MR. MALONE:** — Ontario.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Ontario, the Hon. Member for Lakeview says. No, no the Ontario Legal Aid scheme is the way the Liberals want to run a legal aid scheme, a fee-for-service legal aid scheme, one that doesn't concern itself with the community, one that doesn't believe in providing support services as part of the community; one that doesn't believe in being responsible to the community, but strictly the old-fashioned lawyers' way. That is not reformist, in my book.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — No, no, the Member for Lakeview you are just telling me now about how reformist we should be. That is how reformist the Liberal Party wants to be, they want to go back to the old fee-for-service system.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Now the Member talks about reforms. I want to tell the Member for Regina South that before I was Attorney General we didn't have one program in the judicial area concerning the native people. Not one! Now we have the special Royal Canadian Mounted Police Program. That was the first in this province, in this country. A first!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — We have the Native Court Worker Plan. We have 16 court officers of native people, a first in Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — We have the Native Justice of the Peace and Coroner Program. I don't know whether that was a first or not, though we have native JPs. I don't know whether or not that is reformist by the Liberal standards or not. But they didn't do that in 1964 to 1971. We did that in a short four years of operation here.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Do you know something, Mr. Speaker, it is hard to believe but when I became Attorney General this province didn't

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even have a Law Reform Commission. This province didn't even have somebody looking at the laws. We established a Law Reform Commission, now doing some excellent work on property law reform. I don't know if that is a reformist thing or not.

Now the Members talk about the Magistrates' Courts. I am the first one to admit that much more has to be done. I am the first one to agree with the report that Emmett Hall has indicated here. But I want to tell the Member when I became Attorney General, the man who sits right in front of him, the Treasurer, I think was paying our Magistrates either \$12,500 a year or \$15,000. I am not quite sure because we raised it that period. That was not even consistent with anything in the private practice and you want to tell me about starving out the Magistrates' Courts. The Magistrates' Courts were in the worst condition that the province had ever seen when I took over as the Attorney General.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — So you can get up and you can say that the pay, \$27,500 today is not enough. I am the first one to say that it is not enough. I hope that we can make a substantial increase. But do you know how far back we had to start to get up to \$27,500 in those four years from \$12,500. That is, indeed, a significant improvement.

The CJMIS system now with respect to magistrates. I want to tell you that when I became the Attorney General there wasn't a magistrate serving the North. Now we have two magistrates, residents of La Ronge, serving the North.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — I want to tell the Member for Regina South that just four years ago, when I became Attorney General, the people of the North didn't even have access to the courts, except irregularly. I want to tell the Member for Regina South that the people in the North who couldn't afford lawyers didn't have access to legal counsel until they came into the Legal Aid Services Plan as they have now. And I could go on. I could talk about the Human Rights Commission; I could talk about the Saskatchewan Police Commission. Yes, I will talk about the Human Rights Commission when it comes under the Estimates. I would be pleased to know what the Liberals want to do about it. I suspect that what the Liberals will do is to abolish the Human Rights Commission if they are ever in power again, and all the other reforms. That is how they believe in reform. I want the press and the public to know. Well, we don't do it that way, with respect to justice in this area.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — The Member opposite says, you know we are going to give financial support to the police. Well, talk is easy. We gave the financial support to the police in municipal budgets and the like. \$1.50 per capita is all that you people gave. Don't make political promises where people are going to judge by what you did when you were in power and you did nothing to support the police of this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Now the Member talks about statistics, about how serious the crime rate is in the Province of Saskatchewan. I am the first to admit that the crime rate, whether it is Saskatchewan or wherever it is, is far too high, as far as I am concerned as a citizen or this province and of this country. But there is one thing that I want to really quarrel about with the Member for Regina South, and I am looking forward to Estimates on this very much, because he said that the best deterrent to crime is catching the criminal and dealing with him quickly. Just note those words, because this I think is a basic fundamental difference in approaches to law reform and judicial reform between us and the Opposition side. Not a word about the environment, social or economic, from which that criminal comes, not a word. Not a word, for example, about the impact of violence in television or violence in movies. No not a word. Not a word about the economic problems! You talk about dealing with a criminal, what you are saying is that you want a policeman at every corner, that is what you are saying. Well, I want to say that I don't agree with that. I think that is a violation of individual freedoms; I think that type of an approach to reform is no reform. That is the old police state concept that has been rejected everywhere.

Until we can come to grips with some of the basic problems, some of the economic problems, some of the social problems, particularly as they relate to our native people, until we can do that, we are going to have a high crime rate and no matter how many police officers we have; no matter how many judges you have; no matter how many prosecutors you have, you're going to have a big crime rate. And you people failed to deal with that basic economic and social fact.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — You don't have any policies to try and overcome those economic and social difficulties that our native people and others face. You deal with the symptoms, you don't deal with the causes and I'm looking forward to a debate in this area.

I just want to close, Mr. Speaker, in this area because I'll look forward to the debate and the Committee of the Whole on the bail reform. And I want to say this is something we can't slough off on Ottawa. Well, I want to make two comments about Ottawa, to the former executive assistant of the former minister of Justice. If you have any influence with that ministry I'd ask you to call them up and, because you are very concerned about this business of law and order, say, please change your position. Tell Ottawa, about the Federal-Provincial cost sharing for RCMP contracts. Don't make it more difficult for the provinces to buy RCMP and policing services and in turn for the municipalities. At least keep it the way it is. I'll ask the Hon. Member to make those representations and have a little discussion on that. Because I blame Ottawa now trying to change the ground rules, costing the people of Saskatchewan more, making it more difficult to get policemen and women when we need them.

The second point that I want to concern myself about very much, is this question of bail reform, and the Act which was

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passed by your party, your Government in Ottawa. The bail reform which I supported in principle has contributed as much as anything to the clogging of the courts that you talk about. And I suggest you have a little chat with the Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) and he'll probably suggest some ideas as to how the Bail Reform Act should be handled.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say in the few minutes remaining to me with respect to this area (we knew the Opposition had asked that they be given at least 20 minutes before the wrap up, I will do this, I promise.)

I want to make some observations about this Budget Debate. Some are disturbing, Mr. Speaker, I am disturbed about the attack on the civil service by the Members opposite. The Opposition has . . .

**MR. MALONE:** — Name one!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — David Dombowsky is one, if you want to know and I can name you more. The Opposition goes on to say about the civil service being "too big", "too bureaucratic", "it's not doing the job." I'm asking the Leader of the Opposition, who is going to follow me in this debate, if that's the case, if it's too big, what would the Opposition cut? Who would they cut? What programs would they cut?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, they can laugh it off any way they want, but they are not going to be able to tell us where to cut, because they don't know the programs that are specific. They know, like the Member for Regina South gets up and says you need more magistrates, you need more police officers, you need more money in the Attorney General's Department. But not the Leader of the Opposition, I predict that he'll get up and he'll try and justify this attack. I say, Mr. Speaker, really what the Opposition is doing is in essence threatening our civil servants, from power workers to telephone operators, to deputy ministers. I say the Opposition in this debate has cast very serious slurs. It's an old fashioned form of politics, the assumption that somehow business and people in their own affairs are better than government and people in public affairs. I simply don't agree with that thread that's been running throughout this entire debate.

Now secondly, Mr. Speaker, I found one of the most interesting statements in this debate, one of the strangest positions, was that opening statement by the Liberal finance critic with respect to the Liberal Party's stand on financing of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Reduced to its basic form, the Liberals are saying this. They will not honor the commitments made by our Crown corporation, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this is a statement with wide implications. Because I say, if they will do it for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, they will also be capable of doing it for Sask Power, Sask Tel and every other Crown corporation in the province. Would anyone believe . . .

**MR. ANDERSON:** — Just like you did with the pulp mill.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Commitments that were made, we made settlements with the people that were involved. We honored it, we made settlements. Yes we did, much to the criticism of the Members opposite.

Nobody will believe that they will stop with the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. You know this is the ‘new look’ Liberal Party. It’s just like the old Liberal Party, Mr. Speaker, especially when it comes to Crown corporations. This statement on the potash financing signals a stepped up attack on Crown corporations by Liberals and the Conservative Party. An escalation of their attack on Crown corporations. Tax on car rates, on power, telephones, I say to the people of this province that no Crown corporation will be safe if ever the day is that the Liberal Party should be elected again. If they win, if the Liberals should win, if they’re able and willing to break the financial commitments of the Potash Corporation, I say that every financial commitment of every Crown corporation is on the chopping block and that’s simply not good enough for the people of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Now, this criticism process has been particularly destructive in SEDCO. First, it has taken the form of a personal attack on a civil servant, David Dombowsky. An attack on a man who served as Deputy Minister to the Minister of Finance and Deputy Premier, now Leader of the Opposition. This free wheeling incompetent man, to listen to the Opposition, this same old free wheeling man who headed all of Saskatchewan’s finances as the Deputy Minister of Finance. Is that a creditable way to conduct politics? Is that a credible position for a Liberal Party to take? I ask the Member for Regina South, is that the ‘new look’ Liberal Party. That’s the ‘old look’ Liberal Party. That’s what I saw for seven years, attacks on civil servants.

And the second stream of this attack has taken the form of a public attack on the small businesses in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the small businesses of Saskatchewan . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I seem to recall, I didn’t have any trouble hearing the Member for Regina South during his address, I’m having trouble several times hearing the Member speaking now. So if we can just lower the level and give the Attorney General . . .

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that I’m going to say in simple terms that the second, is this attack on small businessmen in Saskatchewan. These boys in the Liberal Party bandied about company names, they ask for information. They want the business of SEDCO opened up, they want the files of businessmen open. You mark my words when SEDCO comes before the Crown Corporations Committee what kind of attempt they will make to get at that information. I say to the small businessman what the Liberal Party wants to do is look into your financial dealings, that’s what they want to do. They are not applauding now, but they did just a moment ago . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — . . . on the table.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Now, they’re applauding, yes, the Member over there says

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that he wants the small businessman's files to be put up on the table, They want private business to be handled publicly, that's how they support small businessmen. I am going to ask the public and the press to watch SEDCO in Crown Corporations carefully. Why have they made this attack on small businesses? Because not even I would have believed that this "new look" Liberal to be so much in the hip pocket of large corporations as they have found themselves to be.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — SEDCO is a bank of last resort, SEDCO will make some mistakes, SEDCO will take some risks, SEDCO will walk with small businesses of Saskatchewan. But the Liberal Party and their attack on SEDCO says it is not prepared to walk with the small businessman of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — It's now saying the province of Saskatchewan and those loans which were risks and were not risks should not have been made and we are going to change the ground rules. They are not going to stick with our small businessmen because they're lock, stock and barrel owned by the large corporations.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Now, let me conclude in the one minute remaining to me, Mr. Speaker, to say that the Opposition parties have the most difficult task that I have ever seen in nine years of politics — riding two horses going in two different directions. On the one hand, decrease expenditures, fight inflation. On the other hand, increase expenditures, we need more money for social services for highways and for whatever. It's been a basic dilemma and thus they're caught in really contradictory statements. They're caught. On the one hand, the Liberal financial critic says, the surtax is 'insignificant' but 'they'll again increase the cost of living,' and then in the same breath says 'the tax is so significant that professions will not come to the province of Saskatchewan.' He says you know the health budget is up only 15 per cent and then in the same breath he says, 'but you've gone into SAIL and the Drug Plan and Hearing Aid Plan with additional costs.' Years ago, I heard the Liberal financial critic say, 'the writing was on the wall and you charged in saying at no cost,' and then he turns around and says we need more money for social services.

The Progressive Conservatives are the same. The Member for Elrose today said, we need more money for education and the like. Mr. Speaker, the position of the Liberal and the Conservative parties has been confusing, has been contradictory. It has exhibited political schizophrenia of the highest order; political schizophrenia not knowing whether they are for the anti-inflation fight or against it.

If I might give one word of advice, pick one and not try and go both. I am very disappointed the way the Opposition conducted this approach. If there was a way of moving a non-confidence motion on the Opposition, I would do it, but I can't do it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Mr. Speaker, I simply want to conclude because the amendment exhibits that schizophrenia and lack of policy, I will not support it, but support what I think is a responsible Budget.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. D.G. STEUART: (Leader of the Opposition)** — Mr. Speaker, some of us were worried for awhile as the Hon. Member for Regina South (Mr. Cameron) stated that maybe the overload of work that was put onto the Attorney General had softened him up and he lost his touch, but nothing of the sort happened. He was back in good form with half-truths, untruths and in great form.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I have to believe really, Roy, the only reason they give you all those jobs is that you may be the only one over there that can chew gum, talk, and handle all of those jobs at the same time.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — You know he talks about the native program and what they have done for the Indians. I will tell you what they have done for the Indians, the jails, the penitentiaries in the Province of Saskatchewan are full and 60 per cent of them are native people. That is what they have done for the Indians.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Let's show you what they did for the Indians in northern Saskatchewan when they cancelled the pulp mill. They forced them to rot on social aid, and instead they handed them DNS. What did DNS do? The DNS sent up to northern Saskatchewan hundreds and hundreds of misplaced white people; put them into big homes and gave them high salaries, to do what? To push the Indian people around for another five or ten years. The facts are there to see. The native people . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — We didn't cut their electricity off . . .

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Blakeney, you make a far better speech from your seat than you make standing on your feet. It is nice to see you back in the House again.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — The native people in Saskatchewan are worse off, relatively and in real terms today than they ever have been in the history of this province in spite of what you say.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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**MR. STEUART:** — You know the Attorney General has the gall to accuse us of dragging the name of public servants in the mud. I wish he had been in Crown Corporations this morning when we tried to get the truth from the Minister in charge of Sask Power Corporation of a smear job that they did, that he did, and that Government did, on Mr. Dick Keith and Mr. Bill Reed. They fired them, dragged their names in the mud and threw them out after a combined total service in this province of over 50 years to the people of Saskatchewan.

They say, lay off David Dombowsky. I don't blame you for being sensitive. I said in this House many times that David Dombowsky was a good civil servant but you made the mistake what you call the Peter Principle of raising him one step too far. Just because he was a good civil servant and the only one who would ever talk to businessmen on equal terms, you decided he was your business expert. It has been said that in the land of the blind every man is clean. And so David Dombowsky was the closest thing that you had to a businessman. I tell you he wasn't very close. Now if he had handed the former Minister of Agriculture and his infamous Deputy Minister the job of dealing . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — He didn't go broke in the electrical business.

**MR. STEUART:** — No, Mr. Premier, neither did I go broke in the electrical business and I didn't get out of politics and hand my partner three or four hundred thousand dollars, plundering into the public trough, like you did either, Mr. Blakeney.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — If Mr. Premier wants to stay in this House and has the guts to stay in this House and pass those little barbs let him come in and explain how come his partner is into the public trough of the public purse for over \$300,000 and never had the guts to explain it in this House. I say, let Mr. Premier stand up and tell us about the deal where he handed \$10.2 million to Intercontinental Packers. No wonder they got Mr. Dombowsky to take over the handling of the business affairs.

We have never said anything about Mr. Dombowsky except that his ability to operate in the business world is absolutely zero. If you think that we are going to be quiet after the mess he made and you made of SEDCO, and then you now hand him the job of handling a \$500 million or \$1 billion potash concern. If you think we are going to be quiet on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, you are dreaming because we are not.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Please, don't tell us Mr. Attorney General that we are against the small businessmen in Saskatchewan when we complain about people with their hand in the public purse to SEDCO going broke and losing millions of dollars. I will remind you of the most evil case, and that is in Meadow Lake. That individual you imported from Edmonton. You brought him in



here and you handed him a million dollars or so and he went broke, or two million, and now he is back in Edmonton. We are not concerned about these types of individuals that are wanting in here. The word is out across Canada that the biggest suckers in Canada are to be found in the Saskatchewan Government, operating SEDCO.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — What you said one or two years ago before the election, was, we have to show that we are doing something. And so you said, open the public purse, give anybody anything they want no matter how ridiculous it is, so we can point to the business, Intercontinental, this factory, that factory, the Meadow Lake mills. Well the election is over, the party is over and unfortunately it is not you people who are going to pay for the hangover, it is the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

You know, Mr. Speaker, our financial critic started this Budget Debate about one week ago and he said that the Budget presentation was dishonest. That it is and it was. Oh, don't look at Mr. Speaker, he might protect you from saying something about you, which I am not, Mr. Finance Minister, but we say that Budget presentation is dishonest and it is.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — It is interesting to note that one speaker, while he stood up and said what a great job you did and how wonderful you were, not one Member on that side of the House including the former Finance Minister, stood up and defended your juggling of figures and tried to show that you have lived within a 11 per cent Budget, because they know you haven't.

Of course if you look at the speech delivered by the Hon. Wes Robbins just one year ago, it is no wonder they don't think that this presentation which we heard one week ago was dishonest, because he did the same thing. He said we have a budget increase of 15 per cent, based on what? On last year's actual and this year's expenditures. Of course, last year you overspent by \$57 million and when you add that on to Mr. Robbins' figures, you didn't spend 15 to 20 per cent more last year than the year before. You spent over 20 per cent more, just as you won't spend 11 per cent increase this year, you will spend at least over 16 per cent. Then the Premier had the gall to stand up here in his one brief little run in and run out, slipped in and slipped out, he likes to throw but he doesn't like to catch. We tell the Member for Nipawin, if you can't stand the heat get out of the kitchen. Well, Mr. Blakeney knows about this, he charges in, says a few words and then before the heat gets too hot he runs back out and hides in his office or wherever he hides.

Talk about integrity. The same Minister of Finance then stood up, no one has mentioned it, he said, we are going to give health 25 per cent more, when the figures in here put the lie to that statement. You are going to give health 15 per cent more, less than 15 per cent more and, again, Mr. Minister of Finance, it is interesting not one man stood up to defend that misstatement you made and no wonder.

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**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — You know they talk about integrity. In his Speech he claimed the welfare payments were down. Of course they are down because they took the welfare recipients, the dead ones they are not paying, and they loaded them on to the Family Income Plan in exact contravention of what they said they would do when they brought that plan in.

The Premier of this province has the gall to stand in this House and talk about integrity. A man elected in 1971 and in five short years has broken leases, broken contracts, broken his word, dragged the reputation of this province through the mud, made Saskatchewan the laughing stock and to stand out in this entire nation as a province that cannot be trusted and a government that cannot be trusted.

You know the Members opposite complain and I am sure that the Treasurer will get up and the Finance Minister in a moment or to and he will say, well those Liberals complain but they never offer any alternatives. But I am going to repeat for the benefit of those Members that there have been all kinds of alternatives offered. We just heard some offered by the Member for Regina South (Mr. Cameron). We heard some offered by the finance critic, the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley. Mr. Merchant offered some this afternoon. There have been a host of alternatives offered by the Liberal Party, the Liberal caucus, just as we said we would. I'll mention one or two.

Mr. MacDonald spoke, our financial critic, he suggested that you could cut, for example, \$10 million out of this Budget by stopping your practice of subsidizing poor drivers. Quit robbing the gas tax and use it for what it is supposed to be used for, to build better highways that we badly need in this province, and quit handing it over to EEIA to subsidize bad drivers — \$10 million right there.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — He mentioned the buildings. He said, why don't you put a freeze on buildings, there is \$20 million there. We don't need this monstrosity they are building out in the back. When that was said, the Minister of Government Services for Moose Jaw stood up and ridiculed us. And he challenged us and he said to me, "Does the Member for Duck Lake want us to take that public building out of Prince Albert that we are building there." Well, it's not directly out of the public purse but they'll end up paying for it. The \$10 million head office building for the Timber Board. That great Timber Board with 29 employees, two for every floor, and the Board hasn't made \$10 million since its inception. I said, sure. He said, but the Chamber of Commerce welcomed it. Well, I'll tell him that when the Chamber of Commerce, the people of Prince Albert find out that their mill rate has gone up 10 or 15 mills because of this Budget, when they find out that hospital beds are being closed because of this Budget, if they were given an honest choice they would say, keep your phoney head office for that phoney Timber Board that doesn't need a head office now, and give us back our hospital plan, give us back our hospital beds and give our municipality some money to operate on.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, we have very strange priorities all across this nation, not just in this province but we certainly have them in this province.

I took a look at this Health Plan and no one can deny that our hospital plan is in real trouble. Our former Minister of Health and our present Minister of Health can get up and can quote the statistics, as I have done when I was Minister of Health, about the 6.8 or the 7.2 number of beds per thousand, we're the highest in Canada. Okay, we are, but have we got the bed distribution? Are we the highest in Canada in regard to Regina and Saskatoon? What this Government is doing is squeezing our Health Plan. Squeezing it and doing it deliberately. I say that the Minister of Finance and the present Minister of Health who close more hospital beds in an underhanded way than Gordon Grant and the Liberals did, they have done more in two years than we ever did in seven years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — What have they really done? In their effort to gain political credit, they started a whole host of new plans, the Drug Plan, the SAIL Program, aid to people needing appliances and crutches and so on; they started a Hearing Aid Plan, they took off the 17 or 18 or \$20 million, the premium we paid on the Hospitalization and Medicare. Now I am not going to say, this totals about \$36 million. I am going to say quite clearly that a great many of these dollars are spent and they are spent wisely. There are some people excused of paying medicare premiums and hospital premiums, that at least was helpful in these times of inflation. The Drug Plan without a doubt is helping some people. The SAIL Program is helping some people. Instead of helping the people that really needed the help, cutting this \$36 million down to 5 or 6 or 8 or 9 or \$10 million, the Government in its effort to show that they have this enlightened free program, what have they done? They have launched these new programs and in paying for them they are literally starving the basic health program that the people depend on. I say, Mr. Speaker, that their priorities are political and they are dangerous.

They have done the same thing in Education. You look at this Budget and you go back and look at the Budget in 1971, there are all kinds of new programs and they boast about it. And a great many people like them, the Community Colleges, kindergarten and so on, and they have cost a lot of money — 10, 12 \$14 million. But in the meantime what is happening to basic education? We met with the trustees today just as you people did. They gave us figures and those figures are available that are very disturbing, disturbing as to what is happening to our basic education plan, especially in rural Saskatchewan. As school population drops the burden of carrying the education plan in rural Saskatchewan is becoming far too heavy for local people to carry. Government was warned, the trustees themselves put a study out by Mr. Stark. That study is available to Government. That program pinpointed exactly what has happened, but the Government ignored it. Again, they started all kinds of new programs to the detriment and the danger of programs that we have now.

Now please don't let the Finance Minister or anyone else

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stand up and say, oh, the Liberals are against community colleges, the Liberals are against kindergartens. Of course we're not, no one is, it is like being against mother love. But I say to you seriously, take a look at our basic programs. Our basic health programs are in trouble and they are.

If our basic education program is in trouble and it is today. Last year, when you have the highest revenues in the history of this province, when, because of the bounty of nature and the wonder of good sales at high prices for our basic industry, agriculture, we have this great prosperity, what in heavens name will happen to these basic programs when we have a down turn in agriculture that we will have just as sure as the sun will rise tomorrow. You know it and I know it. If these programs are in trouble in prosperous times, I say it will be disastrous in difficult times. And I ask you sincerely and it is a suggestion, you can't do it now it is too late this year, but you are going to be here for three more years, three long years by the look of it, and I say take a hard look at your priorities. You are going to be in trouble because of changes in the cost sharing and equalization grants from the Federal Government. On this fight I don't know whose side will come down, because you have got real difficulty. The Federal Government has asked for a great many of the problems they have got in cost sharing and in transfers of payment, and they are going to pull the rug out from under the provinces to some degree. But instead of just whining to Ottawa and making all the political capital you can out of it, you'll do that and I don't blame you, but at the same time remember that you were elected to govern responsibly. Take a hard look at our basic programs and a hard look at your priorities.

Mr. Speaker, they have had some good programs and there is some merit in the Drug Plan and the SAIL Program, and there is merit in the Hearing Aid Program, but there is no merit, for example, in paying Gordon Grant when he sat here for his hearing aid. He needed you to favor him with a hearing aid like he needed a hole in the back of his head.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I am sure the rich people in this province and all those wealthy civil servants who are receiving over \$20,000 a year, just like I do, do I need to go in and have my drugs subsidized, I don't need it at all. You are spending millions of dollars on people like me who don't need the program. And when you are doing that what you are doing in fact and the people are beginning to wake up to it, you are threatening the basic plan which the people of this province depend on. You are doing something far more dangerous, far more serious and far more underhanded than we ever did with utilization fees or any other effort that we made.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker . . .

**MR. ROMANOW:** — You can do the same thing for medicare, you don't need help in medicare . . .

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, he says you

don't have to help in medicare. I will admit that the handling of medicare, the bringing of cost control in medicare is far more, I'll admit the bringing of cost control in hospitalization is a fairly difficult problem. You are the people who went to the voters of this province accusing us of making war on the sick and the old and now you are doing exactly the same thing, or even worse than we did.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — You are doing it worse and you have the gall to talk about standards and character. The Premier when he runs in here has the nerve to get up and say, "Let's talk about integrity." You have no integrity, you have no honesty and on top of that what is even worse, you don't even have any commonsense. This Budget distorts our priorities and puts on the back of local government an unfair and a totally too heavy burden. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I will support the amendment and I can't support the main Motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### **INTRODUCTION OF FORMER MEMBERS**

**MR. LANE:** — Mr. Speaker, if I may, with leave of the Assembly introduce another couple of former Members of the Assembly. I will only take a minute of the Minister's time.

The former Member for Watrous who is sitting over there who I was happy to announce took early retirement and is now back behind the bar, Mr. Cody.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. LANE:** — And behind me, Mr. Speaker, is the former Member for Melfort, Mr. Egnatoff. I am sorry, he is from Saskatoon.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ASSISTANT CLERK**

**MR. LANE:** — Another announcement, I have been informed that our Assistant Clerk is celebrating her birthday today. It is I believe her nineteenth birthday. A round of applause, please.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

The Budget Debate continues.

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK: (Minister of Finance)** — Mr. Speaker, after listening to the Leader of the Opposition one wonders if Alexander Pope had him in mind when he said:

And empty heads console with empty sounds.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the Leader of the Opposition had been in the last four years, when he talks about free

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hearing aids. Mr. Grant didn't get a free hearing aid anymore than anybody else, except those people who are on social assistance who get free hearing aids. Hearing aids in Saskatchewan are supplied to people at cost. It costs them about 300 per cent less than had they been buying them on the open market.

I was interested in listening to the Leader of the Opposition and whether he would be applying the same kind of a principle to all the health programs and other social programs that today are universal, whether he is telling the people of Saskatchewan that under a Liberal Government there will be no universal medical care or hospital care and that people at a certain level will be means tested and will have to pay their own way, rather than cost share on a universal basis.

Mr. Speaker, last week when I presented the Budget you may recall that I predicted that the Opposition would oppose it on three grounds — that taxes are too high; that the level of services are too low; and that our spending restraints are insufficient. How right I was, Mr. Speaker. But what I didn't predict, Mr. Speaker, was the almost total ignorance of the Opposition about how government works.

I can excuse the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party, he is new in the House, anxious to show off his managerial skills and business sense. But the more we hear from him, the more we realize the shallowness of his understanding of government. And this is the man, Mr. Speaker, who aspires to be the Premier of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to compliment the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) on his speech in the Budget Debate. How unfortunate that it should have been wasted on this Assembly, when it would surely have won an academy award in some Shakespearean festival. As I listened to him I was reminded of that well-known passage from Macbeth:

Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Certainly, Mr. Speaker, the press does not share the misgivings of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the fact that the leading newspapers in this province and community, organizations and individuals have acknowledged the realistic, well-reasoned and responsible approach taken by this Government in this Budget.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — While the press recognizes our efforts, the Hon. Member for Indian Head-Wolseley was so short on his constructive criticism as has already been referred to, he chose to attack David Dombowsky, President of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. The Liberal Financial Critic claimed he was a good friend of Mr. Dombowsky. With friends like that, Mr. Speaker, who needs enemies! Again we have heard the attack by the Leader of the Opposition on an individual who cannot reply to these charges in this House, clearly demonstrates the Liberal contempt for the public service.

But, Mr. Speaker, however disappointing the performance of the Liberal financial critic, his shortcomings are overshadowed by the ineptness of the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. I notice again he is not here. The Hon. Member for Nipawin has characterized this Budget as a “dream world of fantasy.” Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not claim to be an authority on fantasy and fairy tales, so I shall simply have to accept the word of the Pied Piper of Nipawin and his six blind mice. I am sure all Members of this Assembly are indebted for the profound lecture he gave us, which might have been entitled “Through the Looking Glass — a thesis from Alice in Wonderland School of Economics.”

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, the best the Opposition parties could do in the way of criticism was to resort to name calling. They called this a deceitful budget, a con job. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because we followed accepted government reporting procedures in estimating our spending increases for 1976-77. Mr. Speaker, the Liberal financial critic wants it both ways. He ranted and raved because we compared the actual '75-76 spending to '76-77 Estimates and then, turned himself right around and used the very comparison to criticize the expenditures for health and social assistance and local government spending. Clearly, the Opposition is grasping for anything they can find. However, they trumped up charges because they find it difficult to criticize this Budget because of its constructive basis. Despite the fact that the Leader of the Opposition was saying that they offered constructive alternatives, Mr. Speaker, they are really wanting. Oh, there is the odd idea here, and the odd idea there, but it would be a big expense of eliminating some other programs, programs that the people accept and the people want.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, for example the Liberals call the taxation policy “greedy.” Let’s look at the facts. Our gasoline tax at 15 cents per gallon is the second lowest in Canada. Compare this with British Columbia, 17 cents; Manitoba, 18 cents; Ontario and Quebec, 19 cents; New Brunswick, 20 cents; Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, 21 cents; and 27 cents in Tory Newfoundland, Mr. Speaker.

Saskatchewan residents do not have to pay medical care or hospital care premiums. Compare this to the family premiums in Alberta \$154; British Columbia \$225; and Tory Ontario \$384 a year.

Our automobile accident insurance is the lowest in the Dominion of Canada. There is no question about it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, last year’s \$100 tax cut and this year’s surtax, make our personal income tax the most progressive in the Dominion of Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

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**MR. SMISHEK:** — Saskatchewan low income earners pay the lowest provincial income tax in this nation, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — And the province in addition to that provides low income earners with benefits under the Family Income Plan, totalling \$21 million a year.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Nipawin is constantly attacking our provincial tax structures. He has gone on record as saying that a government under his leadership would abolish the E & H tax. Mr. Speaker, even the Member for Nipawin must realize that a decrease in revenue must be accompanied by a decrease in services to people. What does he propose to cut when he gets rid of the \$172 million revenue from the E & H tax. Would he eliminate the Hospital Services Plan which will be costing \$193 million? Would he eliminate the \$129 million highway construction and maintenance program? Or would he eliminate the Family Income Plan, the Senior Citizens Income Plan, the Drug Plan, the Hearing Aid Plan, or the Dental Plan or Medical Care and Social Assistance? All of these total \$180 million. The people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, deserve an answer to these questions. When will Dr. Jekyll be transformed into Mr. Hyde, Mr. Speaker?

The Opposition has criticized our Budget for Education, for Health and for local governments. Let's look at what the Leader of the Opposition had to say in 1969 when he introduced his budget. Mr. Speaker, I should like to remind him of his words. Let me quote from the 1969 budget:

We see children and adults by the hundreds of thousands coming out of the run down shacks, wading through the mud and dust to get to the palatial schools, luxurious hospitals and elegant nursing homes.

He went on:

We will see hundreds and thousands of dollars wasted on unnecessary services, unused facilities and unnecessary duplication.

Mr. Speaker, that was the beginning of the vicious Liberal attack on this province's education and health programs established under the CCF administration.

Mr. Speaker, what was he saying today. He talked about the health service, the hospital plan. And what was the advice? I should like to remind the Hon. Leader of the Opposition of his words in 1969. What was the advice that he gave to the school boards, to the hospital boards and to municipal councils at that time? Let me quote:

It is our hope that local authorities will face up to their responsibility and hold costs in check.

Those were his words. Today, Mr. Speaker, we are asking the local governments to share with us the responsibility of trying to control inflation and he is saying that you have to spend more money.



Now, these same people in Opposition are complaining that the percentage of our Budget allocated for health care is not enough, that it is too low. Well, Mr. Speaker, this year we are providing 69 million additional dollars for health services. I challenge the Leader of the Opposition to show us another province in Canada which offers to the people a universal prescription drug plan, a universal program providing hearing aids at cost; a chiropody program for the elderly; a universal program of providing braces, wheel chairs, artificial limbs free of charge to the handicapped. Mr. Speaker, we instituted the first dental plan for children in the Dominion of Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — In fact, when you take a look at the health programs in this province, we are leaders all the way through.

Mr. Speaker, no matter what the Liberals say, the people are not going to believe their criticism of health services. They accept the health services that are provided by this Government. Mr. Speaker, that was the failure that the Liberals made in the years when they were in government. All of these programs I have enunciated, prescription drug and the SAIL program, all of these programs are totally financed and funded by the people of Saskatchewan. Not a single penny comes from Ottawa, Mr. Speaker.

Liberals say that we are not spending enough money on health. What hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker. Let me compare. In 1971 they spent \$84 per capita on hospitalization. In 1976 this Government will spend \$207 for every man, woman and child, an increase of almost 200 per cent, Mr. Speaker. This is the problem that you have with the Leader of the Opposition.

The inflationary costs in this province in the last four years increased by 40 per cent, not 300 per cent.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — In education the Opposition claims that we are forcing school boards to bear the full brunt of the fight against inflation. Mr. Speaker, let's look at the record again. In the period 1968-71, Liberal grants to school boards increased by a mere 36 per cent. By a mere 36 per cent in that four year period. Since we took office school grants have increased by 120 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — We are providing 58 per cent of the total operating costs, the Liberals provided only 47 per cent. Almost 70 per cent of the annual increase in school costs will be covered by the provincial grants, Mr. Speaker.

The Liberals complain about our assistance to municipalities. Our record shows since we came into office, municipal assistance has increased by 1,600 per cent. Let's look at some of the components of this assistance. Community Capital Fund, \$47 million over a five year period to municipalities for capital works. Equalization grants to assist less prosperous municipal

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governments. Greatly extended police grants. Local ratepayers have directly benefited from the \$20 per capita unconditional grants to urban municipalities. Property Improvement Grants total \$42.5 million. In effect they represent 22 mills of the property tax, Mr. Speaker.

What about housing. Let us compare. In 1971, Liberals provided a mere \$2.5 million for housing. In the coming year we propose to spend \$46.4 million, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — This, Mr. Speaker, is an increase of 1,800 per cent since 1971.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — In closing, let me summarize. The Budget contains substantial increases for grants for schools, universities, health services, enriched highway construction and maintenance programs. We have made selective cuts in spending programs and staff requirements to fight inflation. We have introduced three small tax increases; in motor fuels, cigarettes and income surtax, totalling \$20 million. A mere one and one-half per cent of the total Budget, Mr. Speaker. This can hardly be called inflationary. Compare this with the tax increases in beautiful British Columbia under the private enterprise system or compare this to rich Alberta again under the private enterprise system facing a deficit of \$31 million. Compare this to Tory Ontario who this year will be running a deficit of \$2 billion, Mr. Speaker. No wonder the Tories don't want to make comparisons. Compare it also to Newfoundland, with a sizeable deficit again this year.

As I said last week, Mr. Speaker, in preparing this Budget, we were guided by two imperatives; the need to fight inflation and the long-term need to develop a stable, secure and rewarding economic future for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this Budget meets these goals. This is a Budget of which the people of Saskatchewan can be proud. It faces the challenge of today, it meets the needs of tomorrow. Mr. Speaker, I will oppose the amendment, I will support the Motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order! Pursuant to Rule 143, I must now put the vote on the motion which is before the House. If I may be permitted a personal comment. I want to thank all Members for their contribution this evening to the debate. I have always been one who has appreciated a quiet evening of academic discussion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Hear, hear!

Amendment negatived on the following recorded division:

**YEAS — 17**

Steuart	Penner	Thatcher
Stodalka	Cameron	Bailey
Lane	Nelson (Assiniboia-	Berntson
Wiebe	Gravelbourg)	Ham
Malone	Anderson	Katzman
MacDonald	Merchant	Birkbeck

**NAYS — 32**

Blakeney	Lange	Cowley
Pepper	Kowalchuk	Tchorzewski
Thibault	Mostoway	Skoberg
Bowerman	Whelan	Vickar
Smishek	Kwasnica	Nelson
Romanow	Dyck	(Yorkton)
Messer	McNeill	Allen
Byers	Feschuk	Johnson
Kramer	Shillington	Thompson
Baker	Rolfes	Banda
Snyder	MacAuley	Koskie

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division:

**YEAS — 32**

Blakeney	Lange	Cowley
Pepper	Kowalchuk	Tchorzewski
Thibault	Mostoway	Skoberg
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The Assembly adjourned at 9:27 o'clock p.m.