

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Eighteenth Legislature
3rd Day

Monday, November 22, 1976.

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

QUESTIONS

CRTC LICENCES

MR. E.F. A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might direct a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister in charge of Cable Television. Is the Government aware that the Manitoba Government have now negotiated a settlement of their dispute with the Federal Government by which Portage La Prairie and Brandon will both have their CRTC licences of last Wednesday amended, along the lines of the Saskatchewan Government claims, and has such an offer been made to the Saskatchewan Government that if our government will give up any claims to jurisdiction over pay television, you would be given the right to maintain the head amps and drops in the provincial hands under Sask Tel?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am aware of newspaper reports to the effect that such an arrangement has been reached between the Government of Manitoba and the Department of Communications. I have no reason to doubt them. I'm simply not otherwise informed about them.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is it not a fact that the Federal Government offered to your government exactly the same settlement and your government chose over pay television to demand continued control over pay television, notwithstanding the fact that that's an illusory claim at best, and that you were not prepared to settle in such a way that cable could have been brought into this province quickly and you've continued the claim to jurisdiction over pay television at the loss of jurisdiction over cable?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Well, that's a long and involved question. It is says that we have done anything which delays cable television coming to Saskatchewan, the answer is No. If it says a great many other things as I suspect it did, I didn't fully understand the question and I'm not able, therefore, to respond to is.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Has the Saskatchewan Government not responded to the Federal Government and said that because you want to control pay television, you are not prepared to accept the Manitoba settlement, that you have rejected the Manitoba settlement because of your claim to control over pay television, notwithstanding the fact that Section 92(2) of the British North America (BNA) Act and the case law clearly says that you don't have any constitutional rights over pay television?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member is obviously giving

information rather than asking for it and accordingly, presumably I should respond by asking a question. My answer is that I am not aware that we have responded in that way to the Federal Government.

MR. W. C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Premier in the absence of his Minister, the former Minister of Consumer Affairs. The Premier has indicated the Government is in no way responsible for delaying cable television in this province. On many occasions the Government has stated as policy they would not make Sask Tel hardware and facilities available to any private group who may obtain a license from the CRTC. Is the Premier, therefore, in view of the fact he is not going to delay any longer should a Manitoba type agreement come into effect in Saskatchewan, prepared to make a statement today that in the light of certain events his government would allow private companies duly licensed by the CRTC to use any Sask Tel hardware?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, it has been the policy of our government to say that companies duly licensed by the CRTC or by any other person having lawful right to use the Sask Tel facilities may use them, but they may use them on the terms that you or I use Sask Tel facilities, that they rent them. If they want to own them, that is not part of the policy of Sask Tel, never has been, is not now.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier would indicate whether it is the intention of Sask Tel to give a long term contract on the amps and drops if the Manitoba settlement is arranged for Saskatchewan, so that the profitability for the co-ops and the companies won't be completely taken from the co-ops and companies that now have the valid CRTC licences?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I'd ask the Hon. Member to put that long and complicated question on the Order Paper and I would be happy to ask the Minister in charge of Sask Tel to attempt to respond.

DETERIORATION OF LIVESTOCK INDUSTRY

MR. L. W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding). Is the Minister aware of the continuing deterioration of the livestock industry in the province?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I think we are aware that there are some reductions in the numbers of livestock in Saskatchewan.

MR. BIRKBECK: — Mr. Speaker, in light of the situation that many cattle producers cannot wait for recommendations between Ottawa and Regina to come to fruitful conclusions, what specific proposals, if any, can the Minister offer to this Assembly today, to soothe the fears of the cattle producers that they are going to be forced out of business?

MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member will know that we have provided a \$32 million program for livestock producers. And I think that goes a fair way . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. KAEDING: — . . . in providing some support for the cattle industry.

CRTC LICENCES

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister responsible. In light of the Sask Tel's stated position on cable television equipment, is it the intention of Sask Tel to obtain the computers . . . (N.B. microphone break) . . . technology that they are presently engaged in constructing for the computer industry in the Province of Saskatchewan?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not fully aware of the urgency of that one either and I think probably that could be dealt with by the normal process and I invite the Hon. Member to put it on the Order Paper.

CABINET ADDITIONS

MR. E. A. BERNTSON (Souris-Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. Is the recent announcement of the addition of two Members to your Cabinet, which brings your Cabinet to 50 per cent of your caucus, and an obvious effort to control your caucus, in keeping with your Government's policy of controlling all or part of everything in Saskatchewan?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, Order! I question the validity of that question. Next question.

POTASH CORPORATION OF SASKATCHEWAN

MR. E. C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview): — I should like to direct a question to the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Government announced over a year ago that it was their intention to acquire half to all of the potash industry in Saskatchewan, and I believe they set a deadline of six months to a year, although I may be somewhat wrong in those figures, but there was a deadline set. It is apparent, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has moved to acquire only one mine at this time and my question to the Minister is: — is this an indication that the Government is reconsidering its position, hopefully, and that you are not going to be taking over half to all of the industry as you previously announced?

HON. E. L. COWLEY (Provincial Secretary): — No.

MR. MALONE: — Supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker. How many companies are you presently negotiating with and who are they?

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think it is known to most Members of the Assembly and the public that we have done an evaluation of Sylvite. We are currently in negotiations with them and an evaluation of the Alwinal potash mine is near completion. It was announced on Friday that we will be carrying out, starting in the next two or three weeks, an evaluation of Central Canada Potash.

MR. MALONE: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is it your intention to use the funds that are presently in the Energy Resource Fund to purchase these mines until such time as those funds are exhausted?

MR. COWLEY: — The source of the funds for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan will be decided upon by the Cabinet on the advice of the Department of Finance.

MR. MALONE: — Supplementary question then, Mr. Speaker. How many mines is it the present intention of the Government to acquire?

MR. COWLEY: — The stated intention of the Government is to acquire approximately 50 per cent of the productive capacity in the province and, therefore, our objective is a number of mines that would meet that estimate.

MR. MALONE: — Final supplementary for me, Mr. Speaker. Have you set any deadlines as to when that purchase is to be completed?

MR. COWLEY: — As soon as possible.

ENERGY FUND

MR. C. P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I should like to ask the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation, has any of the Energy Fund in the Province of Saskatchewan been used for new exploration or development since the closing of the last session? Or has the only money that's been drawn out of the Energy Fund been used to purchase existing production and existing jobs that are already in the Province of Saskatchewan, or could you tell me what percentage has been used for new exploration, new development, which was the stated intention of the Energy Fund at its origin?

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, the Energy Fund is not one of my responsibilities. I can't answer that question. I would suggest the Member put a question on the Order Paper.

JUNK FOOD IN SCHOOLS

MR. R. H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Education (Mr. Tchorzewski). Recently the announcement by his Department, both in the press and to school boards, the department intends to take immediate action to rid the schools of junk food, as the announcement came forth. Can the Minister tell this House as to who is going to determine “what is junk food and what isn’t?”

HON. E. L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Education): — Mr. Speaker, I think the Member has misinterpreted or has misread the communication that I have extended to school boards in co-operation with the SSTA and the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation, which essentially was urging that boards establish policies that would phase out the selling of junk foods in cafeterias in schools, something to which everyone mutually agreed. A package of information has been provided to all school superintendents indicating the kinds of things they might consider to be junk food.

MR. BAILEY: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. You are saying then, Mr. Minister, am I correct, that the onus is not falling on the Department of Education to make the decision, but you are encouraging a decision only at the local level?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — They are certainly very much in favor of these steps being taken, but we are urging that school boards, with their school principals, make those essential decisions at the local level. Yes, and I’m very confident that most of them, if not all of them will.

MR. BAILEY: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is the department, about the guidelines given, to supply the dieticians, etc., to determine to the fine point what is considered as junk food?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I think we can, with co-operation of the Department of Health, provide any information of that kind that may be requested.

COAXIAL CABLE

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. speaker, I wonder if I might direct a question to the Premier. Prairie Co-Ax have a licence to use the streets and lanes in Moose Jaw. Is it the expressed intention of your Government to go behind the authority of the city of Moose Jaw, and how do you rationalize that with your claim to allow local control and local authority to the towns and villages and municipalities of Saskatchewan.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Note, Mr. Speaker, the quality of that question, which asks one question and then assumes the answer one way and then follows with another question.

I shall answer the first question which was whether we intended to go behind the authority of the city of Moose Jaw, as I recall being the question. The answer is: I don't know what authority the city of Moose Jaw had; if it had authority - Prairie Co-Ax doesn't have to worry about anything the Government of Saskatchewan does - if it doesn't have authority then obviously it is not relying upon that authority and it should be concerned with what the Government of Saskatchewan does.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary. Is the Premier then saying that it is not within the ambit of authority of the city to allow the use of the streets and lanes in Moose Jaw as the city council in Moose Jaw have now allowed them to do?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I am saying that that's something for the courts to decide and I shall not state a point of view on that. If in fact the courts decide that the city has that power they have it, and if the courts decide the city doesn't have that power they don't have it and nothing I say or the Hon. Member for Wascana says will in any way affect it.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is it the intention of the Premier to challenge that licensing by the city of Moose Jaw in the courts? Will the Attorney General be directed to challenge the licensing in the courts? If the challenge is upheld by the courts, or to put it the other way, if the city's right is upheld, will you pass legislation to take away the right of the city to grant the use of the streets and lanes?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think a good number of those questions are hypothetical. If you are asking me whether or not we propose to commence any proceedings against the city of Moose Jaw the answer is No, no present plans to commence proceedings against the city of Moose Jaw.

MAINTENANCE OF SUPER GRID ROADS

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, is it true the policy of the Department of Highways is to take over the maintenance of the super grid roads from their present municipal authorities?

HON. G. MacMURCHY (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — No, it is not the policy at the present time. The policy of the Government is to leave the grid system under the jurisdiction of the municipalities and not transfer into the Department of Highways, which has been a policy in the past, but has now been changed.

MR. LARTER: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Will there be special funds available to the municipalities to look after these super grid roads and their maintenance.

MR. MacMURCHY: — There is a special formula, Mr. Speaker, for both capital and maintenance of the super grid system, which has been proposed to the rural municipalities. And as a matter of fact, there has been some construction of super grid roads under that existing policy this past summer.

MR. BAILEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Does the Department of Municipal Affairs have a standing agreement with the Department of Highways as to when a road, a joint venture, takes place between the rural municipality and the Department of Highways? Is there not at the present time a contractual arrangement whereby the department agrees to maintain that highway or that portion of the road for a given period of time? Can the Department of Highways renege on its responsibility at their own discretion?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I do not have the answer to the question in my mind. I would ask the Member to either give me time to respond or put the question on the Order Paper.

POTASH CORPORATION OF SASKATCHEWAN

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and I wish we could get an easier title for you than that. Your answer to me earlier indicated that the Government was prepared to take only 50 per cent of the potash industry over. I suggest to the Minister that that is a change in your policy as announced by the Premier in his address to the Speech from the Throne last year, at that time he indicated it would be from half to all of the industry. My question to you now is: — have you advised those industries or those companies in Saskatchewan that you are not interested in purchasing or expropriating?

MR. COWLEY: — No.

MR. MALONE: — Do you intend to do so in the days ahead so that those mines and those industries will at least be in a position to be able to plan for the future?

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, our objective remains the same as it was before. With respect to potash mines that we are not currently having discussions with, obviously one of the possibilities is that some of the discussions we are currently undertaking may not be fruitful and therefore we may, indeed, be talking to other potash companies in the future.

MR. MALONE: — A supplementary question. In connection with the mines that you are presently talking to at this time on a negotiation procedure, is it your intention to use the provisions of Bill 1 to expropriate those mines by issuing a vesting order if you are unable to make an agreement with them?

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, that question is obviously hypothetical. In the event that we are not successful in negotiating a purchase we would have to make the appropriate decisions at that time.

MR. BAILEY: — A supplementary question. Mr. Speaker, in light of what the Minister has said, is his department currently negotiating any loans on the international money market for the proposed 50 per cent takeover?

MR. COWLEY: — Mr. Speaker, all the loans that might be negotiated with respect to the acquisition of potash mines would be borrowed in the usual way. That is, the Department of Finance would handle them, as we borrowed money recently for the Power Corporation and Sask Tel through the Department of Finance in the United States. I would assume that if we were going to borrow any money for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan in the United States or any other market, it would be done by the Department of Finance and the money subsequently advanced to the Potash Corporation.

MR. BAILEY: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. My question was, are there any current negotiations at the present time going on for the acquisitions of loans for the acquisition of the potash mines?

MR. COWLEY: — Not that I am aware of and I think I would be aware of them if Finance was doing it.

MR. MacDONALD: — A supplementary, I would like to redirect my original question to the Minister of Finance who is in charge of the Energy Fund. I think it is rather important that the people of Saskatchewan know whether any part or what part of the Energy Fund has been used for exploration or development of new energy resources in the Province of Saskatchewan or has the total been spent since the last session prorogued, for the purpose of existing jobs, mines and oil production in the Province of Saskatchewan?

HON. W. A. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, there are several questions in the question of whether any money has been used for exploration. I am not sure whether that is in respect of potash or whether it is in respect of oil. Perhaps he might ask the question specifically of whether it is in respect of either. There has been money from the Energy and Development Fund that has been used for the acquisition of the potash mine. For the information of the Member the amount that has been used is \$117,218,714.61.

MR. MacDONALD: — \$117 million. Could the Minister tell me what amount approximately - he may not have it at his fingertips - what has been used for purchase of existing production in the oil industry and what percentage has been used or what amount in relation to \$117 million for new exploration and development in either potash or in oil.

MR. SMISHEK: — I do not have that information available.

MR. MacDONALD: — Has any of the fund been used?

MR. SMISHEK: — There has been some of the fund used for Saskoil in respect of drilling but I don't know the exact amount.

MR. MacDONALD: — A final supplementary. Would you provide those figures for me tomorrow? I am sure it wouldn't be very difficult with one set of books and I would like to know exactly how much has been spent for new exploration and development in the oil industry.

CRTC LICENCES

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker . . . (N.B. Question inaudible - microphone break.)

MR. BLAKENEY: — I do not know what the policy of Sask Tel is with respect to on-stream computers with respect to the ownership of hardware and accordingly I cannot respond to the question.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I don't consider the question in the first place to be legitimate in the sense that I don't believe it is of urgent concern. I am sure that if the matter becomes or urgency he'll view it differently than he does at this time. The Member for Regina South.

COAXIAL CABLE

MR. S. J. CAMERON (Regina South): — I have a question to the Premier related to the general subject. In response to an earlier question the Premier indicated the Government intends to take no proceedings against the city of Moose Jaw. Can the Premier give us an assurance that the Government of Saskatchewan does not intend to take any proceedings of any variety to prevent the use of streets and lanes in Moose Jaw by Prairie Co-Ax.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I will not give that assurance. I certainly don't know what rights Prairie Co-Ax has to use the streets and lanes of Moose Jaw, nor is it, with all deference, my job to know what the rights are. I will not preclude a proper exercise by the Attorney General or anyone else of his function, if in fact activities are taking place which are not lawfully authorized - activities by Prairie Co-Ax or anyone else - which are not lawfully authorized.

MR. CAMERON: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier is aware I am sure that the city of Moose Jaw has given to Prairie Co-Ax the right to use the streets and lanes of Moose Jaw to lay cable. Let me ask you more specifically, are you contemplating in any branch of your government, including the Department of Highways, some action to prevent Prairie Co-Ax from now acting on the licence they have from the city of Moose Jaw?

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the short answer to that is, No, we are not contemplating it. But the longer answer is, if the city of Moose Jaw had the authority to give a licence to Prairie Co-Ax then Prairie Co-Ax can go ahead and have nothing to fear from the Province of Saskatchewan. If the city did not have that authority, then it clearly profits Prairie Co-Ax not at all to get authority from someone who did not have that authority to give. So nothing that the city of Moose Jaw did in any way

affects the rights of Prairie Co-Ax to the extent, that if they are relying on the city of Moose Jaw and they are relying appropriately then they have nothing to fear from the Government of Saskatchewan. If they are relying inappropriately because the authority wasn't there, obviously they have something to fear. They will make their choice, we will make our judgment in due course.

MR. CAMERON: — A final supplementary. Mr. Speaker, I asked the Premier if it is fair to treat a citizen of this province, which Prairie Co-Ax is, in that manner by indicating to them . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. CAMERON: — Well, they are in fact citizens of the province. They are doing business in this province. They have a right to do it. The city of Moose Jaw has said to them, we will give you a licence to use our streets and lanes and you are sitting there saying you don't know whether it is lawful or unlawful. My question to you is: — is there no obligation on your behalf to indicate to them whether you consider that the city has that power or doesn't have it, so that they can govern their decisions accordingly?

MR. BLAKENEY: — It may be an obligation which we have and if they ask us we will consider their request. So far as I am aware we have had no request from them for a statement on this matter other than through their agents in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! The next order of business is Ministerial Statements.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, may I rise on a Point of Order during the question period.

MR. SPEAKER: — No, that matter may be raised on Orders of the Day.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

MR. D. H. Lange (Bengough-Milestone) moved, seconded by MR. W. J. G. Allen (Regina Rosemont):

That an humble Address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province as follows:

TO HIS HONOUR THE HONOURABLE GEORGE PORTEOUS

Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan in Session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious Speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present Session.

He said: Mr. Speaker, in beginning my speech to move the Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne, I would like to introduce to the House a number of people seated in the gallery. These are members of my executive from Bengough-Milestone constituency. They are from communities such as Avonlea, Bengough, Lake Alma, Oungre, Minton, Big Beaver, Ceylon, Milestone, Radville, Lang, Ogema, Crane Valley, Parry, Trossachs, Pangman, Yellow Grass. They represent such interesting geographic regions in the constituency of Bengough-Milestone as the Missouri Coteau Hills south of Moose Jaw, the Regina Plains, the Big Muddy Valley next to the American border, the Souris River drainage basin. They also represent such diverse occupations as farmers, ranchers, teachers, nurses, small businessmen, retired senior citizens, students.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — I am flattered that these people have come from these towns to the Chamber this afternoon so that I might share with them the honor of moving the Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne.

The theme for opening night at the Session this year was to remember the Clerks who have served this Legislature. This is a most appropriate theme because it doesn't matter whether you are a Dean of the House like Eiling Kramer or Art Thibault, or whether you are a newcomer; whether you are the Premier or the Leader of the Opposition, the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk are always there to help you. They are the people who are seen but seldom heard in the House and those most important for the smooth operation of the business of this House.

In keeping with the theme of opening night, and on behalf of all the Members of this House, I should like to acknowledge the quiet presence and the conscientious work of the Clerk, Mr. Gordon Barnhart, the Assistant Clerk, Mrs. Gwen Ronyk and their staff, Mrs. Rose Zerr, Mrs. Vivian Doan and Mrs. Joyce Rublee.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — I am honored to be given the opportunity to move the Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne. Personally I thought it was a great Speech from the Throne, and one in which the people of Saskatchewan can take a great deal of pride. It is a speech which continues the major policy thrusts which this New Democratic Government has initiated over the past five years.

As my remarks are being broadcast across Saskatchewan on several radio stations, it is interesting to think about the many people whom we are contacting by radio at this time. Perhaps you are a farmer listening to this broadcast while you drive along a grid road in your half-ton; perhaps you are a housewife, listening while you do your work at home; you may be a teacher; or a worker or a businessman in a local shop or garage; you may be a senior citizen, or a patient in a hospital, or a receptionist in a doctor's office. But whatever you may be as you listen to my remarks, whatever you are doing, you may be thinking one thing in common with many others. You may be concerned and becoming confused about the changing role of government in society today. You may also be frustrated about

what it means to be an independent person in a period of rapid change. You may be wondering what effective control you have over your own future. How can you maintain your individuality in such a complex society? How can your personal freedom be secured in a system comprised of large organizations? Today, I want to talk about how this Throne Speech and the Government that stands behind it can assist you in enhancing your life chances, in advancing your society and in securing your individual freedom.

But first I should like to discuss that policial philosophy which is being advanced by Opposition Parties in this Legislature. Shortly put, the Liberals and Conservatives are saying that "that government is best which governs least." They are saying that the New Democratic Government of Saskatchewan is too involved in the daily lives of its people. They are saying that government threatens individual freedom, destroys personal rights, limits incentive. The Opposition is saying that our government should not be directly involved in the economic development of our resources; that we should not get the best value today and a bonus for tomorrow for each and every one of our citizens. Despite the fact that the natural resources of uranium, potash, coal and oil are common property to us all as Saskatchewan citizens, the Opposition Parties are saying that only the private sector has the right to own, the ability to operate, the incentive to profit, from resources. Do we not have the collective intelligence and the individual initiative to develop our own economy and our own future? Can we not be masters in our own house? The Opposition is consistently, dogmatically, using the argument that government presence in any activity destroys individual incentive, restricts individual freedom and is inherently inefficient. In summary, they are saying, that government is best which governs least.

Now this political philosophy, if we think about it for more than a moment, is both naïve and dangerous in the case of Saskatchewan. It is a strange maxim that finds no enduring place in the political history of our province. In actual fact, the common threat of our history has been to create and use instruments of collective power for the attainment of our social and economic goals. What are Sask Tel, Sask Power, the Canadian Wheat Board, the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, Federated Co-operatives, the system of rural Credit Unions, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association and the Government of Saskatchewan, if they are not effective instruments of collective power?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — And where would we be as a society today if we had not taken collective action to protect and advance our own interests? If this is the lesson of the history of the people of Saskatchewan, then to whose interests is the banner of the Opposition being raised, when they say that the role of government should be restricted to that of referee? I believe that the people of this province, after some reflection, will come to reject this political view, "that government is best which governs least." The New Democratic Party believes, as a growing number of people in this province and in this nation that, that government is best which most intelligently serves the interests of its people.

What would this province have been like today if the CCF

Government, which came to power in 1944, had not politically intervened on behalf of farmers to protect the home quarter from the jowls of the eastern financial institutions? What kind of dog-eat-dog society would we have today without medicare, and some measure of social and income security?

Now within this tradition of Saskatchewan history, let us turn to the future of agriculture. The world's food system is undergoing major changes in energy, inventory, finance, production, distribution and consumption. These changes are happening all at the same time. They are happening in magnitudes never before experienced. This situation creates greater risk for those Saskatchewan farmers, ranchers and rural businessmen participating in the food system. We as a society in Saskatchewan, we as a government, have to start thinking about policies to deal with this increased uncertainty.

Because of an expanding world population and limited land resources upon which to produce food, food will become the political commodity of tomorrow. Those nations possessing enough land, water, energy and fertilizer to produce food for export will have the international political power of tomorrow. Saskatchewan, with 43 per cent of Canada's arable land is going to play a very important role in the production of food in Canada and in the world. Saskatchewan will see more emphasis on agriculture than ever before in history. If agricultural policies developed by government are favorable, we could also see more industry, stronger rural communities and more people involved in the production, processing and distribution of food here in Saskatchewan than we have ever imagined possible.

From this point in history the future of Saskatchewan agriculture and rural communities can take one of two directions. We can see many people involved in farming, each managing his own operation in the tradition of Saskatchewan agriculture or we can have a new era of corporate serfdom with very few wealthy people involved. Multinational corporations are looking on Saskatchewan with lust. They have designs on Saskatchewan's food production which do not include the full involvement of the Saskatchewan people or its communities. The seduction of Saskatchewan agriculture has begun and there may be no way of stopping the advances of the multinational corporations.

Let us remember how fraught with problems the agricultural industry is, the farmer deals not only with the vagaries of weather, but also with the violent instabilities of the market place, which set the cost of his inputs and the price of his produce.

The farmer's number one worry right now is the price of wheat. According to the Canadian Wheat Board, prices have dropped badly in the last four and one-half months and there is no point in deluding ourselves that things are going to turn around soon. Early last July they were quoting No. 1 Red Wheat at \$4.57½ in storage at Thunder Bay. Today that price has fallen to \$3.12 3/8, a drop of over \$1.45 a bushel in that time. Our wheat prices have, in fact, been running below the domestic minimum of \$3.25 per bushel for several weeks. This is the first time wheat prices have been so low since the present two-price policy was implemented in 1973. More recently, the farmer's problems have been compounded by a higher cost of capital, a greater indebtedness and a subsequent need for greater uninterrupted cash flow.

Now let us suppose that we have a depressed agricultural economy, and let us suppose that we have that inevitable slump in the grain industry, much like we see in the cattle market right now. Under these circumstances, how will the individual farmer fare? And, if he gets into trouble, who is going to help? Who is going to help preserve his individual freedom, protect his assets and keep him in business? Will Cargill market grain in the best interests of the Western Canadian farmer? Will Burns Meat Packing Company market red meats in the best interests of the livestock producer? Will John Deere and Massey-Ferguson provide him with the technological security he needs during seeding and harvesting time? Will EXXON oil corporation preserve and husband our limited petroleum resources to that future Saskatchewan farmers will be assured of a supply of fuel for their farm machines? Will the Canadian Pacific Railway provide us with reliable transportation service for the movement of goods and people?

When giant corporations have control of the agricultural industry, how much freedom will the individual farmer have? Members of the Opposition say that the individual freedom of farmers is threatened because their provincial government has introduced a stabilization program to help hog producers stay in the industry. But just think about how much individual freedom and security Saskatchewan hog producers would have if they were substantially at the mercy of Canada Packers instead of being protected through the market power of the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Commission.

The favourite allegation of the Opposition is that the Land Bank Commission somehow denies the right of ownership of farm property in Saskatchewan and compromises the individual freedom of Saskatchewan farmers. How so? The Land Bank program has helped over 1,500 younger farmers to be engaged in farming in rural Saskatchewan. It has created new opportunities and freedom for individual initiative for part of the younger generation of our province and has benefited small towns by maximizing the number of producers on the land. The Land Bank is a program designed intelligently and equitably to serve the needs of rural people and is an excellent example of government involvement for a social purpose - namely, the future of rural Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — We need only think of the Family Farm Protection Act of 1971 to know how corporations would respect the individual freedom of the farmer in hard times. We need only think of the Farm Security Act of 1944 to know how banks would deal with farm mortgages during hard times. We need only think of what it must have been like before there was a Canadian Wheat Board or a Saskatchewan Wheat Pool to know how ruthless Cargill would be with the farmer during hard times. In the face of possible agricultural depression, in the face of corporate pressures to monopolize western Canadian agriculture, the only real friends that people in rural Saskatchewan have are those instruments of collective power which they control, such as the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, the United Grain Growers, the Credit Unions and the Saskatchewan Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — Yet, as multinational corporations move in to restrict even more the personal freedom of individuals in our society, the Opposition glibly suggests that government should act as a referee between those giant corporations and the individual. The Opposition naively asserts “that government is best which governs the problems of its people - that government is best which responds to its people - that government is best which most intelligently serves the needs of its people.” . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — . . . And by intelligent I mean people like Allan Blakeney, with legislation to keep oil profits in Saskatchewan; Gordon MacMurchy, with legislation to help to develop rural communities; Jack Messer with legislation to assist small businessmen; Elwood Cowley with potash legislation, and many others in Cabinet, in caucus, and in the civil service. And let me demonstrate how this government has, over the past five years, intelligently served the needs of the people of this province through specific programs which have responded to their problems. (Although my discussion will use rural examples, the Member for Rosemont will discuss after me, similar urban examples to show how this government has intelligently served the needs of the people of this province.)

Farmstart, another government agricultural program has assisted 2,800 farmers in this province to expand their livestock production.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — The Hog Stabilization Program has, during the past three years given additional economic security to producers of hogs.

In 1974 this government introduced a Calf Cash Advance Program, providing \$35 million to 12,000 producers. In 1975 the program was extended - 14,000 farmers borrowed \$41 million. This year the cash advance has been extended and a further cash grant of \$50 per cow has been made available to cow-calf producers.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — These several government-sponsored livestock programs have assisted thousands of Saskatchewan producers to better withstand the recent cost-price squeeze in the livestock industry - clearly, examples of government intervention into people's lives which has increased their economic freedom and security. Would farmers who had received benefits from these government programs agree with the Opposition that government is best which governs least?

The former Thatcher administration was a government which governed least, and the farming community stated rather conclusively, its opinion of that government in the 1971 election . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — . . . it has no enduring place in the political history of the Saskatchewan people.

Operation Open Roads and Operation Main Street are government programs that have helped to increase all-weather road access to rural communities and regional parks.

The New Democratic Government of Saskatchewan respects the autonomy of local government in Saskatchewan. We have provided \$20 per capita a year in unconditional grants to local government - the largest unconditional grant program in Canada. We have provided community capital fund grants and these are spent wholly at the discretion of local government. We have initiated the Cultural and Recreational Facilities Capital Fund Program designed to create employment in Saskatchewan's municipalities, while at the same time leaving a legacy of vastly improved cultural and recreational facilities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — The Property Improvement Grant has lifted the financial tax load for education purposes from the landowner and provided a more equitable tax system. At the same time, large unconditional grants have been provided so that local boards of education might improve the quality of education in their schools at their own discretion.

This Provincial Government has provided large grants to many communities and municipalities within the province to compensate for flood damage. And only last week the government has agreed to pay for all flood damages above the cost of two mills for those several municipalities which have had extensive flood damage this last spring and summer and to which the Federal Government has refused help.

Each and every one of these government programs has been designed to enhance the development of rural Saskatchewan and the living conditions of our people. Each and every one of these programs is one facet in an overall government policy designed to enrich the quality of life in rural Saskatchewan either through the development of rural communities or the development of the agricultural industry. The new provisions in this Throne Speech when woven together with existing program commitments of the Government of Saskatchewan will strengthen the economic, social and cultural fabric of our province tremendously.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — And each of these programs reflects a government which listens to its people, which responds to its people and which most intelligently serves the needs of its people.

Now let's contrast the performance of this Provincial New Democratic Government with that of the Liberal Government in Ottawa when it comes to rural development. What has the Federal Government done for rural Saskatchewan? Well rather than develop a program to help ensure that more industries, communities and people will be involved in agriculture in rural Saskatchewan in the future, the Federal Government has made it possible instead

for rural Saskatchewan communities to have inland terminals. Now, why, all of a sudden do we have inland terminals in Saskatchewan? What do inland terminals symbolize? Does it not seem strange that terminals should be built at Rosetown and at Weyburn of all places where the elevator capacity is already efficient? Why do we need terminals at all? Has the rural elevator system not served the farmer well throughout the last 60 years? When has the rural elevator system ever failed the farmer? When in history can you cite the rural elevator system as being the bugbear in the total grain handling system from farm gate to tidewater? You can blame the markets, you can blame the weather, you can certainly blame the railroads, you can blame the port terminal facilities, you can blame a whole host of other things, but when can you blame the rural elevator system for failing to perform for the farmer? So, why do we need inland terminals to replace the rural elevator system?

Now the Opposition will say that it is just a group of farmers who are promoting the terminal. And it's true there are many farmers who have shares in the Weyburn terminal who are frustrated with the Federal Government's ineptitude at dealing with the Canadian grain-handling and transportation system. But, remember, it was the Federal Government's grains group under Otto Lang who first suggested that Canada needed inland terminals. It was the grains group, under Otto Land, who made the rural elevator system the scapegoat for Federal Government dereliction of duty in the grain-handling function. Now, why would the Federal Government and Otto Lang suggest that we duplicate a fully adequate rural elevator system with an inland terminal system? Well, perhaps we can appreciate the answer to this if we look at multi-national grain corporations.

Now, if you were a multinational grain corporation and wished to speculate with grain on the international grain exchange you must be able to control supply, but you can't control supply if the country's grain is stored in a system of 1,500 rural elevators which is co-operatively owned and on the average seven miles from every farmer. But you can secure ownership of greater quantities of grain if you can dominate inland storage capacity through a system of say, 20 or more inland terminals. Then you know how much grain you have on hand, then you control supply and if you control supply you can speculate and manipulate on the international grain exchange. That's why multinational corporations want inland terminals in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan farmers don't need terminals, but multinational grain corporations can't operate without them. Inland terminals will be the vehicle through which they will try their hardest to monopolize western Canadian agriculture. And the Federal Government and Otto Lang have greased the skids for the construction of inland terminals in Saskatchewan by the private grain trade. Were it not for Otto Lang taking feed grains out of the jurisdiction of the Canadian Wheat Board the terminals would not be able to buy No. 1 Red Wheat as a feed grain and fill the terminal to capacity. Were it not for the Federal Government allowing farmers to be able to deliver grain to any elevator in the province, rather than just a local delivery point which protects the individual farmer, then the terminals would not be able to fill to capacity by drawing feed grains from all across the province. Were it not for the Federal Government promoting the abandonment of rural Saskatchewan rail lines and increase the trucking of grain on our provincial highways, the terminals would not be able to take advantage of the flexibility that trucking provides, at the expense of the Saskatchewan taxpayer

and farmer. Were it not for the Federal Government and Otto Lang wanting desperately to eliminate the Crow's Nest rates on our rails, the farmer might be able to sleep a little more easily at night and be less anxious about his future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — Make no mistake about it, it is the Federal Government which facilitated the advance of inland terminals into Saskatchewan. Multinational grain corporations like Cargill will use inland terminals to constrict and monopolize the western Canadian grain economy.

I want to talk for a minute about Cargill Grain Company, I could talk about Continental, Tenneco or Bunge or others, but since Cargill has come to Saskatchewan, I'll talk about Cargill. Every time I see some aspect of Cargill, it conjures up in my mind an image of the Cookie Monster on Sesame Street. You know you can't hide any cookies from the Cookie Monster because he can smell them a mile away. You can't keep his hand out of the cookie jar either, because he is totally consumed by his unnatural desire for cookies of all descriptions. The multinational grain companies are all in the same game. They are the international cookie monsters of the grain trade. They want all the cookies and they will do everything in their power to get them. Remember the inland terminal at Weyburn is now an agent for Cargill and Cargill has a terminal at Rosetown, Saskatchewan and at Elm Creek, Manitoba.

Ideally Cargill would like to see about another 40 or so in western Canada. So let's see what happens when that inevitable slump comes in the agricultural economy and the Canadian Wheat Board is perhaps offering only a four or five bushel quota, because it cannot make sales. Cargill will go to the young farmer who is strapped for funds because of the high costs of input. And, Cargill will offer to buy his No. 1 Wheat as a feed grain on the open market. It will be necessary to truck that grain to the Weyburn or Rosetown terminal at the expense of tax subsidized roads and tax subsidized diesel fuel. But, when it gets to Weyburn or Rosetown, the CPR will load the grain into a unit train and take it into the American grain handling system of Cargill International. And what will Cargill do with the grain they have bought at rock bottom prices on the open market in Canada? Well, they can put it into one of their many feed processing plants that they have located in North and South America. Thus, our Canadian grain will take its place alongside fish meal from the fishing fleet which Cargill has off the West Coast of Peru; tailings from one of the many corn refineries that they have located in the United States; or perhaps some screenings from one of their flour mills. And when they have processed the feed, they can obtain the value added from cheap grain by selling that feed through one of their many retail outlets located across North America. Or, if they wish, they can feed that grain to their own cattle located in numerous feedlots located in North and South America. Or, if they do not wish to feed it, Cargill can simply store it in one of their 12 inland terminals and hedge the grain on the open market until they are ready to move it out in one of the largest trucking operations in the United States which Cargill also owns; or perhaps they can transport it over the American rail network through one of their 1,000 leased hopper cars. And then dump it into one of Cargill's ocean-going ships which ply the international waters and distribute the grain across the world.

They will direct these world-wide operations by means of a \$250 million computer facility located in Zurich, Switzerland, which monitors and controls their corporate activities in the world food system. And this is what people are talking about when they say “a little competition is good for the Wheat Pool.”

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — Saskatchewan farmers can have the Wheat Pool and the United Grain Growers and the Canadian Wheat Board, or Saskatchewan farmers can have Cargill. But Saskatchewan farmers cannot have both Cargill and the Canadian Wheat Board and the wheat pools living harmoniously together. We can't have both, they are by nature mutually exclusive. The philosophy of one can exist only at the expense of the other. So, next time, you, as a farmer, think about wearing a Cargill cap, remember what wearing that cap will do to your community, to the family farm, and to the grain-handling and transportation system as we know it. Do not underestimate the deleterious effect that inland terminals will have on rural Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — The advent of inland terminals means the disappearance of rural Saskatchewan communities. The advent of inland terminals means the disappearance of rural Saskatchewan elevator systems. And the advent of inland terminals means the destruction of the monopoly power of the Canadian Wheat Board and the protection and freedom that provides for Saskatchewan farmers.

If we need to be reminded of the power of multinational corporations, remember that Cargill, Continental, Bunge, Cooke and Louis Drafos Company, five privately-owned multinational corporations control over 80 per cent of the free world's grain traffic. The Dominion of Canada by contrast, controls and exports only 8 per cent.

In today's world, the alternative to the protection of the Canadian Wheat Board for Saskatchewan farmers is not some idealistic so-called free market system based on inland terminals, rather it is a system of grain marketing where a handful of multinational firms would control your destiny for their profit.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — The Liberal Government and Otto Lang are governing least. Are they your real friends? And who are their friends? When the farmer finds out what Otto Lang is doing to his grain-handling system, the farmer will not be happy. When the farmer finds out what Otto Lang is doing to the monopoly power of the Canadian Wheat Board, the farmer will not be happy. When the farmer finds out that Otto Lang is destroying the very basis for the development of rural Saskatchewan, the farmer will not be happy. And when the farmer is not happy, Otto Lang, will find out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — Let's try and relate our agricultural future to

the future of Saskatchewan resources. Many people find the lifestyle of the farmer attractive. Why? Because the farmer operates his own business. He decides when and he decides how he will farm. By doing things for himself, he attains a certain degree of personal confidence. He possesses many personal skills. He must obviously know a great deal about plant and animal husbandry. A farmer is not only an agronomist, a mechanic and a financier, but also a weather expert, a chemical expert and a bit of a gambler. Not only does he possess a variety of knowledge and skills but he must also be able to combine these with energy, technology and materials to be a successful producer of food.

The farmer is independent, he has a great deal of personal freedom. Nobody tells the farmer when to start work, how hard to work or when to quit. Nobody tells the farmer when to sow or harvest, except perhaps the Member for Saskatoon-Humboldt, Otto Lang, that Benedict Arnold of prairie Liberals when in 1970, under the LIFT program he told the farmer not to sow wheat at all. Now it would take a professor of law to draw a conclusion like that about farming, wouldn't it?

In the face of imminent world food shortages, the decision to limit the production of food could only be reached by a man who knows as much about farming as Otto Lang. Some farmers have only recently recovered from the colossal lack of judgment by the Ottawa jet set.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — But, we were talking about why it is good to be a farmer. The farmer has many basic skills. He is an entrepreneur. He has the individual freedom to employ his own skills his own labor, his own judgment, to his own business. As a result of doing things in his own way, in his own time, the farmer attains a certain degree of confidence. That personal confidence is healthy for the farmer; it is healthy for the farm family. Moreover that confidence is healthy for the community in which that farm family lives. By having as many people involved in the agricultural industry as possible, each one operating his own business with confidence, we attain a healthy agricultural society. But that personal freedom of the farmer would not exist were it not for positive government intervention in his life, by agencies like the Canadian Wheat Board. That individual initiative of the farmer could not be exercised if it were not for the co-operation that farmers demonstrate through organizations like the United Grain Growers or their local credit unions.

The farmer, rancher and small businessman each form an effective team with their provincial government, so that their individual initiative may result in benefits to themselves, their families and communities, and the purchaser of their products and services. In this way, society gets full value from the agricultural industry.

And so it is with the Saskatchewan potash industry. By having many people involved through their government in the potash industry, it will be healthy for Saskatchewan society. Nobody tells the Saskatchewan farmer how to farm, and nobody will tell the Saskatchewan people how we will mine our potash. By operating the potash industry ourselves, rather than having foreign multinationals do it for us, we as a society, will

obtain a personal confidence. Much as Saskatchewan farmers attain confidence from operating their own business, so Saskatchewan people will attain confidence from operating our own potash industry.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — It is healthy to have many individual farmers operating the agricultural industry and it will be healthy for many Saskatchewan people to operate their own potash industry. This rugged collectivism, like that found in the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and the system of rural credit unions is the key to our future. But yet, the Conservative Opposition is suggesting that rather than buying potash mines, which will serve future generations of Saskatchewan people, that we should instead use that money to build more highways, more highways to inland terminals, more highways which serve multinational grain corporations. The Conservatives are suggesting that this government should govern least and that we should spend your money on provincial highways upon which multinational corporations will haul your grain, your potash and your profit out of your community, out of your province and out of your country.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — The New Democratic Party believes that by purchasing 51 per cent of the potash industry, we are most intelligently serving the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — Do you remember the fuss that the Liberal Opposition made in 1972 about Bill 42 - the bill which taxed the oil profits? They said that it threatened individual freedom, it destroyed personal rights, it limited incentive. They said that only the private industries had the right to own, the ability to operate, the incentive to profit from resources. Well, since then the Energy and Resource Development Fund created by Bill 42 is a financial asset of great importance to our economic future. It is the key to a strong partnership in potash or uranium or agriculture. Were it not for the foresight of Allan Blakeney to capture the windfall profits from oil, we would have been in no position to allocate \$100 million from that fund in an equity advance to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to pay cash for the Cory Mine, newly acquired from Duval.

If one of the opposition parties had been in power at the time of Bill 42, we could not even contemplate a strong partnership in potash, uranium and agriculture. Instead they would have governed least. They would have been a referee instead of getting into the game to help Saskatchewan people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — I want to turn now to the larger scene of Canadian politics. Canada, evidently, is at a turning point. We have, as a diverse political nationality, reached a point of inflection in our public affairs. As a nation, we are moving to repatriate our constitution. As a province, we seek to repatriate ownership and control of a significant proportion of our resource economy. In Quebec, the former Premier has been defeated in his

Montreal riding of Mercier. The Parti Quebecois government of Rene Levesque, which so far has every appearance of being a social democratic party, is committed to a system of public automobile insurance similar to that pioneered in Saskatchewan many years ago. Premier elect Levesque has promised significant new labor legislation similar to that in Saskatchewan; health initiatives like dentacare, housing and home renovation programs for those on lower income people. The people of Quebec in last Monday's election have asked for a government that will listen to its people; that will respond to its people. That Levesque will govern his province in the best interests of both the Quebec people and Canadian federalism according to democratic principle, I have no doubt.

In Ottawa, the policies and organization of the Liberal Party are in an advanced state of decline. Although all the evidence is by no means in, there are signs that Canada is moving toward a two-party system at the federal level of government. The reflection of this situation provincially in the Province of Quebec can be seen in the form of the Parti Quebecois and the Union Nationale.

The character of Canadian federalism is changing, fundamentally. We must now begin to adjust our concept of federalism, of Canada to this new political reality. A country cannot hold together merely as an economic bargain among regions. There must be some common sense of nationality or social purpose as the ground for a new Canada. So, we should not talk of national unity but of national integrity and national purpose.

What we need is a more communicative, a more flexible federalism, in which all regions of the country both give and take in a common national endeavor.

The essence of federal-provincial conferences and relations in recent years has been one of confrontation, not accommodation. The constitutional policies of the Parti Quebecois may well engender a basic change in the practice of federalism. This could be a welcome change for the Province of Saskatchewan.

Our policies for the development of potash, uranium and the delivery of high quality television services to the greatest number of Saskatchewan citizens are all expressions of a general Saskatchewan desire for self-development, which should normally have received strong support and approval from our national government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — As a result of the Parti Quebecois election victory, we are hopeful that our efforts to obtain full service and value for Saskatchewan from technology and resources will find less resistance in the future than in the past.

Now it is interesting and not surprising that the Liberal Opposition in Saskatchewan should be apprehensive about the Parti Quebecois victory in Quebec. The defeat of the disintegrating Bourassa Liberal government is indeed a low blow to Liberal governments across Canada. The results of the Quebec election do not augur well for the future of Liberal governments in Canada, much less Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Liberal Party will require strong leadership to maintain traditional Liberal policy in the face of the Parti Quebecois victory.

But getting back to cookie monster, Davey Steuart always likes to chide the Premier by telling him to get his hands out of the cookie jar when it comes to potash and oil. I think that it would be more to the point for Davey to see whose hand is in his cookie jar. The cookie monster has already gobbled up that sharp cookie from Qu'Appelle, and we hear that the cookie monster is now after the cookie from Moose Jaw-Thunder Creek. Colin cookie has been forewarned, if not forestalled.

It's clear in this monster-eat-cookie world that the Liberals need somebody in leadership to keep the lid on the jar.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — In commemoration of the Liberal leadership race, and the simultaneous growth of the Conservative caucus, albeit not the Tory Party, I have acquired - I have in the Chamber here, two cookie monsters which I understand are exact replicas of the real Cookie Monster of Sesame Street fame. For those listening on radio, I should like to describe these cookie monsters. Of course they have very large eyes, which can see cookies anywhere. They have exceeding large mouths which can gobble more and more cookies. Very large stomachs which can consume endless quantities of cookies and they are covered with a soft luring material. Although not Tory blue in color they are, nonetheless, a very attractive blue. Oh, and one other thing, both of these cookie monsters have an insatiable expression on their faces.

I should like to ask one of the pages to present these mementoes, with my compliments, to the two Leaders opposite for their enjoyment and reflection. I would only ask that Mr. Steuart pass this symbol of strength on to the new leader of the Liberal Party according to the natural laws of succession.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — During this speech we have analyzed the role of government in contributing to individual freedom and preserving individual rights. We have observed that to preserve personal rights and freedom, government intervention in people's lives is not only necessary, but desirable. We have refuted the allegation of the Opposition parties that government is best which governs least, by showing that it is not within the tradition of Saskatchewan history to have individual freedom without government involvement in people's lives. We have shown how the policy thrust of the New Democratic Provincial Government has, during the past five years, been designed to develop rural Saskatchewan communities, within the context of personal initiative and individual freedom. We have shown how this government has consistently developed programs to enhance rural Saskatchewan and the agricultural industry. We have shown how the Federal Liberal Government has set the stage for the demise of rural Saskatchewan communities and the destruction of agriculture as a lifestyle embodying the use of instruments of collective power, such as the co-ops, the pools, and the credit unions.

Although my speech has been about rural Saskatchewan and agriculture, my remarks will be complemented by the Member for Rosemont (Mr. Allen) when he speaks about urban life.

During the next several days of debate on the Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne my colleagues in this House will be demonstrating to the Saskatchewan public how this Speech from the Throne is designed to dovetail into the past five years of policy developed by this government. They will be demonstrating that government is best which most intelligently serves the needs of its people. And that in Saskatchewan, government, far from being an enemy of the people is, rather, your most profound friend.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANGE: — I therefore move this motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. W. J. G. ALLEN (Regina Rosemont): — Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to second this Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne. It's an honor both for myself and the citizens whom I represent in Regina Rosemont.

Before I begin my formal remarks, I'd like to congratulate my friend the Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris) and the Member for Melfort (Mr. Vickar) on their recent appointments to the Cabinet. Both of these gentlemen have earned the respect of all Members of this House for their intelligence, their thoughtfulness and their sensitive approaches to the issues facing our province.

Mr. Speaker, I support this Throne Speech because I believe it is just one more example of the strong, stable, sensitive leadership being provided by the New Democratic Government of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — In every area of Saskatchewan life, people are ahead under this Blakeney Government. We are ahead in every area. But the area of which I am most proud is the health care enjoyed by the people of the Province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — We enjoy in our province the highest standard of health care of any jurisdiction on the North American continent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — This standard is being enjoyed in spite of the efforts of the Federal Government and the criticism of our opponents to the opposite.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech expresses Saskatchewan's profound concern with the Federal Government's intention to cut back in their commitment to help finance medicare and hospital care.

I believe that by so doing the Federal Government is shirking its responsibility to maintain national standards in the health care field.

It should be remembered, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial governments of this country agreed to participate in the hospital and medicare programs because of the solemn assurance that the Federal Government would pay half the cost. If the federal share falls below 50 per cent it will mean drastic consequences for many of our poorer provinces. It will mean for the people of those provinces either serious reduction in their health service or very, very dramatic increases in taxes.

For nearly a year the New Democratic Governments of Manitoba and Saskatchewan and New Democrats in the House of Commons have pleaded with the Federal Liberal Government not to do this to the people of Canada. These pleas, Mr. Speaker, have fallen on deaf ears. An arrogant, insensitive Liberal Government has steamrolled their legislation to destroy medicare through the House of Commons . . . The Member laughs, the Member laughs at this very serious situation.

The latest move by the Federal Government to destroy medicare in Canada occurred in June of this year. At a First Ministers' Conference, the Prime Minister announced that his government would withdraw its commitment to pay 50 per cent of the cost of hospital care, diagnostic services and physicians' fees. Mr. Trudeau proposed replacing this commitment by granting the provinces certain unidentified tax points and equalization grants. He says that this will gear health costs to the annual growth in the economy, which he considers a more realistic approach to health care financing.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the Prime Minister's intention to tie health care to the gross national product is open to very, very serious question. There is no direct relationship between health care and GNP figures. The incidence of illness bears no relationship whatsoever to national productivity. Sick people have to be cared for and health services must be provided even in times of economic recession. Indeed this was one of the basic imperatives behind the development of health insurance in Canada in the first place.

Another weakness in the Prime Minister's proposal is that tax points will provide proportionately less revenue for the less affluent provinces.

The Federal Government seems to be pushing the provinces into a position where they must resort to exorbitant health premiums, deterrent fees or other taxes on the sick.

Mr. Speaker, in spite of all this, in spite of the actions of the Federal Government, I believe Saskatchewan, under the Blakeney Government has the finest health service in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — The Opposition with their barbarous banter has been critical of the quality of health care in our province. As in all other aspects of government, while being critical they have not advanced a single new idea that they would implement if either of their parties sat to your right, Mr. Speaker.

The fact of the matter is neither one of them have had a new idea since Liberal Ross Thatcher introduced deterrent fees, and Conservative Dalton Camp suggested doing away with medicare altogether. Since we have no concrete proposals to judge them by, we can only look at what their record is in other provinces.

In the Conservative Province of Alberta, the government has increased their spending this year by 11 per cent over 1975 levels, this compared to 24 per cent increase in the Province of Saskatchewan, less than half, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — Despite Alberta's wealth, the poor people there have to pay \$153.60 a family for medicare premiums. This cost isn't borne by residents in Saskatchewan or Manitoba where medicare premiums have been abolished.

In addition, under the Conservative Government, Albertans have no universal drug plan, as we do in Saskatchewan. They have no dental care plan in Alberta, Mr. Speaker, we do in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — Mr. Speaker, Albertans have no hearing aid plan, but we do in the Province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — I'll tell you what they do have. The Member asks what do they have in the Province of Alberta? Well, they've got a \$5 charge on admission to an acute care bed in the Province of Alberta. They've got a deterrent fee, Mr. Speaker, of \$4 per day for every day over 120 days in a hospital. We have neither of these in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — There are other comparisons that I could use between Alberta and Saskatchewan, but my time is limited, and I wouldn't want to leave out the granddaddy of all Conservative provinces, the government of the richest province in Canada, the big blue Tory machine of the Province of Ontario.

In Ontario, a family of four must pay \$384 per year medicare premium for levels of medical care significantly lower than we have here in the Province of Saskatchewan.

If anyone of any age in Saskatchewan requires prescription drugs, they automatically qualify under the prescription drug plan. The price at most is \$2.25 per prescription. Ontario has no assistance for people needing prescription drugs until they reach the age of 65.

Ontario has no universal plan to provide wheelchairs, crutches, artificial limbs or other aids to assist in overcoming a physical disability.

Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living is yet another pioneering program that provides these essential services to the handicapped of Saskatchewan, without charge.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — Mr. Speaker, for the people most precious to us, our children, there is dental care for ages five to nine and by 1978 all of our children up to the age of 12 will be covered. Ontario parents either have to pay the full cost of the dentist's bill or as is often the case for the majority of Ontario's working people, neglect their children's dental health.

Mr. Speaker, our New Democratic Government also has chiropractic care available without cost regardless of how extensive the treatment is. In Ontario there is assistance too, but it stops at a miserly \$100 per user per year and anything over and above that is the responsibility of the patient.

Hearing aids may be purchased in Saskatchewan at cost. That cost is about \$95 on average. There is no counterpart to the Saskatchewan Hearing Aid Program in the Province of Ontario. Residents with hearing aid problems in Ontario are paying three or four times what our people are paying here and getting less satisfaction for their money.

Somebody mentioned the hospital situation. Well, I'm delighted that they brought it up. What about the hospital situation in the Province of Ontario? The Davis Government last spring set as its target the closing of ten general hospitals and two psychiatric hospitals resulting in the closing down, Mr. Speaker, of 3,000 hospital beds in the Province of Ontario.

The public outcry was, of course, loud and long. Citizens' groups managed to get court action under way, were able to stop the closing down of four of those hospitals, but the Ontario Government's budget slashing has done away with 1,237 beds at 37 hospitals, not including those hospitals that they closed down. There have been reductions at 69 hospitals in terms of staff. The ultimate result of cutbacks, it's predicted that 4,500 hospital workers in the Province of Ontario will lose their jobs.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear, it's clear from the facts that I've related to you that living in Saskatchewan means the saving of hundreds of dollars every year for Saskatchewan citizens.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — But even if completely healthy, a Saskatchewan resident has the peace of mind that comes from knowing he or she is free from financial worry if illness occurs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — The people of the Province of Ontario burdened with yet another Conservative Government have no such assurance.

Well I've talked about the Conservative record. Most of you have been calling for the Liberal record and I'm delighted to give that to you as well.

For this let's turn to the Province of Quebec, until one week ago the only province of any size in Canada unfortunate enough to labour under a Liberal administration. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that in Saskatchewan we've raised health

expenditures 24 per cent this year over last year. In Quebec, in the period January 1 to March 31, 1976 there was no increase. In the period April 1, 1976 to March 31, 1977 the increase was a staggering seven-tenths of one per cent. Seven-tenths of one per cent!

Needless to say these problems that have been created by an Ebenezer Scrooge approach to health care, these problems are enormous for the people of the Province of Quebec.

The Montreal Star, September 25 carried a front page story entitled, "Ambulances Still Blocked" which began with the following sentence and I quote:

Ambulance bans at major hospitals are still endangering the lives of Montrealers who cannot quickly get the care they need. Montreal ambulance drivers and attendants tell hair-raising stories of rushing acutely ill patients from hospital to hospital, looking for one that will accept new emergency cases. They tell of patients who died on the stretcher, or soon after long-delayed admissions to hospital.

AN HON. MEMBER: — You're putting us on.

MR. ALLEN: — I am quoting from the Montreal Star. These are not my words, undoubtedly a Liberal reporter wrote that.

The newspaper story goes on to describe a situation where hospitals in the Montreal area lock the doors and turn off the lights in their emergency wards, because they simply cannot handle any more patients, even critically ill ones. The reason they cannot, as the Montreal Star explains, is there is a shortage of nurses and of hospital beds in the Province of Quebec. While graduate nurses in Canada are leaving, particularly in the Province of Quebec to work in the States, the Liberal Government in Quebec cut health spending off at such a level as to make enough nurses available impossible. And while finding lots of money, \$1.2 billion dollars to underwrite the Olympic Games structures, they can't even find enough money to keep their hospitals open and to provide care for critically ill patients. The Quebec Hospital Association protested. Said that the Minister was endangering the quality of care and even jeopardizing the whole health care system.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Did he get re-elected?

MR. ALLEN: — I think not. Quebec in 1975 had already the dubious distinction of having the lowest number of occupied beds per 1,000 population in the country. Saskatchewan, as to be expected, at 5.6, provided the highest number of beds per 1,000 population.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — In Canada, as a whole, there were 4.1 beds per 1,000 population.

The severe budgetary restrictions, the two levels of Liberal Government have inflicted upon those unlucky enough to need health care in Quebec, have meant hardship for many and horror stories for others.

The September 25th article goes on to describe the difficulty of heart patients with cardiac arrest at getting a bed. Another incident involved a 77-year old man, who after being sent home from a Montreal hospital recuperating from an operation, suffered complications. When he returned by ambulance to the same hospital and still wearing his hospital bracelet, he was turned away. There are other stories of sick people spending three or four hours in an ambulance before finally gaining admission to a hospital. Meanwhile, ambulance drivers have to ignore other emergency calls.

The Montreal Star had another article on the 2nd of October, and looked at the practice of overcrowded hospitals closing their emergency wards. They had the following to say and I quote:

This is a common occurrence in the Montreal area today. Patients who are in a coma, even those with heart attacks, may be rushed to as many as three hospitals before getting professional medical care.

Hours can elapse from the time the private ambulance picks up a patient in his home to the time he is admitted to a hospital emergency department. What happens to patients who, because of ambulance bans and shortages of hospital beds, are refused immediate medical care at a time when they desperately need it?

To answer their own question, what does happen to these patients, the newspaper interviewed two Montreal area women. One of the women was living with her chronically ill husband on a disability pension of \$129 a week. Montreal hospitals refused him entry while he was in a diabetic coma. Her bill for the various ambulance trips was \$110, and she was asked to pay in cash.

The other woman interviewed told how her 47-year old father had collapsed and was rushed to a hospital to be similarly refused entry. The man, after over two hours of waiting to be admitted to emergency ward, died. One of the women at the end of the interview said: "The SPCA is better than those hospitals. When I called them to take some of my puppies I couldn't look after, they came right away. Dogs get better treatment than us."

The Bourassa Liberal Government was quite prepared to allow the shortage of nurses and hospital beds, the overcrowded medical facilities, and the locked emergency wards. They were prepared to let that go on. The chief sufferers of course, are, as always, the old, the poor and the chronically ill. It isn't likely that their suffering would ever move the federal Liberals, or it appears provincial Liberals either. Well, I will tell you something, Members of the Liberal Party. The Quebec voters have taken that decision out of the hands of the Liberal Party, and I am absolutely confident, I have all the confidence in the world, that the citizens of Saskatchewan will never, ever allow you people the opportunity of controlling our health care system.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I would expect the Liberals and Conservatives to criticize our health program. I challenge you to do two things when you make that criticism. When you get up

on your feet to speak, I challenge you to:

1. Tell us where in Canada, what province in Canada has a better health care system than in Saskatchewan?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: —

2. Liberals and Conservatives - explain to me why your record is so abysmally poor in every other province in this country?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — Mr. Speaker, our government freely admits that there is room for improvement in the health field in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — We believe significant progress has been made and we will continue to work on improving the system. But, Mr. Speaker, this progress is predicated on the resource policies of this NDP Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — We have been able to maintain a high standard in health care only because we have had the courage to challenge the multinational resource companies and gain for our citizens their fair share from the resources that belong to them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — Both the Liberals and Conservatives propose to do away with these policies. By so doing, they will do away with the revenues that accrue to the province because of these policies. The resulting effect, Mr. Speaker, will be complete disaster for the health care of Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, I support this Speech from the Throne. I believe that this Blakeney Government has provided strong, stable, sensitive leadership to this province. Strong leadership to deal with the serious problems we have had to face in the past, and will face in the future. In a world where it is becoming increasingly evident that things are out of control, and that governments can do nothing about it, this Saskatchewan Government is an island of stability in a sea of confusion. And this government has provided sensitive leadership - sensitive to the needs and aspirations of our citizens, humble in the knowledge that all of our problems have not been solved, but courageous in the determination to address the problems without reference to the pressures of special interest, only with reference to the good of Saskatchewan people. We are opposed in this, Mr. Speaker, by the spokesmen for the multinational corporate elite who sit to your left. While we have strong, stable, sensitive leadership in our party, supplied by our Premier, Allan Blakeney, they appear to have some crisis in their leadership. In the case of the Liberal Party, two men are involved in a titanic struggle to lead the Liberal Party into

the political boneyard. The Liberals, it seems to me, have two choices in this:

1. To go to their demise kicking and screaming under the leadership of the sometime Member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant); or
2. To go to their demise with dignity under the leadership of the Member for Regina Lakeview (Mr. Malone).

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it doesn't really matter to the people of Saskatchewan how they go, just as long as they go!

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — The Conservatives, Mr. Speaker, appear to have a different problem. I'm sure the Leader of the Conservative Party is leaving, because this part is addressed specifically to him.

In light of recent events, Mr. Speaker, people are beginning to wonder if you can believe anything the Conservative Leader says. He portrayed himself, I understand, to his former employers as a competent businessman, and they believed him. He portrayed himself to this House as a competent businessman and we almost believed him. Now some will say that the Leader of the Conservative Party is dishonest. I will not say that. The courts will decide on the Member's honesty or lack of it. I will say, however, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Conservative Party is undoubtedly the most incompetent businessman in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ALLEN: — I had the opportunity a week or two ago to speak to a competitor of the Hon. Member in the hotel business in Saskatoon. He told me that they had never made more money than they have made in the last few years in the hotel business. He said to me, a guy would have to be really incompetent to lose money in the hotel business today. I said, yes, it appears that way.

Mr. Speaker, he did lose money, lots of it. But more importantly, it was somebody else's money.

Now farmers, Mr. Speaker, have an expression, an expression I am sure all you farm Members have heard, "He can't even run the farm, how can he run the country?" Well I say, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party can't even run a hotel, how is he going to run this province?

Mr. Speaker, because this government has provided strong, stable, sensitive government to this province, because this Throne Speech continues in that tradition, I am honored to second the motion of the Hon. Member for Bengough-Milestone.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. D. G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I would first like to congratulate the mover and the seconder. I tremble a little bit when I contemplate that it has been a bit of tradition to take eventually the mover and the seconder into the Cabinet, but then when I realize the

size of the Cabinet, I know that given another year or two you will all be over in the Cabinet over there, so I really don't have to worry. As a matter of fact, when you came in the other day I thought it was the first time in history that some of the Cabinet Ministers had to bow out in the alley way, they couldn't all get in here. This is something new in parliamentary democracy. Exactly, if you include the Speaker, you have 39 Members, minus the Speaker is 38. Exactly half of your Members in Cabinet. I don't know whether this was from fear by the Premier that there was going to be a little revolution in the back benches, whether the backbenchers were getting ugly. By the look of it I think that might have been the case, but there is one thing, you don't have to worry because there is nothing the backbenchers can do now, they can't outvote you.

I wish to thank the mover of the Speech from the Throne. I am sure that someone will appreciate this doll. I can't think of much else to say about the speech that he made except that I am not surprised that he is still playing with dolls. I should like to deal in a little more length with the hatchet man, the seconder, the Member for Regina Rosemont (Mr. Allen). I would point out to him that he dwelt for a great deal of time on the Province of Quebec. I don't hold any brief for the former Government of Quebec, the Liberal Government. I never felt any particular kinship with them, and I wasn't surprised when they were defeated. They, I think, deserved to be defeated. But you know it is an interesting thing in the history of the Province of Quebec, that no matter whom they have turned to, the Liberal Party that was defeated, the old Union Nationale went down in disgrace, and now the Parti Quebecois. Never did the people of Quebec sink so low that they turned to the NDP, nor I think ever will do that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — You know, Mr. Speaker, the seconder of the Speech, the Member for Regina Rosemont, suggested that the people of Saskatchewan are ahead, ahead of everybody. Well, I wonder? There is one thing we are ahead of, the waiting lists of people waiting to get into our hospitals. I suppose per capita we probably have more people waiting to get into hospitals, not for serious illnesses, or emergencies I will admit, but for elective surgery and for other forms of illness that are just as serious or very serious to people they happen to. We probably have more people per thousand than any other province in Canada.

He asked me to name, when we stood up, provinces that have a better basic health care than we have. I think you can name almost any other province in Canada and you would be ahead of the game. When you are talking about the basic health plan of hospitalization and medical care.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — When you talk about hospitalization and medical care, when you talk about people being able to get into the hospitals, when you talk about people being able to see the doctor, unfortunately Saskatchewan at one time led and now they trail the rest of Canada very, very badly. I think this is a disgrace because this has happened, not in the time of recession, or the time of depression, this hasn't happened when that government

over there has had more money available to them, far more money, double and triple the amount of money than any other government ever had in the history of this province. In spite of that they haven't been able to maintain our two basic health plans and anything matching the quality that existed a few years ago.

You know, when he was talking about Quebec, people waiting to get into the hospital, people being turned away, and then the Province of Quebec spending their money on the Olympics, I thought to myself he could substitute for the Province of Quebec the Province of Saskatchewan, and substitute for the Olympics the potash mines. Because if you people get out in the country and you really talked to the people - obviously you are not - you will find out that they are angry, they are mad, because they say, what is happening to our school taxes, what is happening to our municipal taxes, what is happening to our hospital services. Here is a government with hundreds of millions of dollars to throw away on a potash mine you didn't need to buy and don't know how to run, and yet they can't even maintain the basic services for which we elected them.

He asks who is ahead? Well I wonder how far people in our cow-calf operation feel we are ahead of the rest of Canada. I think thanks in part to the lack of action by the NDP Government, most of them are about one step ahead of the sheriff.

He talks about who is ahead. How about the people waiting to get community cable television? Are we ahead of the rest of Canada? No, we are way behind the rest of Canada. While this government defies the law and refuses to go along, most of the rest of Canada has cable television. But we are not going to have it in this province, we are not going to have it until Mr. Blakeney and his NDP Government can control it. Why? Because they want a little black box in everybody's home just like they have got that little machine in every news room so they can send out their government propaganda at the people's expense into every home in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — Don't kid yourself. That is exactly why we are not getting community cable television. We will only get it when they get it on their own terms, so that they can continue to pour out propaganda directly to the people of this province under the guise of educational television.

Mr. Speaker, I said that this was the longest, dullest Throne Speech that I had ever heard in 12 or 13 years. And it is. If that meant that this government was looking ahead, was concerned about agriculture, and they should be, drought conditions that are on us now, if that meant that they had decided to be prudent, set aside some money against that tough day that may be coming in agriculture, then I would applaud this Throne Speech. But, it doesn't mean that at all. It means one of two things. It means that already after only a year and a half in office they have run out of ideas. They have become literally mentally old and tired. Or it means that they have so much on their plate now, that they don't dare start any new programs, because they haven't begun to pay for the ones they have got now. I think it is a little bit of both.

There is nothing in this Throne Speech. If they get up and say there is nothing in it, because we could afford to

spend any more money, there are all kinds of things that need doing in this province, that would not cost more money.

The welfare system is in bad need of reform. The welfare system is in a mess. Local government needs more help, needs a rearrangement of their priorities and their responsibilities.

Law and order in this province, again, the city of Regina with the highest crime rate by almost any indices of any city in all of Canada. Is there anything in the Throne Speech to say the government opposite is going to try to come to grips with this very desperate situation? There is absolutely nothing!

I mentioned our health scheme. Our basic health plans are in trouble. And yet, what does the Throne Speech say? It boasts that we haven't closed the doors of any hospitals. But it doesn't say that under the Blakeney regime there have been more hospital beds closed than at any time in the history of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. STEUART: — The tragedy of it is this has happened because that government over there hasn't had any courage. They know that by just squeezing the handle, by tightening up, they have forced our hospitals all over this province to lay off staff, to cut back services and to close beds. They know just as surely as they are sitting there, that this blind approach, this lack of courage approach means that the beds that are being closed are probably being closed in the wrong places at the wrong time.

Mr. Speaker, this government was elected on one plank to bring labor peace to the Province of Saskatchewan. Here, again, no mention in the Throne Speech, nothing in the Throne Speech. There is no labor peace in Saskatchewan, after the election of the NDP. In fact we have one of the worse strike records in the past year or two years of any province in all of this nation. There has never been as much labor turmoil, there has never been as much bad feeling between management and labor and labor and government than exists today between the so-called friends of labor and organized labor in the Province of Saskatchewan. And yet what do they do. They bury their heads and refuse to face the situation.

Tomorrow, when I speak, I am going to talk about three things. I am going to talk about the basic incompetence of this government. I think I can make a case to show that without a doubt they are the most incompetent government that ever sat on Treasury Benches, with probably the exception of one, and that was the Conservative Government of 1929 to '34.

I am going to talk about irresponsibility because they have been a government lacking in responsibility on every front. The Premier, the Attorney General, two lawyers, should have been schooled, should have known better, have led this province into a situation where it could end up with the greatest financial crisis that we have ever faced in our history. Why did they do it? They did because again they didn't have the courage to put the kind of taxes that they wanted to put on the potash and oil industry, put them there out in the open, direct, squarely and clearly within their jurisdiction, so that everyone could see them. They tried to do it in a sneaky and underhanded method and they got caught. They are not only in trouble, the tragedy is the people of this province are in trouble.

I want to talk about law and order, not on the streets. Someone once said about President Nixon, he promised to take disorder and lawlessness off the streets, and he did. He took it off the streets and brought it into the White House. I sometimes wonder if that isn't what we have done here by the example we are setting. I am going to talk about lawlessness in government. I am going to talk about a government opposite that has shown clearly, time and time again, that they don't believe in laws for themselves and that they are quite prepared at any time to ignore their own laws, to ignore national laws. They have become convinced evidently, that in the development of their great socialist plan that laws don't affect them. Any time it suits their purpose they ignore the law, they take the law into their own hands.

Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed in this Throne Speech, as we all were. I hoped that while I knew that there wouldn't be any great new challenges in mid-term; politically enough aware that in the middle of their term with probably two years to go or three years to go, that they wouldn't be taking on many new challenges. But, I did hope that that Cabinet over there, who prides themselves on being young, and forceful and innovative, would have at least come up with something that would be challenging, except to say that if we are in trouble in the courts we will try to skate ourselves back on side and make a sorry, dreary, rehash of all the things that they have done in the past, the fact that they may intend to do them a little better in the future.

I have a great deal more to say, Mr. Speaker, and I beg leave at this time to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

QUESTIONS

HON. G. R. BOWERMAN (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — Mr. Speaker, there was a question raised last sitting day to which I gave an answer which needs to be corrected. Should I do it now?

MR. SPEAKER: — I propose to the Minister under the Orders of the Day, before Orders of the Day.

CABLE TELEVISION

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of Progressive Conservatives): — Before the Orders of the Day, Mr. Speaker, you ruled that consideration be given to my question about computers for Sask Tel's cable television control, after Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER: — I thank the Member for bringing that item before us at this time.

First and foremost I want to apologize for the condition of some of the microphones in the Legislative Assembly, this is a matter that is presently under consideration - the replacement of the sound system. Members will have to bear with each other in regard to that system until such time as - it is not

what's in the system, but the system itself, I am talking about the hardware, the system is replaced.

How to get back to the subject of cable television and computers. The subject before me is why the Member was cut off on the question. I refer the Members to the first Interim Report of the Special Committee which was tabled on March 12, 1976. On page nine, it says:

Questions should be asked only in respect of matters of sufficient urgency and importance as to require an immediate answer.

This is the basis on which I ruled the Member's question out of order. I will admit that I was unable to see the urgency of the relationship between cable television and the computer facility in the province, if that in fact was what the Member was talking about. Therefore, on that basis I ruled the question out of order. I think examination of the record will support that.

MR. COLLVER: — Mr. Speaker, I just want to mention about the microphone at this particular desk. The Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) and myself did attempt to move the desks today and I think inadvertently we moved the wires as well and broke the connections.

LEASING MOBILE UNITS

MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Speaker, last sitting day the Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter) asked whether the Government of Saskatchewan was going to exercise its option to purchase all of a portion of the 151 mobile homes leased by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. I answered the Hon. Member indicating that a decision had not been made as yet and was therefore unable to answer definitively, yes or now. I have subsequently been advised by my officials that effective December 1, this year, the department will take options to purchase a total of 150 mobile home units, including the 137 or all units currently leased by the department as well as 13 used units for sale by Saskatchewan Housing Corporation. I am also advised that the occupancy of the department's leased units is estimated at approximately 90 per cent during the lease period.

MR. SPEAKER: — The House will pardon me but I interpreted the Minister as bringing forward a correction of some type. In fact he was answering the question. Questions that can't be answered on the day they are asked would be answered the next day during the Oral Question Period. However the question has been answered at this time. If there are supplementaries I will permit them during the Oral Question Period when it next occurs.

STATEMENT

CONGRATULATIONS - ROUGHRIDERS - RAMS

HON. A. E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to rise to extend our congratulations to the Saskatchewan Roughriders for winning the Western Football Conference Championship . . .

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . I think the Saskatchewan Roughriders are a team supported by all corners of the province and people of all political persuasions. There is a relatively short number of subjects on which we are all united but I know that this will be one. All will join in extending our congratulations to the Riders, to Coach John Payne, to quarterback, Ron Lancaster, the our best wishes to them when they meet the Ottawa Roughriders in the Grey Cup Game next Sunday. There have been many Regina-Ottawa tussles, not all of them on football fields. I hope that we will be successful in this one.

I should also like to extend my congratulations to the Regina Rams for winning the Canadian Junior Football Championship. I think that coach Gord Currie has done an excellent job with the Rams. This we would all concede in the light of the victory in winning the Canadian Junior Football Championship - called the little Grey Cup. This is a fitting climax to perhaps the most outstanding career in the history of Canadian Junior Football.

We therefore ask all Hon. Members to join with me in extending our congratulations to the Riders and the Rams and all who are associated with those victories.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. D. G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to join with the Premier in congratulating both the Rams and the Roughriders. I might say that when we were the government, we succeeded in defeating Ottawa on many occasions, including the Roughriders, who were successful that particular year. This is one time there have been tussles between Regina and Ottawa when I have had mixed emotions, but this time I have no mixed emotions. I hope that our Roughriders come out and thoroughly trounce them, just the same as the Rams have done.

I should like to say incidentally there was another great event that took place. We had a Miss Canada chosen from Saskatchewan, in fact she is a young lady called Miss Foster from Prince Albert. She not only is a beautiful girl, she won the Miss Canada aware . . .

MR. MacDONALD: — She's a Liberal!

MR. STEUART: — Thanks Cy, you are always taking my lines! She is a Liberal which shows she has a great deal of brains too. She comes from a fine Catholic family, one of about 14 kids. I congratulate her as well as the Rams and the Roughriders.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of Progressive Conservatives): — May I add my congratulations to the Saskatchewan Roughriders for gaining the right to enter the Grey Cup, final and all success to them in that game. And also to the Rams for winning the Canadian Junior Football Championship.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

CONGRATULATIONS ESTON-ELROSE BAND

MR. R. H. BAILEY (Eston-Elrose): — I agree with the Leaders of the political parties in this Assembly in passing on their congratulations.

I should like to point out to this Assembly this afternoon, that this particular Grey Cup, as far as Saskatchewan is concerned, is somewhat historic in that the official band representing Saskatchewan for the first time does not come from a city but rather from a rural area. The Eston-Elrose School Unit band is the official band representing Saskatchewan at the Grey Cup parade. These youngsters are extremely nervous but proud about this. Tomorrow morning at about 7:00 o'clock they will be loading on the buses to make the drive to Toronto for the Grey Cup. A great deal of credit has to go to the youngsters, to the band directors, and to the parents of the youngsters from the Eston-Elrose School Unit who have seen this thing through. Although it may not turn out to be the most classy band that you have watched, I am sure that they will do the Province of Saskatchewan proud. I would guess that the average age would range somewhere between 13 and 14 years. I am very proud to make this announcement and even have more pride in the fact that they come from the Eston-Elrose School Unit. I would hope that all of Saskatchewan will be proud of our band and certainly want every Member of this Legislature to watch very closely when the Grey Cup Parade comes on television.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 4:45 o'clock p.m.