

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Third Session — Eighteenth Legislature**  
**4th Day**

**Tuesday, November 23, 1976**

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

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. P.P. MOSTOWAY** (Saskatoon Centre): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to welcome to this House a group of 47 students from Bedford Road Collegiate in Saskatoon. The collegiate is actually located in the constituency of Saskatoon Centre. They are accompanied by Mr. Serienko, Dr. Ens and Mrs. Gough.

I believe that prior to coming to the House they visited the RCMP Barracks in Regina and also the Museum of Natural History. I am sure that they found it interesting, and it is to be hoped that they find proceedings in this House this afternoon interesting, also.

Later on I will be meeting with them and, hopefully, some pictures will be taken.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MOSTOWAY:** — I fail to see the humor in my wanting to have some pictures taken of young adults who are going to be voters in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MOSTOWAY:** — It seems to me that that laugh that you gentlemen just came out with may spell your doom. At any rate some pictures will be taken. I have some scenes of Saskatchewan which I would like to present their teachers later on as well as some booklets on the province. It is to be hoped, as I mentioned before, that they have a good day and a good, safe journey home.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS**

**DISMISSAL OF RENTALSMAN**

**MR. C.P. MacDONALD** (Indian Head-Wolseley): — I would like to direct a question to the Minister in charge of the Rent Control Program of Saskatchewan. I see by news reports that the Minister has dismissed Mr. Ian Rogers, the rentalsman in the Province of Saskatchewan. I ask the Minister if that was his decision and, if so, if he could outline to the Members of this House the reasons for the dismissal of Mr. Rogers?

**HON. E.C. WHELAN** (Department of Consumer Affairs): — Well, as all Members know, the rental control area is a

difficult area. The sort of person whom you need in that type of position has to have certain qualities. To administer it in a manner that is satisfactory to everyone is an impossible task. You will probably recall awhile ago when a committee sat and suggested certain drastic changes in the whole rental procedure. You will also recall when the Speech from the Throne came down there were some amendments suggested. I felt that if we were going to look at the committee report and make the changes that were necessary or suggested, it was necessary that we look at someone in a capacity that had different qualifications than the present incumbent. The present incumbent is a very valuable employee. We consider him the sort of person that we would like to work in the Government service and therefore he has been offered opportunities to work in a couple of other areas and his salary continues until he considers which of the opportunities he is going to accept.

**MR. MacDONALD:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister if Mr. Rogers is not really the scapegoat for the Government in this? The Government has received some very severe criticism from tenants and landlords alike about the Rent Control Program. Can the Minister indicate to the Members of the House is Mr. Rogers the scapegoat on behalf of the Government? Could he indicate to the Members of the House also what areas of re-examination in the Rent Control Program he is proposing and tell us what changes and in what direction he intends to proceed?

**MR. WHELAN:** — Mr. Speaker, as a very sensitive and conscientious Minister I am listening to the people. I'm not necessarily listening to the Member opposite, I don't find him always authentic and accurate. I do think there is a need to look at a new rentalsman. The decision was mine and I stand by it.

**MR. MacDONALD:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister tell me what mechanism he is using to re-examine the Rent Control Program? Will he give an opportunity for tenants and landlords and particularly landlords, because if there is anything very obvious in the Province of Saskatchewan it is the fact that rental housing is no longer being constructed. What mechanism is he using to re-examine the Rent Control Program in Saskatchewan and will tenants and landlords have an opportunity to voice their criticisms?

**MR. WHELAN:** — As has always been the policy with this Government we have, Mr. Speaker, made every effort to keep in close touch with the people who are involved in this sort of program. The committee that was given an opportunity to report is a clear indication that the former Minister did exactly that. We will be looking at the committee report carefully, we will be doing some in-house studies of what has been going on and an announcement will be made in due course.

**MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT** (Regina Wascana): — I wonder if the Minister would indicate whether having enticed this career public servant into resigning as a deputy minister to take that position, whether he will now be returned to the rank of a deputy minister in some other department or whether, having used the man, like using him as your scapegoat,

you now intend to shunt him off into some other area?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHELAN:** — As usual the Hon. Member for Wascana is jumping at conclusions. His mind is as active as a jack rabbit. There was no enticement to the deputy minister from me and I think all of his observations are in error.

**MR. R.L. COLLVER** (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. As a result of the dismissal of the rentalsman and in view of the temporary nature of the entire rent control procedures and in light of the fact that the rentalsman, Mr. Rogers, was very, very actively involved in the preparation of the legislation, would the Minister not consider withdrawing the legislation at this time?

**MR. WHELAN:** — I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Member will receive this information in due course.

### **BEEF MAKES PEOPLE FEROCIOUS**

**MR. W.C. THATCHER** (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture. I am sure the Premier is aware of a statement made in Calgary last weekend by the Federal Minister of Agriculture, Eugene Whelan, to the effect that beef makes people ferocious.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THATCHER:** — I would like to know if the Government of the Premier agrees with Mr. Whelan, and I would ask the Premier in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture, if he would concur in this statement?

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY** (Premier): — I am sorry, he is attending a function at a small hospital in his constituency which apparently missed the axe which was being swung by the now Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake. It is at Langenberg, for those who wish to know the answer. That isn't Neudorf, or Maryfield or Qu'Appelle, it is Langenberg.

The question asked by the Hon. Member is one which I am unable to answer. I want to advise him that the Mr. Whelan referred to was the Hon. Eugene Whelan, the Minister in the Federal Liberal Cabinet and not the Hon. Ed Whelan in our Cabinet. Accordingly, I think that Liberals should take responsibility for his statements and I think I will decline.

**MR. THATCHER:** — In view of the drastic situation that the cattle industry is in right now and in view of the fact that the cattle industry doesn't need any more irresponsible statements, such as this, particularly from someone in Mr. Whelan's position, would the Premier agree with me that Mr. Whelan should resign.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I think the Member for Biggar (Mr. Cowley) has suggested the appropriate answer which I will adopt. Yes, indeed, I think Mr. Whelan should resign together with all his colleagues. And we should have another Federal Government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THATCHER:** — Perhaps I should be addressing this to the Member for Shellbrook (Mr. Bowerman). Would the Premier also agree with the federal agriculture Minister when he indicated that if you eat better, you love more?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I don't consider that to be of urgent public concern.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### **MOBILE HOMES**

**MR. R.A. LARTER** (Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister in charge of DNS. In light of the detailed and lengthy reply to my question regarding the 150 mobile homes on Friday, the Minister has obviously a detailed report before him or access to a detailed report. Will he advise if it is the Government's intention to continue to rent these mobile homes to DNS employees or government contract employees?

**HON. G.R. BOWERMAN** (Minister of Northern Saskatchewan): — I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, that I understood the question, is it whether or not we are going to lease the trailers to DNS employees or what other kind of employees?

**MR. LARTER:** — Is it your intention to continue leasing them to the DNS employees or people who are doing contract work for DNS in northern Saskatchewan?

**MR. BOWERMAN:** — Any work that may be undertaken in the northern administration district with regard to construction projects or housing projects or the teachers for example, the northern school board, if those are who you might be referring to as people who would be living in the trailers, I would then say, Yes, it is quite possible we will be leasing them to some of those people.

**MR. LARTER:** — Supplementary. Is it the intention of the Government to subsidize rent as they do in government owned homes in northern Saskatchewan, and will these subsidies be included in any union agreement, or any contract, and if so, do they have the approval of the public sector Price and Compensation Board?

**MR. BOWERMAN:** — The rental structure, I believe did have the approval of the Price and Compensation Board when they were established.

I don't know whether these will be taken into the union agreement or not. It is a matter of negotiation by SGEA and the Department. I can't tell you whether it will be or not.

**MR. LARTER:** — Is the Minister aware that this method of salary subsidy was disapproved of by the Public Accounts Committee last year and can the Minister tell us why he persists in following a practice which has led to substantiated documentary abuse in northern Saskatchewan? And which puts DNS workers in substantially better houses than the non-government employed citizens of northern Saskatchewan.

**MR. BOWERMAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't know of any province in Canada nor do I think that the Northwest Territories Government expects or has any of its employees living in non-subsidized housing. That particular situation has existed in the northern extremities of all provinces of Canada and in Saskatchewan as well. It is one where it has had to provide either salary incentives or some other kind of incentives to have people move to those isolated locations. It has been a long tradition in the Province of Saskatchewan. It isn't anything new that came about as a result of the establishment of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and it is true I believe in most other provinces. In fact the rental subsidy provided in northern housing in Saskatchewan is similar to that in Alberta and in Manitoba. Their subsidy system was looked at when we were developing ours.

### **PRAIRIE CO-AX**

**MR. MERCHANT:** — I wonder if the Minister of Government Services would comment on certain remarks that he made about an hour ago on a radio program. Yesterday in the absence of the Minister, the Premier told us that in dealing with Prairie Co-Ax in Moose Jaw, it was the intention of the Government to in essence, lie in the weeds, to wait to find out what the company did and to pounce upon them as it were . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! The Member, I think will agree with me that the Minister is not to be asked to comment on reports of that nature, that includes radio or television reports. If the Member wants to direct a question to the Minister, that is fine. But he shouldn't ask him to comment on a report.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — They were his own words, Mr. Speaker. I wonder whether the Minister would indicate whether it would be the intention of the Government to seek an injunction to stop the company duly licensed in Moose Jaw if acting upon that duly licensed authority from the Federal Government and their licence from the city of Moose Jaw, if they now proceed to lay cable, will you use your authority to obtain an injunction to stop them from laying that cable or would you nationalize the cable if laid?

**HON. E. SHILLINGTON** (Minister of Government Services): — I would doubt, Mr. Speaker, very much, I wasn't here yesterday, I didn't have the opportunity of hearing the exchange but I would doubt very much that yesterday the Premier said we were going to lie in the weeds and pounce on them from behind.

We have never wavered in our position with Prairie Co-Ax. We have told them publicly, we told them privately and we have told them before the city council that in our view only Sask Tel has the right to use the streets and lanes. That position has been crystal clear from the beginning. If the Hon. Member for Regina Wascana has misunderstood it, I guess he is deserving of our pity because I don't think Prairie Co-Ax has misunderstood it. The question arises as to whether or not we would actually sue them if they went ahead and used the authority. We have told Prairie Co-Ax that they should recognize legal proceedings as one of the options open to use. We might well use the option. I don't think at this point in time it would be proper for us to announce we are going to sue them and what fashion that suit will take. But we have warned Prairie Co-Ax the bylaw which was passed by the city of Moose Jaw is in our view void. If they attempt to proceed and use whatever authority they think they have got, they might well find themselves facing a suit.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would indicate whether you have ever told the Premier that you have specifically told Prairie Co-Ax because that is not what the Premier told us yesterday. Did you report to the Premier that you had conversations with Prairie Co-Ax because the Premier yesterday told us that they had no policy, that you hadn't decided what you would do. And, that you didn't know whether you would seek an injunction.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — The Hon. Member is not listening very closely. I did not say that we would sue Prairie Co-Ax. I thought I just finished making it clear that I refused to say that. All I am saying is that it is one of the options open to us. We have warned Prairie Co-Ax that we might exercise that option and that is as far as it has got.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Have you ruled out the possibility of taking action against the city of Moose Jaw and if they lay the cable, would you tell us, whether you would seek an injunction to stop them from laying the cable?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — Mr. Speaker, I have answered the question twice, I guess I can keep on answering it until the Hon. Member for Wascana understands it - that seems to be a difficult process.

I will say again, it is open to us, our position is that Prairie Co-Ax has no authority to lay cable, it is open to us to sue them. We have told them that we may well exercise that option, we haven't made any commitment to sue them and I am not going to make that commitment here.

**MR. W.C. THATCHER** (Thunder Creek): — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister. The Minister has referred to telling Prairie Co-Ax this, and telling them that. Is it not true that you have never held a meeting with Prairie Co-Ax, is it not true that Prairie Co-Ax asked for a meeting with Sask Tel which was refused? In effect, you, your Government or Sask Tel has never sat down yet to this point in time with Prairie Co-Ax.

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — No, that's not true. Indeed we have another meeting set up for some time next week with Prairie Co-Ax. I won't be there personally, but the Sask Tel officials are meeting with the officials of Prairie Co-Ax. The answer to your question is: — No, it is not true.

**MR. MERCHANT:** — A supplementary. Would the Minister indicate whether in your meetings with Madam Sauvé on Monday, if you are offered the Selkirk-Portage La Prairie-Brandon settlement, is it the intention of the Saskatchewan Government to accept the Manitoba bargain as reported in the press and elsewhere by which the rights to pay TV are bargained away in favor of getting cable for Saskatchewan?

**MR. SHILLINGTON:** — We have never been offered the Manitoba agreement. I think the position of the Government of Saskatchewan is that we are not prepared to sign the Manitoba agreement because the Manitoba agreement commits the Federal Government to nothing. Our experience in dealing with the Federal Government is if they don't put their commitments in stone, if it is not written with perfect clarity, you can't depend on them to keep their side of the bargain.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### **CHANGES IN CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM**

**MR. R.H. BAILEY** (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture, I should like to direct this question to the Minister of Finance. Is the Minister of Finance aware of any changes which may be coming about in the increase of the insurance premiums for the Crop Insurance Program in Saskatchewan?

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK** (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, No, I am not aware.

**MR. BAILEY:** — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the rather dismal soil conditions that exist in Saskatchewan this fall, I wonder if the Minister of Finance would be able to tell this House at this time, if they would give any indication of the possibility of supplementing funds should this rather dismal picture continue until next fall?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, we'll have to wait and see what the weather is going to look like and based on that, a government policy may be determined.

**MR. R.L. COLLVER** (Leader of Progressive Conservatives): — Would the Minister not agree that it is better for a government to look ahead a little, perhaps to make plans now, rather than wait until a disastrous condition hits Saskatchewan and we are faced with serious conditions for which we are not ensured?

### **PRAIRIE CO-AX**

**MR. S.J. CAMERON** (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, a question of the Minister of Communications. Can he give an assurance to the House that no action will be taken by the Government of Saskatchewan against the city of Moose Jaw in any way in respect of the licence that the city gave Prairie Co-Ax to use the city's streets and lanes?

**MR. SHILLINGTON**: — No, Mr. Speaker, all options are open to this Government of Saskatchewan.

**MR. CAMERON**: — A supplementary. Do I understand the Minister to say that the Government has not ruled out taking action against the city of Moose Jaw?

**MR. SHILLINGTON**: — No, you do not understand properly, that seems to be a problem over there on the other side of the House today.

What we are saying is that I don't think the Provincial Government can give a commitment that in any eventuality no matter what happens, the city of Moose Jaw isn't going to be involved in a legal dispute. That just doesn't make sense, and I think frankly if the Hon. Member for Regina South thinks about it, for a moment, it won't make sense for him.

### **SAFETY OF AUTOMOTIVE VEHICLES**

**MR. D.M. HAM** (Swift Current): — A question to the Minister responsible for SGIO, Mr. Speaker.

Last year I asked the Minister a very important question with regard to automotive safety in the province, I will repeat it again this year and hopefully I will get a satisfactory answer. Will the Minister assure this Assembly that written off vehicles are not being repaired and placed back on Saskatchewan highways without proper safety inspections?

**HON. E.C. WHELAN** (Minister in charge of SGIO): — In answer to the Hon. Member's question, Mr. Speaker, there has been a constant surveillance on this matter. I think if you put a specific question on the Order Paper, we could give you some specific information. He may find later on in the Session that there will be some legislation that will be of extreme interest to him in this respect.

**MR. HAM**: — That is not an assurance in my opinion, Mr. Minister. Unfortunately we may have some deaths, if we haven't already had deaths with regard to repaired vehicles which are unsafe.

But will the Minister assure this House that he will take steps to formulate policies for these crucial inspections?

**MR. WHELAN**: — As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, when the legislation is introduced, I am sure the Hon. Member will realize that we have done something positive in this respect.



## MINISTER OF HIGHWAYS

**MR. R.H. BAILEY** (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the House Leader. Due to the large number of questions that we have and concerns over the conditions of Saskatchewan highways, could the House Leader give us any indication when the Minister of Highways will be back in his seat in the Assembly?

**HON. R. ROMANOW** (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Highways is involved in a very important out-of-province conference involving Ministers of Highways, a very legitimate function, for not only that Minister, but I think for other Ministers as well. As the Premier has pointed out, the attendance in my judgment of Ministers has been excellent in this House.

## PRAIRIE CO-AX COURT ACTION AGAINST CITY OF MOOSE JAW

**MR. S.J. CAMERON** (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, a question of the Minister of Communications. The Premier gave us an assurance yesterday in your absence in the House that no action would be taken against the city of Moose Jaw as distinct from other parties. Your response earlier to me indicated that you haven't ruled out that course and that you and the Premier are in conflict in that respect. Can you tell us what circumstances you foresee that the Premier doesn't in which you might take action against the city of Moose Jaw.

**MR. SHILLINGTON**: — Mr. Speaker, I think that question is too hypothetical to answer.

**MR. CAMERON**: — That's a fair question . . .

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. D. H. Lange, (Bengough-Milestone) for an Address-in-Reply.

**MR. D.G. STEUART** (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, since this is the last time I will speak in a Throne Speech debate as the Leader of the Opposition, and the head of my party, I hope you will bear with me, if I put some personal observations on the record.

First, let me say how much I have enjoyed being a Member of this Assembly, as an Opposition Member, then on the Government benches, now as Leader of the Opposition. It has been the greatest experience of my life and I think we are, all of us in this House, a lucky and privileged group of people. I always feel differently when I walk into this Chamber because no matter how dull the debate or irrelevant the speech, I know we are making history and we are at the centre of things as far as action in the Province of Saskatchewan is concerned.

Saskatchewan politics are exciting and this Legislature has a reputation of being one of the most active, controversial and vital in all of Canada. I am aware and I hope all Members will

always remember that we are following in the footsteps of some of the greatest politicians in Canada's history and I hope we conduct ourselves accordingly. I hope this House never loses its strong character or its fiery debates because I am convinced this is the way great legislation is born. Some casual observers of our House go away with a feeling that we are not serious or our actions demean the democratic process. This view is often expressed and sometimes leads some of our Members to question our procedure and our conduct. Mr. Speaker, I will admit that we could all do better. But I challenge those critics to sit in this House day in and day out and follow every question and every Point of Order and every debate. I am convinced that if they do this and are fair-minded, they will be as convinced as I am that this Assembly is a strong, a serious and important institution in the democratic process and should not be tampered with in a major way. We must of course update our methods, but never let us lose the central character of this House that guarantees and is in fact the very essence of freedom of assembly and freedom of speech.

Mr. Speaker, I first became active in politics in 1946. I came back from the Second World War and found we had a socialist government in Saskatchewan under a name I couldn't pronounce but whose initials I never forgot, that was the CCF. I must admit that some of their ideas I liked; to bring secondary industry to Saskatchewan, to take an independent stance from Central Canada and to bring about some needed social reforms, I found appealing prospects. However, as I observed the CCF in action I became concerned about the methods they used to achieve these laudable goals.

The secondary industry would be run by the government, remember the woollen mill, the door factory, and all the other dreary list of Crown corporations that failed, dashed our hope for a larger base than agriculture for our economy. The social reforms came, but they were government controlled and administered at the expense of local and individual control.

Let me give you some examples. The Hospital Plan was basically good, but it took all the control away from the local hospital boards and lodged it in Regina. The bad results took a long time to surface but they are tragically apparent today. Few people in the local communities have any sense of responsibility to the local hospital, so a kind of a contest is developed to see how much they could take out of our hospital plan and how little they can put into it. Thus, we now have the spectacle of hospital services declining, especially in rural Saskatchewan while costs mount to unmanageable heights and the Government takes refuge at pointing the finger at the former administration and saying at least the NDP are doing better than those dirty Liberals did.

Mr. Speaker, this must be cold comfort to the sick people waiting months and months for hospital beds.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — The CCF began the process, the NDP have raised it to new heights of taking control away from locally elected school trustees. The results are obvious, education is in a mess while costs rise at an alarming rate and the Government's only answer is more centralizing of power and an ever growing bureaucracy, including a new department in education complete with a new minister.

A look at welfare tells an even sadder story. Controls snatched away from the hands of local people and moved to Regina. I ask you to look around us thirty years after the great socialist reform was launched in welfare. The slums are still with us, the poverty on the reserved is still with us, only worse, the jails are still full and the gap between the rich and the poor is wider than ever. The socialists did stake out an independent position from eastern Canada, but instead of making us more independent we have become the worst beggars in Canada at Ottawa's door.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, every Throne Speech, including the last one spends more time whining to the Federal Government for more help than on any other single subject. The independence theme of the CCF and the NDP has only been a political ploy. In fact, they have made our great province a dependent colony of the Federal Government. One statistic will suffice to prove this point.

Last year when Saskatchewan was enjoying the greatest prosperity, our government depended on Ottawa for almost one-third of its budget.

Mr. Speaker, much of what I have just spoken about had not happened in 1946, but the trend was clear. The trend was clear for anyone to see who wasn't blinded by the something for nothing philosophy of the CCF movement. I decided that since I didn't like what was happening I should get involved in political action. I couldn't join the Conservatives because they had sold out to Tommy Douglas and the CCF.

A look at the history of the Conservative Party might be interesting because like most political parties they haven't really changed, they are just attempting to do the same old thing in a different way. In 1929 they were elected to govern Saskatchewan, and an examination of their personnel and platform is worthwhile. The Tories of that day were motivated above all else by a hatred of Liberals, some of them even threw in French and Catholics for good measure, in fact most of them didn't really think there was much difference. They gathered around them a group of candidates, some of whom were dedicated to the Conservative philosophy but many whose only goal in life was to be a Cabinet Minister or to whack the hated Liberals. This motley crew which was the 1929 election and produced a government the likes of which, for incompetence and dissension has never been equalled in the history of this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, I am not suggesting the present Conservative Party is the same but a few similarities are beginning to surface.

In 1934 this so-called Conservative government was wiped out to a man, not one of their Members was re-elected. The same fate awaited them in the 1938 provincial election, again, not one Conservative was elected. Wracked with frustration and with their hatred for the Liberals now fanned to a white heat, the leadership of the Conservative Party in about 1943, made a fateful decision. They decided to support the CCF in

the 1944 election in a desperate effort to wipe out those terrible Liberals. They did exactly this by design and with instructions from their leadership, the Tories worked for the election of the CCF in 1944.

Now my dad told me when I came home in 1946 the CCF committee room in Prince Albert looked like a meeting of at least half the local Chamber of Commerce. The Tory theory was to elect those crazy radical CCF, defeat the Grits, and then knock off the Socialists in 1948 with a Conservative government. The Tories overlooked a few things, one of them was Tommy Douglas. In his heyday he could charm the spots off a leopard and he convinced most of the Tories to stay with them. As the old saying goes, "They came to scorn, and they stayed to pray."

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Those old Tories hated the Grits and if you wanted someone to pound, destroy, and generally chew up the Liberals, Tommy Douglas was your man. The results of course are history, the Conservatives as a provincial force disappeared for over thirty years and only surfaced under their present leadership. But the present leader seems bent on repeating the same mistakes of the past, gathering around him a staff of disgruntled ex-Liberals and now welcoming to his front bench the same type of individual. An examination of speeches clearly indicates once again the Conservative leader is launched on a hate campaign, hate Trudeau, hate the Liberals, hate the NDP.

This may appear to be a successful strategy. I predict, Mr. Speaker, that it will fail because most of our people want much more than this from a person before they will trust him with their government.

Mr. Speaker, I turn to the Liberals because of their strong belief in the dignity, the worth and the intelligence of the individual. The Liberal Party has made many mistakes but one mistake it never made is to think that the state should be supreme or that the individual was created to serve some master plan of government planners, no matter how well intentioned they may be.

Another mistake the Liberals never made is to believe that government was created to benefit the privileged few or that government should shrink from acting against the powerful in our society on behalf of ordinary men and women. That is why I chose the Liberal Party and I have never regretted that choice.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I have never regretted that choice, Mr. Speaker, even when the easiest course would have been to follow the majority because our basic philosophy was out of fashion at the time. And, Mr. Speaker, this is such a time. Our basic philosophy may be out of fashion at this time but I have never been more proud to be a Liberal and my message to those who may be questioning all political parties is simply this. Go back to fundamentals, go back to square one, choose the party that more than any other has built this nation into the envy of the world.

Go back to the political party that has given Canadians more of the goods of this world, more prosperity, coupled with more individual freedom than that enjoyed by the people in any other nation in the world at any time in the history of the world. That is the Liberal Party and make no mistake it continues as the strongest force in Canadian politics because its basic belief rests on people and on people alone.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — That, Mr. Speaker, is why I chose the Liberal Party and that's why today I remain loyal to the Liberal Party.

I now take a look at the Socialist party 30 years later, they have a new name, the NDP, but in truth little else about them has changed. Today I will use three yardsticks to measure the performance of the Blakeney NDP Government, the same ones that applied to the old CCF: — competence, responsibility and a respect for the law.

I sincerely believe that this NDP Government is incompetent, irresponsible and they obviously are convinced that the normal laws don't apply to them. Let's deal first with the incompetence of this administration.

Mr. Speaker, to begin with, it is difficult to measure the competence or efficiency of a government by examining a department of government. I'll use the Department of Agriculture as an example. Every government, no matter what their stripe, boasts that the more they spend on the Department of Agriculture the more concern they are showing for our farmers. Now the truth is that most of the money spent in this department has little or no effect on the individual farmer. In fact, if the Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture disappeared, six months later most farmers would be unaware of the event.

For example, in 1973, or it might have been in 1974, the fact that I can't pinpoint the exact year is significant, the Department of Agriculture carried out a major re-organization. Towards the end of the year in question, I was told by a very senior official in the department that production in the department had dropped severely during that year of change.

I mentioned to him that it was a queer thing but I had not heard one complaint from any farmer about this drop in production by the Department of Agriculture. This senior official thought for a moment and then he said, "You know, it is a queer thing, neither did I." The truth is that most of our departments have doubled and tripled their size under the NDP, but it is hard to measure their impact in the area of their particular concern.

Under the NDP the Departments of Education, Health and Welfare, to cite the three largest, spend most of their time and money chasing paper within their own departments and nagging people outside of the department who are really doing their best to develop our education, health and welfare programs.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to measure the efficiency of a government but you can do this with Crown corporations. A Crown corporation will either make money or lost money, they will provide good service or bad service, their prices will either rise or fall and you can measure why any of these things

have happened.

Let me give you a few examples to show that Mr. Blakeney is running the most incompetent government in the history of this province. Now, Mr. Speaker, there are 19 Crown corporations presently operated by the Government of Saskatchewan involved in utilities, insurance, transportation, investment, furs, minerals, printing, oil, potash, water, housing and forest products. Two of these, the telephone and power utilities have been in operation for a long, long time. They are monopolies, and the fact that they operate under the Government has been accepted by the majority of our people.

The other 17 were either instituted by the CCF or by the NDP and most of them compete to some extent in the open market. In 1975, during the greatest economic boom this province has ever experienced these 17 Crown corporations managed to lose over \$4 million of the taxpayers' money. Mr. Speaker, with the exception of Saskatchewan Minerals, a company producing sodium sulphate, a product in great demand whose price hit an all time high last year on the world market, the other 16 government operated enterprises lost over \$9 million. A loss of \$9 million when most other Canadian companies were running up record profits.

All this under the guidance of Mr. Blakeney who says, please trust me when I risk hundreds of millions of dollars of your own money in oil and potash. This is a record of disgraceful incompetence and indications are that the 1976 figures will be even worse.

I would like just to take for example, the Saskatchewan Forest Products Company. Last year the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation lost \$2.3 million in the face of a building boom. When most companies selling building products were making huge profits, Mr. Blakeney's timber company was chalking up record losses. This year I predict they will break their old record and lose over \$4 million of the taxpayers' money.

Now how did this happen when most people in the lumber industry were showing a profit. Well, Mr. Blakeney made up his mind that if he ever became Premier of this province he would show the world how terribly we Liberals had exploited our forest resources. First, he spent over \$6 million in two years trying to prove that Karl Landegger was dishonest and that the Prince Albert Pulp Mill was a bad deal. Well, Mr. Speaker, he found out the opposite was the truth. Mr. Landegger was an honest man and the pulp mill was such a good deal he has never changed one sentence in the contract or even uttered a word against it in the five years he has been Premier.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — On the other hand he hasn't had the courage or the good grace to admit he was wrong. However, Mr. Speaker, he was committed to change our forest policy, so he hired Mr. Springate and Associates to be his guiding light.

First they did a study of our forests, then they recommended a new and larger annual allowable harvest of the best wood

in all parts of the North. Their next step was to recommend a whole series of mills and plants to utilize these so-called new-found resources. Then they designed plywood plants, stud mills, lumber mills and treatment plants to turn our forest resources into saleable products.

Mr. Speaker, this was not the last of Mr. Springate's services to Mr. Blakeney and the people of Saskatchewan, he even took over the management of some of the new facilities he had recommended and designed. For all this Mr. Springate was paid hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Although there is an open and flagrant conflict of interest in all this, we could not complain too strongly if Mr. Blakeney had received value for the huge sums of money he spent with Springate and Associates. The unfortunate truth is he got taken to the cleaners and his whole forest development program will collapse like a deck of cards.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — To begin with, Mr. Springate recommended much too high an annual cut. Our forests cannot sustain all the mills and plants that have been built and are being planned. Some of the facilities are in the wrong location. For example, the mill at Carrot River was doomed before it was ever built. The plywood plant at Hudson Bay ran way over cost and will only show a profit if the books are rigged. The crowning piece of insanity has to be the plans to build a \$10 million head office for the Saskatchewan Forest Products Corporation which has less than 40 people working in its head office. And you know, Mr. Speaker, for all this our efficient NDP Government pays their friend, Mr. Springate a commission.

Before leaving the Crown corporations I will admit that under the present Government the Power Corporation and Sask Tel showed a combined profit last year of \$25 million. But, Mr. Speaker, please don't get carried away with admiration for the business acumen of the NDP Government. Under the Liberal administration these two corporations made annual profits as high as \$47 million, almost double last year's performance.

I will only touch on two more examples of the Blakeney Government's monumental incompetence. The first is the \$10.2 million they paid for 45 per cent of the Intercontinental Packing Plant and it still stands as a record in this nation of government stupidity. The Premier at that time had in his possession annual statements of that company indicating that Mr. Mendel himself placed a total net value on the company of around \$7 million. The report of Dun and Bradstreet was not difficult to obtain and it set the net worth of Intercontinental Packers at slightly under \$6 million. But Mr. Blakeney cleverly ignored all this evidence and instead he relied on the figures of an insurance evaluator who said for insurance purposes the replacement value would be about \$23 million. He then had Mr. Messer, his then House genius for good deals, work out 45 per cent of this amount and he paid Mr. Mendel \$10.5 million for less than half the company.

I might point out that so far the Government's return on their investment in the "People's Pork Plant" has been less than one quarter of one per cent.

Mr. Speaker, their record in paying top dollar for second rate oil property is well known in that industry and has made SaskOil a poor joke right across Canada. But the pièce de résistance has to be the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

You know there is an old saying, I don't know whether it is a religious saying or not, but there is an old saying, "Why buy the cow when you're getting the milk for nothing." The Government was making over \$100 million a year from the potash industry with nothing invested and not a cent risked. We will leave aside for the moment that they may have been getting the money illegally, because that piece of stupidity didn't really have to happen. But not satisfied with this happy state of affairs that group of incompetents across the way paid \$128 million for a ten year old mine that cost less than \$80 million to build ten years ago. Mr. Speaker, I know they tabled a beautiful thick, red book that is supposed to be proof that they struck a good deal but I am unimpressed. As I pointed out on Thursday, if you look hard enough, you pay high enough, you could get some so-called expert to put a kosher stamp on a pig, or tell a good Catholic the meat he was eating on Friday was really a fillet of whale in disguise. I wouldn't trust most consultants as far as I could throw them and that is what you should do with most of them. All I know for sure is that the Duval Corporation grabbed the \$128 million and they never stopped running until they hit Dallas, Texas. I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, the taxpayer got trimmed again and the NDP built another monument to their own incompetence.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, the second yardstick we should measure this Government by is their sense of responsibility. The question is, has Mr. Blakeney and his Government, handled our affairs in a responsible manner. Now the answer can be found in the records. Spending has more than tripled since the NDP assumed office. Our population is almost the same but our Government spends three times as much money. New programs are started before old ones are made financially secure. The number of people working for the Government has increased more in the last five years than the total in any 15 year period in Saskatchewan's history. Office space has increased at a rate that is almost out of control. While the Government leases every building program that will add hundreds of thousands of square feet of office space to the present establishment.

This is a spendthrift Government with no thought of tomorrow, they have mortgaged our future and that could well be a difficult future during the next four or five years.

The handling of resource taxation must, of course, stand as Mr. Blakeney's single most irresponsible act. By this one piece of mismanagement he could cost our people hundreds of millions of dollars and place a crushing financial burden on us for years to come.

You know I am convinced that a great deal of the trouble the Premier finds himself in is because of the advice he is receiving from the paid staff he has surrounded himself with. Here again in the handling of the public service the Government has used bad judgment. On top of all this the Blakeney administration has blown the greatest opportunity ever presented to this province to build a sound, broadly based economy.



Mr. Speaker, I realize these are serious charged but a more detailed look at each one of them will prove, I think, the truth beyond doubt.

Let's look at spending. The last year we were the Government in 1971 our budget was \$450 million. Now I agree this was a net budget, it did not include some transfer payments from the Federal Government and if you add those the total of our budget was probably somewhere over \$550 million. The last budget just brought down by the NDP just last spring amounted to \$1.3 billion or \$1300 million. However, to get the real figure that this Government will spend in the current year, you must add on supplementary expenditures. Going by their past history this will probably add up to over \$100 million, giving us a grant total to be spent this year of \$1.4 billion. This means that roughly for the same number of people the Blakeney Government are extracting and spending an increase of \$900 million, about triple what was spent five years ago.

I mentioned new programs started while old ones experience great financial difficulty. Of course the classic case is our hospital plan, it is in serious trouble. Thousands of sick people are forced to wait months to get a hospital bed. This unhappy situation has been developing for many years but the Government under two Health Ministers who refused to face up to the facts and attempted to place the blame on our local hospital administrations.

Mr. Speaker, if they were short of money one could have some sympathy for them but I ask you to look around at what is really happening while our hospitals close their doors to sick people. New government buildings springing up in every community, the daddy of them all is being built just back of the Health Building. I predict it will cost at least \$75 million, if they ever tell us the whole truth. You add this to the new government buildings to be constructed in Saskatoon and Prince Albert and every other city and every large town and it probably adds up to close to \$200 million in new government buildings. \$200 million in new government buildings, enough to run our health plan, our share of the health plan, the hospital plan for about two years.

Then there are the potash mines. Already \$128 million committed, plus all the money already spent on huge salaries and fancy head offices, first in Regina and then in Saskatoon. Again enough money to pay our share of the hospital plan, our share for about one year and one half. Added to this we have the Hearing Aid Plan, we have the Drug Plan and the Family Income Plan. Now all of these plans have merit but surely it is an act of an irresponsible government to start two costly health projects and still jeopardize the basic hospital plan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Please don't blame it on the Federal Government. They have been warning the provinces for six or seven years that they intended to put some control on their portion of cost-shared programs.

Mr. Speaker, the present NDP Government must present a rather pathetic sight when they go crying poor mouth to Ottawa in the face of their record of throwing money by the hundreds of millions of dollars. Ottawa doesn't believe them and neither

do these unfortunate people waiting for hospital care when they see this vicious waste on all sides.

I talked about the way Mr. Blakeney and his swollen Cabinet are hiring new people. In spite of the fact that they use every device to hide the truth, we know that the NDP have added over five thousand new people of the Government payroll since they came to office.

To give the people some idea of the magnitude of people our NDP friends have larded onto the payroll, let me point out that five thousand people with their families would make a city the size of North Battleford, or one larger than Weyburn. And Mr. Speaker, I again remind you that all these new employees are to govern the same number of people. No wonder we have little unemployment in Saskatchewan. Mr. Blakeney puts them all on the public payroll. You know, Mr. Speaker, there is no use hiring new people if you don't give them a car, or a typewriter, or a desk and office space. Let's just imagine what these new people have cost us in the way of this kind of equipment. All this means is that Mr. Blakeney has used the people's tax money to buy at least a thousand new cars probably, two thousand new typewriters, five thousand new desks, probably three thousand new filing cabinets and at least five hundred thousand feet of new office space, all costing at least one hundred million dollars and this cost goes on, not only goes on year after year, but it will increase as time goes by.

Again, Mr. Speaker, millions for cars, typewriters and staff, but starve our hospitals to pay for it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — You know, the question of civil servants raises an interesting point.

Since coming to office our Premier has cleaned out every old, long-time deputy minister who was working for this Government when he took power. I think of respected men like Harold Horner - Agriculture; Mr. Meldrum - Attorney General; Lloyd Holmes - Highways; Ted Walters - Municipal Affairs; Lyle Bergstrom, Education. All these long-time public servants have been shunted aside for a new breed. The new ones are young, they have strings of degrees after their names and they are all dedicated socialists.

They have something else in common. They haven't got the slightest idea of the value of a dollar, nor do they have any great degree of common sense. During their short lives they have been busy spending other people's money and their contempt for those who earn these dollars is obvious from the way that they throw it around. This group reminds me of the people the old CCF gathered around them. during the 1950s almost every young man in Canada with a Master's Degree or a Rhodes Scholarship, whose head was full of dreams of a socialist Utopia, converged on Saskatchewan. Some of you will remember the names - Al Johnson and Don Tansley; Tom Shoyama; Cass-Beggs; Bill Haney, Art Wakabayashi; George Botham, and there was even one named Allan Blakeney. I know all kinds more. Like their present day counterparts they had degrees, they had idealism, but they also had a lack of common sense and they had the overpowering urge to spend someone else's money.

When we became the government they either left on their own accord, or on our accord. There was a great outcry because they had the reputation of being the most outstanding civil servants in all of Canada. If you don't believe me ask any of them, because this exalted reputation was self-created. They were, on top of everything else, great self promoters. You just had to ask any of them and they would tell you all the rest of them were the greatest public servants this country had ever seen. Oddly enough, and tragically enough most of them were snatched up by Ottawa, by the Federal Government. I think it is fair to say that the ex-Saskatchewan group have been the most influential bureaucrats in Ottawa in the last ten years.

Now you know, Mr. Speaker, they have been a very powerful group down there in Ottawa. There are those who think, there are those people, strange as it may seem, in Canada who think that the Federal Government is in a mess. There are those who are convinced that Ottawa has been spending money lately in a reckless manner. People who feel that many federal programs were useless or overlapping and have damaged our economy, and among those I number the Premier and his Government. Of course, the easiest thing is to blame the politicians. There is no question they must shoulder the major portion of the blame. But anyone who knows Ottawa is aware of the extent to which the politicians depend on the senior civil servants. The truth is our exported brain trusters have helped get the Federal Government into the same mess we find ourselves here at home in Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — You know, we in Saskatchewan have that in common, and one other thing. We have the same kind of bureaucrats. In fact, most of them came from the same training ground, the socialist Government in Saskatchewan.

I suggest to the Premier that he hire a few people with some experience in the business world to add a touch of common sense and sanity to his Government.

I'm not suggesting, Mr. Premier, you replace all of your whiz kids, just a few of them, so you will get another point of view.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I stated that the Premier's greatest blunder was the way he taxed potash and oil. Let me make it clear that I believe a provincial government has the right to tax any resource as high as they want to.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — That's crystal clear. I may question the wisdom of overtaxing any group because it will discourage and drive them out of our province, but I have never questioned their basic right to do it.

However, Mr. Blakeney decided he would camouflage or hide the huge taxes he was levying on the oil and potash, so he charged them a whole variety of taxes. This was done in an effort to conceal from the public the enormous taxes he was gouging from these two industries. I guess he felt that Saskatchewan people are basically fair and they would have been

shocked at his greed. The unfortunate result of the Premier's duplicity is that the courts may say his taxes in the form that they were levied are unconstitutional, in fact beyond the powers of the provincial government. If they do this and order the Government to pay these taxes back, we will face the worst financial crisis in our history. The fact that we did not need to be in this position had our Premier acted in an honest straightforward manner makes his irresponsibility all the more unforgivable.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, to point out a little fact to the Government opposite. It hasn't rained in Saskatchewan for months. Everybody but the Government opposite is aware of this and is worried about the potential drought. Our Government evidently doesn't believe we can ever have tough times down on the farm again, because they are not only spending every cent they can lay their hands on, but they are borrowing hundreds of millions of dollars that will have to be paid back in the future.

Why is this Government not making contingency plans in case we have a few tough years in agriculture? Why are they not setting this money aside now when it is easily available so they can tide our people over the rough years that may lie ahead? Why do they add new programs, new Cabinet Ministers, new expenditures on to the public purse with evidently no thought of tomorrow?

Mr. Speaker, it is because they are the most irresponsible group of men ever to control the government of this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — They live for today, they spend as if there is no tomorrow. They have not only blown the greatest opportunity handed to them in the past five years, but they have mortgaged our future to a degree unheard of in any province in Canada.

I said the third yardstick I would use to measure the performance of the NDP is their respect for law.

Mr. Speaker, I am not questioning the determination of the Government to enforce the laws on the people of this province. I am concerned about how they apply the law to their own actions. In fact, a look at their actions over the past five years shows all too clearly that Mr. Blakeney and his Government often consider themselves above the law. There is, unfortunately, a degree of lawlessness about this Government and I believe it is time our people were made aware of this serious trend. Surely one of the basic tenets of democracy is that the law applies as equally to the government as it does to ordinary people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Let me cite a few examples of the NDP Government's attitude towards the law. Let's take cable TV. The Government of Saskatchewan does not have the constitutional power to legislate or govern in respect of cable television. That power, under the BNA Act, lies with the Federal Government solely.

The CRTC, under the authority of Canada's constitution granted licenses to four groups - two co-ops and two private companies. That was July 15 of this year. In any other province in Canada that would have settled the issue and the cable companies would now be in business, but not in Saskatchewan. Despite having no power in this area, no right under the law of Canada, this Government moves in and thwarts the licencees in their plans. That in itself is bad enough. But they did more.

The government of the city of Moose Jaw granted the right to Prairie Co-Ax (a company licensed to do business in this province by that very Provincial Government) to use its streets and lanes for cable. The Provincial Government then attempts to bulldoze by coercion and threats (and we saw more of it today) the people in Moose Jaw not to let these TV people use their streets and lanes despite the provisions of The Urban Municipality Act, the law of Saskatchewan which clearly states that the municipality has the right to regulate and control its own streets and its own lanes.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — So here is the Provincial Government putting itself above and beyond the law. In the first place it has no authority over cable TV, under the constitution of this country, yet it persists in taking that authority unto itself. In the second place it uses its muscle in Moose Jaw saying in effect to the local government, "You better not let the TV company use your streets and lanes or we will move against you."

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — When clearly the law says it's the right of the municipality to control their own streets and lanes.

Let's look at another part of their government, at the actions of the Saskatchewan Public Sector Price and Compensation Board.

The Government established this so-called anti-inflation board without legal authority. There is no provision in the law of this province for this board and the powers it is exercising. I will give you an example. The employees of the Workers' Compensation Board entered into a contract with the board. The Public Sector Price and Compensation Board attempted to roll back the settlement. The employees went to court to enforce their contract. They had to sue to get what was rightfully theirs. This provincial Government, acting outside of the law, without authority, tried to prevent it. Again, above and beyond the law.

Let's look at the Land Bank. the law of this province demanded - I am sorry the Minister of Agriculture isn't here - that the Government appoint a Land Bank Advisory Commission and that no appeal board could be appointed or that certain other decisions could not be made by the Minister of Agriculture without first referring it to the Advisory Commission. The Minister of Agriculture said, and I will be polite, "to blazes with the law." and went right ahead to appoint the appeal board and make other decisions without consulting the Advisory Commission as the law clearly required that he do. He didn't consult it because it didn't exist. Its non-existence was actually

unlawful. He was in breach of the law for over two years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Let's look at transportation. The Government, that Government, out of neglect, got into a squabble with CPR trucks. Again, it assumed unto itself power it didn't have. It laid 17 charges against CP trucks. Then it gets into court only to concede it didn't have the power to lay the charges in the first place. It tucked its tail between its legs and withdrew, or tried to, but the judge wouldn't let them withdraw, he threw the whole thing out of court.

How about our senior law enforcement office, the man pledged to uphold the law in this province, the Attorney General. After the fracas in Saskatoon last winter in a hockey game, a young hockey player was charged. The Attorney General charged him in an effort to come to grips with violence in hockey. I think this is a commendable move. The accused appeared in court and after hearing the judge ruled there was not sufficient evidence of guilt to put the boy on trial. Then the Attorney General moved in and single-handedly overruled the judge. He laid a direct indictment, forced the accused to go to trial despite the judge's ruling. Again, a bulldozing. Again, "we'll take the law into our own hands" and to hell with anybody else.

These incidents are bad enough, but the situation regarding the taxation of the potash and oil, I think is even worse.

When the Government was faced with the possibility of the enormous taxes they had taken from the potash industry that may have been collected illegally, their reaction was typically arrogant. In fact, lawless. They said in effect, "even if what we did was outside of the law, we won't give the money back." That's theft by any other name.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — They propose to take the same attitude and they are taking the same attitude with the oil industry.

CIGOL, an oil company, has taken the Provincial Government to court, also claiming that the taxes taken from them were done in a manner beyond the powers of the Government. In arguing the Government's case before the Supreme Court, George Taylor, the NDP lawyer, was asked by the Supreme Court if what the Government of Saskatchewan had done to this company was just and equitable. His answer, the answer on behalf of the Blakeney Government, says a great deal about their attitude towards law. Mr. Taylor's answer, speaking for this Government, said in effect, "justice and equity don't matter, it is only government policy that counts."

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Again, to the devil with the law, we're above it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Mr. Speaker, I know what they

will say opposite. They will say who cares about a cable TV company, who cares about a single young hockey player, who cares about the giant potash or oil corporations. But I say to you that a government who acts above the law in these cases will do it to anyone any time it suits their purposes.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — Disrespect of the law by a powerful government threatens the freedom and rights of every individual.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is guilty of incompetence, irresponsibility and actual lawlessness to a degree that will be condemned by every fair-minded person in this province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I urge them to show more respect for local government. Take away some of the powers from those back room planners you've hired and begin to act within the laws of this province and this country. I am afraid I have no confidence that they will change their ways and a motion to give all Members the opportunity to show their displeasure with the Government will be introduced by the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) who will follow me.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I said at the beginning of my speech that I was never more proud to be a Liberal than I am right now. One of the reasons for this pride is the calibre of the two young men who are seeking the leadership of our party, Ted Malone and Tony Merchant.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — These two individuals are capable, dedicated and sincere men who have already made a great contribution to this province and to the Liberal Party. Either one of them will make a fine leader and an outstanding Premier. The future of our party, and indeed of Saskatchewan, is assured when we have men like this serving in public life.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I wish them both well and I pledge my full and enthusiastic support to whichever one is chosen by our convention on December 11th.

I closing, I want to thank my colleagues. No one could have had better co-operation and support than was given to me during my tenure as leader. While I don't agree with the Members opposite and it is obvious, or those Members to my left, I respect their integrity and I promise I will continue to make their political life as uncomfortable as I can for a long time to come.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. STEUART:** — I thank the members of the press. Unfortunately for me they always reported me accurately. Occasionally they made

the odd mistake and even made me sound intelligent from time to time. A difficult feat.

I want to acknowledge a debt that I owe to the staff and the executive of the Liberal Party. They were loyal, hard-working and a tremendous help to me at all times. In closing I just want to say that I thank my wife.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. J. WIEBE** (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, before I begin my comments on the Throne Speech I should like to pay recognition to the fact that we have just heard the last speech that Dave Steuart will make on the Throne Speech debate in his capacity of Leader of the Opposition. His quick mind and his quick wit never paralleled before in these Chambers. I am confident that history will record Dave Steuart as one of the greatest debaters and humanitarians ever to grace these Chambers.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — I welcome this opportunity to say how great a privilege and pleasure it has been for me to serve in this Legislature under the leadership of Dave Steuart. He may be the smallest guy in size in this Legislature, but without any doubt he's the biggest man in stature.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — The fact of his leadership is indicative in the quality of men and women which Dave has attracted to devote part of their lives as he has, to serving the people of Saskatchewan in the capacity as Members of this Assembly. Dave is turning over to the new leadership a vibrant party with unqualified principles and dedication to the people of Saskatchewan.

Dave on behalf of our caucus, thank you for a fantastic five years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — In my capacity as Opposition critic for agriculture, I should like to deal for a few moments with what effect if any, the implementation of this Throne Speech will have on the agricultural industry in this great province.

As a rule, the Throne Speech lays out the very general direction in which the Government wishes to take this province and to deal with the various segments of our society in the coming year. In all due respect, Mr. Speaker, if this Throne Speech is an example of things to come, its implementation will have no effect whatsoever on our agricultural industry.

The Throne Speech has done an adequate job in vaguely outlining the problems which agriculture may face in the coming year, but again it is completely void of any suggestions or proposals on how this Government intends to deal with and to tackle those problems.

The Government recognizes that while this year's wheat



crop of 550 million bushels is the largest in the province's history, clouds on the horizon still appear. Recent declines in grain, hog, cattle and dairy prices give a considerable cause for concern. These, Mr. Speaker, are problems that are man made not necessarily problems created by provincial or federal governments, but problems which are created by international and world events, which to a small extent can be solved by co-operation with our federal and world counterparts. The Federal Government has made an attempt, while not adequate in this regard, but our Provincial Government is content only with confrontation.

Besides the apparent decline in the price of products which we produce, we must be aware as well of a large part which mother nature plays in regard to our greatest industry. At present we are witnessing an extended drought period. What will happen to our provincial economy if because of weather conditions we are not able to produce even an average crop in 1977? What will happen to our already hard pressed livestock industry if we are not able to produce the hay and feed grains that are required to maintain that industry?

During the past number of buoyant years in our agricultural industry adequate time was available to make contingency plans and programs. One must ask, what has this Government done to prepare itself and our agricultural industry for this eventuality?

The people of Saskatchewan have a right to ask and also to receive answers as to what the Government intends to do in case our greatest industry does find itself in difficulty. It is no longer good enough, Mr. Speaker, nor acceptable by the people of Saskatchewan for the Ministers to try to shift the blame with the hope that some other government will come along and bail them out.

Saskatchewan again, let me repeat, has gone through one of the greatest periods of prosperity in its history. Again, thanks to agriculture. Now that clouds are appearing agriculture could be facing a difficult period. The people of Saskatchewan are rightly asking, what are you intending to do to combat those clouds? They are asking, what did you do during those good years? They are asking more and deserve better than what you have outlined in the Speech which we are now debating. They expect and deserve more than just lip service.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — Let's pause for a moment, Mr. Speaker, and look at your record. Crop insurance and the Grain Stabilization Bill, two excellent programs, but programs that were implemented not by your Government but by the Federal Government. the Grain Stabilization Bill, a program that if grain prices continue to decline and our markets become sluggish, will prove to be the salvation of our agricultural industry in Saskatchewan. What did your Government and Minister do to contribute to this program? At each and every opportunity you've condemned, ridiculed and opposed it. You were not concerned about the agricultural industry, but more concerned about some cheap political gain that you could derive out of it.

Again, let me repeat that if grain prices continue to decline, and our markets become sluggish, the Grain Stabilization Program which you opposed so violently could prove to be the

salvation of our agricultural industry in this great province.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — During those good years of high tax revenue, again because of agriculture, where was your Government when universities and farm organizations were recommending more dollars for agricultural research? They recognized the need to keep our industry ahead of the times. They knew that more time, effort and research was required in developing new crop varieties, drainage, irrigation and land use policies. The potential for expansion is almost limitless. Huge acreages of land await more intensified utilization. Alternate sources of livestock feed can be developed. The list again, Mr. Speaker, is unlimited. What the Government appears to have forgotten is that the most important role of government is not regulation, but research. At the moment your Government is pouring millions into the various social welfare and giveaway programs. Millions in your desire to control potash and other industries, already established and producing in this province. As a result, Mr. Speaker, you are sacrificing the millions needed by agricultural research.

In your efforts to make sure that the idle and lazy continue to lead the good life you are ignoring and cutting research budgets in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the situation is alarming and could constitute the biggest single threat to the future security of our food supplies.

You go on in your Throne Speech to say that despite the record wheat crop, net farm incomes are expected to decline this year. But that's where it stops. No proposals to ensure that net farm income does not decline. What does your Government intend to do to ease or slow down that apparent decline in the farmers net income?

Let's look again at your action to date. First of all because of your desire for more forms of taxation you increased the price of the farmers basic expense, farm gas and diesel fuel. The single, most vulnerable expense that a farmer can have. By your actions you increased the price of farm fuel by over 14 cents a gallon and tried desperately to put the blame on the shoulders of the oil companies.

You then tried to gain some political advantage. You introduced The Farm Cost Reduction Program. In glowing press releases you announced the program, said that we as a government are concerned, we will ease your cost in farm fuel and we'll be sending each and every farmer a cheque once a year. What those glowing press releases didn't say was that we as a government increased the price of your fuel by over 14 cents a gallon, but we are going to keep ten cents to help buy potash mines. We will refund back to the farmer only four cents a gallon, providing that the farmer uses 2,500 gallons of farm fuel or less. For every gallon of farm fuel that a farmer uses over 2,500 we're going to keep the entire 14 cents.

What we see here is a deliberate attempt by this present Government to hide one of its most unfair forms of taxation. Again, instead of keeping down farm costs, you have added to it and you've added to it considerably. One again has to ask, why?

During this period of agricultural prosperity this Government has been preoccupied with its insane desire of control and ownership of our potash industry. The people of Saskatchewan are saying that it's time this Government gets off its potash kick and starts paying some attention to our basic industry, that being agriculture. If the Government is sincere about developing this province and investing \$1 billion in development, I suggest that you turn to this province's greatest resource and its greatest industry.

Mr. Speaker, it may sound old hat and it may be an old refrain, but agriculture remains one of our most important industries and with proper attention and with proper concern will retain that status for a long time to come.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is the bread basket of this nation and yet the only agricultural products that we produce in this province are grain, livestock and similar products produced by farmers. This province is literally a desert in terms of the manufacture of agricultural products to service and maintain the agricultural industry. We must again, Mr. Speaker, depend on other provinces and other countries to service that industry. Millions and millions of dollars leave this province each and every year just to service that industry.

For example, this year alone over \$160 million will leave this province for the purchase of agricultural machinery and repair parts. Would it not be wiser, Mr. Speaker, to take part of that billion dollars to develop an industry to manufacture those machines and equipment right here in this province?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — Mr. Speaker, if this Government has run out of ideas, as the Throne Speech certainly leads one to believe, why not correct a mistake which you made three years ago when you cancelled the South Saskatchewan River Irrigation Project, one of the worst decisions this Government or any government in the Province of Saskatchewan has ever made. One only has to go back to the winter of 1972-73 when hay in southern Saskatchewan was non-existent, to realize just how vital future and further development is.

Mr. Speaker, it's strange, but we don't even produce enough potatoes or peas to feed ourselves in this province. We have no plants to process these products even if we did produce them. Again, we have to rely on other provinces to put this kind of food on our table.

We are looking at more opportunities for our young farmers to find land, to make a start. Irrigation will provide an excellent future for from six to eight farmers on the same acreage that now provides a living for a one-family farm.

The future of increased production to feed a hungry world lies in irrigation. We have that potential, all we need is a government with the courage to develop that potential.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. The potential in this province is just as great if not superior to any other province in Canada. Again I say, all we need is a government with the courage, the proper perspective and the right political philosophy to build this province into one which we can all be proud of.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — Mr. Speaker, I would briefly like to turn now to the segment of the Throne Speech which deals with the serious cost price squeeze that Saskatchewan cattle producers have been caught up in. You announced the continuation of the Cash Advance Program and the cash grant of \$50 per cow sounds like a good and timely program, but only on the surface, Mr. Speaker. One has to read the fine print to realize the gross discrimination and unfairness of this program. This program alone, Mr. Speaker, will do more to encourage cow-calf producers out of the cattle business and into straight grain farm production.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — If we are to encourage the cow-calf producers to remain in this industry he must be treated fairly. The grant should be paid on the cow-calf portion of his farming operation, independent of this grain operation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — It is unfair, Mr. Speaker, for this Government to play the kind of a game of discrimination within our agricultural industry. One has to ask why the discrimination and it is difficult to find and understand the reasoning behind any kind of an answer that they may come up with. There was no discrimination against the hog producers when their industry was in difficulty and a grant was paid independent of their grain operations. Although at the time it was politically unwise to show that discrimination because this Government was trying to protect its political life and was trying to have a compulsory market commission, accepted by the agricultural industry.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — That grant at that time, despite its political overtones, was fair because it was made available to every hog producer independent of his farming operation and was geared basically to maintain and protect that hog industry. You are taking exactly the opposite approach in regard to the cow-calf program. In order to treat the beef industry fairly it is

imperative that the eligibility for the cash grant under the Beef Industry Assistance Program for cow-calf producers be determined solely on the net income received from the beef portion of the farmer's total farming operation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — I urge the Government, Mr. Speaker, to look seriously upon this recommendation.

Questions also arise regarding the establishment of the Hog Marketing Commission. The Minister in introducing this program stated very emphatically that in order to stabilize hog prices and increase production the Marketing Commission was the only answer.

On these two points alone, Mr. Speaker, one must say that the program has failed. Hog prices have not been stabilized. In fact they have dropped from \$66 in November of 1975 to \$46 today. where is the stabilization in that kind of a drop?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — Whether it is the fault of the Commission or not, you have failed to maintain producer confidence in the hog industry. In the past 12 month period, 132,000 fewer hogs have been marketed with no attempt by your Government to restore that confidence in our hog producers in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the last segment of the Throne Speech on agriculture deals with the Land Bank and the mention of some proposed amendments. Time will tell what the amendments will be. And if they will be adequate to dissipate some of the clouds on the horizon that appear in regard to this province's Land Bank program. The year 1977 as well will be the year that we should have an indication of this Government's true intention of making Land Bank land available for sale. We await, Mr. Speaker, with anticipation.

What is more disturbing, however, is that while Saskatchewan agriculture has gone through its most prosperous period in history, one has to question the viability of the Land Bank program. The increasing percentage of Land Bank lessors who are unable to pay their cash rentals is alarming. As an example, a farmer and his wife were in my office yesterday morning. He operates two sections of cultivated and pasture land. He leases though, six quarters of those eight from the Land Bank - \$3,600 rental fee. He has been unable to pay that cash rent during the four years of existence on that Land Bank farm. Because of his arrears only partially in each and every year, the Land Bank Commission is now charging him an outrageous 14 per cent interest on the portion due on that rental. Fourteen per cent interest! And the Government opposite starts to criticize the huge companies and loan companies that are gouging the poor people of this province. Mr. Speaker, it is time that you looked closer to home as to who is gouging whom.

Let's go on to see what else happened. Last week the sheriff arrived and sealed up his bins. What has the gentleman got left to do? So the Land Bank counsellor arrived, his only suggestion was this. Give up your lease, we will put you on some small acreage and we will make sure that you receive welfare.

Is that your answer to the people who want to farm in this province? But the sad part about this whole situation, Mr. Speaker, is that this particular producer prior to his involvement with the Land Bank had been successfully farming for the past 14 years on a crop share basis, so that when he took over the land under the Land Bank, because of your high rental rates he was unable to pay that cash rental even though the agricultural economy has been extremely buoyant.

One must ask why the government has set the guidelines in regard to the lease fee for Land Bank land according to the price which is paid for that land. In effect when the Land Bank purchased the initial land they paid too much money for that particular piece of land. One has to question this.

So I asked this farmer and his wife who were in my office yesterday morning, what do you feel is the solution to your problem. He said three things. First of all, a lower interest rate on his arrears; secondly, I would ask that the land Bank Commission come out and re-evaluate that land. Re-evaluate that land to its productive capacity and base the rental rate on that productive capacity, not on the purchase price of that land.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MOSTOWAY:** — Say thanks brother-in-law.

**MR. WIEBE:** — Mr. Speaker, the Member for Saskatoon said, that I should thank my brother-in-law. As if it were my brother-in-law that was leasing the land. I would like to invite him to come along with me, I invite the former Minister of Agriculture, I also invite the present Minister of Agriculture to come along with me and drive out to that gentleman's farm. Let's find out if he is my brother-in-law and let's find out if he is serious and if he does have a serious problem. Mr. Speaker, I am confident that his problem is serious and I sincerely hope that the Government will take the appropriate action to look after that problem.

**MR. MESSER:** — Who's at fault?

**MR. WIEBE:** — The former Minister of Agriculture says, who is at fault? I say, Mr. Speaker, let's look at who is at fault. Why should this particular farmer who has been leasing land on a crop share basis for 14 years been able to successfully farm. He then takes over Land Bank land four years ago on a cash rental basis and he finds himself in trouble. If that doesn't indicate that there is something drastically wrong with the Land Bank rental base, then I don't know what does.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WIEBE:** — I echo, Mr. Speaker, the emphasis placed by that particular farmer in his suggestions. First of all reduce the amount of interest rate on the amount of arrears and reassess that particular land to productive capabilities, not to the outrageous price which the government paid for it initially.

Mr. Speaker, it is surprising when something is said in this Legislature that touches a nerve, the Government Members opposite appear to wake up, put their newspapers down and react. I am confident, Mr. Speaker, that I have struck a nerve. I

hope that by striking that nerve that the Government will take a second look at their Land Bank program and come up with one that is going to be fair and equitable to people that happen to be in this same particular situation as this gentleman is.

I invite the Members opposite to come to my office and I will show them the notes on this particular case and they can then go back to their Land Bank office and check it out.

Mr. Speaker, I should now like to turn for a few moments to some of the concerns which lie within my constituency. The Member yesterday in moving the Throne Speech Debate seemed to spend a considerable amount of time on the concern which farmers have in this province, about a particular grain company by the name of Cargill. I say, Mr. Speaker, yes, my constituents have a concern about Cargill. But they also have the same concern about Pioneer, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and United Grain Growers.

Let's take a look at what is happening. We have spent a lot of time in the past number of years on rail line abandonment and what is going to happen in case some of our branch lines are abandoned. How far will the producer have to haul to that inland terminal or that high through-put elevator. What my constituents are asking is that, if their particular branch line is abandoned and they then haul to the main line, how much further on that main line will they have to go to find an elevator that will accept their grain? I say this quite sincerely. I say this as a member of a local Wheat Pool committee. I say this as a former chairman of that local Wheat Pool committee. Regardless of whether my branch line stays or goes, my elevator goes. There is as much concern by all people in my constituency not only for Cargill but for Pioneer, Wheat Pool, United Grain Growers and all elevator companies conducting business in this province.

I say, Mr. Speaker, it is time you got off that kick of only one company. Remember that we have a responsibility in this province, not to try and gain some political marks by condemning one particular company and saying nothing about the other. If we are going to condemn one we are going to have to look just as broadly at the others as we are about those that we condemn.

Mr. Speaker, as well I have a concern over a particular stretch of highway in my constituency. I am sorry that the Minister of Highways is not here, but I have talked to him often enough about this particular highway. Last year I made a request of the Government, privately with the Minister and in this Legislature regarding this 21 miles from No. 1 Highway south to Hodgeville. I got a sympathetic ear but I didn't get any work done.

**MR. MOSTOWAY:** — That's a pretty big lane to your house.

**MR. WIEBE:** — That's not to my house. That particular highway for the edification of the Member for Saskatoon happens to lead to the former Member of the Gravelbourg constituency. He was one of the gentlemen who happened to be around when the last election was being run and I happened to be running in the same constituency that he was. So, Mr. Speaker, let me point out that I am just as concerned about a highway coming out to my farm as I am concerned about a highway going out to my opposition or my

opponent's farm. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this Government will be just as concerned about providing that highway in the Morse constituency as they are concerned about providing a highway in the Member for Tisdale's constituency or any other constituency.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I am going to have ample opportunity to convey the concerns of my constituents at a later date in other debates. In closing, because of this Government's inability to recognize many of the needs and desires of the people of Saskatchewan, I wish to move an amendment, seconded by the Member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg (Mr. Nelson), that the following words be added to the motion:

But this Assembly regrets that the Throne Speech has failed to:

- (1) recognize the need to provide concrete solutions to our agricultural problems and to provide adequately for agricultural research in the province.
- (2) provide any programs to deal with our serious crime rate which is one of the highest per capita in Canada.
- (3) stop the reduction of our health services and denounces the Government for making these services less available to the population of Saskatchewan.
- (4) include any proposals for dealing with the problems confronting our native people.

and further condemns the Government for using the taxpayers' money to finance high risk investment projects.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. A. E. BLAKENEY** (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to add a word or two just before we call the question.

In my first words will be ones of congratulation to the mover and the seconder, the Hon. Member for Bengough-Milestone (Mr. Lange) and the Hon. Member for Regina Rosemont (Mr. Allen).

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I think each of them did an outstanding job. Both are young Members under 30, they are not the only young Members under 30 in the House but they are among the few who are under 30. I think it does credit to any House to have Members who are as articulate, thoughtful and as clearly talented as those two young Members are.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Each of them is serving his constituency well both inside and outside this House. I want also to welcome my two colleagues to the Cabinet, Dr. Faris and Mr. Vickar, the Member for Arm River and the Member for Melfort. I think that each will acquit himself well, as I think Members opposite will soon find out.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!



**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I want to address a few words to Members opposite on the remarks which have been delivered in this House this afternoon by the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Steuart) and the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe).

I extend my congratulations to the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake on his career as Leader of the Opposition and his previous career as Member of the Opposition in the early days of his career and then as a Cabinet Minister for seven years in the government which preceded ours. His career has indeed been an outstanding one and he has discharged his duties as Leader of the Opposition in this House with distinction and ability.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I rather think as a matter of fact that when in a couple of weeks there is a leadership convention, we will find that there is a campaign perhaps led by the Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher), I don't know, to 'draft Dave' and to offer yet a third alternative to the delegates at that convention. Certainly there have been strenuous efforts to find a third candidate. I think that the merits of the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake should not be overlooked.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I want to comment just very briefly on a couple of the remarks of the Member for Morse. He spent a good deal of his time talking about the Land Bank and how this program to get young farmers on the land has its defects. He found one case, where in his judgment, one of 1500 farmers who have not benefited from the Land Bank. All I can say is that Members opposite did not run that risk when they were in office.

When they were elected in 1964, they were elected on a program of getting young people on the farm, by providing loan money at low rates of interest, to a high percentage of the value of the land. I invite anyone to read that literature. In seven years they provided not one dollar to not one farmer for one acre of land.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — So they took no risks. They took no risks about the program having one of 1500 being unsuccessful. They took no risks because all of the young farmers lost under their program, not one in 1500, but all of them.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — And note carefully what the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake was saying. He started out with his usual comments about the inefficiencies of Crown corporations. I was struck by the remarks of the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake, the manner in which they were delivered, the exceptionally fine way in which they were delivered, having regard to the exceptionally poor quality of the content. This will naturally affect any one.

Because I think a style of delivery like that deserves better of the content. One of the things which struck me is that somehow the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan lost \$9 million. I sent out for the book and wondered what Crown corporations he was talking about. It certainly wasn't the Power Corporation because he concedes it made some money. And certainly wasn't the telephone corporation, because it certainly made some money. It certainly wasn't those corporations administered by the Government Finance office, because, although some of them lost money and some of them made money, the total net profit was \$2.6 million.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I discovered that what he had added up presumably was the Land Bank Corporation and the FarmStart Corporation and the losses of those corporations. Then I listened to the Member for Morse who argued that these corporations would suffer still greater losses by lowering their interest rates. I heard the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake say that those losses suffered by Land Bank and FarmStart in assisting young farmers to get on the land were somehow evidence of inefficiency. This indicates just what is wrong with the Liberal Party figuring.

**MR. STEUART:** — I didn't use any.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, the Member says he didn't use any. I say that he did use those figures. For you cannot get Crown corporations which lose \$9 million without them. \$9 million was the figure, I fortunately made a note.

Let's take another aspect of the speech of the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake. It always fascinates me to see how they go about arguing that when the Liberal Party does something it is great, but when somebody else does it it is bad. Please recall to mind the points made by the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake and how proud he was to be a Liberal and how outstandingly the quality of the administration of the Liberal Party was because it had brought to Canada the good life, better than anywhere else in the world. But he then said that there are terrible problems in Ottawa, that the Federal government, not the Liberal Party, mind you, but the Federal Government is doing a terribly bad job. And that it is not the fault of the Liberal Party which after all is only the Prime Minister and the Cabinet but it is all those nasty public servants . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — . . . those nasty public servants who are doing this terrible thing of causing the Federal Government to do a bad job running this country into debt and adding huge deficits when the Liberal Party is offering us the greatest administration that Canada has ever seen.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — This is absolutely classic. It indicates the deep dyed suspicion in the minds of all Liberals and indeed of all Tories of any public servant. Public servants are in the minds of Members opposite, there to be vilified, there to have heaped upon them, all abuse which ought properly to fall upon the

Members of the Liberal Party. I must say the Member for Thunder Creek is honest enough now and then to identify those politicians.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Federal Minister of Agriculture's name leaps to mind. Those politicians who ought to bear some of the blame along with these terrible public servants for all of the chaos and mess that we have had described to us as being in Ottawa.

Then there was another fascinating part of that argument. You heard that argument which said that the Saskatchewan budget had gone up by so much - I forget how much - was it double or triple whatever the figure is. And that therefore this Government was extracting all of this extra money out of the same number of people. That is what he said. Then in the next breath he says - what a shameful thing it was that this Government wouldn't tax to provide for its own programs but went off begging to Ottawa and not only begged to Ottawa but that one-third of its budget came from Ottawa. Now, what is the problem? Is the problem that we are getting too much money from Ottawa and not levying enough taxes or is it that the budget is going up too much so we are levying too many taxes?

**MR. STEUART:** — Both.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake suggests that we get about one-third of our budget from Ottawa and somehow that this is reprehensible. Well, there is hardly a government in Canada that doesn't get a third of its budget from Ottawa. When I say from Ottawa, I mean from those shared taxes which are no more Ottawa's than ours.

It is I think clear that some time ago in the course of building the good life that the Member outlined, we in Canada decided that we were going to have some national programs providing national standards for basic welfare programs. I use the term welfare broadly. Programs like hospital, medicare, the Canada Assistance Plan, secondary and post secondary education and the like. The money for these programs came from Ottawa. Far and away the greatest sums of money we get from Ottawa come under those four headings. I think that is good, not bad. I think it strengthens Canada, does not weaken Canada. I think it does not indicate any lack of merit on the part of provincial governments, that they share with the Federal Government in the provision of these national programs. I think it indicates a high level of responsibility, a high level of devotion to the national welfare that we as provinces and the Federal Government can get together and provide programs of this nature. I say that we should continue to provide these and if scorn is to be heaped on anybody for participating in these programs it should be heaped upon the Federal Government now for attempting to withdraw from these programs. They are as necessary today as they ever were.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Member went on to talk about the decline in local autonomy and gave many examples. I will just touch upon one. Local school boards. He talked about how local school boards do not make the decisions they made presumably 25 or 35 years ago.

I invite anyone, because I used to do this as an occupation as a recreation to get some minutes of school boards of 25 or 35 years ago and get some minutes of school boards today and find out what the school boards were talking about 25 or 35 years ago. They were talking about who would provide the wood and how they were going to get water to the school, and whether the roof needed new shingling. And did they talk about hiring teachers, of course not, we have nothing to do with hiring teachers, that was all done by the superintendent, hired by the Department of Education.

**MR. STEUART:** — Hire, fire . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I invite the Hon. Member to read these and he will find that in the vast majority of cases the effective selection of teachers was done by the school inspectors as they were called.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Roy knows.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Member for Rosetown-Elrose knows that what I say is right. He knows too, that 25 years ago school boards spent no time at all talking about curriculum, it was all assumed that was to be done by the Department of Education. Now, today we see school boards sitting down, talking about what program they should offer, talking about what the young people in their area need by way of education. I think anyone who fairly looks at that will see that boards now are coming to grips with the real issues in their communities. And what's more they have got the cash so that they can make decisions which make some sense in the light of their community problems.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I will certainly want to address myself to some of the comments of the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake on resource taxation. He is attempting to stake out a piece of ground for the Liberal Party. He forgets that last year in this House the Liberal Party voted that they would not have anything to do with Bill 42. He says that, he does not say what the Liberal Party would have done and it was open to them at any time since 1973 to tell us what they would have done with respect to oil taxation. They have been completely silent. They have taken the position that all of the money that is collected under Bill 42 should go not to the Government of Saskatchewan but to the oil companies. And now they want to withdraw from that position. They are trying to back up a bit because they know that that is no longer an acceptable position. Even governments like the Tory government in Alberta and the ultra-Tory government in British Columbia are collecting oil royalties of a size that are much greater than the Liberals would have contemplated. So they have got to back up. They have got to find a piece of ground, and they haven't got one yet. They are clearly identified with wanting to repeal Bill 42 and put nothing in its place. And they are going to stay stuck with that problem.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — They don't have any place to

move. They have had three sessions to indicate what their policy is and their total policy statement has been repeal Bill 42.

Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on a couple of points before I ask to adjourn. I am sorely tempted to speak on cable television since I have heard more mis-statements on that issue in the last couple of days than I have heard for some time, but I will wait until tomorrow for that. I heard, for example, that somehow we were disregarding some law when we say that closed circuit television is an area of provincial responsibility. I am baffled to know what law we are disregarding. All I can say is that in Ontario closed circuit television operates and it operates not under federal jurisdiction but under provincial jurisdiction. I would have thought that what was constitutional in Ontario was constitutional in Saskatchewan. So it is pretty clear, I think, that the assertions of Members opposite that somehow closed circuit television is a constitutional prerogative of the Government of Canada bears no resemblance to the truth. There is simply nothing there.

So far as cable is concerned, we are saying that any cable company duly authorized by the CRTC can use Sask Tel cables. Nobody has ever suggested otherwise. We are saying perfectly clearly that this is the case. We now know that our proposal cannot possibly hurt the CRTC licensees. There was a feeling that somehow unless the CRTC licensees owned a part of the cable that somehow we were going to control what they broadcast. That was always nonsense, it was always a specious argument on the part of the Federal Government and now they have been good enough to concede that it is a specious argument by signing a deal with Manitoba which presumably eliminates that argument on their part. They are perfectly clearly saying that there is nothing wrong with a provincially owned telephone company owning all the cable. That is what they are saying.

Now that they are saying that in Manitoba, why aren't they saying it in Saskatchewan. They aren't saying it in Saskatchewan because they want a quid pro quo. And the quid pro quo they want is something for which they have no constitutional basis. You can bet your bottom dollar that if they had any constitutional basis they would go ahead and take it without asking us. But what they are asking is that they want to make a deal to switch powers from the Federal Government to the Provincial Government, powers which they don't have. And powers which they are trying to enforce by holding to ransom, potential TV viewers in this province, saying that they will not give their licensees the right to do something which in Manitoba they permit because they want to extract from the Government of Saskatchewan, a right which belongs to the Government of Saskatchewan. That, by this party which has such a firm and devoted devotion to the law as explained by the Members opposite. I think it is pretty clear that what is going on here is a power play. It is an extra legal power play, and accordingly does not have much to comment it.

The Member opposite apparently feels that it is inappropriate to ask citizens to go to court and it is inappropriate for us to go to court. Any time we go to court we are somehow taking away somebody's rights. We are breaking the law. If we ask the Public Sector Prices and Compensation Board to test its powers in the courts, we are breaking the law.

If the Attorney General uses a power which every Attorney General in Canada uses very frequently the direct indictment one,

we are breaking the law. If we attempt to exercise our constitutional rights for closed circuit cable television we are breaking the law. If we don't agree forthwith to bargaining away our constitutional rights, we're breaking the law. It is clear in their minds that whatever the Liberal Party says is the law and when we disagree with them we're breaking the law.

I think it is worthwhile to pursue a little more a couple of the points that they have raised. One of them was the vilification of senior public servants. I want to say that while Members opposite don't like public servants, we believe that the public servants in this province have done a good job for the people of this province and are continuing to do a good job.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — They work hard and they help to run our public business well. This Government and the New Democratic Party believes that the public wants to be served by public servants and served well. We are friends of the public servants and we're friends in government and out, and we think politicians should particularly guard that respect they have and be friends of public servants. Our Sask Telephone repair men and our social service case workers and potash miners and our nurses and our teachers and our highway employees, our safety inspectors, they are not faceless bureaucrats, they are people, and the great majority of them are hardworking people. I imagine many of them are sick and tired of being criticized by Members opposite as somehow being layabouts who don't earn their bread. It is an easy game to play, no names, just that public servants don't do their job right. Easy game to play, no names, just a general smearing, but thousands of good Saskatchewan people who are trying to do their job, are caught up in the smear. That's the sort of target which the Opposition likes, they can't hit back, nobody is named, it is just all of you people are somehow lazy and don't earn your keep.

All around us I think are examples of the good work of our public servants. He, of course, named the ones who are poor, some of them. The successor to Mr. Horner was suggested that he was incompetent; the successor to Mr. Meldrum, it was suggested that he was incompetent . . .

**MR. STEUART:** — Biggest, craziest spender . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well, there we are. No, there is no suggestion that that indicates any lack of confidence to say that a person is the biggest, craziest spender that this province ever saw, but otherwise he is perfectly competent.

All around us we see examples of the good work of our public servants. When given an even break we think, our public servants show they can compete with the best of them. We look at Sask Tel and I say that Sask Tel runs as good a telephone company as is run in Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Look at SGIO. It may well be that the SGIO will or will not make a profit, but taken in conjunction with their rates, they run as good an insurance company as anywhere in Canada.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Let's look at Sodium Sulphate, and Sodium Sulphate competes with private companies in this province and sells its commodities to private enterprise elsewhere in Canada and in the United States. They do a pretty good job. You bet they do! Yet the Members opposite are trying to say that all these Crown corporations except Power which is all right, and Telephones that's all right and Insurance that's all right, nothing wrong with the bus company, Sodium Sulphate that's all right, but somehow the Crown corporations are all bad. On we go and on we go, and now he reduces it to one or two. I reject this negative campaign to discredit our public servants and discredit the whole idea that if you work for the Government somehow you are a second class citizen.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — It is the whole idea that somehow if you work for the government and you do an honest day's work you are a sucker, that's the idea they are trying to get across and it's a bad idea, it's out of date and it never had anything to commend it.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I saw the other day that the Member for Nipawin was suggesting that somehow civil servants didn't like to take orders from the elected officials. I am glad to see that the Member for Nipawin indicates that that is an accurate statement. So many of his statements are inaccurate, that we'll add this one to the list. But because I am happy to have the acknowledgement that in this Government as I suggest in most governments in Canada, although I gather from the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake does not agree with the Federal Government of Canada, in most governments in Canada the public servants do the proposing and the elected officials do the disposing. That's how we work in our Government. We make some mistakes, and we get some advice, some of it may be good and some of it may be bad, but we are prepared to take responsibility for our mistakes, we do so and ask to be judged on the basis of our record.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I think maybe one of the mistakes was to provide air time for some of the speeches we hear in this House. But other than that, we think that we do not too badly.

We rather say that we think public servants are entitled to a living wage and we hear a lot of comments about how public servants are getting too much money. We believe that our public servants generally are paid fairly, we bargain and we bargain hard. We have tried in the last several years to raise the level of wages of public servants at the bottom of the scale and we make no apology for that. We try to pay somewhat competitive wages for our public servants at the top of the scale. We do not pay anything like the wages paid by the Tory government in Alberta where deputy ministers get an average of \$12,000 more than our deputy ministers, we do not pay anything like the wages paid to deputy ministers in Ottawa where they may get close to

twice what our deputy ministers get. Why in Ottawa they have deputy ministers who can retire at 55 on pensions which are very nearly as high as the salaries we pay the deputy ministers. Now that is the way presumably that Liberals run governments, that is how they bestow their blessings on their senior public servants. We think it is better to try to keep down the wages of senior public servants. In a sense you might say that we are very nearly the Canadian leader in offering anti-inflationary salaries to senior public servants.

**MR. CAMERON:** — Certainly your Attorney General . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — The Member for Regina South makes clear that we do not pay as high for our lawyers as they do in Alberta.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — What about Jack Kinzel . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Members opposite are now busy naming names, they never did that before, but we are happy to have them.

We know that on the whole our people are good people, they serve us well and in my judgment they deserve the commendation and not the abuse of all Members of this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words about my constituency and then I will ask for leave to adjourn.

I have been in this House since 1960. I have seen the city of Regina and watched it with a good deal of care since I have been a Member representing this city. Considering all things I would say this city has never had a better year than 1976. I suppose it could be argued that 1975 was a better year, or 1974 was a better year, but certainly when you are looking for a year when Regina has prospered, 1976 is a pretty good year. If you looked at years when Regina did not prosper, when things were really tough, you would have to select a year like 1969 or 1970 or perhaps you might even have to go back as far as 1934 or 1935.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — When you are looking for the longest leanest years when this city had really tough times, you must go back to a Liberal year or Tory year when free enterprise had its full play. Free enterprise showed what it could do 1969 and 1970 in this city and in this province and people in Regina are not soon going to forget those lean, gaunt years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Last year we had some games this is new, this the Western Canada Summer Games, this hasn't been in the Speech in previous years. I want to compare that with games operated by Liberal governments. I want to tell you how we can run our games here with a cost of \$1 million or so, break even and



leave our city with a track, with a swimming pool and other solid evidence that the games were here and the facilities were provided.

I don't want to talk about how a provincial Liberal government operates games, how they operate games which leave them with a deficit of \$1 billion. But I think if anyone wishes to look at the records and I know they are not really comparable but to the extent that there is comparability, I suggest our people in Regina ran games infinitely better than did the people in the Liberal Province of Quebec.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I won't tell you about the success of our football team this year, you know that well.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — What else do you . . .

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Well knowing Members opposite, if we don't win the Grey Cup next Sunday, by next Monday Members opposite will be blaming it on this Government.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — I want to just remind Members what has happened with respect to housing in this city. Think back to 1970, the last year when the free enterprisers opposite were managing the affairs of this province and this city. During that time there were 418 housing starts in 1970. Mr. Speaker, 418, and they counted them all. I don't know what they will be this year, last year 1975 there were not 418 but 2,982.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — We confidently believe that there will be more this year. We think that this indicates the sort of leadership which has been given by our Government. We have not only provided support and assistance for the housing industry, we have provided money for lots, for developing lots, we have provided money so that there will be serviced lots in this city and we have provided the city of Regina with very substantial unconditional grants to allow them to build services in this city. This is in sharp contrast to what was done when Members opposite were sitting on the Treasury Benches. How many lots did they develop in Regina in 1969 and 1970 or 1971? I suppose it would have been absolute folly for them to develop lots because no one was building any houses, but it seems that they ought to have had enough faith in the future that they might have provided some funds to provide some lots so that when New Democratic Party prosperity came, there would have been a few lots to build houses on.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Just look back on what happened in this city. This year the building permits are going to be greater than at any time in the history, and the last record was 1975 and the record before that was 1974. Look at the new projects in this city. A

new city hall in which we have \$2.5 million of Community Capital Fund money and some other funds; a new government building, which the Leader of the Opposition was very critical of; a new Agridome, a good deal of provincial government money in that; ring road, \$66 million planned to update the city's hospitals; a downtown re-development project involving Sask Tel and SGIO, rail line relocation proposal, which the Government is giving some assistance on. This is the sort of action in Regina we could have desperately used in 1969 or 1970 or 1971. I won't talk about what we could have used in 1933, 1934 or 1935. But in any case at any time when the Tories were in charge and the last years when the Liberals were in charge this city stagnated and that's the only word you can use, "stagnation." Since 1971 we have had prosperity, you can say it isn't the fault of our Government, or our Government shouldn't be given the credit, you can say that, but our policies have assisted in that prosperity and we take full credit for that.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Just listen to what has been done in housing. In the last two years senior citizens' highrise, 140 units, 35 low rental family homes; helped in building 153 co-op housing units; built 153 rental units for people of moderate incomes; developed 500 lots in the northwest of the city; bought 640 acres of land for future development in the southeast of the city. In addition we gave 650 senior citizens' home repair grants. Now that in two years is performance! And in no four years or five years or no ten years can any Tory or Liberal Government match that two-year record.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I will have a great many more words to add to this debate, accordingly I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

## QUESTIONS

### AGE OF PREMIER IN 1933

**MR. R. L. COLLVER** (Leader of Progressive Conservatives): — Just one question. Was Mr. Premier alive in 1933, '34 and '35? And if so, how old was he?

**HON. A. E. BLAKENEY** (Premier): — Mr. Premier was alive, he wasn't in Regina and he was on a quick guess, eight, nine and ten.

**MR. COLLVER:** — A supplementary . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I will not permit a supplementary on that one . . .

I think the Members are expanding to fill the time allotted to them in this particular situation. I will move on to Ministerial Statements.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:10 o'clock p.m.