

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Third Session — Eighteenth Legislature**  
**8th Day**

**Monday, November 29, 1976.**

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

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**Mr. R. H. Bailey** (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my deskmate, the Hon. Member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane): and through you to this Assembly, I should like to introduce a group of some 60 students visiting the Legislative Assembly at this time from St. Catherine School, Regina. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Thompson and Mr. Exner and we are particularly pleased to have them here. They have had a tour of the Assembly, and I shall be meeting with them a little later on in the Member's dining room.

I ask everyone to join with me in welcoming these young people with us today.

**Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**QUESTIONS**

**CALF ADVANCE PROGRAM**

**Mr. E.F.A. Merchant** (Regina Wascana): — I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if I might direct a question to the Minister of Mineral Resources in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture. Is it a fact that the calf advance program will now be on the cows and bred heifers while the cash advance system, when you were the Minister of Agriculture and in the past, was on the calves and yearlings, and I wonder why the change?

**Hon. J.R. Messer** (Minister of Mineral Resources): — The answer to that I think is substantially yes. The reason for the change is to undertake at least to maintain a basic herd which is the most important, I think, situation at this point in time.

**Mr. Merchant:** — A supplementary. Would the Minister not agree that the result has been that many people who held on to calves and yearlings thinking that the same kind of cash advance program would operate now find that they are not eligible for the continuation of the cash advance and they are faced with repaying money borrowed previously that they did not think they would have to repay? They have been put in a very difficult situation and a great deal of confusion has been caused for the industry by this change in the calf advance system in the third year of the same system.

**Mr. Messer:** — No, not necessarily. I say that for a number of reasons. I think one has to look at the whole operation in total. You

can't divide up the cow-calf operation and assume that simply because x amount of dollars is coming for either a cow or a calf that it isn't going to have some affect on the overall industry in total. I believe that it is. The second reason is that we are not the only ones who are administering the program in this way. The Province of Alberta has also seen fit to administer very similar to this way and we think that at this particular time and under these circumstances this is the best way to get assistance to producers. I think it is also the best way to encourage them to at least maintain a basic herd which is of prime importance at this time.

**Mr. Merchant:** — Mr. Speaker, is it not the case that in order to get the grant, the direct subsidy, all that the producer has to do is to demonstrate that the producer has the cows and bred heifers. The result is that a farmer could go out and buy cows and bred heifers or heifers old enough to appear bred, last week, for instance and be eligible for the subsidy, if he had the cattle when the inspectors came? Is it not the case that the program works in such a way that it is producing the cows and bred heifers that count and not having to produce in any way proof of purchase or proof that they owned the cattle before the program came into effect?

**Mr. Messer:** — No, I believe that the regulations of the program will stipulate that there has to be some evidence given to the inspector when he visits the applicant that the herd has in fact been in place for some time. So it is not simply a rolling over of cattle to receive the grant and then move the cattle on again. I think in light of the present state of the industry even if that were not the case I would doubt very much whether there would be many farmers participating in that because of the unpredictability of what they are going to receive for the cattle that they purchase in order to get the grant and then have to move them on again.

**Mr. Merchant:** — I wonder if the Minister would indicate why the cattle industry was singled out to have a subsidy that is limited in the gross earnings to \$8,000 and that limitation is on the earnings of the farmer as such rather than running the program in the same way that the hog subsidy operated three years ago, when that subsidy was on the hog operation alone? The result of this program is that it acts to punish the mixed farmer, the diversified farmer.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order! I think the Members will agree with me that the first supplementary question tended to debate the merits of the program and the Minister correspondingly was debating the merits of the program and I think the Member is getting into that area now.

### **SURVEY OF WOOD RIVER BASIN**

**Mr. R.E. Nelson** (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg):: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question of the Minister in charge of SPC. Did the Government of Saskatchewan contract a survey of the water supplies of the Wood River Basin north of Gravelbourg this past summer; and will the Minister clarify for

the people of that area what the future intentions of the Government are?

**Mr. Messer:** — Mr. Speaker, I think that is a somewhat detailed question. The best I can do at this point in time is take the question as notice.

**Mr. Nelson:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister indicate whether a dam is planned in the area?

**Mr. Messer:** — No, I couldn't indicate that.

### **CARGILL TERMINAL AT ELM CREEK**

**Mr. Bailey:** — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Last day in speaking in the House and as reported in the Leader-Post of Saturday, November 27, he indicated that the inspectors of the Wheat Board and the Grain Commissioners closed down Cargill Terminal in Elm Creek last week. Mr. Speaker, information that I have had from phone calls are that this is not so from any source. I wonder if the Minister could give us some indication as to his source of this information?

**Hon. G. MacMurchy** (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, the information that I have is that an audit has been taking place by the Canadian Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners. I think that would clearly be in relationship to the comments that I made in the House on Friday if you check them, and it seemed to me to be very strange that an audit should be taking place one week after the inland terminal has opened.

**Mr. Bailey:** — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Does the Minister of Municipal Affairs consider it also strange that other grain companies in that general area had that same audit going on? Would you call that a closure of their elevators as well, including the Manitoba Wheat Pool and the Grain Growers?

**Mr. MacMurchy:** — It is my information when an audit takes place an elevator is closed. I think I indicated earlier, Mr. Speaker, that it seemed strange that this should happen one week after it just opened.

**Mr. Bailey:** — A final supplementary question. The Minister categorically claims in the statement which he read and made in this House that last week Cargill Grain Terminal, Elm Creek, Manitoba was closed down. The information that I have, Mr. Speaker, is that the grain terminal was not closed for one hour and I think he should provide this House with a reason for that misleading statement.

**Mr. MacMurchy:** — I am pleased to see the Hon. Member for Rosetown defending the Cargill Grain Company. I think, Mr. Speaker, that if he wants to debate this during this Throne Speech

Debate I will be glad to hear his comments.

**Mr. W.C. Thatcher** (Thunder Creek): — In view of the questions the Minister was just asked, I should like to ask the Minister on this subject: did you receive bad advice or did you deliberately lie to this House . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. MacMurchy:** — I am glad to see we have another defender of Cargill in this House. The answer to his question is 'no.'

### INVESTIGATE OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL OF CARGILL

**Mr. L.W. Birkbeck** (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I did have a question for the Minister of Agriculture but in light of his absence I would direct a question to the Premier or the Attorney General. Has the Minister of Agriculture or his department been currently investigating, or intend to investigate, the ownership and/or control of Cargill?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that the Minister of Agriculture is attending an official function at Agribition and not able to be in the House. I will take notice of the question.

### CALF ADVANCE PROGRAM

**Mr. Merchant:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might pursue that area with the Minister of Mineral Resources (Mr. Messer):. I wonder if the Minister would indicate why the pig subsidy was a subsidy that dealt with all production or that dealt with hog production and didn't take into account other earnings. And why you have singled out the cattle industry and the subsidy to the cattle industry to in a way punish the cattle industry and punish the farmer who diversifies?

**Mr. Messer:** — Mr. Speaker, while we are wondering why here, it might be stated why the Federal Government isn't looking after this responsibility, seeing it falls under its jurisdiction. I shall attempt to satisfy the farm critic for Regina Wascana. Firstly, he is misled or has misinterpreted the basis of the grant. It is not on gross income, it is on the net taxable income. I suggest to him that there is some significant difference between the two. The cattle industry is a much, much larger industry than was the hog industry when we had a subsidy program for hog producers in Saskatchewan. The economy of agriculture including the cattle producers in many instances because of other related incomes, is much more buoyant than was the situation when we gave a subsidy to hog producers, because at that time the grain producers were also suffering from lack of sufficient income to look after their operations. In light of those circumstances, we felt it was legitimate that we undertake to recognize who is confronted with real hardship and relate it to the net taxable income. And where those producers were suffering hardship we would undertake to give them some assistance in their cow-calf operations.

I might also say, I think it is legitimate for the

Government to look at its own ability to make available moneys by way of grant programs to these industries. I think that most, if not all producers, in fact residents of Saskatchewan think that this is a genuine and a sincere attempt when we launch a program to provide through grants over \$32 million to livestock producers in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### **FIRE REGULATIONS IN BUILDING RINKS**

**Mr. R.L. Collver** (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives): — A question to the Premier. The Premier is no doubt aware there are a number of communities in the Province of Saskatchewan whose voluntary organizations have raised funds to construct rinks and community buildings in their small communities. Is it the intention of the Government of Saskatchewan to provide to those organizations who have raised these funds, sufficient moneys to help them to meet the increased fire regulation compliance that they are now required to meet in the light of the recently introduced stricter interpretation of the fire regulations in the province for smaller communities? They cannot build their project now because these fire regulations have drastically increased the cost of the project. Is it the Government of Saskatchewan's intention to assist these communities in any way?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — I am not aware of any action by the Government of Saskatchewan other than enforcing the National Building Code in this regard. I am not aware of any changes in our regulations. It has for a long time been a custom of the Government of Saskatchewan to adhere to the National Building Code and there are a great many reasons why that is a good idea.

To specifically answer your question: we announced in the Speech from the Throne, and of course, we can debate it in 15 minutes, the program for additional grants for recreation which will be a minimum of \$25 per capita and even more in some instances. This should provide very substantial additional funds for communities that wish to build rinks and similar recreational facilities.

**Mr. Collver:** — Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Premier is not aware that some communities have built rinks and community buildings that were not in strict compliance with the National Building Code as it relates to fire protection. These areas have been left open for future construction for those communities and I will give you an example, Aylsham, which built one that is not in strict compliance with fire regulations. Now another community, Ridgedale, has the funds raised on the same basis, and the question is raised on the basis of the Aylsham experience and other experiences throughout the province in which they have sufficient moneys to meet the needs of their rink and their community centre on the old basis, and now the Provincial Fire Commissioner is saying that they must comply strictly with the fire regulations. Is it the intention of the Government of Saskatchewan either to provide extra funds to enable these people to . . .

**Mr. Merchant:** — Same question.

**Mr. Collver:** — . . . I have another part to the question for the benefit of the Member for Regina Wascana. Is it either to provide the necessary funds or to give them a break on the compliance? In other words, to allow them to perhaps not comply with the fire regulations; and furthermore, is it the Government's intention therefore to require those communities who have built their community centres and rinks, not in compliance with fire regulations to insist that those communities now comply immediately with the fire regulations?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — There are three questions. First, with respect to making fire regulations retroactive, I think this is rarely done. It is the custom when buildings are built which comply with the regulations, generally not to require them to be rebuilt if the regulations are changed. I think, therefore, that unless there is an extreme hazard, the answer to that question is, No.

With respect to the second questions, of whether or not we propose to instruct the fire commissioner not to enforce the regulations, the answer to that is, No. We do not ordinarily interfere with his discretion. I can think of no case in the five years that I have been Premier where I have ever heard of the Minister instructing the fire commissioner to overlook the regulations. We may ask him whether or not it strictly applies in the way he suggests. But I think never have we taken the other view.

Thirdly, with respect to the question of whether additional funds are to be provided. The answer is \$25 per capita and in some cases more.

**Mr. Collver:** — A further supplementary . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order, order! I am not going to permit a further supplementary on this, in doing that I am just going to read a section of the Interim Report. It says:

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

#### APPOINTMENT OF PERMANENT OMBUDSMAN

**Mr. A.N. McMillan** (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Premier. In his responsibility for the Ombudsman's office in Saskatchewan, I should like to know if the provincial Government has made a decision regarding the appointment of a permanent Ombudsman for the province?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — The Government has solicited applications, has interviewed applicants, has selected its nominee of preference and we are in the course of consulting with the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the third party to see whether or not the nominee of preference is acceptable to them.

**Mr. McMillan:** — In view of the fact that the position has been

vacant for almost a full year, 11 months I believe, are the people of Saskatchewan to assume that because of this vacancy for this particular period of time that your Government has perhaps lost some confidence in the ability of the Ombudsman's office to serve the function it was initially implemented to do . . .

**Mr. Snyder:** — Your first question answers your second.

**Mr. McMillan:** — Well, we have been waiting 11 months to see an Ombudsman appointed in this province, the people of Saskatchewan have been waiting and we are still waiting.

**Mr. Blakeney:** — We are in a very fortunate position to have an assistant Ombudsman who is doing an exceptionally good job. I think the work of the office has not particularly suffered.

**Mr. Penner:** — We didn't need that person.

**Mr. Blakeney:** — There was some suggestion as to whether or not the assistant Ombudsman ought to be the proper person to appoint. We reached another conclusion because we felt that it would be better if the person had perhaps more academic qualifications. That may be a wrong judgement, but it was made and accordingly we are pursuing the course of action which we are now following. We have been at it for some months now in consultation with the two other parties. I am not suggesting they have held it up, I don't suggest that for a moment. We are, I think, in a position to move very shortly.

**Mr. McMillan:** — Mr. Speaker, I suggest you have been at the question of appointing an Ombudsman for some months. You have also had some considerable length of time to appoint a solicitor for the department, a position which has been vacant for some time. Have you at this time come to a decision about who will replace the solicitor who has left the office over a month ago?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — No, I am not aware of what steps are being taken to replace the solicitor in the office of the Ombudsman, in fact that position has been vacant for a month. I am not aware of that length of time.

## INTERVIEW RE CARGILL

**Mr. D.M. Ham** (Swift Current): — A further question for the Premier. Has your Minister of Agriculture or / is he planning to interview a retired judge from the United States pertaining to the ownership and/or control of Cargill Grain, and if so, for what purposes are these interviews or investigations?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — I must say I am not familiar with whether or not the Minister of Agriculture proposes to interview an American citizen. It may come as a surprise to Members opposite, but in our group we don't necessarily check with the Leader each time we propose an interview.

## CABLE TELEVISION

**Mr. E.F.A. Merchant** (Regina Wascana): — Would the Premier indicate whether the Minister of Government Services is today in Ottawa negotiating with Madame Sauvé about cable television in Saskatchewan?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — The Minister of Government Services is in Ottawa on government business. I am not sure that he is going to see Madame Sauvé, but it would not surprise me if he did, since he makes a practice I believe of keeping in touch with her. Whether or not any discussions which he is having could be characterized as negotiations, I cannot say.

**Mr. Merchant:** — I understand that he will indeed be meeting and negotiating with her. I wonder whether the Premier would indicate whether there have been discussions privately between yourself and the Minister or within Cabinet of the response that the Government of Saskatchewan will take to the anticipated offer by Madame Sauvé, that the Manitoba package, namely the illusory claim to pay television and educational television will be bargained away if the control of the head and amps etc. be given to the Province of Saskatchewan. What will be the response of Mr. Shillington when that offer is made to him today?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, I think firstly, it is somewhat premature for me to say what the response of the Government of Saskatchewan will be to an offer which has not been made to the Government of Saskatchewan. We tend to wait until we get the offer before we make the response.

**Mr. Merchant:** — Is the Premier then suggesting that you have not discussed this matter with the Minister of Government Services, and that if that offer is made notwithstanding the fact that you made some comments about it in your remarks in the Speech from the Throne that that would come as a great shock to you and that you really wouldn't have any response as a government and haven't considered how you will deal with the matter?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — We will deal with the matter if, as and when it arises.

## REPLACEMENT OF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SASK TRADING

**Mr. R. Katzman** (Rosthern): — A question to the Premier seeing as the Minister of Agriculture is not here. Mr. Perry Wilks left the Government in June last year just prior to your trip, when will he be replaced?

**Mr. Blakeney:** — Mr. Speaker, he was not with the Department of Agriculture, he was with an organization known as Sask. Trading, I will ask my colleague the Minister of Mineral Resources to reply.

**Mr. J.R. Messer:** — Mr. Speaker, due to that



agency falling under my former jurisdiction, I am fully aware that Mr. Wilks has left, and is now with Agribition. I know that there were undertakings in progress to seek out a new executive director for the Sask. Trading Corporation. I have not conversed with the Minister of Agriculture in the recent past as to their success in that regard. I am sure that I can undertake to have him convey to the Member upon his return what the situation is at the present time.

### **SEDCO ADS ON TELEVISION**

**Mr. E.C. Malone** (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, I have a question I should like to direct to the Minister in charge of SEDCO. I was surprised to see yesterday on television, I think it was during the football game, certain ads being placed talking about the benefits and glories of the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation. Would the Minister give me the reason for these ads being placed, some indication as to the approximate expense, and how long the ads are to last?

**Hon. N. Vickar:** (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to take that question as notice.

### **AD RE SELLING POTASH**

**Mr. S.J. Cameron** (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister in charge of the Potash Corporation. I have in my hand an advertisement put in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, Saturday, November 27 by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. My question to him is, in view of the fact that the job of the Potash Corporation is to mine and sell potash, can that advertisement possibly sell one ounce of potash? And if not, what is the justification for that?

**Hon. E.L. Cowley** (Minister for Potash Corporation): — Well, Mr. Speaker, that advertisement is running in some Saskatchewan papers, it is also running in some newspapers in the United States, where they consume large amounts of potash. I hope it will sell some potash. One can put that in the classification of institutional advertising. I suspect it sells a similar amount of potash as IMC's ads in Saskatchewan do.

**Mr. Cameron:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister indicate whether it is the same ad agency that is used by the NDP that is placing these ads?

**Mr. Cowley:** — No, Mr. Speaker, I could not indicate the name of the agency. I am not familiar with which particular advertising agency the New Democratic Party is using at this time. But if the Member would like to know the name of the advertising agency that placed those, I certainly will get it for him.

**Mr. Cameron:** — A supplementary, I would be happy if the Minister would advise us if it is in fact Struthers that is placing this ad on behalf of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, that does the NDP advertising?



**Mr. Cowley:** — The answer to that is No, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Cameron:** — Would the Minister indicate then whether it is Dunskey Advertising Agency which does the NDP advertising/ The Minister ought to know who does, as a member of the strategy committee of the NDP.

**Mr. Speaker:** — The question is out of order. Next question.

### **APOLOGY TO CARGILL GRAIN COMPANY**

**Mr. W.C. Thatcher** (Thunder Creek): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Transportation. In that the Minister's personal integrity has been drawn into question today, by both the Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey): and myself, can we, therefore, expect the Minister to either substantiate his very ill-advised statement or issue an apology to the Cargill Grain Company?

**Hon. G. MacMurchy** (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to clarify any statements that I made in due course. I suspect that the Hon. Member will have to wait a long time for an apology that I will tender to Cargill Grain Company . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. MacMurchy:** — . . . for any statements that I have made in this House.

**Mr. Thatcher:** — Mr. Speaker -e

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order. I am not going to permit a supplementary on that.

### **RURAL AMBULANCE SERVICE**

**Mr. R.H. Bailey** (Rosetown-Elrose): — A question I should like to direct to the Minister of Health. During the last session of this Legislature I raised a question which is of immediate concern to rural Saskatchewan. Has the Minister discussed the topic of rural ambulance service with any Members of his Cabinet since that time?

**Hon. W.A. Robbins** (Minister of Health): — Yes, we have had considerable discussion within the department itself. We are attempting to work out a program which will eventually get to Cabinet.

**Mr. Bailey:** — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister of Health provide this Legislature with some reasonable assurance that the budgetary provisions will be made for assistance in this vital area in the Budget Speech later next spring.

**Mr. Robbins:** — Mr. Speaker, I can tell the

Member that we give both ambulance service and home care very high priority.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Lange (Bengough-Milestone): for an Address-in-Reply, and the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Wiebe (Morse): and the proposed subamendment moved by Mr. Larter (Estevan):.

**Mr. S.J. Cameron** (Regina South): — Mr. speaker, I am happy to rise in this Legislature for the first time in this Session to address some comment in the course of the Throne Speech Debate now going on.

Since the Session began a few days ago, I noticed Members have expressed a variety of views on the consequences of the change in the seating arrangements on this side of the House. Someone observed the other day that the consequence of the Member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane): having gone to the Tory Caucus from the Liberal Caucus was to improve the intellectual quality of both. I wouldn't Mr. Speaker, pass any judgement on that, but I was interested in a comment that the Member for Qu'Appelle gave on a CBC television interview some days ago. When he was asked if he was now in the Conservative leadership race, he responded very quickly with a quick no. Then he added with a telling little smile, what leadership race? I would want to say, Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Qu'Appelle if he was here, that we in the Liberal Caucus are very proud that a man by the name of Bob McGillvray has come forward to take the presidency of the Qu'Appelle Liberal Association. Members will remember Bob McGillvray is a long time and active member of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, a farmer, a former president of the Regina Chamber of Commerce, and a very able individual. We are very pleased that he now is the president of the Qu'Appelle Liberal Association.

In the same way, a fellow by the name of Tim Maloney, who is a teacher at Wilcox College, has come forward to serve on that executive too. Those two able men, along with a good many others, are now building in that constituency a Liberal organization which will restore that constituency to a Liberal constituency which it was in 1975, ought to be now and certainly will be again in 1979.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cameron:** — It has always seemed, Mr. Speaker, to me that political endeavor must stem from much more than partisan rivalry and much more indeed than merely wanting to form a government, or to be with those you think may form a government.

Most of us in this endeavor are pursuing not the power and authority of government as an end in itself, but an ideal, a conception of what government ought to be and what government ought to do. Men whose purpose is limited merely to gaining government with no clear notion of why they want it, are not likely to succeed in their aim. I think the electorate of this Province is too perceptive for that. They will not be persuaded by men whose only fundamental purpose apparently is to have the

power of government. For so fuzzy a purpose according to the Member for Qu'Appelle as to implement common sense. We know, Mr. Speaker, that that is not common sense, that is nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, we in Saskatchewan are facing two very critical issues of fundamental importance as we enter into 1977 and in 1978. The first of these is the area of resource taxation, the second, grain-handling and transportation. The resource taxation policy of this Government, which was passed some three or four years ago, is now being severely tested on all sides. Many have from time to time issued warnings to this Government that its resource policies may be unconstitutional, that the Provincial Government may be attempting to exercise power which it doesn't have.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind Members in a basic way that we live in a federal state and many years ago had parcelled out in this country by the Fathers of Confederation, the powers of government between the national government on the one hand and provincial governments upon the other. In their view, Canada was to have a strong national government and they armed it appropriately with strong national powers. Indeed, they made it certain that provincial governments could not encroach on national powers; in fact in doing that, they gave to the national government of this country certain over-riding powers which over-ride those of provincial governments. They did that because they thought it was necessary to build a strong nation.

Now, we may or we may not agree with the way in which those powers were divided in Confederation but divided they were and it remains the law of this land. Grave questions have now arisen in this Province in these past years as to whether this Provincial Government in its resource taxation policies is stepping beyond the powers allotted to it by the Fathers of Confederation.

Now, constitutional issues as Members know are not new in this country. Questions over which level of government had certain powers, powers of licensing, whether provinces could legislate in respect to dominion companies, and to what extent, who has control over radio communications, are all issues which have at one time or another been decided by the Supreme Court of Canada as to the division of powers in this country. They were all in themselves important issues. But in none of them was there the unique problem that is inherent in the constitutional clash as we now see over resource tax policies. If we, as a province, fail, if the Provincial Government is wrong in thinking it has the power to pass these Acts when it didn't, we not only face having the matter of constitutional principle decided against us, we face the prospect of having to repay millions upon millions of dollars, money that we have already collected and spent, and which we go on every day collecting and spending in the same way.

If it is found that these taxation policies are indeed illegal and beyond the constitution, we face, in this Province, repaying staggering sums of money which at that point in time we won't have.

The question is of course, how did we ever get ourselves into this bind? The Government, on taking power in this Province five years ago, wanted to expand significantly its tax base. It saw basically resource production, oil, gas, potash, timber and other minerals as the source for additional government revenues and in general terms there is not a thing wrong with

that notion. Indeed, the economic struggle of governments in Saskatchewan ever since the great depression has been to diversify our economy, to broaden our tax base and to lessen our heavy dependency on agriculture.

Over the years, the CCF under Tommy Douglas, and the Liberals under Ross Thatcher, attempted the slow and painstaking task of building diversity, block by block into the economic life of this Province. The interesting thing that happened is when this Government came to power five years ago, the attitudes of former days of long-term patient and wise building yielded to a new attitude, a new attitude which was based upon impatience of pushing artificially and rapidly to the limit of taking big gambles and enormous risks to gain quickly what other wise men in the past knew had to come slowly. This Government decided immediately on taking office to take over directly or indirectly through huge taxation, the oil and gas and the potash and the forest industries. They pushed immediately into other industries such as uranium. Now what they have done in their haste in these areas, is to set us as a province on a very treacherous course, for we may not as a province have the powers that this Government has presumed to exercise in these areas, and that is the dilemma. Therein lies the risk.

At this very moment in time, the Supreme Court of Canada is considering the validity of the Government's new oil and gas taxation legislation. We have under this legislation collected and spent millions of dollars. The argument before the Supreme Court, which concluded only a few weeks ago, did not go very well for us. I know Members on the other side of the House had the same perception of that argument. I know that Members inside the Government are extremely concerned that we may in fact lose that case before the Supreme Court. If we lose it, if the Supreme Court of Canada says that Mr. Blakeney acted without constitutional authority in passing that legislation, the result for us clearly can be financially devastating. If we lose we face the prospect immediately of one of two things; of either repaying millions of dollars collected under an illegal tax scheme or alternatively going about the unpalatable business of trying to legislate ourselves out of the mess retroactively. Neither one is a very palatable course for us here.

The Provincial Government's potash legislation is in exactly the same position. We saw a challenge of the Provincial Government's prorating scheme in the Queen's Bench Court in Saskatchewan. The Provincial Government lost the case. It is now under appeal. We lost a second round as a province before the Supreme Court of Canada just recently. The Government had said that even if the potash legislation was illegal it wouldn't pay back the taxes. The Supreme Court of Canada in effect told Mr. Blakeney he had no such power. Yet another case, a third case involving the Government's potash reserve tax is again before the court. In due course the Supreme Court of Canada will rule on that one and the other potash cases.

Many constitutional authorities, both in this Province and elsewhere, are concerned that the Provincial Government did not have the authority to pass these several taxing statutes now being challenged. If they are proved right and we can only hope for the good of this Province that they are not, our Provincial Government, if it went beyond the power allotted to it under the constitution, will face the prospect of repaying in one manner or another some \$400 million to \$600 million.

That amount of money we can't afford as a province. The Premier knows that, the Attorney General knows that, everyone knows that. That is the enormity of the risk we face in the challenge to the Government's resource taxation policy. A risk, Mr. Speaker, which unfortunately was needless. Let us make no mistake about the extremely hazardous course that this Government has set us on. One of the very disturbing aspects of it is this constitutional mess over the hastily devised resource and taxation policies. If, in the event we fail, the losses far outweigh the benefits in the event we succeed. A needless, irresponsible, gambling course that we are set upon.

Mr. Speaker, early in the New Year, we will see emerge more clearly the second critical issue of fundamental importance to Saskatchewan. The Snavely Commission has completed its investigation into real costs of rail lines and the Hall Commission is now completing its report into rationalizing the prairie branch of the rail system. The process, of course, to this point in time has been one of identifying problems. The process we will face in the New Year is one of a solution to the problems.

We have seen in these past months two major difficulties with respect to grain transportation emerging more clearly. The first is that the grain transportation system is rapidly decaying. The second is the way in which western development in processing grain is being thwarted by an ever-increasing discrepancy or gap between the rate on grain on the one hand and the rate on grain products on the other. Now I want to deal for a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, with each of these.

For the past 20 years the prairie grain transportation system has been declining and being seen to be declining. We see branch lines everywhere decaying. Some indeed are shot completely, some can't take a train at more than five or ten miles an hour. Some look as if they are made for roller coasters rather than moving grain. We used to have 80,000 all purpose box cars move grain in this province or the prairies. That number is now reduced to 40,000 and continuing to decline. Many of the locomotives which are used on the prairie branch system are of the 1952 vintage, passed down from other uses to grain. Cross hauls and wasteful duplication exist in respect of the system. And the system, most importantly of all, is literally starved for additional investment. We have, of course, seen the railways for two decades claim that they are suffering huge losses with respect to grain movement and that is why we see the decay. Few, of course, have believed them. In fact, the CPR dollar has always seemed to be the most amazing thing. When they spend it it somehow becomes \$2, when they earn it it somehow shrinks to 50 cents. But the arguments over what it costs really to move prairie grain which have raged for these 50 years are now about to be settled.

The Federal Government did two things in that respect. First, it forced the railways by legislation to open their books to our examination. Secondly, they appointed Carl Snavely, a renowned rail economist from the United States and empowered him to fully investigate the costs of moving grain. While his findings are not yet in, it is interesting to observe some of the things that have emerged.

One of those things is that clearly we have reached the point in time when costs of moving grain are exceeding by a

substantial margin the revenues earned for moving grain. Statutory rates, as producers will now raise about \$90 million a year moving grain. The costs appear to be in the area of about \$240 million. Therefore, the short fall today between revenue and expense is somewhere in the area of \$100 million to \$150 million a year. I noticed with particular interest the brief of the Provincial Government which the Minister of Municipal Affairs will be familiar with that it made to Snively. And even it conceded that there was a loss annually on the movement of grain of something in the order of \$75 million a year.

Now we have two important tasks ahead of us. One is to rationalize the prairie branch line network, to end the waste, the costly duplication that is there, the cross halls and, of course, the Hall Commission is working on that. The second thing we have to do is, of course, begin the task of rebuilding the system which has been so long neglected. The price tag for all of this is enormous. We are talking in Snively figures of \$100 to \$150 million more a year in order to rebuild and properly maintain the system and that, as I have said, is only one side of the problem.

The other side is the growing discrepancy between the low rate on grain which is the Crow's Nest Rate and the higher rising regular rate on grain products such as meat and livestock and rapeseed oil and rapeseed meal. The difficulty with that is that it is now cheaper to move out of the prairies grain and rapeseed than it is to process those products on the prairies. If one can move barley to eastern Canada cheaper than one can move the equivalent amount of meat, it is logical the barley will go and the meat won't. Likewise, if one can move rapeseed out under the low Crow's Nest rate and move oil out at a higher

Regular rate, economics will dictate that the raw rapeseed move out and be processed elsewhere.

When we grapple with a solution to these two problems it is going to have to be a solution which answers both, which will on the one hand provide the funds to upgrade and properly maintain the system henceforth and secondly, to bring some equality to the rates between grain and grain products so that this western development which should be ours is not continuing to be thwarted.

Mr. Speaker, I see that some people have advocated various and sundry schemes as a matter of solution. Two years ago Members will recall that Otto Lang suggested a possible remedy. He suggested that perhaps what we should do, or at least look at doing, is to permit the Crow's Nest rates to rise to full cost recovery rate and protect the farmer by way of a special benefit fund against his increased transportation costs. That would do two things, it would solve the problem for money and secondly it would solve the discrepancy in the rates. Now Members opposite particularly jumped on that notion immediately. They have been running about the country for the last two years saying that Otto Lang was wanting to tamper with the Crow's Nest rates and do away with the Crow's Nest rates. Of course, nothing could be further from the truth. Well, Members opposite laugh. What Otto Lang was wanting to do and what Members on this side of the House want to do is to build in this Province a first class, modern transportation system for our grain. That's what he is trying to do and indeed that is what we are all trying to do.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!



**Mr. Cameron:** — Now, Members opposite apparently more interested in partisan advantage than solving the problems, continue to attack this man who is about to try and solve it. I was revolted, Mr. Speaker, the other day to hear the Member of Parliament for Yorkton, Mr. Nystrom, in a personal attack, not having been able to successfully attack Mr. Lang on policy and issue, they have now turned to attacking him personally, suggesting that he has somehow misused Government aircraft privileges.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cameron:** — And I say to Members opposite that instead of carping about him travelling around the country we should be applauding it. I saw him, Mr. speaker, many weekends in Assiniboia and Gravelbourg and Canora and all over this province, travelling about, talking to farmers, listening to their opinions and answering their questions. A Member of Parliament and a Minister with responsibilities of that kind, such heavy ones, who can still find the time and is still willing to travel about the province meeting with farmers should be earning our credit and I think he will get our credit.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cameron:** — Needless to say, Mr. speaker, I will not be supporting the motion but I will support the amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. L.M. Larson (Pelly):** — Mr. Speaker, I listened rather intently to the former speaker. I would have thought that with the amount of hot water that Otto Lang is in that he would have refrained from trying to protect him in this House.

He mentioned the concept of the ‘users pay’. I think what he should have said is that the taxpayer pays and I use. This would have applied more correctly to our good friend, Otto Lang, and his actions of recent times. Certainly a very poor attempt to protect something that’s totally unprotectable.

I want to join my colleagues in congratulating the mover and seconder in the Address-in-Reply. I am very proud to be associated with them. I want to offer my congratulations to the two new Cabinet appointments. Certainly they will fill their positions with distinction.

In this time of political unrest and turmoil in the whole world, it is very comforting to know that in Saskatchewan at least we have a government that is ready and indeed prepared to face up to and take action on the problems of today.

When the record of achievement and performance of the present Government is looked at since it came into power in 1971, it becomes very clear that it is a government of today and today’s needs and wants. It is a government that has acted and taken the lead in meeting the needs of the future.

These needs are forever becoming more and more apparent and urgent. We know now, with some positive assurance, that the

kind of wasteful society that has evolved, even during my short lifetime, is being challenged, curbed and subject to restrictions, subject to close scrutiny, and we know facts change and alterations are inevitable.

On the political scene, we see an ever-increasing demand for services from central governments. We see government after government toppled in free, as well as not so free elections. We see a world wide demand, as well as a world wide ability of people to change and throw out governments of whatever political stripe. Added to this is the general low esteem in which politicians are held in the eyes of the general public. These facts give all of us who are involved in government particularly, something to ponder.

I want to spend a few moments talking about my constituency of Pelly. We are strictly an agricultural community. The largest town is Kamsack, with some 3,000 population. The rest consists of smaller towns and villages, with a sprinkling of hamlets. We also have three native reserves, Coté, Keesokoose and Keys. These reserves play an important role in both the economy and the culture of the whole area.

The Coté Reserve stands as a good example of what native people are capable of doing for themselves. Under the capable leadership of Chief Tony Coté, they have established beyond doubt, the capability and talents of the native people. This reserve is one of the more progressive, if not the most progressive in all of Saskatchewan. They operate a post processing plant, a new sawmill and have one of the most comprehensive sports complexes to be found anywhere. This complex is producing some fine athletes. The Coté Chiefs Hockey team distinguish themselves wherever they play. Horse racing and many other activities round out their recreation program. I invite all Members to visit this reserve to see for yourself the progress and spirit of these people.

The Key Reserve, under the able leadership of Chief Sterling Brass, shows similar signs of progress and purpose. This young and aggressive man gives every indication of coming to grips with the many problems of his people.

The Keesokoose Reserve has many similar projects under way. It is my conviction that these people will distinguish themselves as good and worthy citizens. They seek basically to have the opportunity to preserve what they cherish and prize, and to be given an opportunity to prove this in their own way. I congratulate them and offer my co-operation in their endeavor.

I want now to recognize some of the visible and tangible evidences of the Government programs in Pelly constituency. The per capita grants have meant many improvements in all areas. We see street paving, water installations, new service buildings, new fire equipment, new and better sports facilities, to mention only a few.

The Senior Citizens' Home Improvement Program has brightened up all the small towns, villages and hamlets. It is very pleasant to chat with these people and hear the appreciation they express. Never before in their lives have they had this kind of recognition.

The Open Roads Program has been taken full advantage of,

several villages now have open access to them that they would otherwise not have enjoyed.

The assistance given to senior citizens drop-in centres from New Horizons and Social Services has opened up a new dimension for this important group of people.

The Land Bank has been very active in my constituency. There was a backlog of people who wished to retire but could not find anyone with the money to buy their land. The Land Bank has made it possible for these people to retire with dignity because they got a fair price for the land they sold. This land is now being operated by young people who would otherwise not be able to enter into farming.

The proof of the success of this program is the demand for Land Bank land. If the program was as bad as the Opposition have said, the farmers involved would be the first to recognize this and would not be so anxious to apply and get the land. The acceptance of the program is proof of its success.

There are many other programs that have made life better for our citizens. The drug plan is well accepted, the Family Income Plan has made life a little better for some who are in need.

FarmStart has provided an additional opportunity for many young farmers to do things they could never have dreamed of.

The Hog Marketing Commission is proving to be beneficial as it provides a system of orderly marketing and now incorporates a stabilization program.

The building of No. 49 Highway is much appreciated. The flooding of No. 8 south of Kamsack has been eliminated with the additional bridges and elevation of the grade.

Our municipalities have made some remarkable progress in farm access roads. The network of roads is a good one, thanks to the progressive attitude of the Department of Municipal Affairs.

The list of benefits could go on. Suffice to say that the future of this rich farming area is favorable and we look forward to the future with confidence, particularly with the prospect of a New Democratic Government in Saskatchewan, this future is assured.

I want now to spend a few moments dealing with a few aspects of this Throne Speech. There are several areas of importance to which I want to refer.

I refer to the snowmobile legislation, traffic safety, inflation, the sensitive area of federal-provincial relations, agriculture and its future.

The vital area of resources, their use and who will own and control them. No solutions have been reached in the transportation confrontation. There are some proposed methods of dealing with this tough and important matter, but few are a practical solution.

Health and social services that are most costly and

difficult to resolve are receiving attention.

The role of government in the field of labor, minimum wages, working conditions, safety for working men and women are scrutinized.

Consumers' affairs and consumer protection are reviewed and given attention.

Education and the environment, as well as housing and urban affairs are to be considered with proposals.

Human rights and the treatment of minorities are considered.

It is of course not possible to review in the short time at my disposal all the programs I have referred to. Many of them have been covered by my colleagues, others will be covered by others.

But, Mr. Speaker, they serve to illustrate the concerns and the direction this Government is going.

The Opposition have had great difficulty finding anything to say or criticize during the last week of this debate.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Larson:** — The ridiculous and irrelevant utterances that have emanated from your left, Mr. Speaker, are unbelievable. These utterances have lacked substance, they have lacked logic and I would say have bordered on being fanatical.

I find it difficult to believe that this kind of unmitigated nonsense could come from men who portray themselves as responsible and would project themselves as potential government alternatives. The Liberal Party, after two devastating defeats in 1971 and 1975, are in total and complete disarray.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Larson:** — After their stand on the Land Bank, FarmStart, Bill 42, the potash debate, provincial bargaining, they have exhausted themselves completely. What is even worse, they are not even able to hold their own Members within their own ranks. It is my guess that there will be more defections to the Tories.

During this Session there has been a concerted effort to criticize the health care and the drug care plan in general, trying to create a feeling of disaster in this field.

Let's review a few of their actions when in government.

First, they campaigned on a drug plan plebiscite in the 1967 election. They won that election but forgot the plebiscite, consequently, they forgot the drug plan. They imposed deterrent fees, a direct tax on the sick. They proposed utilization fees, a tax on those who were flat on their backs in the hospitals.

They closed hospitals at Hodgeville, LeRoy, Neudorf, Mossbank, Maryfield, Quill Lake and Lashburn. Reasons cited were, economics, bed utilization, availability of space and alternate services and staffing problems.

In response to protests from the “Save the Rural Hospital Association” and others who tried to stop the trend, the then Minister of Health as reported in the Regina Leader-Post of November 21, 1968, had this to say and I quote:

Closure of some small hospitals in this Province is imperative. The present situation is a waste of the taxpayers’ money and anyone saying otherwise is simply not facing up to the facts. The situation is not only adversely affecting the budget, but what is more important it is seriously affecting the quality of care. I am firmly determined that closure is a step in the right direction.

With a record like that, as late as a few years ago, it would seem a good time to keep quiet.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Larson:** — However, it seems to be an exercise in futility to talk about the Liberals and their actions. They have done an excellent job of self-destruction all over Canada. In election after election they have been soundly rejected. Their federal counterparts are in such a state of disrepute and confusion that it seems, as I said, a waste of time to even talk about them.

What about the Conservatives, Mr. Speaker? I feel compelled to pass a few remarks about them. I have listened with a great deal of interest to their speeches and have watched with equal interest their performance both in this House and outside. I had expected by now to have learned something about their platform, their ability and just how they intend to govern, if by some tragic event they became the government of this Province.

I had thought that fresh from a federal leadership convention, fresh from a provincial convention that has been lauded as an overwhelming success, that we, in this House, would have faced a party that had a platform that it was anxious to present, as well as a group of enthusiastic Members to vigorously pursue its presentation. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I have been profoundly disappointed.

I must also say that what has emerged leaves me totally convinced that there is absolutely no difference in the Liberals and Conservatives. I am also convinced that they have nothing more to offer than a blind and slavish dedication to the so-called free enterprise system. I am convinced that they are sold out body and soul to the multinational corporations that would enslave us all.

Not a single statement has emanated from either their federal or provincial convention to indicate otherwise. Let’s look at a few statements, as well as a few actions.

The newer than new federal Conservative leader, after stating in a speech in Saskatoon that he was not opposed to the concept of orderly marketing, stood up in the House of Commons and opposed an amendment supporting the marketing of all grains through the Canadian Wheat Board.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Larson:** — Let's look at some of the statements made by the Leader of the Conservative Party in Saskatchewan. Speaking at the recent convention as quoted in the Prince Albert Herald, November 15, 1976. I quote:

Progressive Conservative Leader Dick Collver pledged to lead the party to victory in the next election, calling for a return to the good old days of rugged prairie individualism.

At this same convention he is quoted as saying:

A Conservative government in the province would give local governments more power, more control, so the public can have a meaningful input into their daily lives.

I ask him to enunciate how he proposes to do this? I ask him to enunciate what powers local governments have lost and what power he proposes to return.

Tell the municipalities of the good old Conservative years. Tell them that they will have the power to look after social services. Tell them that MRAA (Municipal Road Assistance Authority): will be turned over to them to administer. Tell them that the super grid road plan will be administered by each individual rural municipality.

Tell school boards that teacher bargaining will be turned over to them. Tell them that from now on, you will be allowed to operate without provincial grants. Tell them that from now on curriculum and all school standards are yours to set as you see fit. Tell the universities that from now on the rugged individualism philosophy will dominate your schools.

Tell the town and city councils that from now henceforth per capita grants will no longer exist. Tell them that street paving programs are cancelled, that the recreational grants are cancelled, and from now on you are on your own.

I challenge the Leader of the Conservative Party to do just that. Don't talk in such generalities that you even begin to believe them yourself. Saskatchewan people deserve better and demand better.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Larson:** — I want, Mr. Speaker, in my concluding remarks to pay a special tribute to the Centennial of the first shipment of western grain from western Canada. It has often been said that ever since man began tilling the ground with his pointed stick that he has grown wheat. Ever since he discovered fire and began to cook, his food has been baked bread, a staple that has fed masses down through the years and down through the ages.

It is interesting to note that on October 21, 1876, the first shipment of wheat from western Canada was shipped. The records show that a Mr. Steel travelled through Fort Gary in 1866 hoping to buy 5,000 bushels of wheat required for seeding purposes in Ontario. The local farmers had never sold that kind of grain before and they hustled together 856 bushels and 10 pounds. This, Mr. Speaker, was the beginning of the

tremendous industry that has grown in western Canada to produce wheat and to produce an economy for western Canada. I salute the pioneers, I salute those who made the first step. Very obviously, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the main motion, but will not be supporting the amendment.

**Hon. E. Cowley** (Minister of Saskatchewan Potash Corporation): — Well, Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise to take part in this debate on the Speech from the Throne. I am pleased to follow the Member for Pelly, who as always, has given a clear enunciation of the policies of the New Democratic Party and the shortcomings of the Opposition.

I am proud to be associated with this New Democratic Party Government, its policies and programs. I'd like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of this debate for the excellent job that they have done. I am also pleased, as other colleagues have mentioned, to be associated with our two new colleagues in Cabinet. The Member for Melfort (Mr. Vickar): will, I am sure, be a valuable addition. I have had the pleasure of working with the Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris): for several years and I am sure his talents will strengthen this Government.

It is unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that the Opposition have been unable to focus their attention on any real issues, but rather have wandered aimlessly about in their usual fashion.

If there was an award for fuzzy thinking, it would go to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart): for his swan song, which showed him to be a man clearly living in the past. Unfortunately a past severely colored by his own biases. The award for not bothering to think at all would go to the Leader of the Conservative Party (Mr. Collver):.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — He once again caused all in this Chamber to wonder what he stands for, if indeed, Mr. Speaker, he stands at all.

This Throne Speech represents the introduction to yet another session of responsible and progressive legislative action. Every economic indicator showed 1976 to be a good year for Saskatchewan. The future, Mr. Speaker, can be just as bright if handled wisely. This Government is capable of handling that future wisely and is prepared to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Mr. Speaker, this Legislature has been changed from the last one with the addition of a third party, the Conservative Party. I have been personally disappointed with the uncritical way that the press in this Province has treated them and their Leader's dismal performance in this Legislature. Not only have they failed here, Mr. Speaker, but they have presented no policies to the people of Saskatchewan. I have noticed of late that the Leader of the Conservative Party spends less and less time in this House. Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, it is a result of something that goes along with the old saying, "that if you can't stand the heat get out of the kitchen."

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — I hope, Mr. Speaker, that some of the things that I shall deal with today will help to explain some of the ways in which the Leader and his third party colleagues have been treated by the press of this province.

Mr. Speaker, among the many myths that the Leader of the Conservative Party is trying to spread throughout this Province is one that he and his party are representative of the little guy, the average citizen of Saskatchewan. I would like to take some of the time of this House to examine this in some detail.

First of all, I believe it would be useful to examine the PC Canada Fund's return filed with Canada's Chief Electoral Officer, for the period August 1, 1974 to July 31, 1975. It is interesting to note that this period follows the 1974 federal election and is therefore an off-election year return.

Of the \$1,721,162 contributed to the PC Canada Fund, \$974,192 came from public and private corporations.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Another \$44,974 came from unincorporated organizations, for example, legal firms. That makes a total of \$1,019,166 from those three sources or 59.2 per cent of their funds.

Before the Conservatives jump to any wrong conclusions, let me say that in the return filed by the federal New Democratic Party, over 80 per cent of their money came from individuals. And 21,487 more individuals contributed to the federal NDP than to the PCs. To paraphrase the Hon. Member for Rosthern (Mr. Katzman):, I see it just got too hot in here for him, he said in a debate last week that he who pays the piper calls the tune. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we should take a look at who pays the Tory piper.

First of all we will deal with the banks. There is a donation of \$200 from the Mercantile Bank of Canada; \$500 from the Bank Canadian Nationale; \$1,000 from the Montreal City and District Savings banks; and now for the big banks. \$21,000 from the Bank of Nova Scotia; \$26,000 from the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce; \$25,000 from the Royal Bank of Canada; \$20,800 from the Toronto Dominion Bank; \$50,000 from the Bank of Montreal.

Mr. Speaker, that is a total of \$143,600 from eight banks in this country. I wonder if they get two or three tunes for that price.

Mr. Speaker, I then went and looked through to see if there were any oil companies or companies associated with the oil industry. On a quick run through I found 16 of them. I will only give you a few as examples here. Pacific Petroleums Limited, \$1,000; Petrofina of Canada Limited, \$200; Pennant Puma Oils Limited, \$1,600; Alberta Gas Trunk Line Company Limited, \$15,000; Gulf Oil Canada Limited, \$21,703; another little company, Imperial Oil Limited, \$2,075.

Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing you can say for the little guys who call the tune in the Tory Party it is that they



are certainly well oiled.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Mr. Speaker, eight trust companies contributed to the PC Canada Fund. There are many I am sure who didn't think there was any trust left in the Tory Party. I doubt however if they will be encouraged by this evidence of trust.

One of them was the Canada Permanent Trust Company which contributed \$1,600; I ask the Hon. Members to remember this contributor, Canada Permanent Trust Company, to whom I will return later.

Mr. Speaker, I counted 13 contributors associated with the alcohol industry. Among them were Molson Company Limited, contributing \$8,373.20; and Canadian Schenley distilleries Limited contributing \$1,800.

Mr. Speaker, one could say that the Tories are obviously well oiled in other ways.

Mr. Speaker, there are a few other little guys who are paying the piper. For example, Dominion Foundries and Steel Limited, \$25,183; Dow Chemical of Canada Limited, \$10,109.80; Ford Motor Company of Canada, \$20,000; Northern Electric Company, \$18,183; Eatons of Canada Limited, \$26,368, and Simpson Sears Limited, \$8,683. Now we know, Mr. Speaker, who will supply the records for the Tories, who will deliver the power and who will call the tunes.

Ten life insurance companies contributed to the PC Canada Fund. The question that I say, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province must ask: what are those little guys insuring against? I see it got too warm for the Member for Rosetown.

During the potash debate, some wondered why the Tories opposed this Government's legislation. There were those who were surprised at their opposition to Bill 42, evidenced by the speech made in this House last week by the Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter):. Mr. Speaker, a look at the little guys in the resource sector who contributed to the PC Canada Fund may explain the stands of the Tories in this Legislature.

For example, the Abitibi Paper Company Limited, \$3,400; Algoma Steel Corporation Limited, \$25,000; Aluminum Company of Canada Limited, \$12,600; British Columbia Forest Products Limited, \$10,000 and a big one, Dennison Mines Limited, \$26,000; Falconbridge Nickel Mines Limited, \$4,400; the International Nickel Company of Canada Limited, \$25,800. Perhaps of special interest to the people of Saskatchewan, one company which owns 51 per cent of a potash mine in Saskatchewan, Noranda Mines Limited, \$15,983.

There was one contributor that I thought should be mentioned, especially for the Diefenbaker fans in the Tory Party, they should know for sure where today's Tory Party stands, a contribution of \$1,009.80 from Camp Associates Advertising Limited. Mr. Speaker, I noted from press reports that a Toronto advertising firm was at the Saskatchewan PC Convention in Saskatoon, one can only ask, could it have been Dalton Camp's? Irrelevant, but perhaps of interest to some Members were two

individual contributors, \$350 from a Dr. David M. Baltzan and \$1,150 from a Dr. M. A. Baltzan.

**Mr. Steuart:** — Throwing good money after bad.

**Mr. Cowley:** — The Leader of the Liberal Party says they were throwing good money after bad.

Mr. Speaker, the other day in this debate, the Leader of the Conservative Party said that all we got for our money in purchasing the Duval Potash Mine was a piece of paper. Well, Mr. Speaker, apparently there are some who claim that you don't even get that from the Member for Nipawin.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Mr. Speaker, I know the Leader of the Conservative Party will still say, oh, that's the Federal Tories, we aren't responsible for where they get their money from. Here in Saskatchewan we represent the little people. Well, Mr. Speaker, I spent some time searching out whom they represent in Saskatchewan.

In going through their election returns, I found a few interesting little people. A Calgary oil company contributed \$500 to the Tory campaign in Regina Wascana, for example. Scurry Rainbow Oil Limited contributed \$500 to the Tory candidate in Regina South, along with \$200 from Prairie Gas Limited.

**Mr. Steuart:** — They gave us \$1,000.

**Mr. Cowley:** — The Leader of the Liberal Party says they gave them \$1,000 and I can well believe that.

The Regina Progressive Conservative Association finance committee also contributed over \$23,000 to the Regina Conservative candidates. There is in the records no accounting of where they raised their money. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing illegal or wrong about these contributions. The ones I have mentioned are only for the Regina constituencies, however, I once again remind Members of the speech made by the Member for Rosthern, in which he said, "He who pays the piper calls the tune."

Before I continue, Mr. Speaker, I believe it would be worthwhile to just go through a short explanation of Saskatchewan's Election Expense Act. As most Members will know, candidates and provincial parties are required to report all contributions during an election period. However, only those donations over \$100 must have the source identified. Theoretically a donor who didn't wish to be identified could contribute \$100 to each candidate of the party of his choice and to its provincial office, thereby contributing \$6,200 without being identified. One wouldn't think that anyone would go to all that trouble would you?

There are some interesting things which I came across in doing some work with respect to the election expenses, however. Apparently some candidates and their business managers had problems with the Act. It was fortunate that I was busy keeping

track of these things as the returns were filed. The Conservative candidate for Last Mountain-Touchwood filed a return dated July 24, 1975. I had an opportunity to take a look at it and make a copy. Shortly thereafter, prior to the closing date for filing, he requested it back. He subsequently filed another one dated August 14, 1975. Mr. Speaker, that was quite in order. The second return showed 12 donations of \$100 or less, names not revealed totalling \$725.00, quite in order.

The first return, however, Mr. Speaker, had the donations of \$100 or less broken down. One of them was from a Murphy Oil Company of Calgary, Alberta, for \$99.50, an odd amount, Mr. Speaker. Last Mountain-Touchwood is also hardly the centre of the oil industry in this province. However, \$99.50 from Murphy Oil Limited. A second contribution which I want to draw your attention to, was for \$100. You will recall my earlier mentioning them as contributors to the PC Canada Fund, Canada Permanent Trust. Perhaps there is some special trust in the Saskatchewan PC Party. A third interesting contributor to Mr. Tusa, who was the Conservative candidate, was one that I am sure will surprise Members on both sides of the House, a contribution of \$99.00 from CKCK Radio Station of Regina. Lest anyone think this is an isolated case, I wish to point out that one other Conservative candidate, Mr. Harold Martens, running in the Morse constituency also showed a contribution of \$99 from CKCK. Other candidates showed their contributions of \$100 or less, for the most part, in lump sums, without revealing the donors' names.

Now, Mr. speaker, there is nothing wrong with firms contributing to political parties, there is nothing illegal with contributors of \$100 or less not being identified, although perhaps our legislation should be strengthened.

**Mr. Steuart:** — Or unions . . .

**Mr. Cowley:** — Or unions, Mr. Speaker, I am quite prepared to deal with that, and I dealt with it before the Leader of the Opposition arrived.

However, that is not the point. The point is that the Leader of the Conservative Party talks about how he and his colleagues represent the little guy. Some of these facts, Mr. Speaker, indicate who the little guys are that they really represent.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — The contributions that I am most concerned about at the provincial level are the two that I know of in the amount of \$99 from CKCK radio. I have asked the Attorney General to write to the CRTC.

It may be of interest to those who are concerned about cable television, and the current debate in Saskatchewan, to know that at least three cable television companies contributed to the PC Canada Fund. Some more little people for the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver): to represent.

Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a few moments more on the Conservative Party and their leader. You know, during and after

the election campaign the Tory Leader spoke many times about the size of their membership. For example, on June 9, 1975, in the Regina Leader-Post, the Leader of the Conservative Party said their membership was over 10,000, after the election he said it was even higher. What are the facts?

Well according to the Progressive Conservative Party's election expenses filed with the Chief Electoral Office, dated May 12, 1975, the Tories had 5,394 memberships, made up of 5,184 adult memberships and 210 youth memberships. The post election figures for the Conservatives also contained in their return was 6,518, somewhat less than 10,000. The Member for Nipawin does seem to have trouble getting his figures to balance with the books.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — It may be, Mr. Speaker, that I am missing something here. I am not an accountant, and I know it is widely rumored that the Member for Nipawin is. Perhaps there is some generally accepted accounting principles that reconciles these figures. If so, I am sure that it will be pointed out in future debates.

As a suggestion to help the Leader of the Conservative Party out, I would suggest that they give the Member for Rosthern a crash course in accounting, to help them keep track.

Mr. Speaker, one has to wonder about the credibility of the Tory leader. On May 23, 1975, in the Regina Leader-Post he was quoted as saying:

The Saskatchewan Party is working with only the money received from within the province on a day-to-day basis, Mr. Collver said.

Yet, if one goes through their election returns, you find that close to one-third of the candidates' receipts came from the Federal PC Party, or federal riding associations. For example, 57 per cent of the Member for Estevan's receipts came from PC Canada; almost 77 per cent of the Member for Rosetown's receipts came from the PC Party of Canada. so much for the Member for Nipawin's working with only the money received from within the province. I ask him about Scurry Rainbow Limited?

**Mr. Steuart:** — They told us they were loyal . . .

**Mr. Cowley:** — The Leader of the Opposition says, "they told us they were loyal." The Leader of the Opposition seems to be having some difficulty in that regard lately.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — However, we'll get to him later.

May I remind the Member for Rosthern of the words of last week, "He who pays the piper calls the tune."

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Mr. Speaker, in his speech in the debate, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart): attacked this government for highlighting difficulties with the Federal Government. He said, and I quote:

Last year our Government depended on Ottawa for almost one-third of their budget.

He criticized our attempt to get a fair deal from Ottawa, our attempts to get Ottawa to honor its agreements with the provinces. To say the least, Mr. Speaker, the late Premier of this province, Mr. Thatcher, would be surprised to hear his words.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that in the four budgets the Leader of the Opposition brought down, the Federal Government made significant and growing contributions. From 1968-69 to 1971-72 under the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake, as a percentage of provincial spending, federal cost-sharing rose to 39 per cent. This year, Mr. Speaker, under an NDP Government, it is not one-third, but something slightly over 23 per cent.

In the only two Liberal Governments left in the provinces, Mr. Speaker, for this fiscal year, the figures are 48 per cent of federal funding in Nova Scotia and 55 per cent in Prince Edward Island. Now lest the Leader of the Conservative Party smile too much, for Tory Newfoundland it was 47 per cent, and even for wealthy Ontario, over 20 per cent. Mr. Speaker, since 1971-72, while Liberal Nova Scotia and Liberal Prince Edward island, were becoming more reliant on federal funding, Saskatchewan has witnessed the greatest increase in terms of provincial funding of any province in Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — I should also point out, that during this period, because of Conservative mismanagement in Ontario, federal funding there has actually increased. So much for the comments of the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

Mr. Speaker, the announced intention of the Federal Government to withdraw the revenue guarantee will have serious and damaging effects on this Province, and on all of the provinces within Confederation. The Federal Government is incapable of balancing its books on its own measure and is attempting to do so on the backs of the provinces, at the expense of health care, education and social services.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — The \$35 million per year that we will lose because of this move alone will cost Saskatchewan \$100 per taxpayer. No wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant): seeks to shed the Federal Liberals from the back of the provincial party, blood might be thicker than water, but a brother-in-law is only worth his weight in votes, and right now Otto is lighter than air even without his jet.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — While the Federal Government

mults over its burgeoning budgeting mess, and while the provincial Opposition Parties attack this Government for purchasing a viable industry that will provide returns to the province and food for the world, the former Minister of Defence, James Richardson, pays over \$1 billion to an American corporation of questionable character for a handful of planes that will be obsolete before Canadian pilots get them in the air. I am not sure whether that is sad or ironic, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot resist taking this opportunity to comment on one of the great non-events of our time, the Liberal leadership race. They are busy trying to select a new leader, and they don't have an enviable task, with what they have to choose from. Their lack-lustre performance in this debate is perhaps explained by the weighty decision they have facing them. My memory doesn't go back all that many years but I can't recall another leadership contest where more unannounced candidates pulled out than there were candidates in the field. It is like the old hot potato routine. I don't want it, you take it — no, I don't want it, you take it back. It got so bad, Mr. Speaker, that I almost felt compelled to hold a press conference to announce that I wasn't running.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — In the light of this fiasco among the depleting ranks of the Liberal Party, it's no wonder that there are rumors of a "draft Davey for Leader" campaign circulating the province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — All I know about who is going to win, if indeed, Mr. Speaker, that's the right word to use in this case, is that his initials will be TM. But I don't think it would help even if his full name were The Messiah.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Wascana (Mr. Merchant): continues to amaze the world with his antics in the leadership race. First he announced he would run in North Regina, instead of his current riding. Apparently that only lasted until the next opinion poll. Later he announced he would run against an NDP Cabinet Minister in Saskatoon.

**Mr. Penner:** — Easy pickings!

**Mr. Cowley:** — The Member for Saskatoon Eastview says 'easy pickings.' Well I am sure that any of my three colleagues in the Cabinet from Saskatoon would welcome the Member for Saskatoon Eastview as an opponent in the next election.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — I was surprised to hear the Member for Wascana's explanation of his proposed move. I heard him quoted as saying that the seat he was running in apparently was a Mickey Mouse riding.

**Mr. Robbins:** — It's well represented.

**Mr. Cowley:** — That's right.

The Member for Saskatoon Nutana says that if that's true, it is well represented. Well if the Member for Wascana wants to run in an excellent riding, may I recommend a rural riding to him. I notice this afternoon in the question period that he is taking more interest in the agricultural issues as time goes on. He certainly would be welcome as a candidate in any of the rural ridings now held by the New Democratic Party. If he happened to choose the riding I now represent — Biggar — I can promise him that I would be prepared to work extra hard just to give him a real challenge.

While the Ted and Tony 'Punch and Judy Show' goes on in the Liberal Party, the Conservatives appear to have a few problems too, Mr. Speaker. One party is desperately trying to get a leader, while there are rumors rampant that the other is trying just about as hard to get rid of one.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — It took me a while to figure out the reason for the new seating plan for the Tories. However, it suddenly struck me that if I were the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver): I wouldn't put the Member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane): at my back either. All I can say is that for the sake of the Member for Nipawin I hope that the Member for Qu'Appelle's legal insights are a heck of a lot better than his political ones.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Mr. Speaker, there are those, including the outgoing Leader of the Opposition, who have attacked the Member for Qu'Appelle's move as callous and unprincipled. I feel that for the Member for Qu'Appelle this was indeed a move of principle. His only principles are the principles of power. Those principles certainly qualify him to sit as a Tory. He saw his hopes to be leader of the Liberal Party dashed by his own incompetence, and his lack of credibility. He saw the Member for Nipawin's rising star slowly fading. He saw there his chance to marble-mouth his way to fame. Mr. Speaker, yon Gary has a lean and hungry look.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — I must offer a word of caution to my critic in the Conservative ranks, the Member for Qu'Appelle, who unfortunately isn't with us today. The Member for Rosetown (Mr. Bailey): also craves that tattered throne.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — And I wish to point out, Mr. Speaker, that he is ahead of the Member for Qu'Appelle in terms of the number of political parties that he has been a candidate for.

Mr. Speaker, all one can say is, honest Ed Nasserdon where are you when they need you?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — I want to turn to potash and some of the comments made by

the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver): in his maiden speech in this House when he gave us the benefit of his experience on public decorum. Some of us said, perhaps unkindly, that those words of admonition were the only concrete contributions the Leader of the Conservative Party made to the debate in this House. But that's not true. The Member for Nipawin did make one other specific recommendation.

In the potash debate last year he suggested, and I am now quoting:

There are other ways besides Crown corporations to enable Saskatchewan citizens to participate in Saskatchewan resources. One is a joint stock company owned by the people of Saskatchewan, backed by the Government of Saskatchewan.

Now that's a possibility that we had thought of. One of the reasons that we rejected the concept was because there was no way to ensure continued broad ownership of such stock. Small groups or individuals, who are already wealthy, could join together to gain effective control of the company. We rejected the idea for that and other reasons. But more interesting is what happened to the Member for Nipawin when he took his one positive idea to the Progressive Conservative convention in Saskatoon just a couple of weeks ago. The Conservative Party in solemn convention rejected their Leader's brainchild . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — . . . and they rejected it on the grounds that, as one delegate put it, 'it smells of socialism.'

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Some delegates, according to press reports, accused the Conservative MLAs of leaning to the left on the issue. Now, Mr. Speaker, while we have seen absolutely no evidence of that in this House we do think it's an excellent direction for the Member for Nipawin to lean, but he will have to be prepared for some criticism from within his own party. I suppose that after such a slap in the face from his own party, we can expect that the Member for Nipawin will decide never again to descend to the level of actually making concrete policy proposals. He has discovered to his chagrin that it is much safer in the Conservative Party to avoid talking about policy. Better to stick to lofty generalities and vague motherhood statements that have always characterized the Conservative Party in this province. Perhaps the Member for Nipawin should dust off his speech on decorum and treat us to a re-run. That at least, Mr. Speaker, won't get him into trouble with his followers.

Mr. Speaker, the resources of this province have to be managed wisely, both the human resources and the natural resources.

Under the leadership of Allan Blakeney, this Government has made great strides in resources management.

**Mr. Steuart:** — All backwards.



**Mr. Cowley:** — The Leader of the Opposition says, all backwards. If there is anyone in this House who is associated with backward movements, particularly in economy, it has got to be the Leader of the Opposition who has more experience than anyone else.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — Mr. Speaker, I will be very pleased to tell the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake about SaskOil in the Crown Corporations Committee. I am pleased and proud of the record of SaskOil and I am sure that the Member will be dumbfounded when he sees the annual report.

Mr. Speaker, in health care and education and in social services, we have provided a quality of life unmatched anywhere in North America. Our critics have attacked us for our health care system. I don't, and never will, apologize for the health services we are enjoying in this Province. They are second to none. I would welcome an election in which the issue was health care. I would welcome the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to remind the people of this Province where the Opposition Conservatives and Liberals alike stood when the CCF fought to bring in medicare.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cowley:** — I would welcome the opportunity to tell the people of this Province what is happening in health care in other parts of the country. In British Columbia, in New Brunswick and in Ontario where the Member for Nipawin's friend and fellow Tory Bill Davis has shut down entire hospitals. I would welcome the opportunity and so would every Member on this side of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on outlining the problems the Opposition parties have but nothing I can say will identify their faults and their shallow nature as well as they will exhibit it themselves in the course of the debates through this entire Session. To conclude, Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech continues the tradition of responsible government established during our five years. The legislative programs outlined will leave the province better prepared to meet the future, the challenges and the rewards alike.

Mr. Speaker, I shall be supporting the main motion and opposing the amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. R. Bailey** (Rosetown-Elrose): — Mr. Speaker, due to some rather tragic events within the Conservative caucus the Members who were to speak today are unable to be present, so I am filling in and taking their time to speak in this Throne Speech debate.

I'd like to congratulate the Members who have spoken in the Throne Speech at this time. I appreciate the humor and I certainly appreciate the comments which were made by the Leader of the Official Opposition. I enjoyed his speeches in this House and I think he has added a great deal to the House

and I as an individual will certainly miss him.

There is one thing I would like to say particularly to the House Leader. I realize that you have two new Cabinet Ministers, but I think one of the priorities of your Government should be to get a new speech writer, because obviously the same speeches are coming back in again and again. Sometimes twice repeated in the same debate, as we have heard this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a young lad and returned to Saskatchewan right after the war, the CCF were elected and they were going around the province talking about the CCF and the Liberals who were in the Opposition and they were talking CCF and the CCF stayed in power. Now in the Throne Speech debate at this time all we have heard is the Conservatives. Admittedly there are only a few of us to speak, but as long as the Government keeps talking about the Conservatives and the Liberals talk about the Conservatives, then we don't have to talk very much, because you are doing all of the talking for us.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to congratulate the two new Cabinet Ministers. I think that now that they have 50 per cent, we have half of the Members opposite now in the Cabinet, I do think the Premier made one mistake, Mr. Speaker. I think he should have had one more Cabinet Minister. He could have called it the 'ICC' (that is Inter Caucus Communication):. They need a portfolio like that. Because when the Premier called the boys in to move and second the Speech from the Throne, I can hear now what he had to say. Listen, you camouflage twins, get up and speak on anything, but make sure you camouflage the issues that are in Saskatchewan at the present time. I want to congratulate the mover and the seconder because they did in fact camouflage the real issues facing Saskatchewan, as have so many speakers who have followed them.

Let's take a look at the mover of the Throne Speech debate. Last year, Mr. Speaker, I remember him very plainly coming in here. It was one evening and he had something in his hand that he was playing with. We found out it was a little calculator. This year he degenerated, he comes in with dolls. I have never seen dolls like this before. And he talked about Sesame Street. Well, I have heard about Sesame Street, Mr. Speaker, so I go to the TV directory and I find out that Sesame Street is a children's program. Not only is it a children's program but it is viewed in the morning. Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of Saskatchewan citizens are off to work in the morning and they are not sitting around watching Sesame Street. Then I took a look at some of the writings and what the program design behind Sesame Street is. And I find that it is a children's program and it is designed to create fantasy, to take them into a bit of a dream world. Well, I want to suggest that that is exactly the type of program that Government Members should be watching, is Sesame Street, getting them into a dream world.

Back to this new Cabinet position, Mr. House Leader. I suggest you should have the ICC, intercommunication between your caucus. The mover of the Speech from the Throne devoted all of his time, the total part of his speech on damning large multinational corporations. Now the least that the Minister of ICC could have done was gone to the Member for Bengough-Milestone and say, listen, one of your new Cabinet Ministers is a real

sinner, he worked for General Motors Corporation. He sold their cars, those big, bad multinationals, and you know what, Mr. Speaker? He sold them at a profit.

**An Hon. Member:** — No!

**Mr. Bailey:** — Yes, he did. He sold them at a profit. Here he is in the Cabinet. Now this Minister of ICC could in fact have a little talk and tell him to lay off.

But let's get to the seconder of the Speech from the Throne. I remember the headlines, "Allen Lauds Saskatchewan Health Care Plan." How can this man who seconds the Speech from the Throne get up and spend most of his time talking about the Quebec plan, Mr. Speaker, when he knew very well that the Minister of Health had a stack of letters that high on his desk and has had about people who have written directly to the Minister of Health complaining about the health care in this province.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Bailey:** — But one of the camouflage twins decided that he would take on the Province of Quebec and bring it into the debate on the Speech from the Throne.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was amazed at the Hon. Member for Biggar (Mr. Cowley):, who spent so much of his time about all the Conservative finances. I wish that this Member would in fact read into this Assembly, if he would read into this Assembly the financial arrangements of the Government opposite. I wish that he would, Mr. Speaker. But no, instead of that he devoted most of his time as I said in my introduction that he wants to be talking about the Conservative Party.

It doesn't matter much really about the speeches made in the House. They play the radio up a little bit, they come in here with padded speeches, they get the podium up, they read them. That is fine, I am not criticizing that. But really the issues are ignored. It might be all right for the Regina Member for Rosemont (Mr. Allen): and I see he can't take this either, to be talking about condemning the Quebec health plan. But what about the lady whom I know so well who has waited four months for a cataract operation.

**Mr. Mostoway:** — Blame the doctor.

**Mr. Bailey:** — Blame the doctor the Hon. Member says, blame the federal government, that is all this Government ever does is pass the blame some place else. You won't take any part of this at all. You see it is all right for Government Members in this House to say, we haven't really cut back our health plan. But how are you going to go and tell these people who are on the waiting list and have been on the waiting list for months that there is no cutback. It wouldn't matter what kind of brilliant oratory we had in this House on either side, you can't tell the people out in rural Saskatchewan that there haven't been any cutbacks at all.

No, Mr. Speaker, the Premier wants to be congratulated for

one particular statement he made. And I was very, very pleased to hear him say it. The Premier mentioned in the discussion and literally what he was saying was that the Opposition parties, both the Conservatives and the Liberals, had no right at any time to place any condemnation or to ask any question in regard to the civil servants of this Province. What in the world, Mr. Speaker, puts this class of people beyond reproach? I have never heard in this House criticism in generalization of the civil servants of our Province. But, Mr. Speaker, if you go to the people who are out in the small towns and the cities, and as I say, you go and try to persuade these people that there has been no cutback in hospital services and they will tell you what they have experienced. Also, Mr. Speaker, in the same light, we watched certain activities of government members, not government members but people who are employed by the Government and I don't necessarily blame it on them. I think they have got some bad leadership down the way in that hierarchy. Are they beyond criticism?

There is a bridge that joins the Member for Morse's constituency and mine. It is called the South Saskatchewan Landing and actually this took place on the south side of the bridge this summer, so really it is in the Morse constituency. But because I travel that route a great deal I noticed it, along with thousands of people. It took seven or eight men practically all summer to put up two little guard rails south of the South Saskatchewan Landing bridge, and the Premier stands in this House and says, oh no, we are not to be criticized.

Let me give you another example, Mr. Speaker. We have in the Eston-Elrose school unit a dental plan. It is going very well and we have created two new dental labs, but they wanted to start another dental lab in Kyle, a year ago. Well, from North Battleford comes a chap in a car and it was a Government car with mileage involved and a salary involved and we took a look at the space, and he gets all the information and he disappears. A little later on up comes this other car from Swift Current, a Government car, mileage involved. We take a look at it, fine. Mr. Speaker, since that time there have been two more additional visits and we don't even as much as have the brackets on the wall to hold the x-ray plates. And then they say that we are never, never to criticize Government programs or Government individuals. How do you tell the people out in the province that this is so. You don't have to tell them, Mr. Speaker, they see these things.

Mr. Speaker, a lot of these comments that have been made by the Opposition Members are a deliberate attempt, as I said earlier about the camouflage twins, to get the people, and this debate, and the press and radio, to get off the real issues facing Saskatchewan today. Mr. Speaker, there is a real hate on the Conservatives and we've seen that.

But, I wish that the House Leader would go get the Minister of Municipal Affairs. He needs to be in this House at the present time for a number of reasons, Mr. Speaker. Let me point out that in his address to the Speech from the Throne he said this, that the Government of Saskatchewan was protecting local government from inflation. Those were his words, Mr. Speaker. He said the Government of Saskatchewan was protecting local government from inflation. Well, I listened to the comments of the Vice-president of SARM and that's not what he said. I listened to the President of the Saskatchewan School

Trustees Association and that's not what he said. And I listened to the President of SUMA and that's not what he said. So if this Government is in fact protecting the people from inflation in local government, I should like to ask the Minister, what local government? Everyone in the province has stood up and got press coverage in the last month and has said they haven't received protection from this Government from inflation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I wonder who the Minister of Education is? I know that we had a change last year but listening to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I am firmly convinced that he is very much so still the Minister of Education. And he asked a question during his speech today, to name one way in which this Government has interfered with school boards. Well, you know, that was one statement he should have never made, Mr. Speaker, because in fact we could have a one man filibuster on interference that has taken place in the last five years. I could go 'til midnight. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the first act performed by the Hon. Member when he was Minister of Education was out in the eastern part of the province at Moosomin. That was his first act after being made Minister of Education. Now what happened there? Well they had a situation in the school that the parents said they didn't want. They had a situation in the school that the principal said, I won't tolerate. They had a situation in the school that the local board said, 'no way.' They had a situation in the school in which the unit board went and they said, 'no way.' But what did the Minister of Education say, he couldn't leave the regular body to investigate the same, he had to hand pick his own three to go out and get a reverse decision against everyone in that particular community.

**Mr. Steuart:** — Interference.

**Mr. Bailey:** — Interference, you bet it was interference to the nth degree.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Minister who is now for Municipal Affairs and the Member for Yorkton (Mr. Nelson): make sure that they bring up in this House like a little dose of castor oil for the Opposition each year about something which is known as the pupil-teacher ratio and they attempt to score some pretty big points on pupil-teacher ratio. Well, I want to inform them and I am not quarrelling with the present budget structure in the province as far as education is concerned, I have been around 27 or 28 years and it is probably as good a budget structure as any, it is not perfect and I am not sure that anyone ever will come up with a perfect budget structure. But one thing that is entirely misleading is pupil-teacher ratio. Mr. Speaker, we have always had a pupil-teacher ratio or teacher-pupil ratio, whatever you want. And you know much to the embarrassment of these two gentlemen, if they would take a look today they would see that the relationship between the teachers they employed and the relationship between them and with the number of students it is just as high today as it was then when they started yapping pupil-teacher ratio. It is a little deceit mechanism which they have brought it.

You know, Mr. Speaker, one thing I think we need to recognize in the Province of Saskatchewan, the Minister of Municipal Affairs speaking for the Minister of Health, made a challenge in this House about how local government was not denied

certain powers and so on. I want to come back to that just for a moment. Mr. Speaker, recently the Department of Education in Saskatchewan established eight regional zones, they said six regional zones and now we have eight, and I want to say that we need eight regional zones of education like I need five cadillacs. Just an unnecessary commodity. But then when I realize the purpose for this, and I want to make it clear to this House and clear to the Members opposite, why this was done. Well, it was done to put the boys in Regina in a very, very sacred position. Out there in the province they have regional offices and the citizens who have complaints don't come to the department, they go to the regional offices and it can die there. To completely protect the Department of Education, isolate the people from the department.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech had a few figures on community colleges. As you know when we tried to get some information about the community colleges last year we took a verbal beating about that. I happened to be a member and a part of the Prairie West Community College and by using the Government's own figures in the Throne Speech we will see that the number of classes and the number of people enrolling in community colleges is going up. That's fine. Let me ask this question (I see the Minister in charge is not at his desk): last year Prairie West Community College had 13 on staff. This year they either have six or seven, approximately a 50 per cent cut. Now one can only draw one conclusion. If the number of people enrolling in the community colleges is going up, there was at least 50 per cent of the staff that they didn't need last year. Because if they can have increased enrolment, increased classes with 50 per cent of the staff, what were the other seven employees doing at that particular time? That is what the people of Saskatchewan want to know. Instead of that they stand in this House in the Budget Debate and they start off with the camouflage twins and they cover up the whole issue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we need to go to the people on the street, people on coffee row. People who sit and have coffee in the morning, people who visit one another and discuss. It doesn't really matter what we say in this House so much to try and convince people. Let me give you an example. The Minister of Highways stands up and says, all the projects on Saskatchewan highways have been completed. Well, Mr. Speaker, I am not too sure about the highways in other constituencies but I can inform the Minister to go and tell the people in Dinsmore, Saskatchewan that the highway project on Highway No. 44 from Highway 4 to Dinsmore is complete. Let him tell it out there. Instead of that he stands in this House and says all the highway projects are completed. Or better still, let him go to the town of Milden and tell the people in Milden that Highway No. 15 which joins No. 4 a few miles south of Rosetown is complete. That's the people he wants to see, not in this House. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, with a Government that has had more revenue than any time in the history of this Province the highways in Saskatchewan are in a worse condition than they were in 1971 and everyone in this Province knows it. Everybody in this Province knows it.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the Hon. Member for Touchwood (Mr. MacMurchy): was here. Now, Mr. Speaker, last year the Member was so intent on trying to ruin the trucking industry in Saskatchewan that he introduced into this Legislature some of the craziest figures in regard to tire size and weight limits

that he had everybody laughing and yet he would not, Mr. Speaker, admit to this Assembly inside or out that he had erred. Anybody can err, they can make mistakes, but today when I asked this question in Question Period, Mr. Speaker, and of course his immediate response was that the Conservative Party is trying to justify and promote Cargill. I want to say this, Mr. Speaker, that no one in the Conservative Party has inside of this House, outside of this House, to the press or anybody else, said that they were supporting Cargill. This is something which has been cooked up by the camouflage people to take us off the real issue. But, Mr. Speaker, I ant to say this, that if any company in Saskatchewan operating whether it's in the grain trade or in other trades, is falsely accused in this House, then I think it is not only the Opposition's responsibility but the Government's responsibility to see that what is said is the truth.

I am quoting once more from the Saturday's Leader-Post. By the way, mentioning the Leader-Post, I have something to say that the Member for Biggar (Mr. Cowley): said something about these other candidates getting a contribution from CKCK. I am mad at CKCK right now because I am sure they weren't among the donors to me. Did you not get one either? Well, I will take that up with CKCK. Mr. Speaker, quoting from the Saturday Leader-Post, and I want to quote what the Minister had to say, and I am speaking about the Hon. Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurchy):. He said:

People may not think such problems with a large private grain company could happen here but inspectors of the Wheat Board and the Board of Grain Commissioners last week closed down Cargill Grain Terminal at Elm Creek, Manitoba, and seized the terminal's books and documents.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister either deliberately lied to this Assembly or he very carefully distorted the information that he received. And I think it is incumbent upon that Minister if he doesn't want to make an apology to this House, I challenge him to stand in the hall way and make that same statement to the media. When I contacted sources in Winnipeg today, Mr. Speaker, what went on at Elm Creek, Manitoba, is what goes on every place across western Canada. Mr. Speaker, I can remember hauling a carload of oats to the Wheat Pool elevator in a little wee place by the name of Harptree, and the same thing happened there. It happens at all elevators when the commissioners come out and they examine the books. But he seized upon this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to completely distort the facts and I am asking this Minister to either publicly apologize in this House or to have the intestinal fortitude to stand outside and say it to the media at this time.

Mr. Speaker, speaking to the Throne Speech Debate, I want to mention something which I delivered to this Assembly during the budget debate last year. I told this Assembly at that particular time that local governments of Saskatchewan, and I am talking about the affluence in the province at that time, I said that local governments in Saskatchewan were not really concerned right now. They were willing to go with the tax increase, they could manipulate and they could manage. But now, Mr. Speaker, with the price of wheat substantially reduced with every indication that it will go lower, and with the cattle industry, the bottom falling out of it almost completely, I want to say that local governments are now in fact really

concerned about next year's operations. I phoned around to the one school board near Regina asking them what they were going to do. They said, well it looks like about a nearly seven mill increase. I phoned a city board of education the other day and they said it looks like we are going to have to go another 12 mill increase.

Mr. Speaker, there are municipalities in the Province of Saskatchewan that last year alone, last year in one year, had a thirty-three and one-third per cent increase in property tax. Thirty-three and one-third per cent in one year. I might inform the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe): in my survey of this that happens to come from your constituency. I am not stealing any of your thunder, it just happens to be one of yours. Then the Minister, Mr. Speaker, stands up and says this Government has helped curb or cut inflation completely that local governments are not worried because the Provincial Government is there. Nothing, in fact, could be farther from the truth.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with just one other point at this particular time. I would say the big debate that is going on and has gone on more than any other topic, perhaps outside of the camouflage twins and knocking the big multinational corporations, talking about health care, I think the number one issue in Saskatchewan at this time, and I think that Government Members should agree, is the cutback in health services. And for any Member opposite to say that there hasn't been a cutback in health services they would have to be naïve indeed. Let them take that to the people of the province and say that there hasn't been a cutback, because in fact there has been a cutback, Mr. Minister, and you will agree that there has been a cutback. They are concerned about it, they are concerned about the long waiting lists and they are concerned about the availability of beds for some rather sick people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, really all the political talk on this and trying to score points from one side to the other really isn't helping those people out there who need hospital beds. That's not helping them. An 80-year-old man whom I was in conversation with the other day was waiting on a cancer operation and had been waiting for some time, that waiting is not going to help him. I am not suggesting that the Minister of Health hasn't honestly attempted to do his job, but I think we had better take the politics out of this thing and have a look at the areas where people are in fact in need of health care.

The second thing that people are talking about and I would like to inform the Minister of Highways (Mr. Kramer): who seems to be immune to any criticism whatsoever, is that the people of this Province are number one, talking health care, number two they are talking about the highway conditions in this Province. You know for the Ministers, mostly the dean of Ministers in this House, to make statements to say that everything is rosy, things are better than they have ever been, all our highway projects are completed, is sheer nonsense, and he knows it. He goes before a group the other day and says that next year, we had better be careful because we are not going to have the funds and it could well be that there will be a cutback in highway building. I suspect the Minister of Highways is in fact telling the truth.

Number one, health; number two, highways and number three, where do we go with local government? What are we going to do? How much taxes can we collect/ What will happen to local



governments if in fact they go the limit? Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that in certain fields of local government and education could well be one, that there will come a time, if something isn't done to curb the expenditure, there will come a time when the ratepayers are going to demand a vote at the local level on expenditures. This is what has happened in the United States. I don't want to see it happen here. But I suggest that the Government had better take a good close look at this.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say in closing that I have not been too impressed, as I said earlier, with the speech writers. There is one thing that really disturbs me and it is my opportunity to discuss it at this particular time. The Member for Biggar spent a great deal of time in reading off all the donations received from a variety of people, a variety of sources for the Progressive Conservative Party. I am not going to quarrel with it at all. But I want to talk about the last provincial election in Saskatchewan. About this holier than thou are holy people opposite who never, never err or transgress in the way of expenditures. Mr. Speaker, as long as I could remember that immediately the writ is issued I see all kinds of strange faces running around in my constituency. People from Regina, they tell me, I say who is that fellow, he is from Regina. Who are they? Oh, they are out here helping the NDP candidate. From Regina, do they know him? Oh no, they have been released from government offices to campaign. Now somehow, Mr. Speaker, I just don't know whether that is true or not. Then I find when certain things happen, last year during the debate on potash, all of a sudden sodium sulphate carries on a huge long advertising campaign. Why aren't you still advertising the sodium sulphate plant? Why not? If it was so viable an industry, and it is, why don't you advertise it now? Doesn't that strike you that the people just don't really think too highly of your little gimmick games of advertising? Just as if I suspect when the by-election comes we will see an increase in government advertising. And if there is a by-election in Saskatoon, Saskatoon television will be polluted with government advertising. They don't have to account for it as election expense, it only goes back to the department where the advertising comes from.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is time that the Government Members and Cabinet Members in particular be a little more straightforward with the Premier. Don't camouflage the issues. You have done a beautiful job, I commend you on that. A beautiful job of camouflaging the issues facing Saskatchewan today.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that I certainly will not be supporting the motion on the Speech from the Throne.

**Mr. B. Dyck** (Saskatoon-Mayfair): — Mr. Speaker, we just heard from the Member for Rosetown-Elrose full of sound and fury and as usual signifying nothing. He was talking about the over staffing of community colleges. I refer him to the civil service of New Brunswick, Tory New Brunswick, which has a total civil service of about 32,000 people compared to 14,000 to 15,000 people in the Province of Saskatchewan. I think he should look into that. When he talks about health care I want to remind him in the city of Saskatoon that they have actually under-utilized the authorized beds in that city as much as six and seven per cent. They could have treated an additional 1,500 patients in the city of Saskatoon this year so far. Check with SHSP.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to say how pleased I am to join in this Throne Speech debate. This Throne Speech which we heard on November 18, again outlines a legislative program that as in the past will keep Saskatchewan in the vanguard of social and economic development. This speech, as others have done, reflects the progressive posture of the present government in Saskatchewan.

I should like, however, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to confine my remarks to basically two areas; that of the situation of labour in our province and to a topic concerning the general conditions of people in Saskatchewan as compared to people and families in other provinces in Canada. I do this to demonstrate the many progressive programs initiated by the present government in Saskatchewan, many of which are not duplicated elsewhere in other provinces across this country.

You know, dealing with labor, Mr. Speaker, the anti-inflation program of the federal Liberals that was forced on us just over a year ago was one of the most unjust and dishonest programs we have seen emanating from Ottawa since the implementation of The War Measures Act of October, 1970. I want to make a couple of comments about that.

That action was another diversionary tactic so cunningly employed by Liberals to cover up real problems. The War Measures Act covered people all across this country. The federal Liberals said, The War Measures Act was necessary because of a state of suspended insurrection in the Province of Quebec in 1970. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, nobody, including Mr. Trudeau, nobody knows the meaning of the term suspended insurrection, particularly in the Quebec context. They used in October of 1970 a sledge hammer to kill a fly. However, I am sure, most Members opposite on both sides of the Opposition did support and would support again, at the least provocation, the implementation of The War Measures Act, which gave a police officer the right at any time to search without warrant our homes. I want to remind the Tories opposite that their counterparts in Ottawa supported this bill en masse. However, 16 New Democratic Party MPs stood solidly opposed and they were criticized at that time. They are certainly not being criticized today.

Recently on a trip to Japan, Mr. Trudeau was apologizing to the Japanese for the internment of 30,000 Japanese during the Second World War, the last war. It seems to me that he was apologizing to the wrong people. He should have been saying those words to the Japanese in this country. They were the ones who were interned and lost a lot of their property and homes in the process. In those days the Liberal literature makes interesting reading. Particularly that used during election campaigns. Headlines like, "CCF Loves Japs". I want to read to you a little piece of election material that was published in the Vancouver Daily Province, authorized and published by the Vancouver Liberal Council Executive Committee. The headline is, and I will table this Mr. Speaker:

50,000 Orientals in British Columbia, CCF Party Stands Pledged to Give Them The Vote.

The Liberal Party is opposed to giving these orientals the vote. Where will you stand on election day? A vote for any CCF candidate is a vote to give the Chinaman and Japanese the same voting rights that you have. A vote for the Liberal candidate is a vote against oriental enfranchisement.

Under the new Liberal regime Canada will follow the steps of Britain in South Africa to talk prosperity.

And you know the steps they have taken in South Africa in order to obtain the prosperity they are referring to. I will table that document, Mr. Speaker.

I want to comment on some activities of an MP from Provencher, Manitoba, Mr. Jake Epp, Conservative MP for that constituency. He is distributing books from the African Embassy in Ottawa. He said these books went to schools in his constituency. I refer to a letter in the Free Press, the Winnipeg Free Press. I quote:

The Conservative MP, Jake Epp has been sending propaganda from the South African Embassy to Manitoba schools. He was quoted in a Winnipeg newspaper on August 19. Mr. Epp openly admits his complicity and has the gall to try and defend the apartheid policy of the South African government.

Mr. Speaker, those are the types of racist policies and oppression of minority groups and those disadvantaged groups that the Liberals and Tories have been pursuing for years.

I don't have, Mr. Speaker, at this time to talk about the dubious activities or the dubious position of the Liberal government in Ottawa on that immoral war in Viet Nam. I think that speaks for itself. We know where the Liberals in Ottawa stood on that war. It is only now coming to the front exactly how immoral that war was.

I want to return, Mr. Speaker, to labor. As I was saying, the anti-inflation program of the federal Liberals was forced on us just over a year ago and was one of the most dishonest and unjust programs. The Ottawa Liberals were saying in effect that we have an inflationary problem in this country. No one would argue with that point. Then they moved to ensure that the scapegoat of these rising prices and the people who would bear the brunt of the anti-inflation program would be labor. They assumed wrongly in my view that labor was the cause of rising prices.

I stand for the view that our recent inflationary problem has been of a price-pull type as opposed to the cost-push type. A position that is borne out by a lot of eminent economists in the field.

Surely through the AIB the federal Liberals effectively destroyed one of the most important principles the labor people hold so dear, the principle of free collective bargaining. When profits in many industries, such as the food, banking, farm machinery and automobile manufacturing and other areas have been at an all time high and when executive salaries have been at an all-time high, the federal Liberals have the audacity to suggest that labor is the cause of the present inflationary problems.

I want to say, once again, as I have before in public, that I stand four-square in opposition to the destruction and loss of the principle of free collective bargaining in this country, a principle that has been fought for by labor people

for over a hundred years.

The price these people paid — the early union organizers — was high and we cannot stand by idly and have the results of these efforts simply tossed to the wind.

It is also public knowledge, Mr. Speaker, about my position with respect to the provincial Price and Compensation Board. I disagree with it because of the fact that it infringes upon the rights of our workers to free collective bargaining of their salaries and working conditions of their union membership.

Workers over the world are frequently recognized by what they contribute to our society in the form of goods and services that we all need and want. Saskatchewan's labor force of well over a third of a million people are responsible for producing the goods and services which make this province run.

The contribution of working people to the economic and social well-being of Saskatchewan is, and always has been of paramount importance. Working people, along with farmers are the backbone of our society and in the main the backbone of the New Democratic Party. I am very happy to see recently published statistics which show that 17,000 people have moved into Saskatchewan in that last year to take up the more plentiful job opportunities that are available here.

They are returning to a province where the Blakeney Government's solid performance in maintaining the social and economic well-being of its citizens has been spectacular. Yes, Mr. Speaker, no other words would better explain this phenomenal growth that we have seen, than spectacular.

These people, mainly young working people are immigrating to our province in large measure because our economic situation is good. The reason our economic situation is so good to a large measure is due to the Blakeney New Democratic Government presently in office.

Once here, the newly arrived workers will be covered by the best labor legislation in all of North America.

Saskatchewan's leadership in enacting progressive labor laws began as early as 1944. Prior to that, Liberal and Conservative governments did not see fit to set up a separate department to administer labor laws, and there is a good reason for this. At that time, there were practically no laws protecting labor. Therefore, there was no pressing need to set up a department to administer those laws that were virtually non-existent.

Under the leadership of Premier Tommy Douglas, and Labour Minister C. C. Williams, a newly elected CCF government moved quickly to recognize and then to safe-guard the rights of working men and women in Saskatchewan. The first and most important step was the passing of The Trade Union Act in 1944, to regulate labor-management relations and to facilitate the collective bargaining process. Among its important provisions are those dealing with income security, voluntary conciliation and the right of civil servants to bargain collectively. All at the time were unprecedented in Canada. Over the years, other features of the CCF labor legislation included prohibition of a

wide range of unfair unemployment practices, the highest minimum wage in Canada — \$2,80 an hour, shorter hours with the same take home pay, equal pay for men and women doing comparable work, guarantees against loss of pay, longer annual vacations, the highest workmen's compensation benefits in Canada. These and many other legal rights and benefits for working people which nowadays are almost taken for granted were practically non-existent before the CCF a few short years ago.

The excellent relationship between labor and government ended abruptly in 1964 when the Liberal administration under the late Ross Thatcher embarked upon a seven year war with working people.

In that period of time, injured workmen were so neglected they were forced to organize themselves to press for fair treatment. The minimum wage was all but static. The Trade Union Act and Labour Standards were sadistically twisted so that workers found it next to impossible to maintain the strength of their organization. Liberal Cabinet Ministers time and time again demonstrated the extent to which they were willing to go in order to some larger extent subjugate the working man.

Mr. Speaker, those dark clouds of those seven years have moved away. Once again there is a government in this Province with a desire for a better and more progressive relationship with working people.

Since returning to office in 1971, we again have moved far into the lead in labor legislation. At the beginning of the new year, Saskatchewan will share with British Columbia, the highest minimum wage in Canada. There will also be changes in worker's compensation legislation to keep benefits ahead of inflation.

The Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, also indicated that the NDP Government will not slow its pace in the area of labor standards. This Session of the Legislature will see a re-introduction of an amendment to The Labour Standards Act providing for voluntary overtime beyond 44 hours of work by an employee. Not one thing shines in the ranks of progressive changes that this Government has brought about as the Occupational Health and Safety Program. It is regarded far and wide as an example to be imitated and to be followed. The changes proposed to The Occupational Health and Safety Act will strengthen the legislation, there is no doubt about that. I think it will illustrate as well as anything else does, the very fundamental difference between the way the New Democratic Party governs and the manner in which old line parties conduct themselves while they are in office.

In provinces where there are Liberal and Tory Governments, workers can and regularly do lose their jobs for refusing to do work which might result in an industrial accident, taking their lives or leaving them perhaps permanently injured. In Saskatchewan, no worker can be fired for doing unsafe or dangerous work. In fact, employees through their occupational health committees have a say in establishing and improving unsafe working conditions. The proposed changes to the Occupational Health and Safety regulations deserve the full support of this entire Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

I could not at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, omit a comment on the economic prosperity of this Province. We have

never seen prosperity in Saskatchewan as we have seen it during the last few years under the capable leadership of Allan Blakeney. You know the Liberals in 1964 with their silly promises of 80,000 new jobs were trying to portray themselves to people as promulgators of perpetual prosperity, promulgators of perpetual prosperity! Well we know how dismally they failed in their attempts to strengthen the Saskatchewan economy during their term of office. In contrast the Saskatchewan economy has been very buoyant and strong in the last number of years.

Let me explain some of the economic indicators for these observations. The average number of people employed in this Province increased from 357,000 in 1974 to 373,000 in 1975, this increase of 16,000 people in employment followed an increase of 10,000 people in 1974 and reflected the continued strong demand for labor primarily attributable to increased construction activities in the service industry.

There was a 16.2 per cent increase to the value of goods added in the producing industries during 1975. Mineral production for 1975 totalled \$858 million, a 7 per cent increase over the previous year's level of \$802 million. Total investment expenditure consisting of all construction machinery, equipment and repairs advanced by 30 per cent from \$1,687 billion in 1974 to reach \$2,289 billion in 1975.

Housing starts in Saskatchewan increased by 20 per cent in 1974 and advanced by an additional 37 per cent in 1975. The starts in housing from the first half of 1976 reached a figure of 4,510 compared to 2,524 for the same period in 1975. Unemployment in Saskatchewan during 1975 varied from a low of 1.9 per cent in October to a high of 4.0 per cent in December, an average of 2.9 per cent for the year compared to 3.3 per cent in 1974.

On January 1, 1976 the population reached a new high of 929,000, which was an increase of almost 2 per cent from the prior year.

During 1975 farm cash receipts rose to a record \$2.5 billion. total personal income in Saskatchewan during 1975 reached \$5.2 billion, increasing 22 per cent over the previous year's level.

All of these indicators suggest to anyone that the economy remains strong and it is no wonder that our credit rating in the money markets of the United States has moved from an "A" to a double "A" rating. Mr. Speaker, this Province is a good place to invest.

Mr. Speaker, I have just outlined at some length the economic indicators that demonstrate clearly the buoyancy and prosperity that has prevailed in this Province in the last number of years. I have outlined this information to you and it is in sharp contrast to the record of the previous administration from 1964 to 1971, which was in my view an unmitigated failure.

I should like, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to move to another area and point out to this body some of the many benefits we have enjoyed by living in Saskatchewan in contrast to Tory Ontario, or Social Credit British Columbia, or any other province in Canada. Most of us are aware that Saskatchewan residents enjoy certain benefits which people who live in other provinces do not have, but we do not really know how living in

Saskatchewan stacks up against living in other provinces in Canada. For example — Conservative Ontario.

In order to demonstrate the difference, as clearly as possible, I want to outline a comparison of what it means for a family of four assuming a mother, father in their late 20s with two children aged six to eight years. They live in a modest suburban three bedroom home, only the father works. If he is, for example, a meat cutter, his average income would be about the same in Saskatoon or Toronto, approximately \$12,000 per year. Now let us look at the taxes and benefits of the family if they live in Saskatchewan, and contrast it with the taxes and benefits of the same family if they live in Ontario.

Probably the most useful way to evaluate the tax position of a family of four is to ask how much after-tax income will they have. Since taxes vary, and two provinces do not have identical benefits, I will use the following approach. Take the total income of \$12,000 and deduct from that the appropriate federal and provincial tax. If you take into consideration the various cuts and tax credits, property improvement grants, which are a form of tax rebate, and you deduct an estimated amount for the payment of sales tax and also deduct medical care hospital premiums which is another form of tax, you will find the following: The Saskatchewan family with an income of \$12,000 per annum will end up with \$10,434 after taxes. The Ontario family, Tory Ontario, will end up with \$9,978 out of the same \$12,000 income, a difference of \$496. In other words, the Saskatchewan family is almost \$500 better off. They have better than \$40 per month to spend than their counterparts in so-called wealthy Ontario. A large part of that difference is made up by the fact that Saskatchewan has no hospital or medical care premiums, while the Ontario family pays a whopping \$384 per annum in medicare premiums. The Saskatchewan sales tax is lower, but while the basic income tax in Ontario is also lower than Saskatchewan's the total tax bill is almost \$500 higher in Tory Ontario than it is in Saskatchewan.

Let us turn to housing for a moment. While the price of housing is not the result of direct government action, there is no doubt that housing prices in Saskatoon or Regina are considerably lower than that of Toronto. In fact, the difference in price is so great, the Toronto family may not be able to afford to purchase their own home. In Saskatoon a three bedroom home with approximately 1,040 square feet sells for a minimum of \$45,000 in a new sub-division. The situation in Regina would be very similar. This price would not include any landscaping, there would be no garage, concrete driveway and so on. Typically a 10 per cent down payment is required.

Assuming our Saskatoon and Regina family have a down payment of such amount, they will be left with a mortgage of \$40,500, their monthly payments with principal and interest will be \$403.81, a big chunk of their money budget. Perhaps they can manage it.

What about the family in Toronto. A similar accommodation in metropolitan Toronto would cost in excess of \$70,000, the Ontario family would have to probably buy outside of metro Toronto maybe 20 or 25 miles. There they would have to pay \$60,000 approximately, \$15,000 more than the Saskatchewan family. With a 10 per cent down payment leaving a mortgage of \$54,000, their monthly payments would be \$538.41. In other words, \$135 or

33 per cent more per month than their Saskatchewan counterparts. That would put home buying out of sight for most of the Toronto families.

Allow me to move on to another area, namely health services, Mr. Speaker. There has been a good deal of talk in this debate on health services. In my view a Saskatchewan family has a definite and significant advantage in health care over that provided in Tory Ontario. First, there is no premium for medical and hospital care in this Province. A family in the East pays a whopping \$384 per year for the same level of hospital and medical services. And in light of recent drastic cutbacks in closures of hospitals in that province, I doubt whether they are receiving the same level of hospital services, particularly when they consider the fact that the number of beds per thousand of population is much lower in Ontario.

But that is only the beginning. Should a member of a Saskatchewan family require a wheel chair, crutches or artificial limbs, or some other aids to overcome a physical handicap, they can obtain it free of charge from the Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living program. The Ontario family would be faced with a bill from anywhere to \$400-\$500 for a wheel chair only. Ontario has no universal plan to provide these essential services for the handicapped. That is Conservative Tory Ontario.

For the children, Saskatchewan provides dental care without charge for those from five years of age to nine. In 1978, the plan will cover all children up to 12 years of age. Under the dental plan service is provided to each child in Saskatchewan at an average cost of \$178. If these services had to be paid for in accordance with the Ontario dental surgeon's fee schedule, it would be much higher, approximately \$235 in Ontario. The Ontario family would either have to pay out the extra \$235 per annum to receive full dental care for the children, or as more often is the case end up having to neglect their children's dental care.

If any member of our Saskatchewan families require prescription drugs, they automatically qualify for benefits under the Saskatchewan Prescription Drug program. The price for each prescription will be a low \$2.25. While it is difficult to estimate what amount of savings this represents, we know in many cases where prescriptions regularly exceed \$5, some as high as \$10 or more. Ontario families have no prescription drug plan, although there is a pharmacare program for those people over 65.

There is, Mr. Speaker, absolutely no doubt that in health services, the benefits of living in our Province of Saskatchewan are worth hundreds of dollars per year and far exceed those of any other province in Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Dyck:** — I wish to turn, Mr. Speaker, to natural gas and electrical rates. We in this Province have a definite advantage in our natural gas, natural gas is 55 per cent higher in Toronto than in Regina. One of the reasons that we enjoy cheaper rates for natural gas is that Saskatchewan Power, a publicly owned utility, over the years has acquired substantial



natural gas reserves. We can provide our consumers with even cheaper gas had not the Liberals sold out large reserves in southwest Saskatchewan to a Calgary based firm for a song, a very costly example of Liberal mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter how you cut the pie, it doesn't matter how you look at it, there are sizeable and significant benefits to be gained by living in our province, benefits that have been developed over the years by a succession of NDP Governments, governments which had the foresight to see that services for people should and would become more and more important. Many of these and others have developed out of the convictions of Saskatchewan people, that essential human services should not be left to the tender mercies of the market place and the profit motive. We have developed a good way of life, here in Saskatchewan. We enjoy a level of security and prosperity that is the envy of many other provinces and countries. We will continue to develop as we continue elect governments which put people before profits; governments which put humanity first, and perhaps you might say, that these are old fashioned slogans and I agree. But they have withstood the test of time, and I am confident they will continue to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I will oppose the amendment and support the motion.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. L.W. Birkbeck** (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I have a great deal to say regarding the Throne Speech this evening. I wonder if you might call it 5:30?

**Mr. Speaker:** — I will call it 5:30 at the conclusion of the Order Paper.

**Mr. R.L. Collver** (Leader of Progressive Conservatives): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I should like to raise a matter of privilege pertaining to some remarks made this afternoon by the Member for Biggar (Mr. Cowley):.

Although it is probably too much to ask that Mr. Speaker break in on any particular Member when they are referring to a Member's personal business, at such time as the Member actually produces a falsehood to this House, then, and only then, I think it is incumbent upon the Member to rise and correct the falsehood. The Member for Biggar used his position as a Cabinet Minister to obtain from the Chief Electoral Officer of this Province certain numbers or statistics that were submitted originally and withdrawn by one particular candidate for office and corrected. Therefore, the first submission of our candidate in Last Mountain-Touchwood was accepted but withdrawn by the Chief Electoral Officer. Nevertheless, this was withdrawn information quoted by the Member for Biggar in this House. That is not even the worst part of it. The worst part of it is, that each party was required to submit to the Chief Electoral officer of this Province the number of

memberships which the party sold during the course of the writ. These memberships, numbers of memberships were submitted to the Chief Electoral Officer in good faith, by each party as the number of memberships it sold during the course of the writ. And the Member for Biggar today suggested that somehow the number of memberships we reported as a party in good faith, sold during the course of the writ, were in fact the number of memberships in total obtained by the party at any particular point in time. That is a deliberate misleading of this Assembly by someone who should know better. I ask the Member for Biggar to withdraw those remarks.

**Mr. Speaker:** — The matter of privilege is a rather important matter which is really very seldom dealt with in Legislatures. Most Members I would say, probably rise to correct the record rather than to raise a matter of privilege. If the Member for Nipawin is in fact correcting the record of the Legislature, that is quite permissible and requires the least amount of formality.

However, if the Member is charging an abuse of ministerial power, then that's a more serious item and should be dealt with under Rule 6, dealing with privilege in the Legislative Assembly. I cannot at this time determine the facts as to the situation. Beauchesne provides some guidance in Citation 105 where it says in part:

A dispute arising between two Hon. Members as to allegations of facts hardly fulfils . . .

**Mr. Steuart:** — That doesn't apply . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order! Hardly . . . Order!

Yes, well perhaps we could just let Beauchesne clear it up, if I could read on a little further. I will begin again:

A dispute arising between two Hon. Members as to allegation of facts hardly fulfils the conditions of a privileged question and if deemed to be a matter to be at once entertained, it is more convenient to postpone other business rather than to extend the area of privilege.

Now, I'm not just sure if the member can give me further guidance as to which course he is taking without placing the argument with regard to the case.

**Mr. Collver:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm rising perhaps to get the Minister to withdraw the suggestion or implication given during the course of his address that the Member for Nipawin did not tell the truth when he said that he had 10,000 members and then reported a number of memberships that were sold during the course of the writ. I'm asking the Member for Biggar to withdraw that allegation. That's all. Whether that's a matter of privilege, whether that's a matter of correcting the record, I don't know. I'm just asking the Member for Biggar to withdraw that implication.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm speaking to the Point of Privilege if I can and as I understand it any Member is entitled to speak to the Point of Privilege. I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, first of all that the rule does require two hour's notice, but that can be waived by Mr. Speaker and I understand Mr. Speaker has done so.

Secondly, when the Member for Nipawin rises a second time, he does not now ask or plead a case for privilege. He says in response to your observation, in effect, you, Mr. Speaker, may very well be right that it is no privilege. He then says, but nevertheless I am asking the Member to withdraw remarks that I say, as a Member of this House, are untrue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's what the Member said. All that I can tell this House, Mr. Speaker, is that in the ten years that I've been here, if every Member got up in this House immediately on the completion of another Member's speech and asked the Member who had just completed making the speech to withdraw remarks that that Member feels in his own mind are untrue, we wouldn't hardly ever get through the business of the House, I think.

This is a debating point, Mr. Speaker, a debating point. At least I'm here to speak. The Hon. Member has, I know, got other preoccupations on his mind right now, but he was not able to be here to speak.

I simply say, Mr. Speaker, that that is no privilege. The Member has an interpretation of those records of The Election Act, he has an interpretation of The Election Act which may not agree with the Member for Biggar or mine. That is a matter of a debating point, but it is not a matter of privilege and I say with respect, Mr. Speaker, that the claim by the Leader of the Conservative Party is fallacious in this regard.

**Mr. Speaker:** — I thank the Members for their comments from both sides of the House in this matter. It is my intention to examine the record of the subject matter that was raised and consequently I will defer any decision until later.

**Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, if I may, just on this point. I'd like to know what the issue is that you will be deferring. What is the issue that you will be deciding on?

**Mr. Steuart:** — Which one is lying, or both.

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order! I think some Members tend to treat this much too lightly. This is important to the House and I think it should be cleared up with a minimum of heckling from Members on the floor.

The thing that I intend to determine from the record is the exact situation that the Member for Nipawin puts forward and then look at the words that the Member for Biggar spoke and decide if there is in fact a matter of privilege before the House.

The Assembly recessed until 7:00 o'clock p.m.

The Assembly resumed the interrupted debate on the Address-in-Reply.

**Mr. L.W. Birkbeck** (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to represent my constituency of Moosomin and the people of Saskatchewan in my reply to the Throne Speech. I would first like to congratulate the mover and the seconder of the Speech from the Throne.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — I am sure they felt very proud to be asked to conduct this exercise on behalf of their party.

I would also take this opportunity to congratulate the Member for Melfort (Mr. Vickar): and the Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris): on their appointments to the Cabinet.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — These positions will demand a very responsible attitude and you will be at all times under heavy pressure. Time will tell how well you stand up under this pressure and I wish you well.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — Mr. Speaker, at this point I suppose I should deliberate at some length in making some insulting, cutting remarks to the Members opposite and to the Members on my right.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — I suppose this is a practice which is designed to command respect in this Assembly and to indicate where the power lies.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Last Mountain-Touchwood (Mr. MacMurchy): and speakers before him have clearly indicated where the power lies in this Assembly.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — The Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan, both inside and outside this Assembly has been referred to as an unknown quantity.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — A party without policy.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — The Liberals say that we are like fighting a ghost and that we are without leadership.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Birkbeck:** — Mr. Speaker, both Liberal and NDP Members have made unsubstantiated accusations against the Conservative Members. Mr. Speaker, our party is a known quantity by the number of people we represent in this Province. Mr. Speaker, we have people we represent in this Province. Mr. Speaker, we have policy by our supporters. Good policy which Opposition finds difficult to nit pick. And for this reason their only defence is to say that we do not have a policy.

Mr. Speaker, I will admit we are like fighting a ghost. Mohammed Ali is a former world champion because he is always on his toes and cannot be hit. Mr. Speaker, the PC Party of Saskatchewan is on its toes on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as far as leadership is concerned, we are a party of unity and the Conservative Members of this Assembly are an indivisible team. These desirable qualities of any party are not a result of poor leadership, but a result of strong leadership and persistent drive which the Member for Nipawin demonstrates so well.

Mr. Speaker, my constituency like all constituencies in the province has problems that are the responsibility of this Provincial Government. I would like to mention a few that are common to most constituencies in Saskatchewan.

Our rural municipalities are in need of funding and in need of more local control in order that essential services and improvements can be maintained. The people in the Moosomin constituency are responsible, capable individuals and are in support of a decentralization of power in order that they may have the opportunity to assume these responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, there is a need for more Level III and IV nursing care beds in our constituency. Too often these people are in hospital beds, if they are lucky, and it is felt that they should be in special care homes.

Mr. Speaker, this Government has too often put the basic essentials of people in a position where it rates lower than one of this centralist government's obsessions. The latest example being the potash takeover.

Mr. Speaker, our roads are not a major problem, but Highway 16 to the Manitoba border and No. 8 to the US border are due for a major overhaul and patching continues on almost a continuous basis. Spring flooding on these two highways in particular, are of a major concern and culverts should be installed to handle future flood situations that may occur.

A near fatal accident occurred last spring on Highway 16 just east of Maryfield, as the road was completely washed out. The same situation occurred on No. 8 between Rocanville and Moosomin. Transportation is not at its best in the southeast part of my constituency. In particular, service to the towns of Maryfield, Fairlight and communities about Parkman.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of elderly people in these areas, who need transportation, in particular to hospital appointments in Regina. I have on more than one occasion raised this issue with the Government and realizing there are some real obstacles to overcome, I am at this time prepared to look forward to any proposals the Minister responsible for highways

may have in overcoming these obstacles and meeting the needs of these people.

Mr. Speaker, last spring I brought to the attention of the Minister responsible for Tourism and Renewable Resources the question of starving deer in the southeast region, particularly in the Moosomin constituency. He was not aware of the problem, but did look into the matter. I would again like to bring this matter to the attention of the Government in order that they might prepare now effectively to handle this matter in the next three or four months.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to tell the Members of the Legislative Assembly that it is a pleasure, an honor and a privilege that I reply to this Throne Speech, the Throne Speech of the Third Session of the Eighteenth Legislature. Although the Throne Speech was not encouraging in many aspects, it is the subject of debate for this Session of the Legislature for the next few days. Up to this point I have yet to see the rationale for the dog eat dog attitude taken by the Government Members and the Liberal Opposition as they debate the issues the Throne Speech has initiated.

The personal attacks on individual Members and unsubstantiated attacks have been made by both the Liberals and the NDP on a variety of issues. I suppose to some extent, one could say the Liberals have a valid argument inasmuch as they are attempting to choose a new leader from their midst and are taking whatever opportunities they can to get publicity and attention. I can see that they need all they can get, but there's little excuse for the Government Members. It's a Government which has a majority in this House, 39 Members, that can pass just about any kind of legislation that comes to their mind. They can out-vote us in the House and if it is between sessions they can pass legislation through Orders in Council. And if by chance they should make some mistakes in some of the legislation which they propose and pass in the Legislature, they can come back with retroactive legislation to correct all those mistakes and supposedly get them out of trouble. But I am confident that the people of this Province are beginning to see the light. They are beginning to see that this Government has got tremendous powers which it is using indiscriminately.

I believe the people of this Province want to have more say in government and I don't think there is any question in my mind that at this point in time they do not have very much say in which direction this Government is going.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech did not deal in a direct way with the real problems facing Saskatchewan residents and this Government and this Liberal Opposition treat these issues like a hot potato. The Liberal Party blames the NDP for all the wrongs and the NDP blames the Liberal regime in Ottawa for all the problems we have in this Province.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the livestock industry is not concerned with who is to blame. They are concerned with getting their industry back on its feet and getting it back into a position where it will be once again a viable operation. A viable operation in the interests of all the people in Saskatchewan, not just the producers.

Mr. Speaker, this Province's economy has been buoyant in recent years and this buoyant economy is attributed to the fact

that we have had good growing conditions right throughout the province. This Government has in no real way contributed to this buoyant economy which Saskatchewan has been blessed with. And, Mr. Speaker, agriculture in this Province is still the greatest generator of wealth, the greatest employer of people, either directly or indirectly.

The attention which this Government seems to give this industry that we have that is so vital to our province, is next to nil. It has introduced short term policies regarding agriculture, similar to the Federal Government which has introduced many short term policies designed to meet the immediate needs of our agricultural industry.

The Anti-inflation Board has claimed success in reducing food prices, but I say these reduced food prices have been on the backs of our agricultural producers, especially here in Saskatchewan. Marketing boards, Mr. Speaker, have claimed success in controlling production, controlling production so that there will not be an oversupply, so that there will not be surpluses because when there are surpluses there are depressed prices.

Mr. Speaker, in a world which is starving, we must strive to produce as much as we possibly can. If these marketing boards which we have in our province, marketed our products, got out and found sales for our products, then, Mr. Speaker, I could be more in favor of marketing boards as we know them in this Province.

Today, there is a great need to bring farm organizations together, so that they may strive for a common goal. I feel that many of our government programs tend to put one farm organization against another.

Mr. Speaker, if marketing boards are the wish of our agricultural producers, then far be it from me or any party or any government to deny it. My argument with regard to marketing boards is that the bulk of the agricultural producers do not realize what the full implications of these marketing boards are. They are not aware of the powers which this Government has through The Natural Products Marketing Act.

Mr. Speaker, in the first Session of the Eighteenth Legislature, the Attorney General said he was prepared to accept an amendment from the Progressive Conservatives. We prepared such an amendment and presented it in the second Session of the Eighteenth Legislature. Mr. Speaker, in a few seconds, 39 Government Members stood up and defeated this amendment in the Legislature. I do not feel that the Government was really prepared to accept any amendment from the Opposition Party.

I can assure the Members of this Legislature that any proposal from the Conservative Opposition that will take away some of the sweeping powers of this Government will be defeated in this House and not considered even as a matter of debate, so that information might be made available to our producers and anyone for that matter in this Province which is affected by the unprecedented power of government.

Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech this government speaks of clouds on the horizon. I would like to tell this Legislature, there were clouds on the horizon the very day that this NDP Government took office, just a little over a year ago, and Mr. Speaker, I am concerned with the present state of our

agricultural industry in Saskatchewan. I feel it is in the most precarious situation since it came into existence. It is in debt to federal and provincial lending institutions, the banks, credit unions, machine companies and suppliers. Outstanding farm loans in the last ten years have tripled. I agree farm operators are in need of financing on both a short and long term basis, but when these outstanding debts threaten to take our farm operations out of private and individual control and possibly into the control of our provincial or federal governments, then I take this opportunity to make our farm operations in Saskatchewan aware of these undesirable eventualities.

The Government puts forth programs which look good on the outside, but when one begins to look at the fine print, he will find that in many cases there is far too much red tape for him to cut his way through. We will find he is legally bound to the powers which this Government is at liberty to impose on him. He will find the programs are discriminatory in many ways.

For example, the grain producers of our province do not benefit from the \$50 cash grant for cow-calf operators. This Government designed its program in such a way as to say to the farmer, who is being a good operator and building some insurance measures into his operation, that you have enough and our program only applies to a limited number of producers.

These are things that do not hit the headlines when the Government announces another of its grand programs. Programs primarily designed to draw people back under their socialist wing.

Further, Mr. Speaker, the Government recognizes that there is little content in the Throne speech which is worthy of debate and for this reason goes on at great length in an attempt to tie the Conservatives in some way, or any way for that matter, with this mysterious bogeyman plot that Cargill is moving in to take over Saskatchewan. In fact, to this point both Liberal and NDP arguments have been a great array of unsubstantiated accusations.

When this NDP Government stops putting up smokescreens, creating non-existent issues in this Legislature and starts to take into account at least some of the proposals the Conservative Opposition can make, then the real issues in our province might be effectively dealt with to the benefit of all the people in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, our agricultural industry is not in a secure situation. It is facing many problems and they view it as being far more serious than mere clouds on the horizon.

Before I conclude my remarks on agriculture, I should like to make a few comments on the dairy industry in Saskatchewan. Drastic reductions in milk production quotas announced by the Canadian Dairy Commission last April, were an overreaction on the part of the Federal Government and our Federal Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Whelan. During this period of quota reductions many dairy farmers in the province were selling out. Our dairy farmers suffered tremendous losses, tremendous financial losses. It hurt this Province's dairy industry at a time when we are trying to increase our number of shippers. The Federal Agriculture Minister, Eugene Whelan's announcement of substantial restoration of quotas cut last spring appears to indicate that



there had indeed been an overreaction to a surplus of milk. Mr. Speaker, this Province has the potential to be a great dairy province. Even though it is in a predominantly grain growing area of Canada. The reason we cannot acquire an adequate number of milk producers is because of an insecure market share quota base which they must have in order to invest the large amount of capital required. When the Canadian Dairy Commission can make quota cuts and impose severe penalties for overproduction and then turn right around a few months later and take the lid off, there is no way we will be able to establish a dairy industry which will match the potential we have here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, our provincial Minister of Agriculture and our Federal Minister of Agriculture must get together and devise a system by which our dairy producers can protect their operation on at least a three year and preferably a five year base as it pertains to their percent of the total market share.

Mr. Speaker, this Government's Minister of Agriculture knows that from 1971 to 1976 our province's per cent of total market share has declined from 3.5 per cent in 1971 to 2.5 per cent in 1976, and Mr. Speaker, unless our provincial Minister of Agriculture can reverse this trend then our dairy industry in this Province will in fact become nonexistent. Mr. Speaker, I can assure this Assembly that the FarmStart program and the Member for Saltcoats (Mr. Kaeding): along cannot hope to adequately meet the future demands of this Province's dairy industry.

I look across to the other side of this Assembly and I see a government determined to centralize all power unto itself at the expense of local governments, local authorities, at the expense of hospital and school boards, at the expense of employers and workers, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, at the expense of every citizen in Saskatchewan. In doing so they are creating great frustration among the people of our province and are losing their support.

But when I look at my right, Mr. Speaker, I see the remnants of the last Government of Saskatchewan, Members of the Liberal Party. Their only difference, Mr. Speaker, is that they feel they can centralize all power in their hands more efficiently than the NDP. We see Liberal efficiency at work in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker. Millions and millions of taxpayer dollars misappropriated, mismanaged and puffed away in a jet stream. We see Liberal centralist policies at work at the expense of the provincial governments, provincial authorities and at the expense of this confederation and every citizen in it. Mr. Speaker, the Liberal ranks grow thinner every day all across the province. And day by day as they peek beneath the carpets in this Assembly for the leadership candidate who they hope will rise up and save them from disaster, a disaster that looms ahead for the Liberals.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this Province are looking to the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan. They see in our party the commitment to their local communities, to their local needs. They are looking to the Progressive Conservative Party for a government that will reflect the needs of people. They are tired of governments which decide what the people need and force it upon them. They are looking to the PC Party to provide responsible, responsive government which will enable Saskatchewan to aspire to the greatness which it can become if it is given the opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech doesn't give any clear

direction to the people of Saskatchewan as to how they will effectively deal with the problems we are facing today.

Mr. Speaker, I shall not be supporting the motion.

**Hon. E. Kaeding** (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to take the opportunity at this time to enter into the debate and talk about some of the agriculture-related issues before us. But before I do, I should like to congratulate the mover of the Speech from the Throne, the Member for Bengough-Milestone (Mr. Lange): for his very good exposé of some of the dangers of rural Saskatchewan related to possible changes in our grain-handling and delivery system. I should like to add a few things about that later.

I should also like to congratulate the seconder, the Member for Regina Rosemont (Mr. Allen):. Certainly, he proved once again that although we, as all other provinces, are having problems related to health care costs, people of this Province continue to enjoy one of the best and most comprehensive health programs in existence anywhere in North America . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Kaeding:** — . . . and will continue to do so.

My congratulations also to the Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris): and the Member for Melfort (Mr. Vickar): on their appointments to the Executive Council. I know that they will, in their wisdom, add greatly to their fields.

As mentioned in the speech from the throne last week, agriculture is still the most important industry in our province. In 1975 the industry was responsible for 54 per cent of the net value of production in Saskatchewan. The experience of the past three years in agriculture serves, once again, as a fitting proof of the traditional maxim that the buoyancy of the agriculture sector determines to a large extent the buoyancy of the entire provincial economy. One only needs to look back to the years 1968 to 1971, where there was a surplus of grain, low quotas, and as a result of these pressures, a great deal of panic selling of grain on the prairies which resulted in a very low return to farm producers. These low returns reflected quickly into financial difficulties for all of the support industries. Implement dealers were going broke, so did car and truck dealers, hardware stores, construction firms and so on. With the return of better prices greater volume of sales in the 1972-76 period, the entire economy became alive again with prosperity showing up in booming building construction on farms and huge expenditures on farm machinery, fertilizers and so on. The business sections of our rural communities were revitalized and the boom carried even into the larger cities like Saskatoon and Regina. Farmers in our province have recently completed harvesting the largest wheat crop in history totalling over 550 million bushels. While grain sales have been quite slow it is expected that the majority of the crop will be marketed before the end of the current crop year.

**An Hon. Member:** — I doubt that very much.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Oh, I think it will be done.

Agriculture incomes in the grain sector are projected to be adequate in the near future, partly as a result of deferred grain sales and after payments from the 1975-76 crop which will inject cash into the economy in early 1977. While there is some room for optimism, it would be misleading to suggest that the industry does not have any problems. Most of us are aware that wheat prices have fallen sharply from their levels of 18 months ago. Decline has been in the area of 40 per cent, with the majority of this drop coming after the start of the current crop year. The price decline has been particularly alarming in view of the steadily increasing cost of production. Data released by Statistics Canada indicates that to the end of June, 1976, farm income costs index for western Canada was about 7.5 per cent above the level of one year ago, and 22.4 per cent above the level of two years ago. The cost increases for particular items are substantially greater than this average cost hike. For example, machinery costs average 8.5 per cent above the levels of one year ago, and 29.4 per cent over the levels of 1974.

**An Hon. Member:** — What about farm fuel?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Farm fuel is another one. Fertilizer costs have risen 65 per cent over the past two years, with about 18 per cent of this increase in the last year. Higher labor costs are 38 per cent higher than they were two years ago, and the machinery repair costs are about 25 per cent higher. If present prices continue to decline, or if costs increase without a corresponding change in product prices then the impact on farmers' net incomes could be serious.

The dangers for our farmers of such a price decline are probably greater now than they have ever been in the past. The reason for this danger lies in the unprecedented size of land and machinery investments used for production on Saskatchewan farms. Many farmers have purchased expensive equipment in recent years, based on optimistic expectations for grain production. Others have bought land at prices well above long-term productive averages. It is indeed unfortunate that the current international wheat marketing system allows a short-term increase in production to have such a major effect on prices. The situation points out again the need for orderly marketing mechanisms, whether the market in question is international, national or provincial in scope.

Inadequacies in the market place comprise one of the major problems in another sector of our agricultural industry, that is the area of beef marketing. For the past three years beef prices have been consistently at levels that do not cover production costs.

**An Hon. Member:** — Why are Jack's pigs so cheap?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — I don't know. Jack, why are they?

For the past three years beef prices have been consistently at levels that do not cover the cost of production. These problems in the industry are not simple or straightforward. However, it seems apparent that a stronger producer voice in the market place and removal of market efficiencies would do much to improve the situation of producers. Throughout this period of depressed beef prices there has been considerable controversy amongst the various groups who claim to represent beef producers.

The controversy has resulted in much hard feelings within the industry, particularly where government financial assistance has been condemned by such groups as the Canadian Cattlemen's Association. However, it now appears that a large number of producers have recognized the benefits of stabilization and orderly marketing for the beef industry and are prepared to consider such an approach.

There are provisions, both under The National Products Marketing Act and the provincial Natural Products Marketing Act for farm groups to apply for marketing boards, or marketing commissions to handle their products either on a provincial or a national basis.

**Mr. Cameron:** — Are you going to say that out in Maple Creek?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — I sure will.

**Mr. Cameron:** — They'll tear you apart.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Our Government is prepared to work with farm organizations towards the development of a more effective marketing mechanism, but it is our contention that farmers themselves must be prepared to mobilize their support in the country to bring this about. I believe a very serious debate must take place amongst farmers themselves to resolve what they really want in a marketing mechanism. Do they merely want a stabilization program; do they want a marketing board or commission? I think farmers are going to have to answer that question for themselves.

We in the Government are in full support of the development of an orderly marketing system for all farm products when farmers are prepared to make acceptable plans for such boards.

We recognize, as do most beef producers, that in order to be truly effective a marketing agency must be national in scope to accomplish most of its objectives. However, as in most other situations of this nature, it would probably be necessary to organize on a provincial basis first before a national agency can be achieved. We look forward to consultations with representatives of major farm organizations in the near future to determine our course in this regard.

If the situation within the beef industry appears somewhat confused then the action of the Federal Government can only be described as doubly so. Many inadequacies of the present Federal Beef Stabilization program, under Bill C-50 have been pointed out to the Federal Government on numerous occasions. However, they have done nothing to improve the situation.

In view of the plight of cow-calf operators an additional federal program to cover such operations on a national scale has been requested by this Government and by other provincial governments. Our requests were made repeatedly, but only repeated promises were received. Dates for final decisions on this program by the Federal Government have been set on a regular basis and have just as regularly been moved back. By the end of September the crisis period for cow-calf operators had been reached and the Federal Government's decision to leave the producers high and dry became very obvious.

**Mr. R.E. Nelson:** — You didn't do much more.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Oh yes. Since the consequences of leaving producers without any support would have been widespread producer bankruptcy and severe breeding herd depletions, our Government took immediate action. Accordingly, the beef marketing industry assistance program was announced on October 13, 1976. The program will distribute approximately \$32 million in two forms of assistance, namely interest free loans and cash grants to eligible producers. The loan program provides interest free cash advances of \$75 per cow for one year, on 80 per cent of the eligible cows in a producer's herd, to a maximum of \$6,000. The grant program provides to eligible producers a grant of up to \$50 per head on 70 per cent of eligible cows in their breeding herd, to a maximum of \$3,500. However, a producer cannot receive a grant greater than the amount by which his 1975 taxable income was below \$8,000. It is estimated that 80 per cent of this province's 28,000 beef producers will be eligible for grants under this program.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Some people have been critical of this assistance program saying it does not meet the total shortfall of the beef producer. I will agree that it does not, nor could our provincial government ever expect to meet the total shortfall in the industry. To do so would have required not \$30 million, but more than likely \$130 million, or more, a figure I'm sure that you will agree is beyond the capacity of the provincial government. Some argue that there should not be a ceiling since all producers of cattle lost money. That is not necessarily so. Some purebred breeders did very well indeed this past year. Many diversified farmers have very substantial revenues from grain and from other farm sources, and this has provided a very satisfactory overall return.

From my own experience as a farmer for over 30 years, I know that those years when I achieved a taxable income of \$8,000 or more were very good years in my farming career, and I certainly was not asking for a government grant in years like that.

In designing this program we knew it was not possible to make up for all of the shortfall. Our policy was, and is, to provide meaningful assistance to those farmers who in many cases could not have survived in the livestock business without assistance, and to those in the greatest need.

In spite of the fact that the Federal Government has not acted up to this point in time to bring about a national program they have signified a willingness to negotiate with the provinces for such an arrangement in 1977. We are hopeful that this can be achieved at future federal-provincial meetings this winter. The present hodge-podge of provincial programs can only lead to further distortion of production patterns all across Canada.

The provincial beef assistance program was a necessary reaction to the Federal Government's refusal to honor its obligations to beef producers. The federal refusal to take positive action in assisting producers was discouraging, but continued federal actions are even more frustrating. While our

producers are suffering from inadequate returns, the Federal Government has allowed off-shore beef imports from Australia and New Zealand to greatly exceed their long-term average levels. The Federal Government claims that it has been dealing with the problem, but its actions range from establishing broken gentleman's agreements to negotiating unsatisfactory quota arrangements.

The Government has deliberately stopped short of implementing a rational long-term beef trading policy whereby only pre-determined levels of beef, related to domestic supply, would be allowed into Canada.

The same can be said with regard to hogs and poultry meats. The Canadian market is now being deluged by cheap imports of these products from south of the border with no consideration for the effects on our producers. The reason for the Government's refusal to act decisively against these cheap imports appears quite obvious. It is far more concerned with cheap food than it is about the country's livestock industry or livestock producers. The latest statistics from the Anti-inflation Board shows a drop in meat prices in the past month of 15.7 per cent for beef, 14.1 per cent for pork and 11.2 per cent for poultry. It is good for the consumer, Mr. Speaker, but not very good for the producer.

I have some fears that other agricultural sectors may suffer from this apparent preference of the Federal Government and the Consumers' Association of Canada for cheap food at almost any price. We have already seen the Federal Anti-inflation Board gloat over past food price reductions, although it has no mandate to control farm-gate prices. There are now rumors that this board wishes to go beyond its present mandate to exercise control over marketing boards. Such a step would be totally unacceptable and inappropriate, particularly in view of the Board's inability to curtail the sharply rising costs of farm inputs.

It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that whenever a price increase is announced by a marketing board, be it dairy, vegetable, egg marketing or any other, the Consumers' Association and the press immediately start a hue and cry about inefficiency and monopoly trading, and all of the other evils they see in an organized marketing system. However, when these same boards announce a decrease in price, as happened recently in eggs, there was not a word from the same people to give the board credit for fair pricing according to cost of production changes.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the Consumers' Association, which represents, in a large measure I would expect, the working people of this country, has ever considered the inconsistency of their demand that they should be entitled to buy foods of all kinds from the cheapest possible source whether that be from Australia, the USA, or any other country, regardless of the consequences to our Canadian farm producers.

How many teachers, for instance, would agree that school boards should be allowed to bring in unlimited numbers of teachers from Britain, the USA or wherever because they could be hired at a lower wage? Or suppose an attempt were made to bring in unlimited numbers of workers to work in the construction industry of this country at \$3 an hour to replace our own workers. We would have a hue and cry such as was never heard in this country of unfair labor practices and scabbing and all of the rest. Yet, farm producers are expected to sit idly by while wholesalers bring

in unlimited amounts of cheap food in spite of the fact that we are quite capable of producing our own. I believe consumers should think about that and seriously consider whether they can allow their best customers to go unprotected in an otherwise protected society.

In recent years, probably the greatest market-related concern in western Canada has been the implementation by the Federal Government of open marketing for feed grains. This policy, introduced in 1974, has been constantly adjusted and revised, but it has remained obvious that the policy could not achieve its stated goals.

Revisions in the federal policy have been so extensive that, presently, the open marketing pricing mechanism has had many of its original functions in the market place removed. With the additional pricing and supply responsibilities assigned to the Wheat Board at the beginning of the current crop year, the open market has apparently become redundant. However, the Federal Minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board, Otto Lang, insists on retaining the open market system, in spite of its redundancy. Some individuals suggest that maintaining the open market as an option is not harmful if sales are voluntary. I believe this position shows a poor understanding of how our feed grain market works. Their arguments cannot be maintained if the facts are known.

**Mr. Nelson** (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg): — We don't understand that.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — I'm sure you don't. The present feed grains policy allows producers to bypass the Canadian Wheat Board and sell directly to grain companies or eastern consumers. If a producer wishes to sell all of his grain, he may do so by placing it all on the open market with no quota restrictions. Since the eastern market is limited, sales made through the open market will, correspondingly, reduce the amount of feed grain the Canadian Wheat Board can sell. In this way, farmers who sell on the open market are taking away delivery opportunities from farmers who are prepared to share the limited market by selling through the Wheat Board.

During the times of sluggish world markets, the present open market feed grains policy could result in chaos. If Wheat Board delivery quotas were low because of limited export markets, more and more farmers would be forced to take a lower price on the open market, simply to move their grain.

**Mr. Nelson:** — Did you ever hear about boot-legging?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Yes, I sure did and I don't want to hear about it again either.

As these farmers moved out their inventories, sales by the Canadian Wheat Board into the domestic market would cease to exist, thereby preventing the Wheat Board from increasing its delivery quotas. This, in turn, would force more and more farmers to dump their grain into the open market before the eastern market was satisfied and before prices dropped even further. In this way, the open market would force farmers into cut-throat competition with their neighbors, and would

destroy all order in the marketplace. The big winners would be eastern livestock producers or grain companies.

It is difficulties such as these that make it imperative for the open market system for feed grains to be terminated immediately. Our Government has constantly worked toward this objective, and we will continue to do so until full control for feed grain marketing is restored to the Wheat Board.

**Mr. Cameron:** — What about farm to farm . . .

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Yes, there are farmers out there.

Farmers in western Canada will be interested to know that at the recent meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture in Quebec, only the Tory Government of Alberta took a strong line against the orderly marketing of feed grains through the Canadian Wheat Board.

The Member for Last Mountain (Mr. MacMurchy): very ably told this House last week of the position taken by both the Liberal and Tory parties during the recent Throne Speech debate in Ottawa. When the chips were down, Mr. Speaker, not one Liberal or one Conservative was prepared to support a motion by the Member for Yorkton-Melville that the Canadian Wheat Board be designated as the sole marketing agency for feed grains. Farmers should never be allowed to forget that, because their future in western Canada may well depend on whether the Wheat Board stands or falls in years to come.

**An Hon. Member:** — . . . freedom of choice . . .

**Mr. Kaeding:** — You have freedom of choice, you bet.

The Member for Bengough-Milestone (Mr. Lange): and the Member for Last Mountain dealt rather fully with the matter of inland terminals but I would like to add a warning of my own. In my meetings throughout the province, I have occasionally run across farmers who say we need these new terminals to . . .

**Mr. Speaker:** — Order! Resume your seats. I am having trouble hearing the Members speaking and I expect the Members to advance them the same kind of courtesy that you would expect to receive yourself.

**Mr. MacDonald:** — Mr. Speaker, we were just giving him a hand . . .

**Mr. Kaeding:** — In my meetings throughout the province, I have occasionally run across farmers who say we need these new terminals to provide extra competition. I wonder how many of these farmers have stopped to think of the full consequence of what they are suggesting. It must be obvious to anyone that when a terminal is built in an area which is already well served by existing elevators in a number of neighboring communities, that the farmers in that community will have to pay for the over-capacity.

To be viable, the terminals must have adequate volume to meet their investment costs. If they achieve this volume it must



be at the expense of existing facilities, many of which are operating in the small communities on fairly narrow margins. This added pressure could mean the closing of many or all of them. When where is your competition? At the next terminal at Assiniboia, or Rosetown, or Yorkton, or Regina? Too far away to make the competition really very possible. Would that then be effective competition? I suggest it would be no competition at all, and farmers would soon be caught in a monopoly situation.

This would apply as well to the many farm inputs which farmers traditionally obtain from their local elevators, their fertilizers, seed and chemicals. Once these local supply points are lost, competition and service will soon be a thing of the past. Let no one be fooled, Mr. Speaker, the inland terminal concept and the traditional assembly system cannot survive long in the same marketplace, since they must both derive their income from the same source. Farmers should recognize now before it is too late that the inland terminal system will lead not to more competition over the years, but will mean that the system would become centralized to the point that no effective competition remained.

The fate of many of our small communities could rest on the decisions farmers make on this critical issue. I would suggest that leaders in small rural communities should examine their support to the farmer owned and controlled elevator system which has served and will continue to serve our farm community well in the years to come. Their only purpose for existence is to serve the rural community. The multinationals have another purpose, to maximize the profits of their shareholders. Service to the rural community is only incidental.

I should like to turn for a moment, Mr. Speaker, to the Land Bank Program. The Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe): took his usual negative round out of this very valuable program. He should have listened to his would-be leader, the Member for Regina Lakeview (Mr. Malone):, when he said that his party's criticism of the Land Bank during the 1975 election had been irresponsible. He added, "We failed to acknowledge that . . .

**Mr. Malone:** — On a Point of Privilege, Mr. Speaker. I've never said any such thing at any time ever and I am unlikely to do so ever.

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Check the press then, the press seemed to have carried this statement. He added, "We failed to acknowledge that there was a real problem of transferring land from one generation to another in Saskatchewan."

The Tory Opposition talked about a bank for land. Now, no one knew what that meant, I think least of all the Members of the Tory Party who tried to explain it.

We believe that the Land Bank has proven its validity as a solution to some of the problems of land tenure today. It is consistent with our strong commitment to the family farm concept. In spite of all the criticism levelled by the Opposition, the Land Bank is both successful and popular. Last year over 2,150 people applied to lease 442 parcels of land. Over 1,700 farmers are now leasing Land Bank land. Over 25 per cent of these did not own land before. Another 30 per cent owned or leased only a small amount of land, insufficient to give them a proper operating

unit.

Father-to-son transfers through the Land Bank are very popular, and provide a mechanism for a father to get his equity out of his land and gives the son a chance to get started without a huge load of debt. Certainly, there will be a few lessees who will end up in financial difficulties.

This will be true no matter what kind of land transfer system were to be used, and there will be occasions where the Land Bank may have to cancel leases for non-performance of contracts. However, I can assure this House that any operator who shows an honest attempt to meet his commitments can be assured that the Land Bank Commission will deal with him reasonably and with consideration.

After three years of operating experience, a number of administrative shortcomings have been identified in the Act, and I will be taking the opportunity later in the Session to bring forward a number of amendments to accommodate the necessary changes. However, the basic principles of the Land Bank are sound and will not be changed.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Kaeding:** — The Member for Last Mountain-Touchwood dealt rather fully earlier in this Debate about the issue of the Crow's Nest rates and transportation. Farmers should be seriously concerned with the total strategy as it has unfolded in this past year. In March of this year, it was announced that the Atlantic and East Rail Freight rates would be removed. This will result in cancellation of these lower rates on the movement of flour from the prairies to eastern and export markets, as well as increased costs for shipping export grain to eastern ports during the winter months. This move will have a disastrous effect on our western milling industry which is already very hard-pressed to maintain a competitive position on world markets.

Policy changes resulting in removal of preferred rates on rapeseed oil and meal announced by Mr. Lang, would put these products at compensatory rates. This again will make the price of western Canada's processed products uncompetitive with eastern Canada, and will undoubtedly result in processing of raw rapeseed being done in eastern Canada, and could result in the shut-down of crushing plants in western Canada. I understand that only a few days ago Mr. Lang reversed this decision temporarily; but I would not depend on that for very long.

The latest move to remove feed freight assistance to eastern Canada adds another dimension. The statement issued by Mr. Lang says that the resulting \$18-20 million annual saving to the Federal Treasury would be passed on to help improve the competitive position of eastern livestock producers. But who is going to pay the bill? No one else but the western feed grain producer. There was not even a suggestion that this saving should be passed on to the supplier of feed grain.

At the same time, Mr. Whelan indicated to eastern feeders that there would not be an increase in the price of feed grains in eastern Canada because they always have the alternative of American corn. So any suggestion that the western livestock producer had somehow gained a bonanza seems totally unrealistic and is not likely to improve their competitive position

significantly.

In fact, the entire strategy now becomes apparent in Mr. Lang's policies, it appears to be pointed to put the maximum pressure on the western provinces to coerce them into agreeing to a removal of the Crow's Nest rates in order to save the processing industry which is so sorely needed to remove our dependence on a straight grain economy.

The irony of these actions is all the more reprehensible when one considers that, only three years ago at the Western Economic Opportunities Conference in Calgary, there was a general agreement that a national transportation policy should be put into place which would ensure a diversified economy in western Canada. Many of the investment decisions to diversify the processing industry were based on the belief that such a policy was indeed contemplated. These industries now find themselves in the position of having these decisions reversed, and the entire processing industry put in jeopardy.

It seems hard to believe that Mr. Lang, himself a westerner, would be the prime mover of such a series of events. It is all the more disturbing when we find the Conservative Transport Minister from Alberta, Hon. Hugh Horner, supporting these moves in a telegram to Mr. Lang, particularly, after the western ministers had arrived at a decision to jointly oppose the imposition of compensatory rates. One begins to wonder what kind of an alliance is at work in this country to destroy the Crow's Nest rates at any cost.

Each of these actions by itself creates problems for some segments of the industry. The total sum of all of these actions when taken together represents a serious erosion of the agricultural economy in western Canada. Not only is the primary producer being asked to assume higher costs or lower returns, but the processing industry which should logically be a basic part of western development is being throttled as well.

These decisions have made a mockery of the Hall and Snavely Commissions which are painstakingly gathering evidence from grassroots farmers and their organizations as to the kind of transportation systems needed in western Canada and who should bear the cost. Mr. Lang appears to have made the decisions long before the evidence is in, and strictly on the basis of making transportation facilities pay their way instead of using them, as was promised at the WEOC Conference, to provide a national development policy.

I am deeply concerned with the implication of these actions on Saskatchewan producers and processing industries, many of which are producer owned and operated. Our Government has expressed its opposition to the 'user pays' concept as it relates to transportation at every available opportunity. I appeal to the farming population, whether you are supporters of this Government or not, to add your voices in opposition to these moves both through your farm organizations and directly to Mr. Lang.

**Mr. Cameron:** — Where did you learn to distort things like that?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Oh, they are not distortions. In view of very satisfactory prices until very recently hog numbers in Saskatchewan have

not increased substantially from the very low levels of 1974.

Partly, this is as a result of very satisfactory grain prices experienced by prairie grain farmers in the past three years. Partly, I believe, it is because of the instability which has plagued the industry with regard to price. We have seen prices yo-yo from under 40 cents up to 80 cents within one year and now back again in the 45 cent range.

This Province stood by its producers in the serious slump in 1973-74 and paid out over \$15 million to producers to help them maintain their incomes through the Temporary Hog Stabilization Program. When prices rose in 1975, many producers were able to take advantage of these very good prices. Still many have chosen not to continue in the industry, with the result that low volumes to our packing plants has forced the closure of the Burns Prince Albert plant.

The Hog Marketing Commission has been able to establish an assembly system for those producers in the north west to deliver to the Intercontinental plant in Saskatoon without undue inconvenience and without extra cost.

The most recent decision by Intercontinental to close their hog-kill operation in Regina has created additional assembly problems for the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Commission, especially in the south east region. The Intercontinental plant here in Regina has been under pressure to improve its hog-killing facilities for some time.

although the kill area itself was satisfactory, federal and United States Health of Animals inspectors have insisted that changes, costing very substantial amounts of money, would have to be made by January 1, 1977.

In view of the very low volume of hogs being delivered to the plant, approximately 1,800 per week as compared to the killing capacity of 6,000 per week, the decision was made by the company to close its hog-kill operation and to increase its kill of cattle in Regina.

Capacity at Saskatoon is completely adequate to handle present and future requirements for hogs in the foreseeable future.

In order to meet the assembly changes required by this closing, the Saskatchewan Hog Marketing Commission is in the process of holding meetings in southern Saskatchewan to set up an efficient assembly system so that producers will not be unduly inconvenienced. Arrangements have been made with Intercontinental to assure that no additional costs will accrue to producers as a result of this change. Although there may be some initial transition problems in the next few weeks, we would urge producers to be patient and stay in production. We are confident that this consolidation, though creating some problems, will work out to the best advantage of all producers.

In order to remove some of the instability which has plagued this industry, we introduced the SHARP program this summer, The Saskatchewan Hog Assured Returns Program.

This is a voluntary contributory program, which is financed jointly by the provincial Government and the producers.

Producers pay into the fund 10 per cent of the difference between calculated cost of production and actual selling price when prices are over cost of production levels.

The provincial Government matches these contributions dollar for dollar. The floor price is variable depending on cost of production figures and is set into a formula which pays all cash costs of production plus 75 per cent of other costs such as interest on investment, depreciation and return for labor.

The first quarter payment price was set at \$47.50.

A long-awaited satisfactory support program from Ottawa has not materialized yet at a level satisfactory to our producers. Because that is so, we have committed provincial resources again to the support of the hog industry to try to maintain confidence in our producers.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Turning for a moment to other items in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, I believe that working people, particularly those in the potash industry in my constituency, will appreciate the amendments being brought forward to The Occupational Health and Safety Act. Although they have appreciated the concern of this Government in passing the original Act in 1973, there were deficiencies in the Act which they have identified. The new Act will give employees greater protection in their work place with respect to occupational hazards, will give them added protection against discrimination by their employer when they participate in occupational health committees, and will protect their right to refuse work which is unusually dangerous to their health and safety without discrimination. These are important and necessary steps forward in providing for the safety of our potash workers and they will be appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, the record of this Government in rural Saskatchewan, in resource development, in the field of health and education is a record we can all be proud of. The speech from the Throne indicates a commitment to further improve these programs. It is a Throne Speech which I am proud to support. I will, therefore, be voting for the motion and against the amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Cameron:** — Mr. Speaker, before the Minister takes his seat, I wonder if he would permit a question?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Yes.

**Mr. Cameron:** — I wonder if the Minister could give the House an assurance that no provincial beef marketing board will be set up without a vote first of producers?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — I can assure the Member that there will be long discussions before any decision is made on a beef marketing commission.

**Mr. Cameron:** — Would you give producers a vote first?

**Mr. Kaeding:** — There will be a lot of consultation before the decision is made.

**Mr. A.N. McMillan** (Kindersley): — Mr. Speaker, I have always been under the impression that the Speech from the Throne was an opportunity for the Government to lay its priorities before this Legislature and before the Province of Saskatchewan. I must say that it was been a disappointment in that respect.

We have just heard the Minister of Agriculture supplement the rather lack-lustre Throne Speech with 40 minutes of criticism about the situation in agriculture which preceded his statement that agriculture was a priority with this provincial Government. We are all aware of the fact that 54 per cent of Saskatchewan's net value is directly related to agriculture. A priority, he stated, making up the backbone of this Province and yet after 40 minutes of criticism no positive priorities, no positive ideas, no relief for the cost-price squeeze this Province is entering into now and will continue into. Nothing to indicate that the provincial Government will take action on cost controls in Saskatchewan as far as agriculture goes to relieve the cost-price squeeze in Saskatchewan.

It is not surprising I suppose. One reads the Speech from the Throne, how do you respond to a speech that really doesn't take the opportunity to lay out priorities before the people of Saskatchewan but which rather in a more subtle way indicates the either perverted priorities of this provincial Government or the lack of priorities.

I say that a Speech from the Throne is the opportunity for the government to set out positive priorities, the direction it wishes to take in the year to come. I should like to take a few minutes to point out the positive priorities that are missing from this Throne Speech.

The first thing missing is a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan that this Government will be shouldering first its responsibility to this Province, that of administering law and order which will protect the citizens of this Province from the negative aspects of society.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — I don't intimate that this Government is shirking its duty of administering the Attorney General's Department and the regulations contained therein on a day to day basis.

Governments were formed thousands of years ago to deal first and foremost with social order. That has to be. Today, in a democratic society it is still the first responsibility of any government. That is why groups of people have been gathering for thousands of years to draw up the regulations to protect themselves from minority interests within their own societies.

What indication do we have in the Speech from the Throne that would indicate that this Government is prepared to accept

even that most basic responsibility? None, Mr. Speaker. Not only do we not hear a commitment from this Government to accept its role as a legislator, we see a commitment from this Government that it will, in spirit at least, circumnavigate laws which it has responsibility of administering on behalf of all peoples in Saskatchewan. I refer of course to the resource question, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — That surely is shirking the immediate responsibility you have to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, when the most immediate evidence would indicate that your Government is not prepared to fulfil its most immediate responsibility, what confidence can the people of Saskatchewan have that they will assume their other responsibilities.

This Government has indicated it is not prepared to accept its legislative responsibilities to the people of Saskatchewan. What then of its second responsibility, serving as a collective conscience for the people of Saskatchewan.

This responsibility has arisen through the years only upon satisfactory fulfilment of a government's first responsibility. Once a government has brought basic democratic order to a society it can turn its attention to the task of instilling in all people of Saskatchewan at least a smattering of brotherly love.

This second responsibility — that of providing services on behalf of a society for the use of all members of a society, has long been a responsibility that the people of Saskatchewan have requested of their governments. In the past this responsibility has been well met by CCF, Liberal and New Democratic Governments alike.

Saskatchewan has always been an orderly society and governments have seldom found it their major task to deal with the legislative side of their work as a government, and I refer to a small 'l' legislative side of their work. Our laws have tended to be thorough, yet first and most importantly, well respected by the people of this Province.

Governments have enjoyed the luxury of being able to focus their attentions and indeed the considerable resources of this Province on providing services to the people of Saskatchewan. When I speak of services I refer to highways, health care, social services and information services such as can be provided by the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Industry and Commerce. These governments were secure in the knowledge that they could afford the luxury of developing these services.

What commitment have we seen in this Speech from the Throne that would have us believe that this Government will maintain even basic services in this Province? None, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — In fact, Mr. Speaker, by all measuring sticks evidence indicates that this Government is ignoring its second

responsibility. I will use only two brief examples, Mr. Speaker, highways and health.

The condition of the highways in this Province, and I am sorry to see that the Minister of Highways has left the Legislative Chambers, the condition of highways in this Province is a disgrace and the Minister of Highways of the province is a poor joke.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — The fact that any commitment toward providing assistance to that basic service in this Province, a lack of any commitment in the Speech from the Throne was shameful indeed. How can the Minister of Highways sit in on a Cabinet meeting and watch his colleagues struggle to spend a \$1.3 billion budget and not convince them that the people of the province need at least enough money to maintain the highways they have, let alone do an adequate job of constructing new ones. How he could sit there and let that pass is far beyond every driver in this Province, Mr. Speaker.

I would love to have seen the look on the Minister's face when the Cabinet reached the decision to spend \$128 million for a potash mine and indicated to the Minister of Highways at the same time they didn't have enough money to maintain an adequate highway program in Saskatchewan. If Members of the Government feel that we have an adequate highway program in Saskatchewan they certainly haven't been travelling the Saskatchewan highways over the past three or four years.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — The shock of that decision to purchase that potash mine at the expense of necessary basic services in Saskatchewan should have been shock enough to wake up the Minister of Highways and certainly the Minister of Health. I am sorry to see that he is not in the House at this moment because I should like to direct some comments to him as well.

If the people of this Province are heaping derision on the Minister of Highways — and believe me they are — then they can have nothing but disdain for the Minister of Health.

A CFQC reporter once said in the media that the Minister of Health was a very nice fellow. Almost too nice to be in politics. Believe me, I am sure anyone dealing with our health care system in Saskatchewan wishes he would be nice enough to resign and do us all a favor.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — First, the Minister of Health has the gall to intimate that our basic health care in Saskatchewan has not suffered at the hands of the provincial Government. These words were piously muttered while staff layoffs continued and waiting lists in our hospitals continue to grow as hospital beds are closed daily.

Where is the Minister of Health who would stand in this House and attempt to justify his Government's stand on the



health care issue? He would stand here and deride the federal government for imposing a restriction on the amount of increase in its share of federal-provincial cost shared programs, the Minister's only defense for the disgraceful situation in health care that's been allowed to develop in this Province.

He stands here and has done so in past days and sanctimoniously defended his Government while the people of the province are denied adequate health care.

This health care horror show is one issue, Mr. Speaker, that Members of this Assembly and particularly Members of the Government are unable to hide from. It's a little too close to home. Its effects are felt within the walls of this Legislature. It was pointed out by a Member of this Legislature who took his son to a local hospital to be treated for pneumonia. He had to have a four hour wait in a waiting room jammed with seriously ill patients, when the baby was finally admitted to the hospital he was given a bed in an open ward with chicken pox, measles and meningitis patients. A doctor's apology for not having the facilities available to isolate the boy is cold comfort for the parents I am sure.

Another instance, and I know every MLA in this House is constantly being made aware of situations not unlike this. The Member for Rosetown (Mr. Bailey): mentioned a similar situation this afternoon. I have been made aware of a situation where a 45 year old bachelor farmer, losing his eyesight from cataracts was put on a waiting list for a bed for surgery many months ago. I say many months ago. Today he sits totally blind at his kitchen table waiting for a bed, now promised sometime in January. His equity position in the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is cold comfort for his blindness, I assure you.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — Mr. Speaker, under no circumstances are situations like these acceptable, but under some circumstances they might be understandable.

If the people of the province lacked the resources necessary to provide adequate health care then perhaps it would be understandable that these situations could exist. Under those circumstances it would be difficult for elected Members to make the necessary arrangements to care for the sick and disabled in our province. We are, however, at a time when our ability to care for our people has never been greater.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — That this sad story should be allowed to develop is indeed a disgrace.

Why has it been allowed to happen, Mr. Speaker? The people of Saskatchewan are anxious to find out and I'm sure that Members of this Legislature will be interested to know.

I mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, about generally accepted priorities or responsibilities for a government in a democratic society.

First responsibility, Mr. Speaker, law and order. This

Government's attitude towards that responsibility is obvious disdain. Your second responsibility and I think one accepted by all Members of this Legislature, services for people. Their programs which belies their compassion for the people they serve. We have seen this abdication of responsibility, because I believe, of a philosophic fixation on government ownership of our resource industry. A priority, Mr. Speaker, which would be questionable at any time, but a priority which has been allowed to supersede this Government's commitment to an orderly society and to providing services to people.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McMillan:** — The ill effects of such priorities have been cushioned somewhat by a buoyant economy, Mr. Speaker, and believe me the Members opposite can be thankful for that. The people of Saskatchewan, however, shudder to think what will happen to this Province if and when our economy slumps again.

A Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, gives the Government the opportunity to lay its priorities before the people of Saskatchewan. This Government has done that, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan will not accept such priorities, nor will the Liberal Opposition in this House.

I will not be supporting the motion, Mr. Speaker, but will be supporting the amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. J.A. Pepper** (Weyburn): — Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise in this Assembly to participate in this Throne Speech debate.

At the outset, I wish to congratulate my colleagues, the Members for Assiniboia-Bengough (Mr. Lange): and Regina Rosemont (Mr. Allen): for the excellent manner in which they moved and seconded the Speech from the Throne. I would also like to congratulate Dr. Faris and my colleague from Melfort (Mr. Vickar): for their elevation to the Cabinet. Both men are well qualified, Mr. Speaker, to carry out their responsibilities and I wish them every success.

I had hoped, Mr. Speaker, to be able to be equally lavish in my praise for the comments of Members opposite during this debate, however, my conscience just does not permit me to be as gracious.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I have had the opportunity of sitting in this Assembly with the Hon. Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake for the past 12 years, looking at each other from different positions in the Chamber, but I can assure you, always on opposite sides. I have acquired considerable respect for him. It is difficult, Mr. Speaker, for me at times to understand how one can be so positive in this approach, but negative in his thinking, so because of that, Mr. Speaker, quite obviously there have been few times when we have been able to share common ideological ground. However, notwithstanding this fact, I say this in all sincerity, I am sure all members on this side of the House will agree with me that we have always looked forward to the Hon. Member's speeches in this Assembly and he has done a creditable job in carrying the flag of free enterprise for the

Liberal Party of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pepper:** — On the other hand however, I find myself at a loss to understand the tactics of the Members on the other side of this House. Their participation in this Throne Speech debate did little or nothing to encourage the people of Saskatchewan that the Liberal or Conservative Parties might and I say, just might, have learned something from the previous elections and are finally prepared to adopt a more reasonable and positive approach to the affairs of this Province.

Mr. Speaker, is it asking too much to expect the Members of the Opposition to be specific in their charges? Is it too much to expect to have Members opposite talk about alternatives?

Are Members being unfair on this side of the House when we say, okay gentlemen, you are against our policies and programs, what do you propose as an alternative?

If the situation is not hopeless it is certainly desperate and leading up to the Liberal leadership convention, based on what we have seen and heard so far it appears obvious that the people of Saskatchewan can look forward to nothing more than the same old tired rhetoric and negativism from Members of the Opposition in the future.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pepper:** — Earlier in this debate, the Premier not only did an excellent job in dealing with the specifics in terms of the Throne Speech, but he is to be commended as well for the precision in which he countered the baseless allegations of Members opposite who attempted to cover their own ineptitude by attacking the policies and programs of this New Democratic Party Government.

I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that we are proud of our record. The Leader of the Opposition says we are irresponsible and incompetent.

I can only say, Mr. Speaker, that he has a right to his own opinion, but I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition, that if I were a betting man, I would not be afraid to back our record against anything the Liberals managed to do during those seven long years of Liberalism in Saskatchewan, particularly when they had the chance to back up their oratory with action. And, Mr. Speaker, I would also challenge the provinces in Canada under Conservative rule to compare records.

Now before dealing specifically with the Throne Speech itself, I would like to take a moment, Mr. Speaker, to offer a personal perspective in relationship to a couple of comments made earlier in this debate by the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

The Leader of the Opposition was particularly incensed at this Government over its handling of Crown corporations. He told the Legislature that our initiatives were shameful because our profit levels were not as high as the record level profits other Canadian corporations were earning over the past couple of

years.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that what he actually says is this, what he told the Legislature that day was that the Liberal Party of Saskatchewan puts profits before people. He thinks it is better business to think only in terms of profits for the shareholders in a corporation as opposed to the benefits that our Crown corporations are accruing for the people of Saskatchewan.

What he is saying is that it would be better to let a couple of multinational corporations take over our northern timber resources and let the smaller mills step aside. That's just what's being said.

He still thinks that the Doré Lake pulp mill is a good idea. Now, Mr. Speaker, if given the chance, I know the Liberal Party would sell the people of northern Saskatchewan down the drain and open up the North for their corporate friends in New York and Washington. Obviously what Members opposite favor in terms of timber development is similar to what the Conservative government in Ontario has approved.

For the past two and a half years, the Conservative government of Ontario has been involved in secret negotiations with the giant multinational Reed Paper Company and very recently, I believe, signed a memorandum of agreement which in effect gives this corporate giant exclusive cutting rights on somewhere around 19,000 square miles of prime forest in northern Ontario.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the situation is so serious that it now appears possible that some of the pulp and paper mills may run out of wood supplies by the turn of the century because the Conservative government has deliberately or otherwise, failed to institute positive reforestation programs.

So I ask you, Mr. Speaker, is this the kind of resource development the Leader of the Opposition favors? Is this the kind of resource exploitation Conservative Members opposite would like to see in Saskatchewan? Members opposite have an obligation to the people of this Province to tell us what they would do.

We have seen Liberal resource policies in action here before and judging from the actions of conservative governments elsewhere in Canada, I can only assume, Mr. Speaker, that they would follow similar policies if ever given the chance to govern this Province.

I would hope that this Assembly will forgive what might appear to be repetition, Mr. Speaker, in my comments respecting Members opposite however, I have attempted, with great difficulty to distinguish between the policies of Conservatives and Liberals. While both parties are frantically attempting to disassociate themselves from one another the job seems to get harder all the time and with all the interparty traffic, Mr. Speaker, perhaps in the future Members on this side of the House would be advised to deal with the Opposition as a single group.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pepper:** — Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne begins by stating the fact that the economy of Saskatchewan continues to be strong. By almost every economic yardstick we are a province on the move.

Many of the significant changes which have been occurring have not been the direct result of any particular initiative by this administration. However, there are other instances where it has been our policies and programs which have very positively influenced the upward trends that we are experiencing. Of all the indicators at our disposal, however, there is one which more than any other exemplifies the increased confidence which is being accorded to our province.

How many times have we heard Members opposite sing of doom and gloom in relationship to this Government and this Province? Remember what they said when we brought in Bill 42? Remember their concerns when we got into the potash business on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan? Remember, Mr. Speaker, what the Leader of the Opposition said when we cancelled the Doré Lake pulp mill agreement? Remember, Mr. Speaker, what was predicted when we invested in Intercontinental Packers?

Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite might have been singing in different keys but they were all singing the same song, and they were all saying the province was on a roller coaster going right to the bottom. They were saying that we were driving business out of the province in droves. They said we had completely destroyed the business climate and that any businessman in his right mind would think twice about putting even a nickel into this Province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, isn't it amazing how misguided some people can become?

I do not want to leave the impression that Members opposite were deliberately attempting to mislead the public or the business community, but what I do think is that Members opposite deliberately or otherwise, chose to ignore the realities of what is taking place in this Province, a province which is enjoying unprecedented growth, a province which has gained immeasurably from the benefits of a New Democratic Party Government for the past five years.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pepper:** — Mr. Speaker, I say that this Government will continue, as it has in the past, to promote any policy and any program which will have a positive and a stabilizing effect on this industry.

Programs such as the Land Bank yes, FarmStart, backs up this commitment, Mr. Speaker. Our further pledge to participate and co-operate with the Federal Government in developing a meaningful stabilization plan, a meaningful beef marketing plan, shows we are all willing to do our part.

Now, it is up to the Federal Liberal Government to do theirs. If they are serious about western Canada's best interests, they will shoulder their responsibilities and come through with these much needed initiatives.

Now, Mr. Speaker, during this debate, we have heard considerable comment about a variety of concerns we have as a government, concerns which affect us as a province, but concerns over which we have little or no direct control.

The advent of inland terminals, rail line abandonment, the Crow's Nest rate proposals, the continual undermining of orderly marketing and the Canadian Wheat Board, the absence of meaningful federal support policies, and many other indicators, justify the concerns which we as a government have in terms of our province and its people.

While we can look to the future of the province with cautious optimism, we still must face the realities of inflation which continues to assert itself on all Canadians.

Our concerns respecting federal measures to fight inflation are well documented, our supplementary measures are aimed at meeting some of the deficiencies of the plan.

At the Government level, we have attempted to fight inflation through a program of responsible restraint. Our success in effecting restraint without imposing a severe cutback on service is very encouraging.

For instance, in health care, where other provinces are closing hospitals, reducing staff, cutting budgets, Saskatchewan stood out very noticeably. When other provinces were closing hospitals, we were opening new ones.

When other provinces, where there are Conservative and Liberal Governments, were cutting budgets last year health spending in Saskatchewan increased by over 26 per cent.

In other provinces where health premiums were rising and deterrent fees were being imposed in a frantic attempt to hold down costs, our province continued to pioneer by offering free medical service, a hearing aid plan, a prescription drug plan, a chiropody plan and a unique dental plan for children. The obvious question, Mr. Speaker, is this: how is all this possible?

The key, Mr. Speaker, rests in the policies and programs of this New Democratic Party Government in terms of its approach towards resource development. Mr. Speaker, our policy is clear, it has been stated many times in the past, and it is unequivocal. We say the resources of this Province are the birthright of the people of the province, as the rightful owners of these resources, it is the people of Saskatchewan who should reap the vast majority of benefits which accrue as a result of the development of these same resources.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is our policy.

It is one which has the support of the vast majority of Saskatchewan people, yet it is a policy which has been challenged and maligned constantly by Members opposite, the multinationals and the Federal Liberal Government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, remember the position of Members opposite when we brought in Bill 42? Why for weeks on end we heard predictions from Members across the way that this legislation would drive every oil company out of the province and they would

never return to the province as long as we remain the Government.

Well, as history shows, in the Liberal dictionary, the word never can mean from a few months to less than a few years.

Mr. Speaker, the oil companies are back. SaskOil is busy working on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan and the people are receiving a more equitable share of the revenue, and things are back to normal.

Similar analogies can be drawn by examining our other resources including northern timber. However, this entire question comes clearly into focus when we stop to examine the chain of events which transpired leading up to our involvement in the potash industry of Saskatchewan.

One year ago when we announced that we intended to become major shareholders in this industry, you remember, Mr. Speaker, the derision from Members opposite which rang through the halls for a considerable length of time. The Liberals said we were getting 'ripped off.' The Conservatives said we had no right risking taxpayers' money in a business venture as risky as the potash industry. You know, at one point in time, Mr. Speaker, I had considered the possibility that a new Liberal leader would adopt a more reasonable and sensitive approach towards this important policy, but just when I think there was real hope, the Member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant): says that not only would he abolish the Corporation if he ever became Premier, but he would sell the potash mines back to his corporate friends.

The other leadership hopeful is truer to form, Mr. Speaker, in terms of Liberal policy position. He just doesn't have a policy. He doesn't quite know which way to turn. He says he would have to wait and see how this investment turns out.

Then there is the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver):, who feels the popular thing to say is that we should be spending this money on nursing homes and improved health and education programs. Then you remember, Mr. Speaker, a little later down the road he says that if he were calling the shots, he would set up a Saskatchewan corporation and sell shares to those people in Saskatchewan who could afford it. Somehow, he reasons that it is only those who can afford it who should be entitled to the profits derived from the development of resources which belong to all the people of Saskatchewan, regardless of how much personal wealth they have at their disposal. At best, his proposal can be viewed as an attempt to placate ideologies both to the left and to the right of his own.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the oil resource, defence of our position can be stated very clearly. The uncertainty respecting energy resources in Saskatchewan is of great concern to this Government. At a time when the oil powers of the world boosted the international price and we found our oil worth more, it was our position that the majority of these windfall profits should go to the people of Saskatchewan. The Energy Reserve Fund was established and our investment for the future began.

Revenues of this Fund have increased substantially since the policy was established, and for the first time in the history of our province, we are in a position, Mr. Speaker, whereby we can offer a degree of security and safeguard against that time in the future when this resource might deplete itself.

Members opposite are either of the opinion that we should let these profits leave the province in the hip pockets of the multinationals, or like the Tories, they say we should spend it all now. What we say, Mr. Speaker, is that these resources are non-renewable and we have a responsibility to future generations to ensure that they too are able to benefit from the development of these 'once only' resources.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pepper:** — Our potash policies reflect this same commitment. However the implications are of a much larger scale. Saskatchewan possesses over 40 per cent of the known reserves in the world. The potential is highly significant and we believe that our investment is a sound investment.

I am of the opinion that within 20 years, that our decision one year ago, will be heralded as the single most important move by any government in the history of this Province. It is also my hope, Mr. Speaker, that within 20 years Members opposite will be given the opportunity to reassess the derisive stance that they have taken with respect to this bold new venture.

By making these investments today, we are in effect making it possible for future generations to enjoy the standard of living and quality of life equal to the expectation which would not be possible had not this Government had the foresight and determination to invest in their future.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech represents a sincere and honest attempt by this New Democratic Party Government to adjust some of the programs earlier initiated, while at the same time laying the groundwork for new policies and programs for the future benefits of Saskatchewan people.

While recognizing the economics and social realities of this Province and its people, we have been able to chart a responsible course. A course which will enable us as a province to realize the maximum benefits possible.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech will go a long way in assisting us to realize that goal. It is a good document, Mr. Speaker. It is positive and reflects a need for particular action at this particular time.

Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I put forward my enthusiastic and unqualified support. From my remarks, Mr. Speaker, quite obviously I will be supporting the main motion and will be voting against the amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. N.E. Byers** (Minister of the Environment): — Mr. Speaker, in this debate I want to join with previous speakers in congratulating both the Member for Bengough-Milestone (Mr. Lange): and the Member for Regina Rosemont (Mr. Allen): for their outstanding performances in moving and seconding this motion. Their contributions symbolize the concern which they display daily in discharging their duties on behalf of their constituents. Their understanding of the forces at work inside and outside the province aimed at undermining and destroying the



social and economic institutions that were built by the sweat of our pioneers and progressive-minded people and organizations equips them well to lead the counterattack to preserve a rational transportation system, to lead the national fight in trying to persuade a stubborn Federal Liberal Government not to opt out of nor cut back in the cost-sharing of health programs. The performance of these two young Members clearly demonstrates the concern and the dedication and the ability that is provided daily by all Members who occupy the back benches, the middle benches and the front benches of the Blakeney Government.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Byers:** — Now Mr. Speaker, Members on this side of the House are ‘house-broken’ when they arrive here and are, therefore, spared that extensive and prolonged preparatory program of bowing and nodding explained in most primers on parliamentary procedures. Unlike the Conservative Members, our Members can and do proceed at once to develop and implement the programs on which they were elected.

It is interesting to observe the Hon. Member for Qu’Appelle (Mr. Lane): who recently swam from the side lane of the Liberal Party to the side lines of the Conservative Party, undergo the initiation course in Conservative courtesy. No credit was given for previous experience. I am amazed that the Conservative Leader is subjecting the Member for Qu’Appelle to more than a refresher course on the rules as the Hon. Member for Qu’Appelle was serving his political apprenticeship under a former Attorney General when the present rules of this House were last revised in 1970. But the Hon. Member for Qu’Appelle is taking the whole course complete with frequent and rigid examinations administered by the one-man board of examiners comprised of the Hon. Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver): lest he suffer the fate of the Hon. Member for Souris-Cannington (Mr. Berntson): who was so inelegantly and ungraciously forced to take a back seat to the Hon. Member for Qu’Appelle. While Liberals make and play with their slates before their leadership convention, and earthquake tremors are recorded on Richter scales, it is now clear that the only measurable impact of the unmourned departure of the Hon. Member for the Conservative Party, this latest exercise in musical chairs which Liberals and Conservatives can play with ease, even when blindfolded, is the undignified demotion of the Hon. Member for Souris-Cannington.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Byers:** — Mr. Speaker, I also want to offer congratulations to the Hon. Member for Arm River (Mr. Faris): and the Hon. Member for Melfort (Mr. Vickar): on their appointments to the Cabinet. It is interesting that both leaders of the Liberal and Conservative Opposition parties have been critical both in public and in this House of increasing the size of the Cabinet. I remind both Opposition parties of an expression commonly used by the Hon. Member for Kinistino (Mr. Thibault): that: “A ship tied up in harbor doesn’t need a large crew.” This Government makes no apologies for its expanded activities that have resulted in the creation of several new departments.

A Liberal Government did not need a Department of the Environment. They had no policy that required an Environmental

Impact Assessment before they would have ploughed under the northern forests for their proposed Doré Lake pulp mill or dammed the Churchill River.

They did not need a Minister of Consumer Affairs, because they believe the consumer should fend for himself in the market place.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Byers:** — They did not create a Department of Northern Saskatchewan because they believed that Liberals are born to govern and northern people were born to be governed by Liberals.

They did not need a Minister of Youth and Culture to administer a \$26 million grant program to build and restore recreational and cultural facilities. Any grants provided by Liberals for youth or culture could have been distributed by almost any public servant working two or three nights a week on a casual basis.

Mr. Speaker, I was interested, but not surprised, with the reaction of the Leader of the Opposition to the Throne Speech. Like a restless child sitting through a church sermon, he could only comment that it was long and dull. Like the immature child he could not find anything constructive. After seven years in the former Liberal Government, and many years in Opposition, you'd think he would want to know what a Throne Speech was all about. Perhaps he will soon hear in that red-carpeted Chamber a Throne Speech that meets his standards.

The Hon. Member for Nipawin, like a rookie blundering around on the political field, could only make the incisive comment that this was a 'groan' speech. Perhaps because he found it so far-reaching that a groan was a comment on his own party's fumbling attempts to come up with anything that would match it in terms of innovative social and economic programs.

Mr. Speaker, in the course of this debate both the Liberal and Conservative parties have ignored the voluntary program of this Government, through its Crown Corporation Sask Tel, to assimilate the 700 rural telephone companies in this Province. This program will immeasurably change the life of the residents of rural Saskatchewan. This \$100 million initiative by this Government will improve the quality of life in rural Saskatchewan. It will maintain and sustain the social and economic fabric of rural Saskatchewan.

The system of rural telephone companies that developed in Saskatchewan is unique in North America, indeed in the world. In forming these farmer-owned, farmer-managed, farmer-directed companies our stalwart pioneers demonstrated the same initiative they showed in breaking and settling the land, establishing a strong co-operative movement by applying collective action to build a variety of institutions like union hospital districts, veterinary clinics and so on.

The challenges which the directors of rural telephone companies faced and met head-on were horrendous. They raised scarce capital to build or rebuild new lines to long-established and newly-created farmsteads. They explained levies on run-off parcels, easements and government grants to subscriber

shareholder meetings. They endured the winter cold to prop up sagging lines and reset fallen poles. They traced these lines over hills, through dales, and across muddy swamps on rainy days to locate the point of trouble at this own expense and called it volunteer labor.

Today, before I proceed to outline the highlights of the new Voluntary Assimilation Program, I want to publicly acknowledge and thank the men and women who have done a highly creditable job of building and maintaining our rural telephone company system.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Byers:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, our Government recognizes that a fail-proof communication system is an essential service for our farming population. We are aware of the problems rural telephone company boards are facing to finance the construction of buried wire and cable to replace worn out overhead lines. We know it is extremely difficult in some areas to find and retain competent full-time maintenance men to keep the facilities in top shape. And for the number of inquiries we are getting requesting Assimilation, we are convinced that an increasing number of companies feel that as communication technology becomes more and more complex, the merger of the rural telephone system with Sask Tel is not only desirable, but also inevitable.

So tonight, Mr. Speaker, I want to outline the highlights of a proposal mentioned in the Throne Speech, the main elements of The Voluntary Assimilation Program.

Commencing in 1977 Sask Tel will offer to assume full responsibility for providing telephone service to the subscribers of the rural telephone companies that vote for the voluntary transfer of their facilities to Sask Tel. This can only be done with a 60 per cent affirmative vote of the votes cast at a special meeting of the rural company subscribers. Both Sask Tel and the Department of Telephones personnel are ready to assist in describing the features of this program at special meetings called for this purpose. But Assimilation cannot take place except by a 60 per cent majority of the votes cast at a specially called meeting. This program will remove the burden of the increased cost of materials and the lack of manpower, which together with higher transmission standards, have made the provision of service difficult for voluntary boards to meet. The program we are proposing is a seven year program and we estimate the cost to Sask Tel may exceed \$100 million.

During the seven-year period, Sask Tel will redesign and where necessary rebuild rural facilities to not more than four subscribers per line.

All circuits will be buried, which will reduce the disruptions in service resulting from storm damage.

Experiences gained by Sask Tel in both the Unserved Area Program and the pilot Assimilation Program at Saskatoon have revealed some potential pitfalls if this new program is hastily undertaken.

I hope all Members of this Assembly appreciate the size of

the program we are launching. There are at present about 50,000 rural subscribers served by more than 700 rural telephone companies with multi-party line service.

Over the next seven years, some 35,000 miles of wire and cable must be laid to provide an improved telephone service in rural Saskatchewan. That's enough to go around the circumference of the earth one and one-half times. It will also involve installing 500 miles of aerial cable. It will require extensive and expensive extensions to existing switching offices at many locations. Therefore, to construct about 5,000 miles of buried wire and cable each year, as well as other facilities including aerial cable and extensions at switching offices will require an annual budget in the \$13-14 million range. Compared with the amounts presently paid in grants to rural telephone companies, this will represent an increase of more than 10 times the total of maintenance and circuit grants paid last year through the Department of Telephones to service rural telephone companies.

Before embarking on a program of this magnitude, Sask Tel has developed some guidelines gained from previous experience with the unserved area program and the pilot assimilation project at Saskatoon. The implementation of these procedures are designed to meet the target date for completing the program, scheduling construction projects in such a way that we do not and will not spend money needlessly retracing our steps, so that when the program is completed the citizens of Saskatchewan will have a modern and sophisticated communication system which they own and telephone rates that are still the lowest in Canada.

Now, based on several samples taken in the course of developing this program, we can expect to find an additional 7,000 to 8,000 farmsteads that are without phone service and are within the boundaries of existing rural telephone companies. Mr. Speaker, 7,000 to 8,000, I hope the Hon. Member for Saskatoon Eastview (Mr. Penner) notes that figure. The reasons they are without service are varied. The fact they are without service cannot be construed as a criticism of the rural companies. This program has the potential of picking up more new rural subscribers than the unserved area program set out to serve in the first place. After the voluntary assimilation program is launched, Sask Tel will canvass each exchange area for new subscribers. To obtain phone service these new subscribers for multi-party service will be required to pay Sask Tel's standard rural service connection charge of \$20 per tenth of a mile beyond the base rate boundary for that exchange up to a maximum of \$400.

One of the main objectives of this program is to replace existing overhead lines with buried cable and in so doing design the telephone distribution system to provide not more than four parties per circuit for all rural subscribers. In addition, we plan to make individual line service available to rural subscribers at Sask Tel's tariff and construction charges. Now as we strike out to re-design and rebuild these rural telephone distribution facilities at an estimated cost of \$100 million, during a period of restraint, it is only reasonable that we schedule our construction program in such a way that we do not spend scarce capital needlessly by retracing our steps unnecessarily. I particularly want to schedule this construction program so that we don't end up with an inadequate distribution system. In the re-design of the combined rural serving area, it is necessary that all rural telephone companies connected to

the same switching office or exchange must assimilate before reconstruction can commence. Otherwise, the distribution system cannot be designed to meet the present and future needs of the subscribers.

I hope this clearly illustrates, Mr. Speaker, the need to carefully and methodically re-design and as necessary rebuild and complete the rural plant, exchange area by exchange area.

Last Friday I made a plea to the members of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Telephone Companies to assist Sask Tel by recommending assimilation to any company not yet showing interest which is required for area design and scheduling.

Even though Sask Tel is prepared to rebuild the rural plant, this task cannot be accomplished over a short period of time. The sequence of work must meet technical requirements. At times we will experience difficulty and delays in obtaining equipment. We must recruit, train and assign additional staff. We must operate within the budget allocated annually for this program.

Mr. Speaker, this program ranks with the Land Bank and FarmStart and other major initiatives of this Government to build and strengthen our rural way of life.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Byers:** — Under the Voluntary Assimilation Program we are putting our money where our mouth is. We are opening the flood gates and welcoming all companies to get in the swim. We are geared up now to receive requests from these companies wishing to join the Voluntary Assimilation Program, so that we can schedule future construction projects in such a way that we do not have to spend money needlessly, retracing our steps and to avoid the pitfall of ending up with an inadequate distribution system.

We recognize that some rural companies are now finding themselves in the awkward position of being unable to provide adequate maintenance. Sask Tel will therefore consider assimilation on an “as-is” basis. I want to make it abundantly clear that Sask Tel is prepared to maintain the present level of service but the rebuilding and the reduction in the number of subscribers per line will not take place until each rural company’s turn comes up in the construction schedule. It is obvious then that the rural telephone facilities will be maintained by Sask Tel’s full time staff. To facilitate rural maintenance, as well as to serve Sask Tel’s present customers, the corporation is establishing during 1976 and 1977 some 27 new work centres. This sizeable program of decentralizing our buildings and staff in rural Saskatchewan communities will improve the level of service in installing and repairing our subscribers’ equipment. Through a decentralization program of this magnitude we are striving for increased efficiency in this corporation as there will be a substantial reduction . . .

Mr. Speaker, interrupted the debate and the question being put on the amendment, it was negatived on the following recorded division.

**Yeas — 12**

Stodalka	Nelson (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg)	Birkbeck
		Ham
Wiebe	McMillan	Katzman
MacDonald	Collver	
Penner	Larter	

**Nays — 28**

Blakeney	Lange	Rolfes
Pepper	Robbins	Cowley
Thibault	Mostoway	Vickar
Bowerman	Larson	Nelson (Yorkton):
Smishek	Whelan	Allen
Romanow	Kaeding	Johnson
Messer	Kwasnica	Thompson
Snyder	Dyck	Banda
Byers	MacAuley	Rolfes
Kramer	Feschuk	

The debate continues on the motion.

**Mr. Byers:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm keeping score.

Through a decentralized program of this magnitude, Mr. Speaker, we are striving for increased efficiency in this Crown corporation, as there will be a substantial reduction in the travelling time between the work centres and the customers. But a major benefit of this decentralization program is that Sask Tel staff will reside in the community in which they serve. They will be more readily available to the surrounding areas.

I want to assure the House that the selection of the 27 centres was not an easy task. The selection was made with the knowledge that the chosen communities will be happy while others may be disappointed. We used standard criteria to select these work centres. We considered the relative size of the community, the proximity of these communities to other staff locations. The accessibility from these communities to adjacent smaller urban centres and rural areas, were also major factors.

I want to make it clear that on assimilation all the assets of a rural telephone company will be assumed by Sask Tel. this includes all telephone sets, poles and cables. And where a company has unpaid debentures or short-term loans incurred for plant rebuild, Sask Tel will ensure the repayment. In passing may I remind this House that through various grant programs, about \$8 million to date has been paid by the Provincial Government to rural telephone companies to assist them in acquiring such items, poles, cable, etc.

Another general requirement is that easements are to be provided to Sask Tel at no charge. Any other practice would only result in increased rural rent and I know that even the Members opposite would not want that. It is possible that some companies may find themselves with the money and the plans to bury cable only to find that they cannot be scheduled until well on in

Sask Tel's overall construction program. Arrangements can be made to speed up assimilation by doing the rebuild for themselves from the assets they would otherwise turn over to the corporation.

I want to place a few facts on the record, Mr. Speaker, concerning construction charges.

1. Existing rural company subscribers will be provided with multi-partyline service without a service connection charge.
2. Individual line service if requested at the time of assimilation will be available to existing rural subscribers at standard Sask Tel tariff rates plus construction charges, less a credit of up to \$400.
3. New subscribers for multi-party service will be required to pay Sask Tel's standard rural service connection charge of \$20 per tenth of a mile beyond the base rate boundary of that exchange up to a maximum of \$400.
4. New subscribers for individual line service will be required to pay the standard service connection charge of \$30 per tenth of a mile for the first two miles plus \$15 per tenth of a mile or \$150 a mile for the next eight miles beyond the exchange rate boundary. The distance over ten miles will require a special rating.

There will be some rural company linemen and contractors who feel that they are losing their jobs with this announcement. While there can be no guarantee in every instance, Sask Tel will offer employment to rural company maintenance staff provided they meet the corporation's hiring criteria. Some we know without further investigation meet those requirements. But as for the plough contractors, they will be offered the opportunity to tender on Sask Tel's rural projects.

In conclusion let me again identify the main points in the Voluntary Assimilation Program:

1. It is voluntary and must be approved by a vote of the rural company subscribers.
2. The distribution system will be designed to provide not more than four subscribers per circuit.
3. All reconstructed plant will be buried.
4. As the schedule permits, Sask Tel will re-design and rebuild the rural distribution plant, exchange area by exchange area.
5. All companies in an exchange area are to be assimilated before reconstruction work can commence.
6. The exchange area will be canvassed by Sask Tel for new subscribers.
7. Individual line service will be available in rural areas.

8. As an interim measure, to ensure proper maintenance of the services they provide, some rural companies may be assimilated and their service maintained on an "as-is" basis until the scheduled rebuild makes the upgrading of service possible.
9. Sask Tel will provide full maintenance for the service.
10. Sask Tel assumes the assets of the company assimilated.
11. Easements as required are to be provided to Sask Tel without charge and;
12. Sask Tel's standard tariff construction charges in effect for rural service will apply.

This program, although there are general and rigid constraints, is not carved in stone. There may be some situations where we haven't seen the forest for the trees, but we believe that this is one of the biggest initiatives that has been undertaken and will be undertaken in the history of this Province to provide a sophisticated, updated and modern communication system.

I want to turn now to some other matters under my jurisdiction — some environmental matters. I want to say a word about the Souris River Study, and I am very pleased to see that the Hon. Member for Estevan (Mr. Larter): is here, also the Hon. Member for Moosomin (Mr. Birkbeck):. Two out of three is not bad.

The Canada Water Act passed by Parliament in 1970, Mr. Speaker, opened a Pandora's Box. This Act gave the Federal Government the power to enter into agreements with the provinces. Now, after the Act came into force the provinces started looking at priorities. Our Government selected the Souris Basin for a comprehensive study, because this basin had experienced severe springtime flooding and because this basin has a number of other water problems. The difficulties our Government overcame before we persuaded the Federal Government to launch this study are now history.

To the best of my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative MPs from Saskatchewan never heartily endorsed this legislation but prefer, instead, to obstruct, by encouraging their provincial counterparts to bay like dogs at the moon and try to hound the Provincial Government into paying out money for flood losses instead of developing a sensible water management program for the entire basin.

And while this Souris River Study began because of Canada's, Saskatchewan's and Manitoba's concern about flooding, the framework of the study also provides for the conservation of much needed water. The Souris river Study started just 25 months ago. Canada, Manitoba and Saskatchewan signed an agreement and there is a little more than a year to go on this study. A lot of money has been set aside so people can have a chance to let us know what they want. Almost 15 per cent of the Souris River Study budget has gone into the public involvement program and considerable effort has gone towards gathering the views of ratepayers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend those citizens, elected



representatives of local governments, organizations, public servants, who have made a genuine and sincere effort to identify the problem and possible solutions for the study board. Since the study began, many residents of the basin have expressed their concern to the Board about flooding and drainage. At public meetings residents of the basin have proposed a variety of flood control measures and conservation measures.

The critics of the study, like the Hon. Member for Estevan, who has suggested on many occasions that the study is not necessary because a host of piece-meal studies were previously undertaken. I am assured by the Board that every effort has been made to obtain these technical proposals from all provincial and federal government agencies and departments and they will be incorporated in the study. The Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Federal Government are, therefore, knowledgeable about the many technical problems that may not be identified by the residents.

Now much of the study work has been completed. The problems have been identified and the solutions are now being developed. And on the basis of all this information the people conducting the study can suggest solutions. After that we can hope to arrive at a consensus, one that matches the technical solutions with the needs and desires identified by the people directly affected by this river.

Now I don't know what kind of final recommendations will come out of this study. There is no doubt that the Souris River Study will provide us with answers to problems. If it only led to further studies the people who live there and the three governments involved would have good reason to be upset. I don't know what the final results of the Souris River Study will be, but I am suggesting to the people of this basin that it is not too early to start thinking about the management of whatever program of policies emerge.

Environment Saskatchewan has developed a strong public involvement policy to strengthen planning for the future of our environment. As the Souris River Basin Study is in its final year, five task forces are to be set up soon to assist in gathering information for the final, definitive report. We believe it is essential that local government and interest groups are involved in a careful evaluation of the alternate solutions to their problems. And rural municipal councils and town councils and interest groups such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Wildlife Association and Service Clubs and so on will be asked to name their representatives.

Three of these task forces will operate in Saskatchewan, one will cover the Yellow Grass-Weyburn area; the second will cover the Estevan area and the third will cover the Oxbow-Carnduff area. These task forces will evaluate alternative solutions, first as it would affect their own area, second as they would affect the whole basin. The study board will provide information and resource people to assist these task forces.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to make it abundantly clear, that this is not just a public relations program to soothe the concerned citizen. These task forces will be designed to discover the needs and the wishes of the people of the Souris Basin. We are relying, putting our trust in the municipal representatives and special interest groups to help identify these needs.

Mr. Speaker, one of the major new initiatives undertaken by Environment Saskatchewan in 1976 involves prior assessment of the impacts which new developments both public and private will have on the environment. The Environmental Impact Assessment Branch was established at the beginning of the fiscal year. Its task is to evaluate the environmental impact assessments before work on new projects is started. Until recently the department undertook largely remedial measures, patching up the errors of the past. Now the department is moving into preventive actions. During the summer the Cabinet approved and drafted environmental impact assessment policies and detailed screening guidelines. The draft document was made public in September. Copies were sent to a variety of organizations and to individuals, with an invitation to review the contents and to suggest improvements. Nearly 40 organizations, 25 consulting firms, a dozen federal agencies, six university departments and more than 200 individuals have been provided with close to 1,000 copies of the draft policy and guidelines.

Other organizations and citizens were invited through advertisements to participate by asking for copies, and providing reaction. December 1, 1976, was set as the final date for submission of comments, but the department is prepared to extend the deadline, if necessary. Comments received so far have been predominantly favorable with some useful and constructive criticisms included. After we have had an opportunity to consider all the submissions, the final policy statement will be drafted and made public.

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude I would just like to say a word or two about some of the operations we have been involved in at Uranium City and this may take two or three minutes.

If Saskatchewan had had an Environmental Impact Assessment Policy 20 years ago there probably would not have been the radon gas problem in Uranium city this year. However, there was a problem with radon gas and all concerned, Eldorado Atomic Energy Control Board and Environment Saskatchewan joined forces to eliminate the problem without any unnecessary delay. An initial radiation survey was completed by June. The Provincial Co-ordinator, Earl Dodds, appointed early in July, went to Uranium City to oversee remedial activity, along with a representative of the Atomic Energy Control Board and cleanup commenced on July 8th. The priorities were first the high schools and the public schools, the residences with the highest radon gas readings. The actual cleanup work was carried out by the Eldorado Nuclear Limited and Bomarc Construction. The major jobs were the high schools where 700 to 800 cubic yards of rock were removed, and the uncontaminated fill was put in its place under three classrooms. I personally inspected this work in early July. the school was back in service during the first week of September. One residence was moved to another site where a new concrete foundation was formed. Ten other homes with high readings were provided with needed forced ventilators for temporary use at no cost to the owner. Now, after fire struck the high school, it was decided to remove the more contaminated fill in conjunction with the renovations. Meanwhile, steps had been taken to ensure that new construction will not face any radon gas hazard in the future. Further testing and analysis will be necessary. Work will continue until all the remedial steps are completed.

Mr. Speaker, there are many other issues, communications and environment and issues of the Government that I would like to

stress but I don't want to infringe further upon the time of the House. I want to assure all Members that I will be supporting the motion.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. D.M. Ham** (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, in an attempt to have a fresh audience tomorrow I will reduce my remarks to a number of sentences.

I should like to begin, Mr. Speaker, by drawing the attention of this Legislature to this fine piece of merchandise the Attorney General is wearing tonight. He looks very good in Tory blue.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my constituents and my caucus I am very proud and privileged to welcome to our caucus the MLA for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane):.

**Mr. Messer:** — You don't know him yet.

**Mr. Ham:** — I will repeat that again tomorrow. This young aggressive and knowledgeable individual not only will contribute much to our caucus, but I am sure to our party, in which he belongs. It is said, Mr. Speaker, that this Member did not leave the Liberal Party, the Liberal Party left him.

Mr. Speaker, for six days now we have heard some of the finest examples of political smoke screening that I have ever heard. In an attempt to cover the real issues affecting Saskatchewan, this Government has confused the public and in some instances, this House, and especially me, over such examples as The War Measures Act, Quebec, Japan, the Federal Government, South Africa and yes, even Sesame Street. I think the climax had to come, Mr. Speaker, when reference was made to that supposedly infamous 1929 to 1934 Conservative Government, about ten years before most of us were born.

Mr. Speaker, I will have much more to say about this matter and I should like now to adjourn debate.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:30 o'clock p.m.