

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Eighteenth Legislature
17th Day

Tuesday, March 15, 1977

The Assembly met at 2:00 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. SPEAKER (Saskatoon Westmount):— I should like to introduce a group of students from the constituency of Saskatoon Westmount. They are from Estey School, Grade Seven students, 45 in number. They are accompanied here today by their teachers, Mr. Earl Peterson, Mr. Dennis Kawalko and Maxine Park. I am sure that all Members of the Assembly join with me in welcoming these students to the Legislative Assembly today and wish them a safe journey back to Saskatoon.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

HON. A. S. MATSALLA (Canora):— Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to this Assembly through you 40 Grade Eleven and Grade Eight students from the Canora Composite High School. The chaperons this afternoon are Mrs. and Mrs. George Ludba, Mr. and Mrs Nick Labuik and the bus driver is Allen Kent, and their school teacher, Mr. Don Noble.

I should like to inform the Assembly that the trip to the Legislatures to Regina, has been sponsored by our local Kiwanis Club and this is one of the many commendable projects that the Canora Kiwanis Club has undertaken. I should like to extend to our visitors a very warm welcome and I hope that they have an enjoyable and informative day here in the Capital City as well as in the Legislature. I do hope they have a fine trip home.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

HON. H. H. ROLFES (Saskatoon Buena Vista):— Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to the House through you a group of students from St. Patrick and St. Phillips Schools. They are in the Speaker's Gallery. These students are in Grade Six and Grade Eight. They are accompanied by Mrs. Rush, Mr. Reiger and Mr. Chouinard. I want to give a special welcome to the students from St. Phillips because that is the school where I had the privilege of being principal for three years and also is in my constituency. I look forward to meeting with the students. I hope they have an enjoyable time in Regina and have a very educational experience in the House.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. C. P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley):— Mr. Speaker, I just received a note that Glenavon has not arrived but if they haven't certainly in their absence they warrant being introduced. I am not sure whether they are here or not. But there are 20 Grade Ten students who are supposed to be in the west gallery with their teacher, Mr. Preikchat and, of course, come from that Indian Head-Wolseley constituency. I want to extend a welcome to them, as they have just now arrived,

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on behalf of all Members of the Legislature.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. H. W. LANE (Saskatoon-Sutherland):— Mr. Speaker, I should like to add my welcome to that of the Member for Buena Vista to the students of St. Patrick and St. Phillips School. There is a two-fold reason, as the Member knows, that I had some interest in that constituency at one time, and also I understand that the students from the school come from the constituency which I presently represent. I hope they have an informative and enjoyable time here and a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. G. H. PENNER (Saskatoon Eastview):— Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might add my welcome particularly to the Saskatoon people and some of my former colleagues who are sitting in the gallery. I was going to say that when the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes) suggested that he had been the principal of the school, many of us hope it will not be long before he is principal of the school again.

HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

QUALITY OF MEDICAL CARE IN THE PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

MR. MacDONALD:— Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question, a short series of questions, if I might to the Minister of Health.

I wonder if the Minister of Health would mind commenting on the reports in the Saskatchewan Medical Association Brief, presented to the Government of Saskatchewan, which made the claim that the quality of medical care in the Province of Saskatchewan was falling far below North American standards.

HON. W. A. ROBBINS (Minister of Health):— I have issued a press release today which will shortly be apparent to everybody. I should like to draw the attention of the Members of the Assembly to the comments of George Bola, who is Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Hospital Association, who is quoted in the March 11th issue of the Leader-Post as saying, there has not been a reduction in the services because of the restraint program and I think he should know a great deal about it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD:— A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister would mind answering the question. Would he or the Government of Saskatchewan be willing to initiate a public inquiry into the quality of medical care and hospitalization in the Province of Saskatchewan by an independent team of medical physicians from outside the province, to answer the charges of low morale, of cutting of diagnostic services, of shortage of equipment, of

reducing hospital beds, of cutting staff which has very seriously jeopardized the quality of medical care. Would the Minister agree to a public inquiry into this very serious matter?

MR. ROBBINS:— I can't speak for the Cabinet in that respect at the present time. It would have to be considered by Cabinet.

Mr. Speaker, I might have a bit of time to answer some of the things that the Member for Indian Head-Wolseley (Mr. MacDonald) is talking about.

First of all he talks about approved patient days, approved patient days for all of the hospitals operating under the global budget system, primarily all hospitals over 50 beds . . .

MR. SPEAKER:— Order! I believe the Member asked the question regarding the Saskatchewan Medical Association and a public inquiry, a subsequent question about a public inquiry, and he mentioned a number of points in raising the question. I would hope that the Minister is responding specifically to those points.

MR. ROBBINS:— It was my intention. I want to point out that hospitals reduced their actual patient day volume over that three year period and the initial adjustments for 1976 were simply a reflection of the actual experience of those hospitals, in 1974 and 1975. The total approved patient days in volume for all hospitals was established at a level higher than that actually experienced in 1975. There was an adjustment made on July 1st. The adjustment did require some effort on the part of hospitals and physicians to utilize in-patient hospital beds more effectively.

Hospital utilization rates in Saskatchewan have traditionally been much higher than anywhere else in Canada and even after the five per cent reduction was proposed last July, we still use hospital beds some 37 per cent above the national average.

Through the 1973-76 period a number of hospitals reduced their patient day volume without affecting any corresponding staff adjustment, with the result being an actual decline in productivity at the time when wait rates in hospitals were escalating at a pace well in excess of normal rates adjustments generally.

I want to point out to the Members of this House that we increased the Health budget one year ago by some 25 per cent; Alberta increased theirs by 11 per cent and Ontario by 10.

Based on unaudited year-end reports, and I stress that they are not yet audited, Saskatchewan hospitals provided 37,000 fewer patient days in 1976 than they were authorized and funded to provide.

Regina hospitals provided 20,800 fewer patient days than approved and Saskatoon hospitals 15,500 fewer patient days than were provided.

Based on December monthly reports, and again I stress unaudited, hospital expenditures exceeded approved budgets by 1.2 million. This represents a variance of well below 1 per cent and indicates a good correlation of approved funding and funding requirements.

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In addition to providing what represents a significant increase in operating funds to hospitals, the continuing development of new and approved services was carried on during the year.

MR. SPEAKER:— Order! I would ask the Minister to bring his answer to a close because, like the questions, the answers must be brief. If I could impress upon the Minister, I don't believe that it is brief.

MR. ROBBINS:— Mr. Speaker, I pointed out, if I may, respectfully, that the Member asked about equipment in hospitals and beds and all the rest of it, and I am simply covering those points.

This is the concluding remark, if I may. Saskatchewan, after the reduction in July statistics available show 1,823 separations per 1,000 compared with 1,493 per 1,000 across Canada, the national average. The percentage of money that we spent on hospitals is 56 per cent in the last fiscal year compared with 44 per cent in Alberta and 49 per cent in Manitoba.

MR. MacDONALD:— A further supplementary Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister zero in please on the problem that the Saskatchewan Medical Association is pointing out for his attention? Would he not agree that the hospital beds in Saskatchewan are located in the wrong place, four per thousand in Saskatoon, five per thousand in Regina, 8.3 per thousand in the rest of rural Saskatchewan. Will you consolidate in rural Saskatchewan? Is there any wonder that there are fewer patient days when you cut the budget? You've had to reduce staff and were unable to provide the services. Are these not the facts?

MR. ROBBINS:— Yes, they asked for consolidation of rural hospitals and we are opposed to it. We will not close rural hospitals.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear.

MR. MacDONALD:— A supplementary. Is the Minister trying to suggest to the people of Saskatchewan and the people of this Legislature that the charges of the Saskatchewan Medical Association are completely without foundation?

MR. ROBBINS:— Mr. Speaker, in a large measure, they are very misleading.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan):— Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Health. This is a letter I have on my desk and I am prepared to table a copy, from Local 80 CUPE, Estevan, St. Joseph's Hospital:

Hospital workers are concerned by the cutback of hospital staff, which has been the policy of the Provincial Government and we feel that this is discrimination against the hospital worker and is unfair to both employees and patients. We the undersigned employees of St. Joseph Hospital, do protest all hospital staff cutbacks and, furthermore, that all past hospital staff cutbacks be reinstated and no

further cutbacks be made.

What action are you going to take on this letter?

MR. ROBBINS:— Mr. Speaker, we make allocations to individual hospitals in terms of funds. Every hospital received large increases in funds. How they use those funds is largely their own business. It is true that SHSP gives them some information in relation to hospitals in that category in comparison with other hospitals across Canada, both in relation to the utilization of those funds and with regard to staffing, but the final decision is made by those hospital boards.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

LOAD LIMIT RESTRICTIONS ON ROADS

MR. W. C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek):— Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs who I note is not in the House, therefore I guess I will have to go down the line. The Premier is not here, so if I may then call on the Attorney General, the deputy Premier.

Mr. Attorney General, will you tell this Assembly, today, after the Minister's announcement in Saskatoon regarding the load limit restrictions on our municipal roads? Will this be by Order in Council or will it be passed through this Legislature in normal procedures?

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General):— Mr. Speaker, I don't believe any determination has been finalized in this area. Quite obviously we would prefer if it could be done by Order in Council because of the fact that Orders in Council are as legally effective and, of course, Members of the Opposition have access to them. They do review them once every week. I know that people from your office come in and review the Orders in Council and, of course, the full time for debate on this matter would not be thwarted. You can do it during Estimates, during Municipal Affairs Estimates or during Highway Traffic Board Estimates. But it may not be possible to do that. I just can't tell you.

MR. THATCHER:— A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Since the Attorney General is well aware in this proposed change, over our municipal roads virtually every commodity such as oil, potash, gravel, cattle etc., can not be hauled. The discrimination is against grain and does the Attorney General really expect our farmers to sit idly by while this potential discrimination is enacted into law?

MR. ROMANOW:— Mr. Speaker, I guess it's a question again of discrimination in whose view. I would simply remind the Member, as I am sure you would agree, the question of road construction and the cost for road construction and the use of a rapidly depleting energy source such as gasoline, all of these are factors of which a province with a relatively small financial base and a small population base has to be aware. Accordingly, when you draw up weight load limits and weight loads you have to be cognizant of those factors and try and work them as fairly as you can by

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considering the competing interests. I don't think that they are discriminatory. I think in the overall interest they work to the advantage of all Saskatchewan people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER:— A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Attorney General tell this Assembly whether or not the purpose behind this restrictive legislation is to eventually scuttle and choke off the Weyburn inland terminal? Does the Attorney General expect our farmers to obey a rank political law? They will not disregard it . . .

MR. SPEAKER:— Order! I think the Member's question is inviting debate.

QUALITY OF MEDICAL CARE IN THE PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

MR. LARTER:— Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct this question to the Minister of Health. Does the Minister feel that the workers, the doctors, all the medical people, do you believe, are all misleading the public on this whole question of health? Do you think we are being misled by both sides?

MR. ROBBINS:— Mr. Speaker, I said they talk in generalities like the Opposition. They prove nothing.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):— Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Health. Some very damning comments were made about the Government by the Saskatchewan Medical Association but I would like a few specific answers. They cite one case of a hospital being denied fundamental equipment such as a respirometer and that led to the fact that the hospital had no means of a preoperative assessment of lung function. Can you tell us what hospital was denied that vital equipment?

Secondly, they make a very specific comment that our lab technicians could lose their accreditation. Now these are two matters that the Government can take specific action and remedial action on immediately. What action is the Government taking with regard to those two specific problems raised in the SMA brief?

MR. ROBBINS:— I can't comment too much with respect to the first. I believe the hospital was in Swift Current. I do know that about it but I would have to check the statistics out on it. I know there are two sides to the story. I know that these people had ordered a large amount of very expensive equipment without even reporting to SHSP and that had something to do with it.

The second one, I really can't comment on at the present time but I will take it as notice and check it out for you.

MR. D. M. HAM (Swift Current):— Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, are you aware that the MCIC recently forced the Swift Current Health Region to give up \$458,000?

MR. ROBBINS:— The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that when hospitals are significantly below their approved bed ratio for the year, they do make payments back to MCIC. Also we have hospitals that have deficits so sometimes adjustments are made in that respect as well.

MR. HAM:— A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure the Minister understood my question. It is pertaining to the Swift Current Health Region, number one. Did your department blackmail the Health Region into securing a new agreement by forcing the surplus money back to the Government?

MR. SPEAKER:— Order! I would ask the Members not to invite debate with the questions.

CABLE TELEVISION

MR. E. F. A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana):— Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister in charge of Co-operatives (Mr. Shillington). Is it a fact that at the beginning of February, members of your department in reference to cable met with officials from the national body and that subsequent to that you flew to Ottawa to meet with Harry Boyle, and that as a result of your meetings with Mr. Boyle he indicated to you that the Government was prepared to concede all of the requests of the provincial Government if you would now proceed with cable television in this province as you have laid \$15 million worth of cable already?

HON. E. B. SHILLINGTON (Minister of Government Services):— You have got the right Minister, but the wrong department. It is the Department of Government Services.

However, we did meet with Mr. Boyle. He made it quite clear that he was not in a position to make any commitments on behalf of the Federal Government or the Commission. He made some personal comments about what he thought might be possible, i.e. what kind of agreement might be possible. It was agreed that the remarks were off the record. I have every intention of respecting that. You are right, we did meet with the chairman of the CRTC.

MR. MERCHANT:— A supplementary. Is it not a fact that your officials met with officials from the Commission for the first time at the beginning of February. The Commission officials advised your department that as far as they knew the Commission would be prepared to agree to all of the requests of the provincial Government and that Boyle said the same thing to you, that there was nothing holding back cable in this province except the silly attitude of your government?

MR. SHILLINGTON:— You are wrong on both points. It was not the first time my officials met with the officials of the CRTC. I don't think a month has gone by that my officials haven't met with the CRTC officials.

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Your second assumption was also incorrect. While they are prepared to make some concessions, they fall well short of meeting the needs of the province and of Sask Tel owning the hardware. That is not to say that an agreement is not possible. I believe it is. I believe we will have an agreement with the Federal Government long before the hardware is constructed. You are wrong in your assumption that the CRTC have totally capitulated. I dearly wish that they showed that kind of good sense, the kind of good sense, I guess you are urging on them. They certainly haven't.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MERCHANT:— A supplementary. Did Mr. Boyle not indicate to you that they were prepared to concede that the Provincial Government, through Sask Tel, would own the head-ends amps and drops and that all that would be required was that a wire be owned by the homeowner, and that that be serviced by the companies having the cable license. And was that not confirmed in meetings that you then had during that same visit with Madame Sauvé, the Minister in charge.

MR. SHILLINGTON:— Again the discussion between Mr. Boyle and myself was off the record. He made it quite clear that his comments were personal. He was giving a personal opinion. He had no mandate to negotiate on behalf of the Federal Government. On that particular visit which was in the second week in February I did not meet with The Honourable Jeanne Sauvé at all.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):— A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is there no way that this petty dispute can't be resolved after cable television is installed so that we can get on with the job, have cable television for the people, let the dispute be solved at a later date because that's what the people of this province want?

MR. SHILLINGTON:— Mr. Speaker, that is a theoretical question. The cable hardware is not now in place. It won't be for at least six months and it is theoretical to ask whether or not that problem could be solved afterwards. We are a fair ways from having the hardware in place.

SGIO GUIDE

MR. C. P. MacDONALD (Indian Head Wolseley):— Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister in charge of Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office, (SGIO). Yesterday we had a rather interesting discussion about the SGIO guide. The Minister said he was going to take remedial action. There are two specific problems.

The first problem is those citizens of Saskatchewan who have already received their assessment for their drivers' license and have been assessed \$5, through no fault of their own, have sent the payment in. What means are you going to take to repay that \$5? What about other individuals who have also received their notice through a computer indicating what their charges will be? Some of them will also have been assessed additional costs because of accidents which were no fault of theirs. What is your

intention? Are you going to run another computer run-off? Are you going to send them another notice? Are you going to turn around and rectify this in some way publicly or privately? What do you estimate that this will cost?

HON. E. C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs):— Perhaps we should, Mr. Speaker, begin by pointing out that the number involved is quite a small number.

MR. McMILLAN:— Several thousand!

MR. WHELAN:— No, there are not that many people that have been involved since January 1. I think that we should also point out that I said yesterday, remedial action will be taken and we have been doing that. The staff people will be giving instructions to those who are issuing licenses and instructions will be going out today.

MR. MacDONALD:— Will there be an extension of the time period when people can make their payment for their license as a result of this mess that SGIO has gotten the individual citizens in through no fault of his own?

MR. WHELAN:— Well, I think we have to look at the situation carefully before we start blackening all the employees of SGIO. They were transferring from one area to another. There were problems which had to be looked after. I don't think there are that many people involved. I have every confidence that the SGIO staff will work it out to the satisfaction of the public. They are preparing correspondence that will go to the issuers, and I am sure the matter will be taken care of.

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives):— A supplementary. Did the Minister receive a letter from the chairman of the trucking industry within the last two or three days pointing out the problem in administration resulting from the licensing system? If he did, is he prepared to tell this Assembly what steps he is going to take to cut the paper work for the truckers in the Province of Saskatchewan?

MR. WHELAN:— As yet I have received no such letter.

DRUGS IN SCHOOLS

MR. R. H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose):— I would direct a question to the Minister of Education. During the last session, the Minister announced a project by which we were to remove from the schools what is known as junk foods, and we certainly commend him on that. I wonder if the Minister has given any consideration to a more serious problem which is the drugs in school. Has the Minister approached the Attorney General's Department for assistance in dealing with this particular problem?

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HON. E. L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Education):— Mr. Speaker, I am not familiar with any vending machines in our schools which dispense drugs. I am glad that the Member for Rosetown-Elrose supports us in our approach to the removal of junk foods and the discouragement of junk foods consumption in our schools and, I hope, throughout society. We are concerned as much as anybody and as much as obviously he is about the utilization of drugs, not only by young people but the population as a whole. The whole Government is concerned, I think, in our enforcement procedures and other methods used through the courts. We in Saskatchewan are taking the appropriate steps, on a continual basis, to deal with that question.

MR. BAILEY:— A supplementary question. That was a rather flippant answer to a very serious problem, Mr. Minister.

Has the Minister been advised of the seriousness of this problem by senior department officials from school boards within the province itself?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— I am not sure, Mr. Speaker, that the problem is that serious in our schools as such. I have not received, from any school board to the best of my knowledge, at any time, an indication by letter or any other way, an expression of that kind of concern.

MR. BAILEY:— Final supplementary. Would the Minister not consider that the problem was serious enough to perhaps initiate a similar program as to what he announced last year in regard to the junk foods to draw the attention of the Cabinet and the Government and initiate a program which would help to alleviate the seriousness of this problem?

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Well, I would welcome the Member for Rosetown-Elrose to specifically tell us what he deems should be done. I have said in this House in answer to this question, and I think each and everyone of us as individuals on both sides of the House and we as a government have said, that we have to continue to do what we can to eliminate the utilization of the use of drugs as well as alcohol and other such things which are abusive to the individuals in our society and we will continue to do that.

STATEMENTS

LAW REFORM COMMISSION - Conflict of Interest

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General):— Mr. Speaker, I have a brief Ministerial Statement I should like to make.

I am pleased to be able to table to this House the Report of the Saskatchewan Law Reform Commission on Conflict of Interest. As you are aware, Mr. Speaker, I tabled the White Paper on Members of the Legislative Assembly and Conflict of Interest Law in 1973. The matter was then referred to the Law Reform Commission for study and the Commission has now completed its final report.

Because the Law Reform Commission has just completed its report, the Government has decided to table it rather than introducing legislation at this Session. We would like to have the reaction of all the MLAs in the House to the proposals set forth in the Report. Then based on the proposals and reaction, Conflict of Interest legislation will be introduced in the Fall Session of 1977.

Time does not permit me to outline in detail or even in general terms what the Commission Report says. I am going to simply table a copy of the statement that I would have read if I had been given the time to read. I would simply say that the most important recommendation is the establishment of a so-called Speaker's Committee which would in effect supervise the question of Conflict of Interest and the regulations pertaining thereto. Also, it would allow a certain number of qualified voters to request an investigation of an alleged case of Conflict of Interest of any individual MLA, and we would then presumably be bound to undertake it on that basis. If Members of the House will permit me to adopt an American form of procedure informally, Mr. Speaker, I will simply table the Conflict of Interest and I will also table as having said my statement surrounding it.

MR. J. G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):— Mr. Speaker, just a comment on the Minister's statement.

The Government of Saskatchewan has seen fit to put serious and onerous demands for Conflict of Interest on local governments. It has been indicated by his statement today that he still doesn't have the courage to put the same standards upon itself. We have studied this matter since 1973. We have had White Papers. We have asked, in this Assembly, on several occasions, Mr. Attorney General, for Conflict of Interest legislation and all that we have today is more studies, more passing the buck in Conflict of Interest legislation. I hope that the Minister has the courage, when this comes in, to make it retroactive to 1973 when the problem first came up and to put upon the Government the same onus, the same responsibility, that it puts on local governments of this province. The buck has been passed long enough and it's time to get on with some action at the Provincial Government level with Conflict of Interest legislation.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

BUDGET DEBATE

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. W. E. Smishek (Minister of Finance) that this Assembly do now resolve itself into a Committee of Finance, and the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Thatcher.

MR. R. L. COLLVER (Leader of the Progressive Conservatives):— Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to re-enter the Budget Debate.

Our Members of the Progressive Conservative caucus will have much to say during the coming weeks relating to the budgetary document placed before us last Thursday. During the Estimates, Mr. Speaker, we will once again undertake to point out to this Government the shortcomings and dangers contained in the 1977-78 Budget, as well as the positive measures therein.

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Mr. Speaker, last year during the budget debate, Progressive Conservative Members stated that the 1976 budget could never be balanced, despite contrary assurances from the Minister of Finance. We stated that this Government was intentionally showing less expenditure than it knew that it would make. Amid howls from the Members opposite, we unhappily predicted that a deficit of \$50 to \$100 million for the 1976-77 fiscal year would result from this dishonest budgeting. We were told, of course, by the Minister of Finance, that that was impossible.

It is obvious now, Mr. Speaker, that the deficit for last year could easily exceed the \$50 million sorry statistic. The Minister currently admits a \$45 million deficit, admits spending about \$70 million more than was planned due to, and I quote: "Unforeseen circumstances", and admits to including in the revenue of the province moneys which had already been included in the revenue of the Energy Fund to the extent of \$35 millions. The people of Saskatchewan were most fortunate to have had a good year, Mr. Speaker. In terms of income, the larger than expected revenue from income taxes saved this Government from absolute disaster. In that regard, Mr. Speaker, our predictions of a year ago were incorrect. The province had a better year agriculturally than we had anticipated.

We pointed out a year ago, Mr. Speaker, that funds from the Federal Government were estimated too high in the revenue column. It was no secret that this source of revenue would be reduced. Yet the Minister of Finance buried his head in the sand while his Government continued on the spending spree like Arab sheiks holidaying in London, spending about \$70 million more we were told. Experience is a hard teacher. It gives the lesson after the test. But, Mr. Speaker, has the lesson been learned? This Government now plans to spend in excess of a billion and a half dollars, or at least that is what they tell us. What they really intend to spend we will further examine during the Estimates, but we probably will never know until after the 1977-78 Public Accounts are finally tabled in the Legislature.

They tell us what they plan to spend and what they plan bring in will produce a deficit of about \$40 million. Yet, Mr. Speaker, as one example of the kind of budgetary and accounting juggling that goes on, the Liquor Board last year made approximately \$43 million. This was transferred to the Government in revenue of some \$50 million, and in this forthcoming Budget the Minister has included \$65 million as potential revenue from the Liquor Board. Yet at the same time the Minister suggests, or the Minister is well aware, that an all-out program in both traffic safety and the Aware program is encouraging people in the Province of Saskatchewan to drink less. And it can therefore be reasonably assumed that if this program is successful, and we all hope it will be, that the Liquor Board profits will be less than they presently are, or less than \$43 million. Yet the Minister includes in his Budget \$65 million forecast for revenue.

Mr. Speaker, assuming that revenues increase as much as the Minister of Finance tells us they will, and assuming that this year's Budget expenditures are as poorly predicted as last year, we could face disastrous results, worse than even the predicted deficit, worse than anyone could possibly forecast at this point in time.

If the Minister of Finance is again \$70 million short of what the actual expenditures will be, we could well face a deficit of over \$100 million. This, Mr. Speaker, assumes the revenues are as currently stated in the Budget.

Should net income in Saskatchewan continue on a downward trend, or in other words should the economic picture in Saskatchewan continue to slide as it has in the last short time, the people of our province could be informed a year from now of a mammoth deficit which could take many, many years to recover from. Warning signals are everywhere. Every economic indication points to caution. Net farm income is tumbling; the prospect of drought is on the minds of many farmers. The very base of our economy at the moment is not sound. Mr. Speaker, as I stated last year, this is the type of blind forecasting that the present Government used to create, or that the NDP used to create, a \$541 million deficit for the people of British Columbia. Now look what the result has been for them. The new government in British Columbia forced to raise taxes, cut social services, Crown corporations raising prices and services at an alarming rate in both British Columbia and Saskatchewan. And while NDP Leader Dave Barrett said: "We were just trying to be compassionate." But compassionate without any common sense.

Mr. Speaker, it may be politically convenient for the NDP in Saskatchewan to watch another government take the heat from previous NDP mismanagement, but it is the people who eventually must pay the price no matter who is in power.

It appears that the \$90 million cash surplus that this Government inherited when it first took office may very well have turned into a negative cash forward situation by the end of this year. Unless the Government begins to exercise financial responsibility by election year the people of Saskatchewan will be faced with a financial albatross the likes of which in Saskatchewan we have never known. All of this while our Government borrows money at an unprecedented rate. As I mentioned last evening, in the funds and cash forward balances in the Public Accounts for March, 31, 1976, the Government has on deposit in cash or in short term securities just a little over half of these so-called funds. The remainder is invested in Crown corporations, in other words, invested only in itself. Our sister Province of Alberta recently loaned \$50 million to another province. Common sense management of their resource industry has put Alberta in a position of long-term economic strength. But in Saskatchewan the first mortgage on the future of our children will be held by a New York bank. For what were we borrowing huge amounts of foreign capital to pay off foreign companies? In exchange for what? New jobs? No, sir. Opportunities for our young people? No, sir. Increased potash production? No, sir. The only tangible return we are guaranteed are the deeds, a piece of paper, the deeds to mine operations, pieces of paper saying the Government owns the mines, the same mines that have been producing revenue for us all along. Profits, says the Minister responsible for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. Has he got any yet? The answer is, No. Has he seen any yet? The answer is, No. Has he now more money in his Treasury than he had before? The answer is, No, Mr. Speaker. We realize the Liberal Government in Central Canada in the East, has not been very co-operative in the resource field. Intrusions into provincial jurisdictions are commonplace in Canada today as the result of the Liberal appetite for power and control in Ottawa. In many respects

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then we applaud the Members opposite for sharing our determination and for showing their own determination to regain Saskatchewan's rights to resource taxation. We commend you for that and have all along. We could not expect the same from Members to my right and that is unfortunate even if today inconsequential.

I believe it was Robert Frost who once defined a Liberal as someone who is just too broad-minded to take his own side in a quarrel. Nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, the PC Party is firmly committed in the struggle to retain the provinces' rights to taxation. We believe our natural resources belong to the people of Saskatchewan and want to insure the greatest possible benefit from them. But to get that greatest possible benefit there is not only one way to achieve that result. There is not only Government Crown corporations as a means to achieve that result. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is blessed with an almost incalculable amount of potash. Geologists tell us our supply will furnish the world's needs for hundreds and hundreds of years. Expansion of this industry would mean a great deal to the future quality of life in Saskatchewan; not expansion in Montana, not expansion in North Dakota, not expansion in New Brunswick but expansion in Saskatchewan. We all know the direct benefits to be achieved from one potash mine. Hundreds of jobs are created, secondary and supply industries spring up and are nourished by the presence of the mine. The increased economic activity in the surrounding communities is a boon to everyone. All of this plus the revenue that goes to the province in the form of taxation, makes expansion of the industry seem like good sense but when the Government opposite makes rules and regulations and restrictions, not only in the area of direct resource industries, but in the area of labour-management relations, in the general attitude of government towards the private sector, such that the private sector cannot foresee good times ahead, as they do not in the Province of Saskatchewan at the moment, then to suggest that the private sector can possibly expand, is a fool's paradise.

The Government of Saskatchewan must create positive rules and positive laws if it expects the private sector to take positive action. This they have not done. This they have refused to do and, therefore, complain later when the private sector does not expand. We can accomplish the kind of expansion and the kind of generation of revenues for the people of Saskatchewan by commonsense, not by babbling with the organizations that are here from now until eternity, but by creating new kinds of organizations and new directions in the resource field in Saskatchewan.

The people of Saskatchewan should be given the opportunity to participate directly in the future of the potash industry, not through the Premier and his Cabinet, but directly. A vehicle must be established whereby our citizens could voluntarily invest in a fund to build new lines and expand this vital industry whether in conjunction with private companies or on their own in formation of a new company directly owned, directly owned by the citizens. And, Mr. Speaker, for the information of the Member for Biggar (Mr. Cowley) I suggest to him that he take another look at how a really democratic party determines its policy, not by some individuals speaking their minds as we entitle our people to do. God is allowing people to speak their minds and we allow our people to do. Not by shutting it down as his convention would do, and holding closed sessions from the press, but allowing individual members to speak their minds and discuss the issue before the people.

The actions of this Government, Mr. Speaker, in the resource development field, have become an embarrassment to our citizens who travel abroad. While people from other provinces, rich in resources or industry, can travel with pride in the economic benefits their provinces have achieved, people from Saskatchewan are forced to apologize for the actions and attitudes of a Government which all too often displays a distinct lack of common sense, particularly in the resource field. People of Saskatchewan are proud of our province, but not so proud of the present Government's performance as it relates to resources.

Mr. Speaker, the recent by-elections in Prince Albert-Duck Lake and Saskatoon-Sutherland most deservedly received much attention from the people of the Province of Saskatchewan. During the campaigns all three parties stressed their importance in relation to the next provincial election. And I notice the Member for Regina Wascana (Mr. Merchant) wants to step out, his party is stepping out to examine the result of this election.

The Liberals said, the main issue in the by-election in Saskatoon was leadership, and I hope for the sake of their leader they were wrong. And from the standpoint of the Member for Regina Rosemont (Mr. Allen) let me say his reputation, which was already on the line in that by-election in which his party received half the number of votes from last time, and that of his leader obviously were rejected by the people of Saskatoon Sutherland. The leader of the Liberal Party said the by-elections would determine which party would form the next government. I hope he was right but I think more definitely, it determined which party would not form the next government. The Premier and the NDP campaigners said the main issue was the resource policy, and told the people to stand up for Saskatchewan. That they did, Mr. Speaker; they stood up for Saskatchewan by electing two Progressive Conservatives, two outstanding individuals who share our vision of the future of Saskatchewan, a province that will challenge the spirit of our people, with governments based on the needs and aspirations of people.

Many issues came to the surface during these two campaigns, not the least of which was the concern of many voters as to the state of our health and hospital services. And only today we heard the Minister of Health (Mr. Robbins) relate further statistical excuses for our health system that has gone awry, further statistical evidence, he says, to prove that we have a wonderful system, when the medical doctors, when the hospital workers and when the individual patients are saying otherwise. Statistics do not prove the case, Mr. Minister of Health. Statistics do not prove the case of the NDP Government. It is the people that determine the case and they are not being served by the present hospital system in the Province of Saskatchewan, and they let you know that in Prince Albert-Duck Lake, and Saskatoon-Sutherland, and they are going to continue to let you know that until you make changes, until you see that the hospital system meets the needs of individual people in Saskatchewan, and doesn't meet the needs of statistical data of the Minister of Health. People find it unbelievable that a Government which could afford to waste hundreds of millions of dollars to buy up existing industries and millions and millions more to build elaborate office buildings, cannot afford to maintain a high standard of health care. I think they sent you that message on the 2nd of March, and I hope you got it; but if the Minister of Health's arguments today are any example I don't think you did. I see that in the Budget that you have

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increased the allocation for health resources and that is good. I hope that increased allocation is more in relation to the health budget this year than the other increases this year. And I would suggest, if that increase this year is met with the determination of the Government opposite to provide a proper health care system then you will succeed where you have failed so miserably in the last two years.

The Progressive Conservative Members of this Assembly will closely scrutinize the medical services of our province over the next two years to ensure that the people of this province receive nothing but the best in health care. The people of Saskatchewan are concerned as well about welfare.

Many people in the province cannot work, and are forced to live in near poverty. We must ensure that those people as well as our working people with large families receive sufficient to live decent lives. Others on the welfare rolls who can work must be given the opportunity to work and earn a living for themselves.

Many of our senior citizens have been forgotten. Progressive Conservatives believe that senior citizens' benefits can be geared and should be geared to the minimum wage level as established by the province, thus whenever the cost of living forces the government to increase the minimum wage, senior citizens' supplementary benefits would automatically rise accordingly, and senior citizens would not have to come hat in hand to government year after year begging for enough to survive.

The people of Saskatchewan are also concerned with the general quality of life in communities. They expect their municipal authorities to provide high quality services to their communities. Increases in the Neighbourhood Improvement Program are fine, but our municipalities have recently been faced with tremendous cost increases mainly brought on by the NDP Government. Large increases in power, telephones, natural gas, gasoline and diesel fuel will swallow up the \$2 per capita grant increase and more. Our municipal councils will be left in even worse positions than last year and doubtlessly mill rates will be forced up even more this year just to provide the needed services. In the city of Regina, the increase is expected and reported to go as high as 17 mills. The \$2 grant increase by the Provincial Government is worth about one mill to the ratepayers of Regina. Clearly, the Government is not fulfilling its responsibility to our municipal governments and to our communities.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Progressive Conservative Party have advocated, for the last several years, that a formula must be established to have a greater revenue sharing plan with our municipalities and while it will not help our communities this year, we are pleased to hear in this Budget the Government's intentions to undertake discussions with municipalities with a view to establishing a revenue sharing plan. We hope that the Government is serious in this spoken gesture towards this goal and hope that meaningful dialogue will result in a formula acceptable to all concerned. However, the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. MacMurchy) in speaking to SUMA and in announcing this program spelled out some areas of distinct direction that the negotiations, so-called, must take. That is not meaningful dialogue and that is not the way to get communities on your side to determine a formula that will work.

Mr. Speaker, we have been concerned for some time that our citizens are seeing their Government becomes less and less responsive to their particular needs of the communities, our neighbourhoods and our families. This Conservative Party believes that citizens must have a meaningful input and influence over programs and policies which govern their daily lives. Thus, our basic policy is to emphasize a decentralization of government power and bring about economy and authority at the local level through locally elected and responsible officials. Revenue sharing discussions must be carried out with all of the organizations in Saskatchewan that are concerned about local government. Their input is absolutely vital to the success of any revenue-sharing scheme. While revenue sharing is fundamental to viable local government, along with it must come greater authority at the local level. Just as we expect the Federal Government to respect the authority of the Provincial Government, surely our municipal governments must be granted the same benefits and direction of the Province of Saskatchewan. It is not right that the Department of Municipal Affairs, situated in Regina, should have final authority over all community planning in our province. A locally elected council is in a much better position to assess and determine the planning requirements of the communities in which they live. The budgetary addition of 40 or 50 more employees to the Department of Municipal Affairs will do little to enhance the quality of life in Saskatchewan communities or in fact to make municipal bodies in Saskatchewan believe that they are going to have authority over their local regions. Only through a real decentralization and redistribution of decision-making authority will our local level of government be rekindled to meet the needs and aspirations of our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, all the Progressive Conservative Members of this Assembly were pleased to hear that after January 1st next year lease lands in the Land Bank will be available for purchase to tenants of five years. It would be a very interesting thing to understand, though, why the NDP Government refused to write this so-called right in the lease. It would be very interesting to find out why the Government won't place that right in the legislation. We wonder whether it is lip service only. We wonder whether the Government doesn't plan to set price levels so high and interest rates so high when the five years are up that no farmer, as a matter of fact, no individual in his right mind could ever possibly buy it, set the lease terms so low that the only possible way that the farmer could continue farming is to continue to lease through the Land Bank. We look forward to the terms and conditions of the sale and hope that the Government is sincere in this announcement. We also hope that the same consideration will be given to lease payments in the determination of the purchase price and that will remain to be seen as well.

The Progressive Conservative Party has held for some time that there are better ways to assist farmers in the transfer of land than the present Land Bank structure but the NDP Government has consistently proven itself to be no friend of the family farm. The family farm does not start with lease land. The recent fuel increases at a time when net farm income is at a low ebb is further evidence of that. We would hope that this Government would offer Land Bank tenants agreements for sale consistent with the lease payments and/or assist these farmers to obtain low interest loans to pay for the land they farm if they so choose.

Mr. Speaker, with the present depressed state of our beef

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industry in the province there is an obvious need for some attention to this problem. We welcome the forage insurance pilot program and await details of this program with great interest. But, Mr. Speaker, the beef producers of Saskatchewan, particularly those I visited within the Prince Albert-Duck Lake area want to be heard. Cattlemen know their business thoroughly and want to be involved directly in any government decision making as it effects their livelihood. Our beef producers feel that they have been manipulated for far too long with far too little to say. They are not going to accept, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, a beef marketing board simply because the Minister of Agriculture thinks it's a good idea. Many of them feel that they are in the situation they are in today as a direct result of the Government's raised beef program and campaign of a few years ago, along with the Federal Government's import policies. The Progressive Conservative Party believes that producers must be involved in government agriculture policy and planning to a much greater degree than they are today. Bouncing from one stopgap solution to another is no way to help anyone plan his business. Producers and producer organizations must be invited by government to become a part of agricultural policy. Furthermore, we believe that no marketing boards should ever be established that are not producer initiated and producer controlled, not appointees of the Government but producer controlled. It is time that this Government and the Government at Ottawa realized that our agricultural producers expect help and assistance from them, not direction and control from them. We believe that the Saskatchewan family farm is the most efficient agricultural unit anywhere in the world. We believe that over the past generation it has proven itself far superior to any collective or commune-style operation. The Saskatchewan family farm is the very cornerstone of the quality of rural life in our province. It is the very breath of the spirit of Saskatchewan. The Progressive Conservative Party is not only committed to the preservation of the family farm but believes that in modern times it must be nourished, re-cultivated, reactivated to meet the demands of the future. To accomplish this in Saskatchewan a fundamental shift in political philosophy is required from the Government. It must become once again the servant, not the master. The family farm cannot survive government domination, direction and control. The basic institutions and fundamental values of Canadian society will not survive unless governments on all levels take on the supportive roles they were intended to play and abandon the authoritative roles that they have assumed. The Progressive Conservative Party believes in government as a servant of the people and I fear we are the only party that does. We believe that the concerns expressed to us as representatives should be the first concerns reflected by us as legislators. It is always our duty to listen and to respond as servants of the people.

We hear a great many political people in our province talk. We listen to the people. It is one thing to listen; it is another thing to listen and to respond.

Mr. Speaker, during the by-election campaigns the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow) accused our Progressive Conservative candidates of cheap political gamesmanship in taking a firm stand on rising crime in Saskatchewan. He even made jokes about a TV series called, *The Streets of Saskatoon*. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan don't think the crime situation in our province is a joke and the people who live in Saskatoon let the NDP candidate in Saskatoon know that. Our party is deeply

concerned about rising crime rates and the loss of respect for our judicial system. We are disturbed by the feeling among many of our citizens that hardened criminals are treated better than our prison guards and our peace officers. And let me say to the Minister of Social Services, who is the Minister responsible for the situation in Prince Albert, that when 24 years of service of a fine peace officer were negated every single peace officer in Saskatchewan believed that the Government was not behind them. Peace officers' morale has deteriorated as a result and that doesn't help, Mr. Minister of Social Services, in improving the crime situation in Saskatchewan and trying to bring the rising crime down.

We are concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the permissive leniency pervading our courtrooms and our parole system. We are alarmed at the number of violent disturbances in our penal institutions. There must have been 100 people in Prince Albert who asked me this question: "Who is running the jails, the guards or the prisoners?"

The people of Saskatchewan expect to be protected from habitual criminals. They expect their Government to back up their police officers. They want our judicial system to become modern and efficient.

The backlog in our criminal courts is appalling; cases take months and months to be heard. A person charged with a criminal offence has a right to a speedy trial under due process of law. For the sake of our society and for his own sake, he should not be freed on bail or remanded into custody for prolonged periods of time. Yet all too often this does occur. We sincerely hope that the increases in staff and expenditures in the Attorney General's department and particularly the larger increases for court services for the Magistrate's Court, are a recognition of the problems that I have mentioned.

Furthermore, we are very pleased to see increased funding in terms of police grants to our communities. We also hope that the Attorney General's light-hearted attitude towards crime in our province is confined to by-elections, because this problem is serious and must be solved.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan and the people of Canada are governed by centralists, with centralist policy determined to control everything. The Federal Government under the Liberal banner has floundered from crisis to scandal to crisis for over a decade and still clings to power. Never, never, have the Canadian people felt the hand of government so heavy in their daily lives. Never has a government of Canada showed such determination to take all power unto itself at the expense of the provinces and at the expense of individual citizens. Mr. Speaker, the people of western Canada feel alienated and cut adrift by a government which has long since ceased to listen or respond. In this respect we share much the same frustration as the people of Quebec.

The Liberal Government has long forgotten who is supposed to serve whom. The principle of government as the servant died shortly after the Diefenbaker Government; it was replaced by a principle that we know best - what is good for this country, and that is what the people are going to have whether they like it or not. I sincerely hope the Liberals in Saskatchewan continue to laugh at John Diefenbaker and continue to spell out

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that laughter over the next few months and they will continue to lose support as rapidly as they have in the last few months. "When we get into trouble, we will advertise," they say, "we will advertise and we will go to picnics." Like Quebecers, the people of western Canada felt the frustration of feeling that they have lost control, Mr. Speaker, lost control over their own destinies.

For 100 years Canada was a strong united nation, but only in the last ten have the seeds of discontent been so well nourished; nourished to a point where our very survival as a nation is in jeopardy; threatened because people who feel they have lost control over their futures want it back at any price.

For many people in Quebec, unfortunately, the price that is being considered is the break-up of our country. All of this is caused by a centralized insensitive government in Ottawa, out of touch with the needs and the wishes of the people of Canada, responsible to no one except to themselves and their political survival.

I want to remind this Assembly of a brief statistic. In 1966 the current Prime Minister was not the main Minister of Justice and at that time the Separatist movement represented two per cent of the population of Quebec. For the next two years the Minister of Justice was responsible for Quebec and responsible for bringing that situation under control and the Separatists grew from two per cent to ten per cent. In 1968 the Liberals assumed office under this Prime Minister in Ottawa and for the next four years the Separatist movement in Quebec grew from ten per cent to 25 per cent. In 1972 the present Government was re-elected in Ottawa and the Separatist movement grew in the next four years from 25 per cent to 40 per cent and became the Government of the Province of Quebec. It grew from two per cent to 40 per cent in ten years and he is supposedly the saviour of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the situation is no better as it relates to this Provincial Government. There is a general mistrust and a feeling of frustration among the people of Saskatchewan towards this Government in Regina. People feel alienated from the political process and it is no wonder. Their local officials, councils and boards have gradually been stripped of their powers. Even their MLA is relatively powerless against this centralized Regina Government. All decisions are made by the Cabinet, or some smaller portion of the Cabinet and carried out by a central planner of one sort or another in one office of government or another. Our citizens feel powerless against the central governmental bureaucratic management of the NDP in Regina.

We were off on a wild scheme to take over the potash industry. Mr. Speaker, we were off on a wild scheme to take over the potash industry within a few months of the last provincial election, in which no mention was made to the people of the province of the proposed nationalization. The recent by-elections were in the words of the Premier, a test of this resource policy. Is that the Premier's idea of a democratic process to introduce policies and actions which have huge and major consequences for our future generations and then test public opinion, once in a while, to see if he should speed up or slow down. That is not democracy and that is not how the people of Saskatchewan expect to be treated.

The election of two Progressive Conservatives was proof that

the people of this province are determined to restore government as the servant and not the master. This gives me great hope and confidence in our future. It is evident that the spirit of our forefathers is still with us today in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I am confident that the people of our province will rise to the challenges we place before them, to build a free society in which we create a better quality of life for everyone; an opportunity for each individual - and I realize that word is harsh to the Government benches, individual, to feel his worth as such and reach out for his hopes and his aspirations as an individual.

The God-given wealth of our province has been blessed with the strength of character of our people and it means that Saskatchewan can become an example for the other people in Canada to follow. A commonsense government based on serving the people will allow this province to attain a quality of life second to none in Canada, if individuals are given a chance. It would allow us to achieve social and economic benefits far superior to what we now enjoy or any other province enjoys. That is the type of government that the Progressive Conservative Party is offering to the people of Saskatchewan, to the individual people of Saskatchewan, commonsense representative government and a challenge to improve our way of life.

We envisaged the day when the Progressive Conservative budget can more adequately meet the needs of our senior citizens and those others in our province who are forced to live near poverty. We envision the day when increased revenues from a revitalized economy can allow a government to reduce the heavy load that our individual citizens are now forced to bear through a maze of high taxes and higher taxes as a result of this Budget.

We are confident that there will come a day in Saskatchewan when a PC budget can readily meet the needs of our people for the very best in essential services for our communities. We are confident that under a Progressive Conservative banner, Saskatchewan's vast energies and resources can provide us with the best education, the best health and social services and individual opportunity of any province in Canada, yes, in fact, for the working men and women of this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Budget presented to us last Thursday was both an admission of past failures and a dismal view of the coming year. I have already outlined the obvious liability that this Budget could create for the taxpayer and future taxpayers of Saskatchewan. In the next few days our Members will point out, in more detail, specific areas in specific departments, which need re-examination in terms of budgetary estimates. We will point out waste and extravagance wherever possible with the hope that this deficit Budget will not result in financial chaos for our province through continued misuse of public funds.

Mr. Speaker, we have known for some time that the people of Saskatchewan have lost control of the public purse. It is common knowledge that the Provincial Auditor's office is too understaffed and inadequately financed to do a proper job of ensuring that the people's money is not squandered. I think that it is clear to everyone in this Assembly that not only has this Government failed to provide the auditor with financial wherewithal to do this job, but this Government has illustrated its refusal to allow the auditor the independence he is supposed to have as a servant of this Assembly.

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Members will recall that during the middle of the by-election campaigns, two or three weeks ago, a press release was issued out of the office of the Premier on behalf of the Provincial Auditor, in direct contradiction to the statements made by the auditor himself, to the Prince Albert Daily Herald. And as if this didn't show enough contempt for this independent servant of the Assembly, the Premier himself read the news release to CKBI Radio. Then he had the gall to suggest that I should apologize to the auditor, which he quite often does whenever I suggest that the auditor should be given more support, independence and respect from this Government.

I draw to the attention of the Members opposite, the fact that the provincial Auditor has, only yesterday, tabled a report to the Legislature outlining 21 different areas of government mismanagement and misuse of Government funds. And . . .

MR. SMISHEK:— . . . misuse, where does it say.

MR. COLLVER:— Listen to his comments then. Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Development Advance Account: "Failure to adhere to generally accepted accounting principles." Is that not misuse? Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Supplies Account: "Uncertainty regarding inventory valuation." Is that not misuse? Department of the Attorney General, Administration of Estates: "Inability to qualify trust liabilities and inconsistency in application of accounting principles." Is that not misuse? Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources: Forest Protection Advance Account - "Failure to adhere to generally accepted accounting practice and principles." Is that not misuse? "Uncertainty regarding outcome, failure to adhere to generally accepted auditing principles, inability to verify opening inventories, failure to record fixed assets acquired from the Department of Health." And the gentlemen opposite request that I define, "misuse."

Mr. Speaker, last fall in the Throne Speech we were advised to look at this new year with modest confidence. In this Budget we are told to look ahead with cautious optimism. I should like whoever is writing these speeches to know that my confidence in this Government is, indeed, modest and my optimism for the success of their budgeting grows more cautious every day.

Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the motion before us but I will be supporting the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

HON. J. R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources):— Mr. Speaker, I think that all Members of this Legislative Assembly are fully aware, along with a number of people who have listened to the debates in this Assembly, would be fully aware of the history of agreements that we have had in this Legislative Assembly when we debate Throne and Budget Speeches.

In the last two years it has become common for those agreements to be broken along with statements of half-truths and the only thing that I can be thankful for, Mr. Speaker, is that this is all being aired over the radio so that the people of Saskatchewan can be made fully aware of how

the Members of the Conservative Party, in particular the Member for Nipawin, the Leader of the Conservative Party, obliges himself to follow those agreements.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure today in participating in this Budget Debate, pleasure because Saskatchewan's economy has undergone its finest year. The gross domestic product has increased by 14.9 per cent; personal expenditures on consumer goods by 16.3 per cent and 14,000 additional jobs have been created. Construction investment and mineral development have been at all time highs during 1976. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party who has just taken his seat, said during the course of his remarks that he does not like statistics and I think that we have to ask ourselves, as do the citizens of Saskatchewan, why does he not like statistics?

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the people of Saskatchewan that he does not like statistics because any statistics that he can lay his hands on will show that Saskatchewan, in the last several years, has been the most progressive Government and province in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— He shakes his head, Mr. Speaker, he shakes his head in disbelief.

Just let me turn to a Trade, Industry and Commerce magazine issued monthly across Canada, the month of February, an article entitled, "Records tumble in Saskatchewan." I just want to quote several paragraphs from this magazine, Mr. Speaker. I quote:

The building boom in Saskatchewan is making news across Canada. Even the Edmonton Journal, which usually saves its superlatives for the booming pace of development in the paper's home city gave prominence to Saskatchewan's record-breaking performance and the fact that the boom is drawing tradesmen from eastern Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— It goes on and I quote:

In 1975 in the province wheat, potash, uranium, coal, steel and paper passed the \$1 billion mark for the first time in the total value of construction work.

It goes on, Mr. Speaker:

Communities have reported permit values double and triple the dollar values of 1975.

And I close in quoting, Mr. Speaker:

And the end of the boom is nowhere in sight. The only possible inhibiting factor could be the problem of recruiting sufficient skilled manpower to cope with the volume of work for 1977.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Mr. Speaker, that is why

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the Leader of the Conservative Party does not like statistics. You can look at any statistics you want to, exploration development of minerals, non-renewable resources in the province, housing, both commercial and private and statistics show that they are record-breaking, not only for the Province of Saskatchewan but in relation to other areas of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make one comment on another item that the Member for Nipawin related to in his speech and that was in regard to the Land Bank. He says that it is only now the Government of Saskatchewan, the New Democratic Government of Saskatchewan is prepared to sell land to farmers.

AN HON. MEMBER:— You were dishonest from the start.

MR. MESSER:— Mr. Speaker, let me say to that Member that it was always the intent and it was clear in the legislation. It is clear in the records of this Legislative Assembly when I introduced that legislation as Minister of Agriculture, that after five years we would make that land available for sale to Land Bank farmers. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, to the Leader of the Conservative Party that he take caution in the statements that he makes in this House and outside of this House relating to half truths and mistruths about the legislation and the policy of this Government. And when he related to the Land Bank I know that farmers in Saskatchewan know this to be a good program and in the not too distant future he will find that out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to spend a few minutes reviewing developments in mineral resources in this province. For 70 years governments in this province have wrestled with the problem of diversification of the economy. Great strides have been made since 1971 particularly in the expansion of mining in the province. Our province is no longer entirely dependent on the agricultural sector in order that our citizens maintain a reasonable standard of living. Revenues to the Government from non-renewable resources in 1971 were \$33 million. In 1975-76, the last fiscal year, they reached a total of \$337 million or more than ten times as much.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— The New Democratic Party Governments of these years have developed policies which combine the best in mineral expansion balanced by a concern for realistic conservation and environmental practices.

Mr. Speaker, what has been the response to this most significant expansion in this province? In the past year Saskatchewan has undergone wholesale attacks on our policies by multinational corporations in the form of law suits, centralist interference by the Federal Government acting in concert with the resource companies, and an attempt by the United States authorities to apply their anti-trust laws extra-territorially. Attacks have also been made in Saskatchewan at the political level by both the Opposition parties that sit to your left, Mr. Speaker, the Liberals and the Conservatives.

The provincial Conservatives and Liberals have done nothing to defend Saskatchewan's right to control resource development. The Member from Nipawin as quoted in the Leader-Post, January 22nd says and I quote:

A PC Government would not repay all tax moneys collected from petroleum companies under Bill 42 because the oil companies do not wish to recoup all their back taxes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) does not seem to understand that if Bill 42 is overturned the Government will be required to repay all taxes. The Conservatives seem to believe that they can simply retain whatever taxes the oil corporations do not want. I think we can be certain just how much that would be if the opportunity was given to them.

The Member for Nipawin bemoaned the lot of oil companies in the province. He was further quoted in the Leader-Post of January 22nd as saying:

Small companies such as CIGOL have nothing to lose by challenging the constitutionality of Bill 42.

As my colleague, the Minister of Education says, the party for the small man. This so-called small company CIGOL merged with Northern and Central Gas Corporation in 1974. They presently employ about 3,400 workers and acquired profits of \$20.9 million in 1976. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, this "small and struggling" company has nothing to lose, but the people of Saskatchewan do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— The Member for Nipawin's defence of small business is totally false. Small businesses are not challenging Bill 42. It is Imperial Oil and the oil cartel which wishes to destroy this legislation. The Member for Nipawin takes every opportunity to distort this fact even though he is giggling in his chair at this time.

Mr. Speaker, the resource policies of this Government are clear. The people of Saskatchewan deserve a proper share of the wealth accruing from the use of our natural resources, and the NDP stand firmly behind that commitment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Now what are the resource policies of the Opposition parties in this Legislature? The Liberals campaigned, in the last provincial election, on a platform that made clear where they stand - firmly on the side of the multinational resource companies and on the side of the wealthy and the privileged.

The Conservatives have been more hesitant to make their stand clear, Mr. Speaker. Stealing a page from their federal leader's book, the Member for Nipawin and his Tory caucus try to avoid the issues whenever possible. Mr. Collver says his party would form a joint stock company and sell the shares of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan to Saskatchewan people.

Through the efforts of this NDP Government the people of Saskatchewan will have an equal and equitable share in that ownership. Mr. Collver's plan not only would again create

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inequality of ownership by concentrating control of the Potash Corporation in the hands of a few large shareholders, it will also be unnecessary since Saskatchewan people will already have control of the potash resource through this New Democratic Government's action.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives opposed . . .

MR. BAILEY:— Mr. Speaker, on a Point of Order. When making reference to a Member whether he be on the same side of the House or not is to refer to the Member from such a constituency and not to refer to him by his name.

MR. MESSER:— Mr. Speaker, I will take note of the Hon. Member's observation and refer to the Member as the Member for Nipawin. I know he is referred to many other things in the country in Saskatchewan and I'll try not to refer to him in those terms in this Assembly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Opposition has been reluctant to express its policy on resources with any clarity but fortunately for the people of this province we have plenty of examples of Conservative action across this country. Let me take you on a trip across this country while I examine the Conservative record on resource policy in other provinces.

Let me begin in the Maritimes, Mr. Speaker. Two potash companies with mines in Saskatchewan, IMC and PCA are exploring for potash in Conservative New Brunswick. They have signed an agreement with the New Brunswick Government whereby the companies will pay the Government a very low royalty. In fact the royalty agreed to is six and one-quarter per cent of the gross value of total sales. This is a give-away. It is a give-away, Mr. Speaker. If we were to compare the revenue produced under this system with that produced under Saskatchewan's legislation, we would estimate that in 1977-78 the value of potash sales for Saskatchewan would be in excess of \$90 million. If Saskatchewan were to use the New Brunswick system, only \$23 million would be obtained by the residents of this province.

Mr. Speaker, in other minerals in New Brunswick, royalties levied on existing mines are very low, so low that even the Conservatives in New Brunswick are getting embarrassed and have directed their officials to undertake to increase those levies. A higher new royalty using the principles expressed in Saskatchewan's uranium royalty system is now being developed for that province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Though Saskatchewan is constantly criticized for heavy taxation, the other provinces, even the free enterprise Conservatives of New Brunswick, recognize that there is tax room in the mining industry and that obtaining a larger benefit for the people does not reduce performance of the industry. Despite the fact that the New Brunswick Conservatives are moving to increase royalties on other minerals, they seem to be contradicting themselves by offering potash companies unrealistically

low royalties to develop their potash resource.

Mr. Speaker, let's move to Central Canada and examine the Conservative record in the Province of Ontario. In the mining industry, as in many types of business ventures, an important criterion in measuring profitability is return on investment. In Ontario, no attempt is made to recognize the greater return that an investment in a low-cost rich ore body has over a larger ore body which may produce more income but which required considerably larger investment.

Taxation systems in most provinces now recognize this factor and adjust mining tax rates to take into account this return on investment. But in Conservative Ontario this is not the case. Bad management of their resources, Mr. Speaker, is not unlike the management performance of the Conservative leader here in Saskatchewan.

Let's address ourselves for a moment to the Ontario Government's misdirected attempts to deal with the oil situation; keeping in mind that Ontario, even though it is a minority government, is a Conservative Government. When the price of oil was increased and the rest of the country agreed upon a 45 day price freeze in order that inventories of the oil companies would be sold at the old price, the Conservatives of Ontario instituted a 90 day freeze. The effect of this was to remove exploration dollars from Saskatchewan by limiting the cash flow to the producers, and to encourage companies to raise their prices to the consumers in the rest of the country in excess of what was needed to offset their losses.

Mr. Speaker, the Ontario Government argues that western Canadian crude oil should not be priced so high. The leader of the Conservative Party here in Saskatchewan argues that point. But do they make any effort to reduce the price of manufactured goods, farm machinery and automobiles that are used in the West? Have you ever heard this crusader for the small farmer ask that some undertaking be made to correct that inequality? No, Mr. Speaker, western Canadians pay more than world prices for commodities produced in Conservative Ontario, yet we are currently selling our oil to Central Canada for \$3.50 a barrel below the world price.

Now you would think the Ontario Government would at least recognize our contribution to national unity. But no again, the provincial Government in Ontario receives more revenue in sales tax on a barrel of western oil than Saskatchewan receives in royalties. Mr. Speaker, let me repeat that. The Conservative Government in Ontario which is so concerned about high energy costs levied more tax on a barrel of oil than we receive here in Saskatchewan by way of royalties. Shameful! But it is interesting. How often can we recollect the Premier of this province, when attending federal-provincial conferences on oil prices, listening to Ontario bemoan our attempts to obtain a price more closely reflecting market prices, only to know that Ontario regards Saskatchewan oil as an opportunity to raise revenue for the operation of its programs. Mr. Speaker, if the price of oil is too high in Ontario, why doesn't the Ontario Government lower its sales tax on petroleum products?

Is this the kind of gamesmanship the Tories in Saskatchewan advocate? Is this the way to preserve Canadian unity? It's a contradictory position, Mr. Speaker, adopted by the Conservatives in Ontario, not unlike that of the Conservative leader in

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Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, he should answer to Saskatchewan people where he stands in this regard. And I can only suggest to the people of Saskatchewan that his silence would indicate that he is in support of that Ontario Conservative policy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's stop for a moment in Manitoba, where a resource policy based on expediency has already brought down a former Conservative Government some years ago. The people of Manitoba are still suffering from the loss of over \$100 million at the Churchill Forest Industry complex in northwestern Manitoba.

Former Conservative Premier Duff Roblin, in his inability to recognize a bad deal, allowed millions of dollars of taxpayers' money to be paid out for the construction of a plant. The developer never had to operate that plant in order to make a profit. The profit was all made on building the complex, by giving lucrative contracts to subcontracting companies most of which were owned by the developer himself. Is this an example of the types of resource management the Conservatives would bring to Saskatchewan? This is not unlike the position on resource development advocated by the Leader of the Conservative Party, the Member for Nipawin.

No, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have already experienced a similar resource management policy in this province, the policy under the former Liberal Government of Ross Thatcher. In 1971 when the New Democratic Party formed a new Government in Saskatchewan, we prevented a deal from going through which would have been a comparable fiasco to Churchill Forest Industries and I am sure all people in Saskatchewan can remember the proposed Doré Lake pulp mill.

Mr. Speaker, let's look for a moment at our western neighbours, Alberta, who talk of free enterprise but yet who buy airline companies. Terribly socialistic, some people say. I wonder if the Member for Nipawin has ever undertaken to ask Premier Lougheed how many new jobs the purchase of Pacific Western Airlines created for the Province of Alberta.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— I wonder if he has ever undertaken to press for the transfer of the head offices of those companies or that company from the Province of British Columbia to the Province of Alberta. Now, Mr. Speaker, although they act as socialists on some fronts recognizing the importance of government ownership of the key sectors of the economy, the Alberta Government denies their residents the full benefits of their non-renewable resources. Against our repeated protests they lowered the price of a barrel of heavy oil by 30 cents. Did it increase demand? No. Some of our producers in Saskatchewan followed suit but no additional oil was sold. The Federal Liberal Government saw some taxing room, stepped in and raised the export tax on a barrel of exported heavy oil by 30 cents. The end result was a transfer of money from Saskatchewan and Alberta to the Federal Government.

Bad resource management, setting the stage of the Federal Government to increase taxation at the expense of the provinces is not unlike the position of the Tory Leader in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one may ask, what are the policies of the

Federal Tory Party? What does the Federal Tory Leader say? He spends most of his time travelling around the country saying nothing, determining how he can make the country safe for unfettered international capitalism. His statements on resource policy are scarce and without value. His latest pronouncement came last week at the Prospector's and Developer's Convention in Toronto. What did he say there? Only that when he became Prime Minister, something the Gallup Poll now says is very unlikely, he is going to take steps to ensure that the provinces all have the same royalty and tax levels.

Mr. Speaker, let's examine this suggestion. Is Mr. Clark advocating that we adopt the Ontario method of taxing mining companies which bears no relation to return on investment? Is he suggesting that we adopt the New Brunswick approach to potash royalties where a very low percentage of gross sales is taken as a royalty charge bearing no relation to costs on return on investment? I can only say to Mr. Clark, surely you jest, Sir! For a man who has been quoted widely as saying he will allow more freedom for the various regions of Canada to develop in their own way, to propose a uniform system of resource taxation throughout a country as diverse as ours is to show very little understanding or appreciation for the uniqueness of Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Not only is the plan unworkable, it is clearly an infringement on provincial jurisdiction over resource management.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Such a plan would make for even greater federal-provincial conflict than is presently the case.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, he is a contradictory man; leading, I suggest, a contradictory party full of petty bickerers all going their own way at the same time. But then, the very name Progressive Conservative is a contradiction.

There is no such thing as a Progressive Conservative. They are instead a collection of every possible attitude housed under one roof for the purpose of trying to attain power, a contradiction of the highest order.

Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you about the contradiction which is represented by the Members who occupy the Conservative benches opposite, a walking, talking contradiction which we have seen manifest in the Conservative Governments in the Maritimes, in Ontario, in Alberta and copied by the Federal Conservative Leader.

In Saskatchewan, the Conservatives would have you believe they stand for less government, more freedom for people, more government spending to allow municipalities to do their own thing, yet, Mr. Speaker, the so-called "Progressive Conservative Party" is going to accomplish all of this by lowering taxes - lowering taxes they say, Mr. Speaker, particularly for those unfortunate multinationals in the resource sector which have finally been asked to pay their fair share.

This, Mr. Speaker, is an example of the Progressive Conservative policy. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, nonsense; the Tories

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should rename their party the “ridiculous contradiction party” and it would be more appropriate to their policy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Leader or should I say the ridiculous contradiction leader, and his cohorts talked about people, not potash in the recent by-elections held in Saskatchewan - people, not potash, Mr. Speaker. It's shameful for a party with its record of unbroken opposition to any policy designed to improve the conditions of ordinary people to have the uncommon audacity to adopt such a slogan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Shameful, Mr. Speaker, absolutely shameful!

The Conservative Party in Saskatchewan and elsewhere in Canada bitterly opposed the introduction of medicare. Now they have the audacity to claim they will make it better than the party which pioneered it; revitalized it after seven years of Ross Thatcher; and have now with this Budget reaffirmed the commitment to quality health care in a way no other province in Canada has been able to do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance read to us statistics in his speech last week that indicate the level of commitment governments across this country have for medical care compared to the New Democratic Party Government in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to remember that it was an NDP Government in Saskatchewan which raised health care spending by 26 per cent in the last fiscal year and it will raise it by an additional \$65 million or over 19 per cent in this new Budget.

Mr. Speaker, let me remind you of the figures the Minister of Finance read in this House last week. Conservatives, those champions of medical care in Ontario, have slashed their health services and limited their health budgets to ten per cent increase. Mr. Speaker, 4,500 jobs were eliminated in Ontario and 12 hospitals were closed. Families pay \$384 per year in health premiums. In Saskatchewan, resource revenue and resource taxation pay those costs of health care that are now borne by the Ontario people in the form of health premiums.

But those contradictory Tories tell us in Saskatchewan that people matter more than potash.

In Alberta, that mecca of ridiculous contradiction, the Conservatives limited health spending to 11 per cent last year, and 7.5 per cent this year. Medical care premiums will rise to \$169 annually. Yet, the same Conservative Government in concert with the Ontario Conservatives and the Federal Liberal Government were able to commit over \$600 million to the Syncrude Project and they won't even have the controlling interest.

What does the Leader of the Conservatives in Saskatchewan say? People before potash, he says. Well, Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words and the people of Saskatchewan will not be fooled by that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— It, in many ways, reminds me of an old time Conservative Government which pumped millions of taxpayer dollars in the CPR to build a railroad in exchange for a commitment for service instead of a share in ownership. We are seeing today the willingness of the CPR to fulfill its commitment of transportation service for the people of western Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— That, Mr. Speaker, was not an example of ‘ridiculous contradiction’, it was just plain ridiculous.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you which party in this province puts people before anything else. The New Democratic Party Government puts people before potash companies, the New Democratic Party puts people before oil companies. It puts people first, always, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Now, Mr. Speaker, don’t let those walking contradictions led by the self-styled management consultant representing Nipawin constituency with head offices at Phoenix House in Saskatoon, born in the Tory Mecca of Alberta, fool you or the people of Saskatchewan. The Conservative slogan should read, “We’ll put potash, we’ll put oil people, we’ll put anyone else who is rich and privileged ahead of any of the ordinary people of Saskatchewan.”

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— That is their slogan. That is their motto, Mr. Speaker.

I think it is shameful for the Conservative Party to claim that it puts people before potash. The newly acquired Conservative Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. Lane) is not the Mr. Lane for Qu’Appelle who woke up only a few months ago to discover that he was a contradictory Conservative rather than a Liberal. The Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland was heard to say on a radio program during a recent by-election, that senior citizens don’t need a drug plan. Senior citizens don’t need a hearing aid program, or the Aids to Independent Living Programs which provide wheel chairs or other needed hardware to improve their lot in life. All senior citizens need, according to Mr. Lane of Saskatoon-Sutherland, is a pension tied to the cost of living.

Before pensions can be seen as a means of fully providing for senior citizens in the current day, a considerably more generous Federal commitment to old age pensions is required. I wonder whether the new Member suggests that pensions need only be raised with future increases in the cost of living or does he recognize the very real hardship already being faced by many senior citizens.

Is the Tory Member recommending the Federal Government provide for this increased commitment to pension levels or does he consider this to be a task that the province should undertake. If so where does he propose the money will come from since his caucus is opposed to our attempts to increase resource revenues?

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Does he, Mr. Speaker? We wait in anticipation. But is he to propose a significant raise in personal income tax and other taxes in this province? Does he suggest money alone will solve senior citizens' problems? Does he suggest that to give them money and push them out to fare for themselves is the solution? Our programs allows our older people to structure services in a manner appropriate to their needs. No slight increase in pension levels alone can accomplish this objective.

The Conservatives say we should be spending the money collected in the Energy Fund to build roads and provide even better medical care and hospital care. They say we could reduce taxes now and improve services at the same time. Mr. Speaker, I wonder where the Conservatives would get the money for these services when Saskatchewan oil runs out. I wonder where the money would come from when the potash companies tell the Government they do not plan on paying their taxes, or when they implement New Brunswick royalty rates as the Attorney General says.

Mr. Speaker, I told you that the Conservatives are contradictory. They tell us to use the Energy Fund to provide services today. Forget about how we will afford those same services tomorrow or five or ten years from now. Those selfsame Tories tell us the Energy Fund shouldn't exist in the first place. It was mean and it was greedy of us to tax those oil companies so high. And we should withdraw Bill 42 and ask the companies how much of the money collected they would like us to give back. I'll tell you how much they would like us to give back, Mr. Speaker. All of it! Is CIGOL and Imperial Oil asking for some of their money back in their court challenges against Bill 42? Of course not. They are asking for all of it.

Mr. Speaker, that is only human nature. Which one of us would voluntarily pay a significant amount of income tax if the Government were to ask us how much we would like to have paid back each year? It is ridiculous and contradictory.

Mr. Speaker, the biggest contradiction in the Tory Party sits as their leader, the Member representing the Nipawin constituency. This so-called accountant says he would run the government according to generally accepted accounting principles. That sounds like a good idea, Mr. Speaker. In fact it is my impression that this Government is doing just that. In fact the Provincial Auditor, who is charged with the task of ensuring this is the case, has in his last reports on Crown corporations and Government departments indicated this to be the case.

But the Member representing Nipawin claims the auditor didn't do his job properly. He claims 27 agencies never received audit reports. The Conservatives owe the auditor an apology. The Conservative Leader owes the public an apology as well. His party campaigned in the by-elections claiming these reports were not done when in fact the Attorney General of this province has listed where the reports on each and every one of these agencies can be found.

Mr. Speaker, the Member representing Nipawin is misleading the people of Saskatchewan and he attempted to do that again today in his Budget address. But then, the Member for Nipawin has misled people before, and he is misleading people now. Mr. Speaker, when the Conservative Leader came to the province he brought nothing with him. It is his intention, Mr. Speaker, that when he leaves he will leave nothing behind.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. MESSER:— Mr. Speaker, some Saskatchewan citizens unfortunately have already learned not to trust their financial well-being to the Member who represents Nipawin. The Saskatchewan people I suggest to you will not be long in coming to the same realization.

Mr. Speaker, I will, as I believe you will be fully aware from my remarks, be supporting the Budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. E. ANDERSON (Shaunavon):— Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise to speak in this far ranging debate, a very interesting debate filled with charges and counter-charges of who has made false statements and who has broken agreements. I would like to enter that discussion. But I think I shall leave the discussion on falsehoods and broken agreements to the experts in the field. Those who understand that field I will leave the discussion to and I will go on to other things, Mr. Speaker.

The Budget for the year 1977 presented us with the fact that this Government has mismanaged its affairs. Last year, faced by the most buoyant economic conditions that this province has ever seen, we were faced with a deficit budget. This year when the downturn in our provincial economy is starting to be felt we will have even a larger deficit.

This Government did not take advantage of our strong agricultural economy to build up our resource industry so that our provincial income would be diversified, and not so dependent on agricultural output.

Because of this Government's war on business and investment we have seen a sharp decline in our resource industries rather than an increase.

Mr. Speaker, we should look at the cause and reason for our deficit budget. Let us now look at the record of the NDP in regard to diversifying our economy from agriculture.

In the oil industry we find that in 1968 production was at 92 million barrels; in 1975 it was at 59 million barrels; in 1968 there were 393 oil wells completed and in 1975, 105 wells completed. In 1968 there were 976 drilling licences issued and in 1975 there were 290 licences issued.

If this Government had not, by their actions, stifled the oil industry we could have quite likely seen an unprecedented upsurge in oil exploration in this province . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. ANDERSON:— . . . along with increased oil production and an increase in revenue to this province.

MR. ALLEN:— . . . they're up.

MR. ANDERSON:— Certainly, because the Arabs raised their prices. The

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oil companies in Arabia raised their prices so they cover up your mismanagement bill. You're lucky that accidents will happen. This could have averted the necessity of deficit budgeting for this year.

In mineral development the record of this Government is just as dismal. In 1968 the value of metal production in this province was \$47 million; by 1975 it had dropped to \$32 million. It is too bad we don't have some Arabs in the metal business, they would put the price up so your mismanagement wouldn't show so badly.

Mr. Speaker, our recorded economic growth in this province was greatly due to the good crops and record grain prices. When crops are small because of climatic conditions or if world prices drop this province will follow the old boom or bust cycle, because of this Government's mismanagement of our growth potential in other sectors.

Mr. Speaker, let us take a look at what this Government proposed for agriculture producers in 1977. In face of the fact that unless we increase our milk production in this province we stand to have our provincial quota cut by the National Milk Marketing Board, what does this Government propose to do? In 1977 the grants to milk producers for the construction and improvement of facilities is discontinued. The grants to construct veterinary facilities are discontinued. Surely with a need to diversify our farm economy and create secondary agricultural enterprises this is a foolish move. This action shows the lack of understanding of rural needs and the lack of caring about the welfare of our farmers that this Government so characterizes.

Mr. Speaker, this Government says it will use deficit budgeting to put money into fields such as construction to prevent an increase in the jobless rate. It would seem poor planning and little research goes into anything this Government does. To increase construction work they propose to build more government office buildings which will be filled with civil servants pushing paper around. Such activity, while certainly pushing money into the economy, cannot and will not raise the productivity of this province and can only lead to inflation.

Mr. Speaker, it would seem that this Government has difficulty in knowing the difference between service economics and production economics. They seem to feel that money collected by taxes and then re-spent by Government departments somehow magically increases the productivity in this province and causes an upsurge of prosperity.

Mr. Speaker, this Government speaks of developing the northern part of our province and budgets many millions into DNS. Their lack of economic sense shows in the results. Mineral development in the North is at a virtual standstill and because of this much-needed jobs are lost. Income to this province is lost. People of the North are dependent on welfare for existence. The people of the North want meaningful jobs not welfare handed out by an army of DNS employees.

What is this Government's record in the forest industry? This Government has shut down the small independent operator stating that he was inefficient and wasteful. In its place they have the Saskatchewan Forest Products Marketing Corporation, a corporation that sustained a loss to the taxpayers of this

province of \$4 million in 1976 and of \$2.3 million in 1975. This is further proof of this Government's ability to take a profitable industry and turn it into a loser.

The NDP in this Budget are continuing in their old practice of taking money from the people in this province by raising the provincial income tax, sales taxes, leases on provincial Crown lands, etc., and doling this money out in various programs to buy voters. Mr. Speaker, the people of this province will see through this foolishness. The cattlemen in this province do not feel that this Government has much concern for their well-being when they receive a cow-calf grant one month and then pay the grant back the next month with a great increase in grazing fees.

The people who work in construction of roads in the rural areas find small comfort in the fact that we are going to build government office buildings in the cities while we cut moneys for the building of roads in the rural areas.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province find small comfort in an increase in health spending while at the same time they find it almost impossible to be admitted to hospitals because of lack of beds.

The elderly people of this province find small comfort in receiving grants for recreation purposes while the list for admittance to nursing homes grows and grows as no room is available. Last month alone, Mr. Speaker, there were 51 people on the waiting list in the small town of Shaunavon to get into the nursing home; eleven of them were considered on the very urgent category.

Mr. Speaker, this Government in this Budget has shown that it has lost its concern for the needs of the people of this province. They have shown that socialism is more important to them than the welfare of their citizens.

This Government says it has concerns for rural areas. It claims to want to help the family farm to survive. Its record of performance indicates that its wish is just the opposite.

Our highway system so necessary to help farm life be viable is deteriorating. Small businessmen in their towns are harassed by regulations that cause them to spend more time keeping records for the Government than they do serving customers. Labour laws are enacted that make it virtually impossible to hire part-time help by students after school to help in the rush periods.

Mr. Speaker, I can agree that this Budget may well be called a 'red' Budget. It is red in its philosophy. It is red in the fact that it is a deficit Budget. It will surely make the people of this province see red when they realize the full scope of this Government's mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, I feel that this Budget does nothing towards solving the basic problems of this province, the fact being that we are still tied to a great degree to our agricultural economics. Therefore, I cannot support the Motion, but I will support the amendment.

HON. E. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Education):— Mr. Speaker, let me first of all in rising extend my congratulations, because I have been unable to do so yet in this

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Session, my congratulations to the two new Members recently elected in the by-elections, the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. H. Lane) and the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf). And in doing so, extend to them my best wishes for a good experience in this House, as the Minister of Finance said, for the short two-year stint that they are going to have here. I'm sure that they will find it worthwhile as I have in the five years or so that I have been here.

I have been listening to some of the things that were said here this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and I want to say that I was most impressed with the things that the Member for Tisdale-Kelsey had to say, because I think he very clearly pointed out the true nature of some of the Members opposite and in particular the Conservative Party.

I was also interested in hearing what the Member for Nipawin had to say, because it is well known in this House and it's beginning to become well known throughout Saskatchewan, that what the Member for Nipawin and most of his colleagues have to say is usually very little. But one of the things that he talked about, which I was particularly interested in, was leadership. I found that so interesting because as an elected Member and as a member of the New Democratic Party, I did quite a bit of work in the by-election campaigns and I don't mind admitting it. But I found a very interesting thing developing, and I wondered and I still wonder, why the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) who is so concerned about leadership was hidden so successfully and so well by his party in those by-election campaigns. Is it that they are becoming a little afraid? Is it that they are becoming just a little ashamed of exposing who the true leader of their party is and the kind of stands he really has? Is it that some of the true positions of that party are beginning to catch up with them, Mr. Speaker, throughout Saskatchewan?

Now, the Member for Nipawin also made some comments about the good old days of the Right Hon. Mr. Diefenbaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, I was born and raised in Saskatchewan. I have spent all my life here and I know something about the politics of this province and the people of this province. I know that Mr. Diefenbaker is a man who has gained the respect of all the people of Saskatchewan. And I know that Mr. Diefenbaker was an honest man and he was respected and that his integrity was never questioned. Now, Mr. Speaker, for the Member for Nipawin to pretend to align himself with Mr. Diefenbaker in this Legislature, I think, is nothing short of an insult. Mr. Speaker, it was the people like Mr. Collver, the Member for Nipawin, I will try not to call him by his name, and the Dalton Camps of this world and of the Conservative Party that threw out that Mr. Diefenbaker when he was Leader of that Conservative Party. And the people of Saskatchewan know that only too well, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this Budget, like all the budgets presented in this Legislature by our Government since 1971, is a responsible Budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— It's a Budget of which, we on this side of the House and the people of Saskatchewan, can be proud. It is a Budget which all can look upon as taking into consideration the important needs of Saskatchewan people, facing up to our economic realities and then making the right decisions to accommodate both. I commend

the Minister of Finance, the Hon. Member for Regina North East for the marvellous job that he has done inputting this Budget together.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— The Member for Regina North East, our Minister of Finance, has, in the short term that he has held that position, developed a reputation of understanding, good management and good judgment. Besides that, he has developed a reputation as an important spokesman throughout all of Canada at federal-provincial conferences and in talking about issues affecting the people of Saskatchewan because of the actions of the Federal Government.

Now the Members opposite, Mr. Speaker, they may criticize and they may twist and they may turn statistics, and I know that the Leader of the Conservative Party, in particular, is especially talented at twisting statistics.

MR. MESSER:— He tells us now he doesn't like statistics.

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— That's because he's a little afraid of them now.

Mr. Speaker, the Members opposite, they even laugh, but if you listen carefully and if you look at the expression on their faces, it is very evident that those laughs are very nervous laughs, they seem to echo from the depths of a deep embarrassment. They seem to echo from the depths of some kind of a feeling of shamefulness and they are hollow like the kind of laughs that you would hear on the late, late movie at 2:00 o'clock in the morning, almost haunted.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one only has to look at the record of the former Liberal Government to understand why their expressions seem so strange in this House, as they respond to this Budget. That record of seven years of Liberal Government, as it related to the management of our economy of this province, was a record of bungling and sell-outs and taking from those who could pay the least, in order that they could give to those who needed nothing, in order that they could give away the resources of this province to the multinational corporations stationed outside this country, throughout the world, with none, or very little benefit to the people of Saskatchewan. If re-elected it should be known that they would again give away to the resource companies all the gains that we have made since 1971 and there is no question about that. You can be assured that once again this province would suffer economically like it did prior to 1972. In the Thatcher Liberals' last year in office, this province collected some \$32.5 million in resource revenues.

In NDP Saskatchewan in 1975-76, the province collected \$337 million in resource revenue, over ten times as much. We will continue to assure that the development of our resources brings maximum benefit to the people of Saskatchewan. These efforts, it should be recalled by Saskatchewan people and this Legislature, have been completely and bitterly opposed by both Conservatives and Liberals.

Now in his speech this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Nipawin made it clear that all of this would be given away.

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He actually came right out and said so and if either of them, Mr. Speaker, were to be elected as a government of Saskatchewan, there is no doubt that the years of \$32.5 million returns from our resources would return. And they have both made that more than clear in their statements and in their actions. A Liberal or a Conservative government would return these revenues to the resource companies and they would then be forced to increase taxes on people and at the same time cut services.

We would, without any doubt, again have deterrent fees and the Conservatives have said so through Mr. Joe Clark, their National Leader, that they would do it. We would see the abolition of important recreation and cultural programs, programs like the Prescription Drug Plan, like the Hearing Aid Plan and the Dental Plan and there is no doubt about it. I was really rather surprised and shocked, because I thought that the Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) would have learned. I was surprised when I heard him say in his speech the other day, I think it was yesterday, that we should consider users pay. He made it clear in this House and he put it on the record, Mr. Speaker, that he much like the Conservative Party, thinks that the user pay principle is a good principle to apply to sick people and to old people when they are in hospital. Well I want to say to the Member for Thunder Creek and I wish he was here, that we don't believe in the law of the jungle in the New Democratic Party.

Mr. Speaker, they would do away with these types of programs because, having given the resource revenues back to the multinationals, we couldn't afford them and secondly, because both Tories and Liberals have called these kinds of programs frills. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that the people believe them to be frills and our Government doesn't believe them to be frills. They are programs that benefit many people. They are programs that make Saskatchewan the best province in which to live in Canada and we will continue to put our priorities on people in the future, as we have in the past.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Now, Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives over there, of course, haven't been in government in Saskatchewan for many years, and looking at the Alberta and the Ontario and the BC examples, we can thank our lucky stars for that. But if you listen to them in this House, if you listen to them right now, it is obvious that they have a deep feeling of embarrassment and nervousness because they, too, have had their share, and continue to have their share of financial embarrassment.

On behalf of my constituents, I am pleased to again acknowledge that this Budget places a high priority on health, education and social services. The Opposition says many of these programs are frills, Mr. Speaker, and I want to join with the Minister of Finance and challenge the Conservatives, challenge the Liberals, to state which of these so-called 'frills' they would do away with. Because until they do, we can only assume and the people of Saskatchewan can only assume, that they would do away with most of them and that many of these programs would fall under the Liberal blade or the Conservative axe. And if you look at what is happening in other provinces, there is little doubt what the Conservative Members across the way believe. With the 11 per cent maximum increase for health care in Conservative Alberta in 1976, and limits of 7.5 per cent in

1977, and premiums of \$169 annually for a family, it is clear that Saskatchewan Conservatives would ruin our health care plan in no time at all.

With Conservative Ontario's health premium of \$384 annually, and with limits on hospital budget increases to 10 per cent, and their closure of 12 hospitals it is clear that the Member for Nipawin and his colleagues would be so busy paying off their corporate friends that our hospital services would suffer the same fate.

With the holding of hospital budget increases by the Conservative-inclined Government of British Columbia to 8.5 per cent and the 50 per cent increase to \$225 annually per family for health premiums, it is clear that Saskatchewan Collver Conservatives would return this province's health care services to a level worse than even the Liberals did during the Thatcher Government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives never talk about their policies and because they never talk about their policies, some people say that's because they don't have any, but I don't completely agree with that. No, I don't, because I think that they do, in fact, have some policies. Policies that they are afraid to talk about, policies like those in Ontario, in Alberta and in British Columbia. Policies that are so inclined to give our wealth away to multinational resource companies that the people have to pay with higher taxes and reduced people services.

Mr. Speaker, why do we in Saskatchewan under an NDP Government, have such a high level of services, while taxes that people have to pay are reasonable? Why can we continue to provide the best health, education and social services in Canada and, at the same time, provide in this Budget a cut in income taxes for people at almost every level? Why are we able to have a Budget so that a family with an income of \$15,000 will pay \$146 less in income tax in 1977 than they paid in 1976? Because, Mr. Speaker, the NDP Government has increased revenues from our resources, resources that belong to our people, and, therefore, should benefit our people.

And these revenues, Mr. Speaker, have enabled our Government to hold the line on most taxes, reduce others, and eliminate some altogether, such as hospitalization and medicare premiums and deterrent fees, while expanding services to people, like prescription drugs, and children's dental care, aids to independent living, day care, universal kindergarten and community colleges.

What would the Conservatives do, Mr. Speaker, I submit that they would do precisely the same as Conservatives do in British Columbia and Alberta and Ontario.

Now the Budget in BC forecasts some major reductions in resource revenues and according to an article in a February edition of a Victoria newspaper, the following seems to come through. In Conservative-style governed BC, logging taxes will go down from \$26 million to \$10 million in 1977-78 compared to 1976-77 Coal royalties will be reduced from \$12.5 million to \$5.3 million. Mining taxes down from \$15 million to \$10,800,000. Mineral land tax down from \$15 million to \$9 million.

It is clear that that is the approach of the Collver Conservative Party. It is clear that the Collver Conservative

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Party would turn our resource revenues over to their friends, the corporations, who support them financially. Companies like Gulf Oil, which contributed \$21,000 to the Progressive Conservative Canada Fund between 1974 and 1975. Companies like International Nickel, which gave \$26,000. Companies like Algoma Steel, a CPR subsidiary, which gifted \$25,000 to the Tories. Is it any wonder that Collver Tories support inland terminals and have not opposed rail line abandonment, and generally are afraid of stating what their policies really are?

Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Members in this House talk about individual independence and individual initiative and freedom of the individual. If you ask them what they mean by that, they're very hard pressed to have an answer, but it's a very good line. Well, I think it's interesting to examine what that party, just as a Liberal Party, means by that particular line.

They mean that the people of Saskatchewan will have to be answerable to the multinational resource companies. They mean that the farmers of Saskatchewan would have to be under the thumb and answerable to the multinational grain companies, such as Cargill Grain. And from the kinds of things that the Conservative Leader, the Member for Nipawin, has been heard to say, generalities without any specifics, without any definition, without any explanation, there is nothing else that we can conclude. He has made it clear, on behalf of his caucus, that a Conservative Government would give to the resource companies of this province a free hand. He has made it clear that a Conservative Government in this province would return the control of our resources, such as potash, such as oil and such as uranium, to the multinational resource companies. He has been heard to say that he would negotiate with the resource companies.

What does that all mean, Mr. Speaker? It means very definitely, that every time a multinational resource company wanted to have a reduction in its taxation, it would simply say to the Conservative Leader, as it used to say to the Liberal Leader when they were in government, and to the party and his caucus, "Hey, I don't like this tax, I don't like this tax because we want to take more money out of Saskatchewan. We want to take more money to some other place in the world, so that we can invest it and make more money." And they would say, "This tax is too high and we're going to refuse to pay it, and furthermore we're not going to expand our plant, we're not going to do any exploration, we're not going to expand our productive capacity," as the potash companies tried to do with this Government. They would say, "Until you do what we tell you, until you lower this tax or change your system of the tax the way we want it changed, we are not going to co-operate with you."

And you know what Mr. Collver and his caucus and the Liberals do, you know what they would do? They would go politely to these resource companies, to New York, or to Bonn, or to Paris or to Chicago or wherever, and they would say, "Now, now, please, you understand, we need you. You pay our election expenses and you are the funding that keeps our party machine oiled; we've always been good to you, you know that; sure, we'll reduce your tax, what do you want?" That's negotiation. "We will make a compromise, we will give you more of that resource revenue so that you can take it out of Saskatchewan and make yourself more millions. Just expand your plant a little bit, a little token, so that we can go to the people of Saskatchewan and we can tell them - look at this development that's taking place." You know

after all, the people of Saskatchewan, the Tories would say as the Liberals do, “They don’t fund our party, you, the oil companies and the resource companies and the banks, you fund the Conservative Party and we’ve got to look after you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— So, once again, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan would pay by lost revenues, and once again those resource companies, Mr. Speaker, under a Conservative Government as under a Liberal Government, would be taking millions and millions of dollars out of Saskatchewan and out of Canada every year. And, once again we would be facing the prospect of having our non-renewable resources depleted and exploited without a rightful fair share of those revenues benefiting the people of Saskatchewan and helping the development of this province for the future - not only for today but for the generations of the future. And when all those resources were gone, those multinational corporations would be laughing because they would have taken those revenues, and they would have reinvested them somewhere else in the world, and we would have been the losers and our children would have been the losers.

There isn’t any doubt, Mr. Speaker, one can put it simply or one can complicate it with a lot of rhetoric, but there isn’t any doubt that this is the position of the Collver caucus in this Legislature and the Conservative Party. That is the position of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Conservative Party. After all there is no one who knows more about exploitation, it appears, than the Leader of the Conservative Party. Now this Government, Mr. Speaker, is not about to concede to that kind of blackmail.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— We believe that we have some responsibility as the representatives of the people of Saskatchewan to think about the next generation, to think about our children, to think about their children and the kind of future that they will have in Saskatchewan. It would be easy to spend like drunken sailors, as the Conservative Party has proposed, and as the Liberals have proposed. That’s the simplest and the most accurate way to define the things that they have been saying in the last several months. They have been saying to this Government and everyone else, “You should spend like drunken sailors, you should blow all your reserves, you should blow your Energy Fund right now. Don’t wait for tomorrow, blow it now. And those kids that are going to our schools today, let them find a way to solve their own problems of tomorrow.” That’s what the Liberal Party and the Collver Party are saying, Mr. Speaker.

That is not what the New Democratic Government of Allan Blakeney is saying. That is not what we are prepared to do. We are making sure that some of the revenue from our resources is re-invested in Saskatchewan so that this province can develop, and so that revenues from our resources can be assured in order that the services in health and education and social services, the construction of our roads, the operation of our municipalities; so that all of those things can be assured, not only for today, but for the future. The record of this Government since 1971 has been a record of good management

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and good planning. Cash carry forwards during good years are making it possible to maintain the highest level of programming and services without having to borrow money. Had there been a Liberal or a Collver Government, Mr. Speaker, they would have spent in a drunken binge and they clearly indicate they would have done that. Just imagine where we would be today without that cash carry forward of several millions of dollars. Just think about that. Just imagine where we would be today, Mr. Speaker, without the Energy Fund. And yet at every step of the way, the Liberals and the Conservatives have opposed Bill 42 and opposed the establishment of the Energy Fund. It's only now, after it has been established, that they are saying and especially the Conservative Party is saying, depending on which part of the province they are, of course, you should spend it today, go on a big binge and have a ball, spend it today and we will let somebody else worry about it tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, our resource policy is providing many services. It is providing revenues which have helped to develop, for example, a provincial library system which is the strongest and the largest and best supported in Canada. In terms of the quality and range of services provided by this agency, no other provincial library can compare. Support services such as reference, inter-library loan, cataloguing and consulting, are all operating at higher levels than other provinces. For example, and I think that this should be noted, the Provincial Library in Saskatchewan handles more inter-library traffic every six weeks than the Alberta agency processes in a whole year. Mr. Speaker, another example of Conservative efficiency as displayed by a Conservative Government in Alberta.

Now this Budget provides a ten per cent increase in grants to regional and municipal libraries. The Government's contribution to the operating costs of regional libraries now average 75 per cent of the total cost. Our Government continues to show leadership in the area of public library development, with Provincial Government appropriations for libraries showing a 276 per cent increase since 1971.

Grants to Regina and Saskatoon public libraries in 1975 nearly exceeded, again it should be noted, the entire appropriation for library services provided by the Conservative Government of Alberta in the same year. That ratio still remains, Mr. Speaker. The support of the Provincial Government of Saskatchewan in terms of capital and operating grants and support services, particularly over the past five years, has been outstanding.

The Capital Grant Program will be continued for this fiscal year. This program has resulted in over 200 library renovation and construction projects in communities in the province and five bookmobiles have been added to regional library services. Our system of operation of libraries provides the highest level of local autonomy and local decision making possible. Regional and Municipal Library Boards in our province exercise almost complete autonomy over their respective operations.

Can you imagine, Mr. Speaker, the effect on this library system if Liberal and Collver policies on resources were ever implemented? They would have to cut back funds and force much heavier burdens on municipal governments.

The Member for Rosetown-Elrose (Mr. Bailey) mentioned the other day something about library grants being reduced. I

want to take this opportunity in talking about the funding for libraries in Saskatchewan to provide some information to the House and to him, as I am sure he will be interested. I want to take the Wheatland region, Mr. Speaker, and give to you and to this House and to put on the record, the assistance provided by this Government to the Wheatland Regional Library where the Member comes from, since 1971. In 1971-72 the operating grants to Wheatland were \$82,156; in 1972-73 they were \$98,524; in 1973-74 they were \$106,704; in 1974-75 they were \$169,745; in 1975-76 they were \$286,418 and it goes on and on, Mr. Speaker, until this year the Budget provides \$416,350 in operating grants. Mr. Speaker, since 1971-72 an increase of 406.78 per cent.

If one looks at the Conservative example in Alberta it is clear that our library system in Saskatchewan would be literally destroyed by a Conservative Government here - another reason why they refuse to talk about their policies; another reason why their contribution to the debates in this Legislature are equal to nothing. They are afraid to say what they truly believe and what they really think.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words on education. Over the years, since 1971, it has become clear that the philosophy of our Government is that educational expenditures are investments in human resources. Such expenditures should have a high priority for the benefit of both the community as a whole and the individuals in the educational process, whether student or teacher. An indication of the priority New Democrats have put on education is again reflected in this Budget.

Total operating grants will increase by \$17 million. This increase will maintain the province's share of educational costs at the 1976 share of 58 per cent, the highest point in Saskatchewan's history.

The rate of increase in costs of our elementary and secondary education can be expected to drop off substantially from the increase of 1976. The 1976 expenditures reflect the fact that that was a catch-up year for teacher salaries. We said, when the Federal Government announced its anti-inflation program, that its guidelines would not apply to some sectors in Saskatchewan where catch-up was needed in agreements. Saskatchewan teachers were one of those groups, and I am proud to be able to say that our commitment was made and our commitment was kept.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Mr. Speaker, teachers' negotiators, trustees' negotiators, and Government representatives all signed the 1976 agreement in good faith and it was a good settlement, agreed to by all concerned.

It is known, of course, and teachers should know that Liberals and Conservatives did not think so, at least most of them didn't think so, publicly they said nothing, but across the province when they talked to certain people, they made it clear that they would not have allowed the catch-up which was necessary.

In addition to direct grants to school boards, property improvement grants have helped reduce the net impact of property taxes on homes, farms and small businesses. If you take, for

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example, the Property Improvement Grant (PIG) into account, net school taxes are actually lower for the owner of an average home or a farm now, than they were in 1971. For example, Mr. Speaker, if you take property in Humboldt, with an assessed value of \$4,500, the amount of net school tax in 1976 was only \$45 after PIG was deducted, a reduction of \$62 from 1971, when the net school tax was \$107. A farmer near Young, Mr. Speaker, with three quarter sections of land, assessed at \$6,000, paid a net education property tax of \$164 in 1971. In 1976 he paid a net of only \$94 after the PIG was rebated. And I know that the Member for Eastview (Mr. Penner) will be interested to know that in Saskatoon, property assessed at \$6,150 paid \$38 less 1976 education tax than in 1971.

When you consider that education services have grown considerably during these years, and costs have increased from \$161 million across the province in 1971 to \$284 million in 1976, this is quite an accomplishment by this NDP Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party has had something to say about the two recent by-elections in his first remarks in this Debate. Of course he boasted about the Tory wins, and I don't blame him for that. I think I would have done the same. The results of the by-elections are clear but I think more important, Mr. Speaker, is what those by-elections showed about the Collver Party of Saskatchewan. It was shown that the Tories cannot be trusted, that their approach to provincial politics is not honest and, in fact, dangerous to some of the freedoms that our people now enjoy.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Conservative Party and his colleagues have left the impression that all the teachers and all the trustees of Saskatchewan are not doing their job. Now it was indeed very disturbing to read and to hear the kind of information that was bandied around by those Members that are smiling over there and by the parties opposite about a lot of subjects but education, I think, in particular. It was particularly horrifying to note the germ of doubt that the Leader of the Tory Party tried to seed in people's minds about the work of the Department of Education, about every teacher in Saskatchewan and about every trustee in Saskatchewan. Now how did he do that? Let me tell you how. In the January 20th edition of the Prince Albert Herald, the Member for Nipawin is quoted as saying, and I quote: "The education system is not moving forward." He said no more and when he or his colleagues were asked what he meant, they had no answer and they still don't have an answer.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Now had they elaborated on what Mr. Collver said and I hope that they do, so that people could understand what they meant, maybe it would not have been quite so bad, but they simply used a broad general statement of this type, which points a finger at all those areas of education which I have mentioned, not only the department, because maybe that's fair game, but every teacher and every trustee in Saskatchewan.

It is a widely known fact, Mr. Speaker, that in the deliberations by that party in its committee of education, that that committee came to the conclusion that they really couldn't find out how they could criticize education in Saskatchewan because of the fine job done by this New Democratic Party Government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that because of the doubt that they have tried to create, and the suspicion that they have tried to make, and the cloaked accusations that they seem to be making about our teachers and school trustees by making such generalized and unqualified statements, that that party over there and particularly its Leader, owes an apology to the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Mr. Speaker, that party owes an apology because that kind of political manoeuvring ought to be unacceptable in the 1970s - political manoeuvring that cares not about the impression it leaves because it provides no substance to what is said and supports nothing it alleges.

It's sufficient to say, Mr. Speaker, that any party that can't be trusted when it is in Opposition, surely can't be trusted to be responsible and honest should it happen to become a government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— This NDP Government and our party has always given high priority to education and this Budget again reinforces that commitment. Everyone in Saskatchewan should be free to have a good education.

Partisan politics should not interfere with the right to an education for our children. But the Tories have shown that they would not hesitate to play politics with our schools. Just listen, they laugh, Mr. Speaker. It was during the campaign that an advertisement appeared, authorized by the Prince Albert-Duck Lake Progressive Conservative Association, in the Prince Albert Herald. That ad reported a mock election that had taken place in a Grade Nine class on February 18 at Stobart High School in Duck Lake.

Now these types of mock elections have always been carried out, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think there is anything wrong with them. If properly done, I think they can be helpful in teaching our democratic process and our democratic system to the students in our schools. The thing wrong in this issue was the actions of the Tory Party in interfering with our educational system and injecting their partisan politics into the school and into the classroom.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— One has to ask, Mr. Speaker, how far would they go?

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How many of the fundamental freedoms of our people would they interfere with? How much would they cause people to suffer in order to pay off their corporate friends? Mr. Speaker, that is the question.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I want to say a few words about the Department of Culture and Youth and I'll take only a minute or two to do that. I take a special pride in presenting, in this Budget to you, the Members of the Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan the programs and activities planned for 1977-78 in the fields of culture, sports and recreation. Participation in such activities, especially in rural Saskatchewan, is fast becoming part of our way of life rather than a special pursuit of the few. The demand for recreation and leisure time services continues to accelerate and this Budget meets this demand, because it helps local people to do the things they feel they need to do.

The Estimates show that expenditures on these activities will increase substantially in 1977-78 over 1976-77. But this, however, only tells part of the story. The more important point is that this expansion in funding will be in programs which react positively and equitably to the needs of the citizens of Saskatchewan. Our objective is to provide equal access for all people, urban and rural, rich and poor, young and old, to programs and facilities which enable them to participate in sport, recreational, artistic, or cultural activity of their choice. This Budget is a major step forward in that objective.

Mr. Speaker, this year's Budget is estimated at some \$11.6 million, up more than \$4.7 million from last year. This compares to an expenditure of only \$2.6 million in 1971-72 on similar programs. You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that in this Budget, my colleague the Minister of Finance announced that \$4 million will be made available to Saskatchewan communities to assist in the construction and the renovation of cultural and recreational facilities. I spoke in some detail on this program during second reading of the Bill last night that I had the pleasure of introducing.

This Budget, Mr. Speaker, provides increased assistance to the Saskatchewan Arts Board and the Western Development Museum, as well as amateur sport and recreation and general cultural programs.

The professional arts in Saskatchewan are alive and growing and I want to commend the people involved in the arts for they have gained for our province national and, in fact, international recognition. Saskatoon's Persephone Theatre, Regina's Globe Theatre and the Regina Modern Dance Theatre, for example, played to appreciative audiences at the Olympics in Montreal last summer. Representatives from various multicultural organizations also displayed the wealth of our rich cultural heritage at the Olympics before an international audience.

With the new focus on museums, history and heritage programming, we will provide more efficient service to the public, particularly those interested in the preservation of our heritage.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have spoken at some length about the programs of the Department of Culture and Youth in this Legislature on previous occasions and, no doubt, during Estimates another opportunity will present itself, so I'll say no more at this time.

But I want to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by saying that this Budget, as I said at the outset, is one of which we can all be proud. I invite the Members opposite to put aside their partisan politics and stand up for Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. TCHORZEWSKI:— Mr. Speaker, I invite them to act as responsible elected Members in this Legislature and support this Budget as I intend to do in opposing the Amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

HON. G. T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour):— Mr. Speaker, I have a modest contribution to make to the Budget Debate and I rather suspect that words delivered by myself might be more favourably received on a full stomach. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might impose upon the House to call it 5:00 o'clock. I know that there are other Members that have obligations respecting a film to be shown depicting a life of a great Canadian and accordingly, Mr. Speaker, it might be most appropriate that we adjourn until 7: 00.

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

MR. SNYDER:— Mr. Speaker, when we called it 5:00 o'clock a matter of some two hours ago, I barely had the opportunity to take my feet. I trust that Members have had an opportunity to shore themselves over the last couple of hours and I trust also that Members opposite have had the opportunity to listen to some of the news that permeates the airways and receive the news that the red, white and blue Tory Government of New Brunswick has brought down a budget with a \$200 million deficit, I believe.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Mr. Speaker, my first words during this Budget Debate this evening must be to welcome the two new Members of this Assembly who took their seats on Monday, March 7th. Like other Members, I trust that their contribution will be significant, objective and worthwhile. I say this sincerely, Mr. Speaker, because during the 17 years that I have spent in this House, there has never been an occasion when the need of a political party in Opposition was so obvious or so great.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Mr. Speaker, I also want to at this time congratulate the Minister of Finance for introducing another responsible Budget, one which shows a good deal of understanding in the handling of the business affairs of this province and at the same time, indicating a compassion for the legitimate needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Mr. Speaker, dependent as we are, to such a large extent on the economic fortunes of agriculture, I think it has to

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be said that it's inevitable that provincial incomes will respond to the humps and the hollows associated with the world price of agricultural commodities.

We have also been faced, Mr. Speaker, with increased costs related to the inflationary trend which no individual or government has been able to escape. This, Mr. Speaker, coupled with the unyielding and insensitive attitude of the Federal Government with relation to dominion-provincial fiscal arrangements and particularly cost-sharing agreements, has compounded our task.

But in spite of these encumbrances, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province will continue to enjoy the many advantages associated with living in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this Government is known for its sensible approach in the planning of responsible budgets.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— In 1973, Mr. Speaker, we said it made good sense for a government, like any good business enterprise, to plan for the future. We said it was no longer desirable for a government to be concerned only with revenues and spending over a one-year period. We recognized that our revenues in any one year depended largely on the buoyancy of the grain economy and that in some years we would have a considerable amount of money to spend, while in other years our revenues would be somewhat more limited.

Now in an effort to stabilize these fluctuations in revenues, we brought in, of course, as you know, a different method of accounting referred to as cash carry forward, or long-term fiscal accounting. This method of accounting allows us, Mr. Speaker, of course, to put aside moneys left over in a good year and spend it on programs and services during the leaner years.

Since 1973, some \$111.6 million has been put aside in the form of cash carry forward for this purpose. This is an amount approximately three times as large as is required to cover a rather modest deficit which we anticipate in the coming year, unless, of course, Mr. Speaker, you use the technique employed by the Member for Nipawin, which is becoming popularly referred to as 'Baltzan Mathematics'.

This adoption, Mr. Speaker, of long-term fiscal accounting means that the financial statements of the province will more accurately reflect the longer term approach to fiscal planning.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I run the risk, for a few minutes this evening, in boring the Assembly by devoting some time to a resume of the activities of the Department of Labour during the last 12 months.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear.

MR. SNYDER:— During this Session the Hon. Members have been asked to study a new Labour Standards Bill which seeks to further consolidate and protect the rights of working people in this province.

As those of this Assembly have clearly seen, the policies of the Department are aimed at ensuring that those who work to produce goods and services will be guaranteed a fair share of

the good life which they help to create.

During the past almost six years, Mr. Speaker, this Government has, I believe, restored self-respect to our working people in many ways, not the least of which has been the creation and restoration of a number of very basic and very important labour standards.

Mr. Speaker, when we consider the target population served by the Department of Labour, the work force of this province, we are looking at some 390,000 people. Along with their families they represent the overwhelming majority of a growing population. I think it's fair to say that there are very few households in this province, Mr. Speaker, who are not profoundly affected by the programs and by the legislation administered by the Department of Labour.

We have been working towards such goals as providing workers with a reasonable measure of job security, a decent standard of living and their well-deserved share of leisure time.

To this end, for example, Mr. Speaker, our labour standards inspectors have continued their efforts to provide a measure of wage protection for employees. During the last fiscal year, their regular and special inspections resulted in the collection of over \$725,000 in wages owing to employees.

We have seen fit to follow the recommendations of The Minimum Wage Board and have raised the minimum wage rate seven times since we took office in 1971, the most recent change being in January of this year.

Another example is shown in the fact that this year in Saskatchewan a worker is entitled to three weeks annual vacation after one year of service and four after eleven. It will be four after ten in 1978 when the provision becomes fully operative.

One of our most active programs over the last year has been the newly created women's division, Mr. Speaker. Formed as an expansion of the former women's bureau, this newest addition to the Department of Labour has a direct responsibility to promote equal opportunities for a growing number of women who are active in our labour force. At the present time the number of working women in this province is about 140,000.

In addition to developing a wide variety of educational and informational programs for the public, this division has also the responsibility for investigating and identifying violations of equal pay and maternity leave sections of The Labour Standards Act. From April 1, 1976 to the end of February in 1977, Mr. Speaker, the division staff has handled 168 equal pay and maternity leave cases, which have resulted in the collection of something in excess of \$17,000 in retroactive pay.

Working in conjunction with the women's division is the new Advisory Council on the Status of Women which was appointed on the 2nd of November last year.

The programs of the Occupational Health and Safety Division, Mr. Speaker, are also continuing to have a positive impact upon working conditions in this province. As you know, the Department of Labour has responsibility for a number of safety services such as the protection of the public from radiation

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hazards, the prevention of fires, the safe construction of boilers and elevators and electrical and gas appliances. Mine safety is also a responsibility of the Department.

In addition to these inspection functions, the Occupational Health Division meets its responsibilities for worker protection by means of a system of joint employer-employee occupational health committees. These are established in places of work where there are ten or more employees.

I am happy to note, Mr. Speaker, that this system and the resulting networks of communications and learning which we have developed amongst management, employees and the Government, are beginning to show definite signs of success insofar as better working conditions are concerned. Employers are telling us, Mr. Speaker, of better productivity, of better morale as a result of the development of such health related things as ventilation, of lighting and of thermal environment. I have to think that these kind of improvements might also contribute to other benefits which are pretty difficult to make here, Mr. Speaker, such as prolonged life, better hearing, less psychological stress and so on.

In spite of the remark by Mark Twain, Mr. Speaker, that there are lies, damn lies and statistics, I think I should take a chance to point out a few facts that are beginning to emerge from recent Workers' Compensation Board statistics.

Although the total number of work-related accidents has not shown a great change, there has been a very reasonable decline in the proportion of very serious accidents compared to injuries which, for example, require only medical aid but no time lost on the job. Furthermore, there has also been a measurable decrease in the average days lost per case where there was a time-loss accident involved. I suppose another way to measure the severity of accidents is to look at the degree of resulting disability. In this respect, Workers' Compensation Board figures revealed that in 1975 some 50 per cent of their disability cases resulted in less than a 10 per cent impairment. In 1976, the proportion of relatively minor accidents had risen to 54 per cent of the total. Looking at the figures in yet another way, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the Workers' Compensation Board pension awards for permanent disabilities in 1975, total \$7 million for 640 cases. In 1976, however, for 736 cases the cost was \$6.6 million. In other words the average cost of pensions fell from \$10,942 to \$8,970. I think the point is, Mr. Speaker, that while the total number of claims is still unacceptably high, some comfort can be taken from the fact that the severity of injuries appears to be less. This may be happening because the worst hazards are being reduced. We have to think, Mr. Speaker, that we are on the right track.

Nevertheless, now is certainly not the time to rest on evidence of partial success. On the contrary, we in the department feel that the continued high accident rate may reflect inadequate legislation and we are dedicated to making changes in that connection. As a result of such concern, we will be proposing some amending legislation at a later date.

Another active program is that of Apprenticeship and Tradesman Qualification, Mr. Speaker, and as the name implies, its purpose is to arrange for the training of skilled tradesmen and to establish the standards of qualifications in the various trades designated under The Apprenticeship Act.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is justifiably concerned that we must use our manpower resources effectively, that we must match the demand for labour with an adequate supply of skilled workers and, at the same time, we must provide the public with a high standard of workmanship.

In recent years the rising prosperity in this province has also meant that there has been a rising demand for skilled tradesmen. In coping with this, the Apprenticeship Branch estimates a 23 per cent increase in the number of apprentices registered with the branch at the end of the current fiscal year as compared with one year ago. Hand in hand with this Mr. Speaker, goes a 27.2 per cent increase in the employment at the Provincial Training Institutes.

In December of this past year, after careful consultations with employees and employers throughout the province, we instituted a system of compulsory apprenticeship for three designated trades, electrical, sheet metal and plumbing. Those who work in those trades, employers and workers alike, have indicated to me that they support such a concept and they are anxious to see that it works. This kind of close co-operation is essential, Mr. Speaker, because introducing such a program requires a considerable amount of adjustment in registration procedures and inspection. Once the system has proven effective, it is vital that the same principles and objectives can apply to the designated trades. In this way, the province I think, Mr. Speaker, can be assured of an adequate supply of properly trained, highly skilled tradesmen. At the same time, we will have the opportunity to afford members of the work force a greater opportunity to earn a more rewarding living.

Turning to the subject of labour relations for a moment, Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on the reorganized Industrial Relations Division of the Labour Department. This division, as many members will know, provides support staff to the Labour Relations Board. As a part of this support, I have recently appointed an executive officer whose main duty will be to help streamline the function of the Board, enabling it to carry on with its ever-increasing workload. The Industrial Relations Division also provides workers' advocate services for people who have difficult claims before the Workers' Compensation Board. In addition to these duties, Mr. Speaker, the division provides a voluntary conciliation service to employers and employees in resolving their disputes. And it should be noted, perhaps, in the last fiscal year, conciliation officers were called upon to help with some 58 disputes involving 516 employers and over 17,000 employees.

In this connection, Mr. Speaker, I should like to comment for just a moment and indicate that work stoppages in Saskatchewan during 1976 involved fewer workers and a smaller number of man-days lost to the economy, a great deal less than were lost in 1975. I have no doubt that the continued positive contribution was made by our conciliation officers and this has been an immensely valuable component in this situation.

Another facet of the work of the Department can be seen in our continuing effort to provide useful, factual information to those who must be actively involved in labour relations in this province, Mr. Speaker. In addition to the monthly labour report, for example, there are a number of sought after computer-based surveys which are proving extremely useful to the business communities and to negotiators as well.

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The Pension Benefits Branch of the Department is also responsible for ensuring that employees' financial interests in private pension plans are protected. To do this, the people in this branch monitor each plan to ensure that it meets the required investment, solvency, funding and vesting standards. In 1976, some 34 new pension plans covering over 1,000 employees were registered, bringing the total number of active private pension plans in the province to 462, covering over 90,000 employee members.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment or two to draw attention to a feature which is of exceeding importance to all of us in Saskatchewan in 1977. Since it is our view that the responsibility for care of the sick and injured lies with each and all of us as fellow human beings, we, therefore, concluded after the receipt of the Sickness and Accident Report under the Chairmanship of Judge Pope, that the Government should consider carefully the best means to provide coverage for those who are not receiving some coverage for sickness and accident. I think members will know that Workers' Compensation covers many people on the job and you will know that the Government Insurance Plan covers them when they are on the road driving an automobile, but there are still a number of areas and conditions where coverage is non-existent or where benefits vary greatly and irrationally between programs.

The Sickness and Accident Report recommended certain changes in the Workers' Compensation and Automobile Insurance programs, but in addition to this it proposed that a third related program be set up to provide protection in areas other than at work and on the highway.

At this present time, Mr. Speaker, the Government is taking a very close look at this proposed new plan, and we are studying all the alternatives in connection with sickness or accident coverage, costing these alternatives and considering how they might be funded. The Government will then be in a better position to make some final decisions on this important matter.

Mr. Speaker, I think I can take some pardonable pride in the fact that many great strides have been taken since we became the Government in 1971. I want to assure the members of this Assembly that we will continue to keep our Legislative and Administrative programs under continuous review. We intend to ensure that working people in Saskatchewan continue to enjoy the prosperity which they themselves helped to create.

This Budget deals with the short and long term needs and goals of my department in a realistic way, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest that this augurs well for those who choose to earn their living in Saskatchewan and make this province their home.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes today to deal with a matter which is, I believe to be, of deep and passionate interest to every Member on this side of the House, and I find it, Mr. Speaker, just a little more than ludicrous that some Members opposite are now attempting to portray themselves as the defenders of health services in this province. Now, one would almost believe, Mr. Speaker, that these creatures opposite were the inventors of the many services which they now claim to support. In effect, Mr. Speaker, the parties represented by those opposite waged a battle to the death to obstruct the programs they now claim to defend.

I am proud, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan has continued to follow its tradition as a leader in the field of health care.

We were leaders in 1947 when we set up the first hospital insurance program over the objection of Members opposite. We were leaders in 1962 when we carried on the fight for medicare, a program which was to be implemented in Ottawa a few years later. We were leaders in 1972 when we pioneered the most progressive occupational health and safety program in North America.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— We will continue to be leaders in pioneering new ideas and new concepts in health care like our dental program for children, like the prescription drug plan, like the hearing aid program, and others.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear

MR. SNYDER:— In spite of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that we have suffered some growing pains in pioneering these new programs, our record of efficiency remains the envy of every other Canadian province. We have been able to offer more services, the best services in the country, at a cost which compares very favourably with any other province.

We are good managers, Mr. Speaker, we are good managers and that is a fact that has been recognized by the New York Times when it called Saskatchewan the “Best managed region in North America.”

Mr. Speaker, we believe that we have the most comprehensive and progressive health programs in North America. In the past few years we have pioneered many new programs, programs which have been studied and implemented by other provinces, by other countries and by other states in the United States.

We have continued to keep our health standards and health programs better than any province. Last year our budgetary increases for health services amounted to an increase of some 26 per cent over 1975 spending.

Yet the Opposition parties say we don't care about our health services and that we have suddenly developed a callous attitude towards sick people. I trust, Mr. Speaker, that Members will pardon some repetition in this regard. But it is necessary because Members opposite never seem to tire in their objective to misconstrue and misrepresent. You know there is a theory, that stock in trade of Members opposite, believed for many years, that a lie will go around the world twice while the truth is getting his running shoes on, and that is the theory that is proposed by Members opposite.

Let's have a look at how this “non-caring” province compares with the provinces that have Tory and Liberal Governments. And I think a little repetition is in order.

Let's take Alberta, one of the richest provinces in Canada, where a Tory Government places a direct charge of \$5 a day. That is \$5 a day on anyone entering a hospital and an additional \$4 a day for all those who stay in hospital for more than 120 days. This is where a family pays \$153 a year in medicare premiums, where the increase in health spending for 1976 came to 11 per cent compared to our 26 per cent, and where there is no drug plan or no dental plan.

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How much does Tory Ontario care, Mr. Speaker? How much does Tory Ontario care? It cares enough to announce the closure of nine hospitals; Tory Ontario cares enough to charge every family \$384 a year for medical care premiums.

And where did Quebec stand, under those Liberals, Mr. Speaker, when Bourassa was the Premier of that Liberal province? They charged \$125 per year for a family of four that was earning about \$14,000. They had the lowest number of occupied beds per 1,000 per population in the country. They increased health spending in 1976 not by 10 per cent or 20 per cent but by a measly seven-tenths of one per cent.

Opposition members are fond of slogans and are very frequently heard to say that they would put the care back into medicare. Now that has become sort of a favourite little slogan. Well, Opposition Members might be delighted to learn that the care came back into medicare in 1971 when this Government restored health care services to seven of the eleven towns and villages where the Liberals closed down their hospitals. Care came back in 1971 when we removed the deterrent fees, placed by Liberals, on sick people.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition may try to convince Saskatchewan people about a lot of things but I don't think they will convince them that the New Democratic Party doesn't care about medical care. Mr. Speaker, we had to fight that same Opposition, tooth and nail, to bring in medicare. We practically invented medicare in Canada, and as long as we are the Government of Saskatchewan, medicare will be safe from the attacks of the Tories, Liberals and their allies.

The Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver), Mr. Speaker, the Member from Nipawin suggested that because of this Government's attempts to restrain some health care spending, emergency cases are being refused admission to hospitals. He said that he knows of cases where this had happened. But, Mr. Speaker, we cannot find a single case. We have checked every alleged case and nowhere can we find facts that bear out his stories. We continue to challenge him to produce evidence for his allegations. Instead we have found that emergency services in our hospitals are operating as effectively as ever.

Another rumour that we hear pretty regularly, Mr. Speaker, is that we are not giving our hospitals enough money to operate. I think here, the Member from Nipawin (Mr. Collver), has once again not done his homework or he would know more about the way in which operating budgets of large hospitals are determined. He would know that the Government, in consultation with the hospital boards, agree on a global budgeting figure for that hospital. And the hospital boards, not the Government, determine how that money will be spent. And if a case arises, as was the case in Saskatoon, where a hospital board feels its budget is not ample, the Government and the board will sit down again and discuss a settlement.

If the Honourable Member had done some checking around he would know that a number of hospitals in this province have not been able to spend the amount of money allocated to them in their 1976 Budget. In Prince Albert, for example, Victoria Union Hospital got \$1 million more in 1976 than it did in 1975. At the end of the year, they had a surplus of more than \$100,000.

All three hospitals in Saskatoon turned up a surplus in their budget for 1976. Preliminary estimates show the following surpluses:

City Hospital surplus \$80,000
St. Paul's Hospital surplus \$60,000
University Hospital surplus \$280,000

Now that's a total of more than \$400,000, more than the hospitals in Saskatoon were able to spend.

When the Leader of the Conservative Party (Mr. Collver) says we are not providing hospitals with enough money, he is wrong again, Mr. Speaker. But it is becoming rather normal practice for the Tories and their Leader to make claims that they can't substantiate; misrepresent the figures that they do use in order to create the false illusion. They have learned well from the Liberals, this idea that a lie will travel around the world twice while the truth is getting its running shoes on.

Now we can find people outside of this House, the friends and supporters of the Opposition parties, who are only too anxious to spread these false stories around the province. Now Liberals say that we are unfair. Liberals opposite are feeling pangs of remorse and they say we are unfair because we keep harping back to the late 1960s and what they did in Saskatchewan hospitals. Isn't that an odious comparison? They don't want us to mention the eleven hospitals that they closed in Quill Lake, Leroy, Willowbunch, Qu'Appelle, Neudorf, Prelate, Frontier, Hodgeville, Maryfield, Mossbank and Lashburn. And I don't blame the Liberals for not wanting to talk about their sorry past. I don't blame them for wanting to forget about those dismal, rotten Liberal years, Mr. Speaker.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— I would like to remind the Leader of the Opposition that people judge a government on the basis of what they have produced, the way that they have performed. It is perfectly reasonable for people to compare what they did when they were the Government, vis-à-vis what we are doing now when we are in government. People will judge us on our record and they will know that we set up community health and social centres in most of the 11 towns and villages where the Liberals denied these services and abandoned the people in these small communities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— But if the Liberals don't want to compare records, Mr. Speaker, maybe they would rather compare promises, and they are better at promises than they are records.

Prior to the election in 1964, Mr. Speaker, the Liberals put forth a party platform in true traditional Liberal style. This platform promised a number of changes in health care as well as a number of other areas. It promised to improve and expand the Medical Health Insurance Program and in the words of the Liberal Leader, at that time, promised to "take the politics out of medicare."

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Now, Mr. Speaker, here is what the Liberals did take out of Medicare - they took away the right of sick people to visit their doctor without paying a direct charge.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— There's no charge under the NDP, and under the Liberals you paid \$1.50 for every visit you made to your doctor. Here's what they took out of Medicare - they took away from sick people the right to be hospitalized without a charge, when they posed a daily fee of \$2.50 for every 30 days they spent in hospital. And, Mr. Speaker, the sicker you were, the more you paid. If you were sick enough to stay in hospital for more than 30 days then you were sick enough to pay another \$1.50 for every day thereafter. And if you were sick enough that your family doctor couldn't cure you, then you were sick enough to pay another \$1.50 to visit your specialist, or was it \$2 that you paid to visit your Specialist?

The Liberal platform also promised to set up a drug insurance program, Mr. Speaker, which was intended to care for major drug costs. And I remember Hammy McDonald stumping the constituency and telling the people of Saskatchewan how the Liberal Party would introduce a drug plan. But in seven years we didn't get a drug plan under the Liberals, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the price of drugs went up remarkably and people were paying more. So I think, Mr. Speaker, people will consider Liberal promises in the past and they will realize that Liberal promises buy nothing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— They will realize, Mr. Speaker, that Liberal promises don't buy a hearing aid, they don't buy a dental program for kids, nor do they buy a drug program. Liberal promises didn't buy wheelchairs and braces and expensive artificial limbs for disabled people who needed them but couldn't afford them. The Liberals didn't provide more freedom and respect for the mentally ill people by taking them and placing them in the community where they could realize their full potential. They didn't build new hospitals in places like Elrose, Lampman, or Climax or Biggar. They didn't build hospitals and medical centres so that native people in the North could have adequate medical care. So much for Liberal promises, Mr. Speaker.

It is because we are concerned with building better health programs that this Government has implemented its resource policy, Mr. Speaker. We have better health programs precisely because of our resource policy. If we had followed Liberal and Tory advice, Mr. Speaker, we would have less resource revenue, we would have fewer health programs.

The positive relationship between health and resources is not very difficult to understand, Mr. Speaker. It simply requires the ability and the willingness to think ahead beyond the immediate concerns of today and to consider the future of our province and its people and its children.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Our resource revenues are taking care, both of today and of the future, Mr. Speaker.

A few years ago Members will recall when the price of oil was going up dramatically. We imposed a tax on oil companies so that the unearned windfall profits would come to the people of Saskatchewan rather than the oil companies. This was obviously opposed by Members opposite. A portion of the oil revenues is coming into the Budget and will help to pay for increases in health costs. This money is spent on increased grants to hospitals, on providing better emergency services, on our dental and drug programs and so on.

Since 1973, in oil revenues alone, the Government has collected more than \$600 million, of which more than \$200 million has gone into general revenue to help pay for hospitals, roads, health care and what have you. But we didn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. We said, because oil was a depleting resource, royalty benefits would accrue to us only for a relatively short period of time and, therefore, we should take some of this revenue from oil and put it into an energy and resource development fund so that it could be invested for future generations. That's what we did, Mr. Speaker, and we are proud of it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— We also invested some of that money into finding oil, new natural gas and to search for hard rock minerals and to buy some potash mines. We are going to buy some more.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— These resources, Mr. Speaker, oil, natural gas, nickel, potash, uranium, will provide dividends and development for generations yet unborn. We think our children and even the children of Members opposite will be pleased with the investments in their future, and with the good health care they are enjoying now and will enjoy in the future.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— This Government, Mr. Speaker, will continue to invest for the future generations of this province. We know Opposition parties will continue to oppose these efforts just as they have in the past. They are very predictable.

We know that the Conservative Leader will continue to oppose investments like Sask Oil's purchase of Atlantic Richfield Canada, because as he said in the Leader Post, "What's the point of buying existing assets with the people's money?" Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose there is no point unless you are determined to ensure that assets stay in operation in Saskatchewan and that the profits from that operation are not shipped out of our province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Mr. Speaker, we have had some indication of how the Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) would handle this province's future in the area of resources and, in a word, he would give away our resources to his affluent friends. It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that at the Progressive Conservative Convention last November, he told his supporters that if his party

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were ever elected to form a government, any government owned potash mine would be sold through public shares.

Mr. Speaker, I think my desk mate mentioned earlier today that every resident of Saskatchewan owns an equal share of our publicly owned potash mines now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— What the Member for Nipawin would do, would be to take those shares and redistribute them among the very small group of well-to-do people who could afford to buy them. The rest of us would get nothing and would receive no benefits from the development of our own potash. By what reasoning, Mr. Speaker, do you suppose the Member for Nipawin could possibly convince me to buy a share in a mine which I already own? Mr. Speaker, the answer must be that he wants the benefits and the profits to go to his own wealthy friends who supported his 1975 campaign so generously.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— You know, Mr. Speaker, with the Member for Nipawin's proven record as a financial consultant and a captain of industry I would be moved to believe that this alone should serve as ample warning. He obviously doesn't want the average working people, Mr. Speaker, the average working person in Saskatchewan to receive any benefits from our potash. This is the Tory idea of equality, of standing up for the little people in Saskatchewan. But in any event, Mr. Speaker, the rednecks in his own party rejected that idea as being too left wing. The rednecks want the public potash mines simply handed back to the multinationals.

MR. R. A. LARTER (Estevan):— Point of Order.

MR. SPEAKER:— What's the Point of Order?

MR. LARTER:— The Member opposite doesn't know what he is talking about. He is talking right through a hat.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER:— Order, order! I think . . . order, order! I'm finding quite a bit of disregard for the generally held rules of decorum this evening and I want to caution both sides of the House about that. I want to encourage the Member for Estevan to distinguish between a Point of Order and a debating point.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Let me repeat once more, Mr. Speaker. The rednecks of this Tory Party have rejected that idea as being totally too far left wing and something too difficult for them to digest. I indicate to you and, I think they have indicated to the public of Saskatchewan, they want the potash mines simply turned back to the multinationals.

Mr. Speaker, the relationship between Saskatchewan's resource policies and our ability to continue to provide a full range of

people-oriented services to the people of Saskatchewan should be clear to everyone. The direct relationship to health services in Saskatchewan, in the years ahead, will be even more impressive. Political parties in our province, Mr. Speaker, that ignore this fact, do this to the disservice of those whom they claim to represent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Now, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan Liberals are unable to fool anyone. Their performance with respect to health services is a matter of record. There won't be an adult in this province who is not able to recall the outright hostility of the Liberals towards health services introduced by the CCF and by its successor the NDP.

But Saskatchewan Tories, Mr. Speaker, they enjoy a somewhat more comfortable pew. However, anyone over 50 years of age will recall that they were such a complete disaster in office, that a sensitive electorate relegated them to the role of an extinct political dinosaur for over four decades.

Now, Mr. Speaker, most political parties exhibit a conscious pride in their historic background. We, in our party, display a feeling of esteem and satisfaction for the many achievements for which we have been responsible . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— . . . and I think we display a feeling of satisfaction and esteem for those whom we have been fortunate to have as our leaders.

Contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with the Member for Nipawin who clearly disassociates himself with any of his predecessors. When reminded of his party's inelegant past, both federally and provincially, he draws himself up with stately dignity and he declares that he wasn't even born in those days of depression and despair. The Member for Nipawin doesn't want to discuss the distant past. He is inhibited further from discussing his own recent past and we hear very little about him concerning his prowess as a financial consultant and as a leader in the business community. You are pretty badly handicapped when you can't talk about your distant past, when you can't talk about your present, and the future is obviously very uncertain.

Mr. Speaker, you don't have to be a senior citizen to accurately judge the Saskatchewan Tory in 1977. All that is needed, Mr. Speaker, is an ability to remember back to 1962, to the days of the medicare crisis and the three-week strike of Saskatchewan doctors in an attempt to prevent its birth, aided and abetted by the "Keep Our Doctors Committee". And I ask Members opposite, I ask all Members of this Assembly to examine their own community. Have a close look at your own community. Pay particular attention to those who are now clasping Dick Collver to their bosom. Compile your own list in your own community and you will note a very impressive duplication of new Tories and the 1962 membership of that nefarious "Keep Our Doctors Committee".

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

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MR. SNYDER:— I can draw up a list, in my own constituency of Moose Jaw, of those who now profess to support the leader of the Conservatives who sat front row centre during the 1962 medicare crisis. The Member for Nipawin seems to believe that the passage of time brings respectability to those who have totally discredited themselves. But what I find most repugnant, Mr. Speaker, is that this same body of people now indulge in the brashest kind of hypocrisy in appearing to support a principle which they fought to the death in 1962.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SNYDER:— Mr. Speaker, these creatures opposite now attempt to take credit for a victory that was won in a battle which they lost.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is a budget which continues a long-established tradition of providing a well-balanced level of services for our people. It is a budget which acknowledges the need for prudent money management and an element of practical fiscal restraint. I am proud, Mr. Speaker, to associate myself with my colleague, the Minister of Finance, and those who sit on your right-hand in this House. I am pleased to support the Motion, and I shall obviously be opposing the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. R. H. BAILEY (Rosetown-Elrose):— Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased this evening to stand and speak on this debate on the Budget. And I am very pleased, Sir, that you mentioned the word ‘decorum’ because I’m quite sure what I have to say tonight will probably produce some of the worst kind of decorum, if that’s possible, from the Members opposite.

I should first like to welcome to this Assembly, and particularly to this caucus, our two new Members from Saskatoon-Sutherland and Prince Albert-Duck Lake. I am sure their purpose in being here this evening with us is something which we can observe from looking at the Members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, when I came to this Assembly on November 12, just somewhat over a year ago, I looked across at a very confident group of people who had recently been elected. The Ministers and the backbenchers included were very confident of their position and lately since the Session has opened this spring, I have noticed, as all Members have, including the press, a very nervous, tense group of people. The reason for that, Mr. Speaker, is because no government of this province has ever been so edgy and ever been so concerned about its position of being a government as the Members opposite are at the present time.

There is a reason for that, Mr. Speaker, there is a very good reason. We can talk in this House all we like and the speechwriters can get up and make all the statistics. I wish they would get some new speechwriters. I have heard the same ones since I was a kid. They can bring out all the statistics they like, Mr. Speaker, but the real jurors in Saskatchewan, are not the Members of the Opposition nor the Members sitting opposite, but the people of Saskatchewan. They are the ones who are going to hand down the verdict as to whether the Government has been successful or not. I would like to make

mention of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that in the recent two by-elections the jury spoke. It came up with a verdict, and the verdict was very definitely dead against the Government.

In 1948, Mr. Speaker, I had the occasion to have a conversation with the then Premier of Saskatchewan, Tommy Douglas, whom my family knew very well. I was trying my hand at that time at a little reporting. So one of the questions I remember asking him was to explain the success of the then CCF Government in Saskatchewan. I can remember his answer, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps the Members opposite should take note of this. He said: "We are talking about the CCF, the Opposition is talking about the CCF, so we are bound to stay in power". Well, if we take that particular formula today, that particular form of reasoning, it is very obvious why the Government Members opposite are so edgy. It is very obvious that they don't like to answer a question from this side of the House. It is very obvious in this day of the Budget Debate that everybody has gotten up and lambasted the Tory Party in Saskatchewan, one speech after the other, Mr. Speaker. So you see, Mr. Speaker, now that we have all of those Members over there converted, they are talking Progressive Conservative. That will be a lot less that we will have to do.

I am very pleased, Mr. Speaker, to see that every speaker opposite has devoted practically 80 to 90 per cent of his speech in talking about the Progressive Conservatives. That does me a great deal of good, because you see the Member for Quill Lake (Mr. Koskie) when he made his famous speech in the House, he got his speech writer down town some place to write about Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Everybody remembers that, and how we were such an insignificant group of people sitting here and how we don't know how to ask questions and how we don't know how to do this, and yet all of a sudden since we returned and particularly in reply to the Budget Speech everybody is talking Progressive Conservative. I want to thank you very much for your contribution.

I couldn't help thinking, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) was speaking, talking about the \$1.50 or \$2.50 a day, the Minister of Health (Mr. Robbins) sits right behind him, if the Minister of Health could tell the Minister of Labour right this evening that there are probably 1,000 people in Saskatchewan right now that would pay \$10 a day just to get into a hospital. He knows that's true; everybody in this province knows that's true. You people can yell all you like. As I said, Mr. Speaker, the real jurors in Saskatchewan are the people.

Mr. Speaker, I want to mention something about the condition of the highways in Saskatchewan. We can go to the Budget Speech; we can listen to all the claims about the percentage in highway construction, go to the people of the Province of Saskatchewan and ask them if there has been an improvement in our highways in the last five years. The answer categorically will be, No. You people know that as well as I do. It doesn't matter what figures you want to throw out. It is the people who will be the judge.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Government says there has been no cutback in hospital care. I would challenge the Minister of Health to go to one of my towns in my constituency - go to the people of Rosetown and make that statement publicly that there have been no cutbacks in hospital care. The Minister of Health would not have the courage to do so and furthermore, Mr. Speaker,

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it would be highly unsafe for him to make that statement. Tell my neighbour who lives just across the road; tell my neighbour that there is no difficulty in getting a hospital bed where this lady has been waiting, and as far as I know is still waiting for over a period of six months.

Mr. Speaker, they are very uneasy. I don't blame them for being a little edgy.

MR. ROBBINS:— I would just like to accept the challenge of the Member and be invited to Rosetown and get on the same platform with him.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. BAILEY:— Well, Mr. Speaker, I will extend that invitation to the Minister of Health. I'll be in Rosetown on April 4th and 5th. There are two official openings there. I would like you to make that statement, and I'll even provide transportation for you to get there.

MR. MESSER:— How about telling us what they are opening!

MR. BAILEY:— I'll tell you it is not the wing of the hospital that was closed.

Mr. Speaker, yes they are uneasy, I don't blame them.

Mr. Speaker, this Government opposite talks about how much they do for the little fellow. "Oh, we are the party of the people," they say. And while north of Lethbridge they just finished a mammoth multi-million dollar irrigation project and where Saskatchewan has a means by which they can further develop irrigation, they have been sitting on their hands until a group of young farmers, Mr. Speaker, on the South Saskatchewan River, just south of Beechy and up towards Outlook have taken it upon themselves to go into irrigation projects. The Minister of Agriculture knows about this. They went into a lot of expense to develop irrigation on their own, with a sort of a promise that they would have some grants in order to fulfil this. What happened? Just like that, they received a letter that the grants weren't forthcoming. Mr. Speaker, this Government opposite which couldn't even poll a poor third in rural support in Saskatchewan, is now becoming uneasy even about matters as they apply to urban centres.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we had an announcement that was made about the Land Bank going to sell land. The Land Bank is going to sell the land back to the farmers. Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that when you go to rural Saskatchewan, and I think you people should go to rural Saskatchewan, talk to the people who are dealing directly with this Government. Between the town of Elrose and the town of Eston there used to be the rural municipality of Fairview. It has since dissolved and part of that went to the R.M. of Snipe Lake and part went to the R.M. Monet. There is a ridge of hills in there, Mr. Speaker, not very wide, but there is a ridge of hills which is suitable for cattle raising only. Oh, there are parts of it that have been cultivated but not to any degree.

Now Mr. Speaker, in this range of hills we have some government land. I would like to take you now, particularly the Minister of Agriculture. I hope that you Members over there are listening very carefully because it will explain to you why you have lost the support in rural Saskatchewan. In 1967 a constituent of mine rented from the Lands Branch a half section of land, approximately 100 acres under cultivation. I want to tell you I visited this land the other day, and it needs a couple of days of rock picking. Now, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, if you will take down these figures perhaps we can get this straightened out. You can verify them, because I am sure they will be a source of embarrassment. He rented a half section of land from the Lands Branch for \$176 plus the taxes. Now, Mr. Speaker, in 1967 the cattle prices were pretty good. I remember that well. He continued renting this land at \$176, plus taxes, until early last year, when the Lands Branch sent around an assessor. Well, what happened? The assessment and the rent went up. Until early this year the renter of this land was notified that he was to pay \$388 plus taxes. He was willing to accept that, but later in 1976 only a few months later, Mr. Speaker, the Lands Branch turned this land over to the Land Bank. They had to have another assessment, and now, Mr. Speaker, I want you to listen to what happens. The price of wheat dropped. With the price of the cattle down, the Land Branch worried about the individual farmer. He has now been served notice that his lease will be \$995 plus taxes - a 300 per cent increase in land rental in less than nine years.

Little wonder, Mr. Speaker, that the people out in the boon docks in Saskatchewan, the people out in the rural areas, the people in the city are not really paying that much attention as to what is being said in this House. It is how the effect on an individual basis that people are going to judge the merits of the Government.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education (Mr. Tchorzewski) made some statements today, and I will be getting back to him. He made statements about the increase in grants. I have here a letter, Mr. Speaker, from the Parkland Regional Library in which they have indicated to me the grants that they have received. 1975 - \$69,512; 1976 - \$40,768; 1977 projected - \$30,000 and 1978 projected - \$20,000. I know the Minister is going to hurry around and get some of his colleagues busy and say these were operational grants or something but it really had nothing to do with this at all.

Mr. Speaker, this Government over here takes its greatest pride in going out and preaching this gospel of being all for the small communities. We just have to keep them alive and keep them going. Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that in the constituency which I proudly serve, that is not the case when it comes to dealing with small communities at all. This Government has the attitude, "go away; don't bother me. You are too small to have any significance." Again the people of Saskatchewan will be the jurors.

Outside of Rosetown, when you drive down No. 15 highway, you take your life in your hands, Mr. Speaker. If the Minister of Health is coming to Rosetown I would invite the Minister of Highways to come out and tell the people who live on the highway, and must commute between Rosetown and Mildred, about the wonderful new highway project. We don't have to worry about a speed limit on that highway, Mr. Speaker, because at 50 mph you are not safe. Now we have the village of Sovereign which took

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the initiative, Mr. Speaker, to put in a sewage system in the village. This was done in 1975. I have had so much correspondence with these people because the Government to this date has not honoured their promise to them in the way of grants. I have a letter which was written to the department and also a note stating, "this work was done in 1975 and we have nothing but problems ever since trying to get the grant." Now, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will be the jurors, not the fancy statistics, not the speechwriters, but the people of Saskatchewan. I dare say that less than 2 per cent of them are going to bother their heads with the statistics that go back and forth.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education today prompted me to say a few words about that particular department. I think there are some statements made by the Minister of Education in talking about the figures in this Budget that are misleading. When he is talking about an overall 10 per cent increase, he leaves the impression, I am sure, to the media at least, that it is a 10 per cent increase in the total cost of the plant in its operation. What he is really talking about is a 10 per cent of 60 per cent of the cost of operation. Just to say 10 per cent of the overall costs of operation, of course, is far from true.

Even though, Mr. Speaker, we have these statements going back and forth on both sides of the House again, it will be the people of Saskatchewan that are the jurors. It will be they who will decide.

I want to get back to some of the grants in just a moment, Mr. Speaker. I want to say something about the nerve centre, and what the Members seem to be very uncomfortable with. The Minister of Education inherited a very important portfolio. I think he realizes this. I think, too, he realizes that there is something else going on within the Department which is kind of unique to Saskatchewan. Nobody quarrels with a Minister taking a portfolio, goodness knows half of the Government opposite now have portfolios. We have doubled the number of Ministers, you might say, in the last 20 years but it is natural and it has been an accepted practice that we select the deputy minister. But in the Department of Education, Mr. Speaker, where there is a great deal of unrest and I want to suggest morale problems, they have gone one step further. We have to get a third tier of people in here. We have to have a third level of officials now in the Department of Education. You can't bid for these positions. The senior officials can't bid for them. People who have been in the department for 15 or 20 years can't bid for them. Now we have this third level politically appointed by Order in Council.

Mr. Speaker, that hasn't been necessary in the past and I see no reason why it is necessary now. These who have been in the department 15 or 20 years are going to take their orders now, you might say, from the Orders in Council people - these appointees. Let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker. The Minister knows what I am talking about. Appointments are made by Order in Council where senior members of the Department of Education don't have a chance to bid on them. Let me give you an example, Mr. Speaker. In the Province of Saskatchewan, we have 22 school units that have a band program, that's not counting the number of band programs that are in the city system. In the province we have one with the Department of Education. We have one consultant for the use of these people for band programs. Rumours that I have heard are that he has to go because we can't

have this. But instead of that, we could employ some people who are going to go through text books to make certain that there is no discrimination, checking whether the little girls have dresses or skirts on or whether the mother is seen in the kitchen or not.

Mr. Speaker, to go out to the rural communities and to the cities - pretty hard to take over there isn't it - you go to the communities and you find this. Let's go to the Rosetown School unit. This Government can brag all it likes about this increase today, 9 mills Mr. Speaker, last year, and it is possible that they could even have to go that much higher this year to maintain operation. Now of course you say, "well it's the Board's fault," very carefully concealing any responsibilities on the Government. By the way, Mr. Speaker, in preparing my own budget, I find the increase in grants is not 10 per cent; it is not 9 per cent; it is not 8 per cent; it is not even 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Where does this 10 per cent come from? It is a lousy 6.9 and we, in turn, are going to have to go for another 6 mill increase. You go to the people of Saskatchewan and tell them that this is what the Government is doing. We're increasing all of this and yet we see the taxes to local governments continuing higher and higher.

Mr. Speaker, a little over a year ago we hit a real nerve centre in talking about the community colleges in the Province of Saskatchewan. I see that we have a new Minister in charge of community colleges and to refresh his memory I will say the same thing as I said then; that the community colleges will never be as successful as they should be as long as the community colleges are used as a spot or a place for political patronage. I will make that same statement again tonight, Mr. Speaker, because it has become very obvious to the Minister and it has become very obvious across Saskatchewan that it will, in fact, never become successful as long as it is used in the manner in which it is being used now. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, the Government did not take the advice of not only the Members of this Opposition but they refused to take the advice of other sources outside this House, in at least having half of the members of the board elected. Oh no, they wouldn't do that, Mr. Speaker. We will appoint them and then we will get ourselves a principal to the community college. And in order that we can watch what the principal is doing, we will appoint a fieldman, so that we then have three levels of communication. Mr. Speaker, I had a call not too long ago not from just one, but three community college principals, who were very, very concerned about their position because they felt they weren't the chief executive officers but some appointee who was planted and able to feed the communication back directly over their heads to the Minister.

Mr. Speaker, when we talked about this, the Government became very angry, very angry indeed. But the people of Saskatchewan again will be the jurors. We are not condemning community colleges. I spoke with the Minister on several occasions, but you cannot run a school system, you cannot run a university and you cannot run the community colleges in Saskatchewan on political appointments. It never will be successful on that basis.

You know what we have right now, Mr. Speaker. I see we have a former community college principal. I see him in the buildings here. That's fine; we have another community college principal who will be principal only until the federal election

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is called. Then he will run off to be a candidate.

Mr. Speaker, that is not the way in which you operate in bringing services to the people.

Mr. Speaker, we have become a government in Saskatchewan of not being able to control the purse strings of this province. This Government, in the last five years, has had more money to spend in the way of revenue than in any previous ten-year period. And still we come up with a deficit budget; and still we have people looking at a 20 and 25 increase in mill rate. Go and tell the people of Saskatchewan that you are doing all these wonderful things for them and, of course, the results of the two by-elections simply means that they will not believe you.

Mr. Speaker, here we have the report of the provincial auditor. I don't know if this has been mentioned before in the House but there are a couple of items that I should like to make reference to at this particular time.

Saskatchewan's forest products as I understand as announced by the Minister, lost a fair amount of money. I see in the auditor's report here where it says, "Failure to report certain costs borne by parent corporation." But the one that I was really interested in was the last one, Mr. Speaker, the Teacher Superannuation Fund.

MR. KOSKIE:— Which one?

MR. BAILEY:— The Teacher Superannuation Fund. Tell the Member for Quill Lakes when he wants his speech written to run out and get his speechwriter and let him write. He should exercise the decorum which the Speaker was talking about and not demonstrate his ignorance in such a manner.

Teacher's Superannuation Fund - "inability to verify liability for teachers contributions" . . .

MR. ALLEN:— What page are you on?

MR. BAILEY:— What page am I on? Page 4. You got it now? You can read it the same as I am. I am sure that that particular statement would in fact bring some comments from the teachers across this province.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, jurors of the province, the people of the province, the people of this Assembly have noticed the uneasiness of the Members opposite. I don't blame them for being uneasy. I don't blame them at all for being uneasy. I would like to suggest to them that the deficit budgeting, the programming, the bureaucracy, the increase in the number of civil servants is not meeting the approval of the people of Saskatchewan. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I cannot support the Motion but I will be supporting the amendment.

MR. J. L. SKOBERG (Moose Jaw North):— Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to take part in this Budget Debate this evening and make reference to a number of issues which I consider to be of some importance.

We have just heard from the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose

and I might tell him that last Sunday in the city of Moose Jaw, the Minister of Finance attended an open public meeting with about 100 people being present, those people gave him a resounding vote of confidence in the Budget that had been presented . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— Those people realized he happened to be a Minister in a government that could be trusted and a government that would bring about a budget that was recognized for the benefit of the people. Unfortunately, I wish he had stayed just for a moment or two, in order that he could correct any statement that he might have said in his few remarks. Unfortunately he suggested that the Parkland Regional Library received only \$30,000 total in grants. Anyone has at his disposal and at his command the provincial operating grants to regional libraries. If the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose had the intestinal fortitude to read that and tell the truth for a change, he would find out that in 1971-72, Parkland received \$119,706. We go down the line to the next years, \$121,725; for 1973-74, \$159,393; for 1974-75, \$243,746; for 1975-76, \$302,212; for 1976-77, \$390,690; and the 1977-78 estimate, \$429,760.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— I would suggest that the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose that he come back in and correct the misstatements that he has made to this House at this time. When you realize that there has been an increase percentage wise of grants of 259.1 per cent from 1971 to this year.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— The second point that I should like to refer to, Mr. Speaker, is when he referred to the community colleges and referred to the political appointments. I invite the Hon. Member for Rosetown-Elrose to go to Moose Jaw. I would like him to talk to the Coteau Range people that belong to that community college. I would like him to find out positively whether or not they are in agreement with the Coteau Range Community College and whether or not they believe that that college is not doing service for the people of that community. We will find out exactly the same as we did with regional libraries, he is not telling the truth in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— The last point deals with what the Hon. Member spoke about dealing with the Land Bank and telling about his great expose of what he found in his constituency.

It so happens that I well know many, many hundreds of people in the Dinsmore, Lucky Lake, Wiseton, Beechy area and there are more young people in that area now going back to the farm than any place in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— If this Government had not provided grants through the

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Land Bank, if the young people had not been able to take advantage of the Land Bank provision for investing thousands upon thousands of dollars in land, they never would have been able to go back on the land and would not have any idea what to do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— I would also like to take a few moments in regard to the Dr. John Archer Report, a report of the Rural Development Advisory Group. As I see one or two of the Liberals and some of the Conservatives in the House, I should like to refer specifically, as he referred to, inland terminal elevators. I will quote:

Dr. Archer and his Committee concluded this:

The concept of inland terminal elevators while related to grain transportation and truck hauls is not yet clearly seen as a very real and powerful threat to rural society that it presents. When one envisages a network of 20 to 30 such terminals covering the agricultural sector of the province, one must realize that this presents a new concept of the grain gathering process and one that will radically alter present modes. There will be longer hauls for farmers, there will be larger trucks, a fact which adds to farm capitalization costs. Bigger trucks and more traffic mean more wear and tear on roads. And the municipal roads will bear the major share.

Inland terminals mean that railway branch lines can be abandoned with less furore than at present. All the above costs are a direct shifting of a burden borne today by all consumers onto the backs of local taxpayers.

Mr. speaker, those people opposite agree one hundred per cent with the inland terminal elevators and they have made their point very, very clear many times. Dr. Archer had this to say:

One hears of a Saskatchewan option . . .

And I believe I have heard the Members opposite talk about a Saskatchewan option being other than the New Democratic Party, but Dr. Archer says this:

One hears of a Saskatchewan option to live in rural Saskatchewan far from the nagging problems of big city existence. If inland terminals cover the face of Saskatchewan, it is our opinion that this will strike the death blow to scores of towns and villages. It is obvious that much trade will be diverted to centres where the terminals are located. As business facilities close other services will falter and young people will move.

Mr. Speaker, all I am suggesting to you is exactly what is suggested in this report when it said that such inducements are temporary measures. Multinational concerns, directed from afar, do not hand out favours unless these aid in a gain for the big concerns. And if those opposite believe and are prepared to support inland elevators and then purport to represent the small areas in Saskatchewan, then they are not again being truthful in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— Mr. Speaker, as a Member for one of the constituencies in Moose Jaw, I can assure you that it is a pleasure to be associated with my colleague from Moose Jaw South. I think this evening well demonstrated the capabilities that are available and have been available to the working people of this province insofar as the labour movement is concerned, insofar as the protection of those people and the small businessmen are concerned in this province. It is a distinct pleasure for me to associate myself with my Hon. colleague from Moose Jaw South.

I might mention just a few of the areas in Moose Jaw that I am more than pleased that our Government, the New Democratic Party, has seen fit to give grants to in our city of Moose Jaw. There are many grants, I will not go through many of them at this time. But in the Community Capital Fund, there has been a total final grant of \$706,815 for one small project called the Creighton Park Indoor Ice Arena; upgrading street facilities in the city of Moose Jaw, another \$31,366. We look at some of the hospitals and we hear talk about the hospitals and about how we should only listen to some people and not the public as to whether or not we should have hospitals. But in Moose Jaw proper, we have two main hospitals. The Moose Jaw Providence has received \$50,000; the Moose Jaw Union \$1.2 million to supply some of the facilities necessary in capital improvements; special care homes, another \$150,000; St. Anthony's Home, another \$75,280; Ina Grafton Home, a partial payment of \$17,985; a construction grant for the Senior Citizens' Activity Centre of \$380 and that is only 20 per cent of a grant that will be made available to them.

We have seen provincial winter works grants that cover a wide area of activities in the city of Moose Jaw. We see in Moose Jaw alone that the YMCA and YWCA have received a grant of \$47,777 and received another \$10,000 not too long ago. The Saskatchewan Technical Institute, which is of prime concern to the city of Moose Jaw and to the young people that attend there to gain their knowledge, has received another \$7.9 million, \$435,000, and \$79,000.

Mr. Speaker, we have another complex that we are very pleased about in Moose Jaw, the Moose Jaw District Recreational Complex, which when completed will be one of the best parks in western Canada if not in the entire country. They have spent up to date \$225,000 and I am pleased that the Minister had indicated that there will be some further sums available to complete the project and continue on with that project. We know about the Co-op Housing Building Program, the public housing program - people in Moose Jaw can tell you about things this Government has done for them and will continue to do.

Another area of great concern for everyone is Zion United Church, a \$10,000 grant was made on February 11, 1977. The amount of \$10,000 was applied against expenditures incurred in regard to the preservation of that church. Last year a grant of \$6,665 was made to the same organization in order to preserve that particular church.

We see other areas - we see in fact a tremendous assistance to the Chamber of Commerce, a grant of \$14,825 in order to bring tourist facilities to the city of Moose Jaw and improve that facility as it may deem advisable. Another grant in last August

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of \$3,966 was made to the Chamber of Commerce for a convention bureau. A further grant of \$400 to assist in administrative cost of that particular facility.

We have a provincial grant for the Peacock Gym. We have the provincial grant to the Moose Jaw Senior Citizens Assistance Program of \$113,696. I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that there are many, many more grants which I will not go into this evening. But it is certain that this Government is concerned about those areas and those organizations that need assistance at this time.

When we listen to those opposite argue and continually attack the civil servants, we actually have to wonder where they receive their information as to the number of civil servants per capita. The Hon. Member for Thunder Creek yesterday referred to an individual in the Leader-Post, a James Roe, whom I believe most of us know and have some respect for. He has been one of the greatest Leader-Post editorial writers that they have ever seen. I believe that if we go back a short time in history we will find out that a former government hired that same gentleman and provided a position for him in order that he could be on the public payroll. Now of course I presume that is why there has been some recognition of his talents in the position he finds himself in now. However, I might suggest that if we looked at a comparison of the civil servants in Canada, province by province, I think that you will find that those accusations by the Opposition are not correct.

If we look at Tory Alberta, the percentage of civil servants is 2.4059 per cent of the population estimated at 1,850,000; we look at New Brunswick, 3.4566 per cent; Nova Scotia, 2.319 per cent; Newfoundland, 2.176 per cent; Prince Edward Island, 3.54; another is the Yukon, which is of course a different situation entirely, which is comparatively high. Saskatchewan, at the time of October 1, 1976, the percentage of civil servants was, with a population at that time estimated at 941,000, 1.891 per cent. Mr. Speaker, once again that position of the Opposition in suggesting that there is a massive civil servant bureaucracy in Saskatchewan, is again a position that they take in trying to attack the working man and the civil servants of this province. We in this party say that is not right and, of course, it is very characteristic of those that want to make points against those people that cannot defend themselves.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG:— Of course, I would imagine that the Liberals opposite are very pleased today with the announcement that almost one million people in Canada are out of work. I would imagine that is a clear example of what they suggest is good economic planning by the Federal Government; it is a clear example, as far as they are concerned, of leadership in a time when leadership is needed, but I would like to suggest to them when the statistics came out this morning they said that Saskatchewan has the lowest unemployment rate in the whole of Canada compared to the highest in other provinces. I am suggesting, the leadership is very carefully spelled out and that happens to be in Saskatchewan with a policy that is acceptable to all concerned.

Mr. Speaker, our party and this Government believe in both political and economical democracy. We must have political democracy to ensure the people of this province are guaranteed a people representation and their voices and needs be heard by

a responsive elected government. I am suggesting that this Government has proven it is responsible, it is responsive and responsible to the people of this province and is prepared to listen wherever and whenever people want to contact Ministers or any of the people having to do with the business of this Government.

I say that we must, at the same time, effect economic democracy to keep in line the incomes and the expenditures dependent on the lows and highs of the variables which all of us are very well aware of. And what is the position and policy of that party, the party opposite, called the Progressive Conservative Party led by one Member for Nipawin?

That Leader talks and acts as though economics is the only concern of that party. He swings and sways in an attempt to meet the most popular position on any particular day which best suits his needs. Under his leadership there would be no input from the ordinary people of this province, the input would only be accepted from the multinationals and the wealthy. The people of this province should be aware of the dangers inherent in the support of any Conservative, at any time, at any place.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all of us have facts available to us that we can well refer to and I will refer to just three points that we have here. These are the people who I am suggesting would be very well represented by either the Conservatives or the Liberals, but as we look into the statistics that we have, one per cent of the super rich individuals, families and their corporations and foundations own 50 per cent of non-stated industrial capital stocks. Two and one half per cent of the also rich individuals own the remaining 30 per cent of total industrial stock properties. Three to five per cent are relatively rich individuals of families who own all the remaining 20 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, there is some 92 per cent of the wage earners at the present time working in industry that own no productive capital stocks of any appreciable kind. Now this explains without any question, whatsoever, why, we on this side of the House would rather represent that 92 per cent and represent them fairly and equitably than represent those people that those opposite represent and have no hesitation in doing so.

Mr. Speaker, we also hear a lot from the Conservatives and even the Liberals about their tremendous resource management provided by the Lougheed Tories of Alberta. We hear a lot about their Heritage Savings Trust Fund, but really we have to ask what is the real purpose behind this gimmick. We should not lose sight of the fact that the Heritage Trust Fund is mostly a public relation exercise. It sounds fine; it is a logical step of clear necessity. One can practically hear the platitudes tripping off the Tory Members' tongues opposite and even the Liberals as we heard yesterday from the Hon. Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher).

The Trust Fund when it was established late last year, will total \$1.5 billion and thereafter 30 per cent of annual revenue from non-renewable resources, such as oil, gas, coal, etc. will be allocated to the fund. The trust fund will grow to over \$10 billion in 1986, that is a tidy sum even allowing for the recent prediction that an average home in Edmonton will cost \$100,000 by then and require an annual income of \$72,000 to make purchase available. However, there are a number of questions we

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have to ask about this fund. First, and foremost, is it necessary? Secondly, what will it cost the people of Alberta? Thirdly, who will be the ultimate beneficiaries?

The simple answer to the first question is, no. Governments in Alberta have, in the past, accumulated considerable financial reserves; more than ten years ago, accumulating a reserve of over \$650 million. Having an accumulation of reserves of the order of several millions is not something that a government normally would find embarrassing. We could certainly manage without the Trust Fund.

There is, however, one thing that Government does find a little embarrassing and that is the fact that there isn't much left of oil and gas. Not only that, the people don't really realize how much is shown for or if they had been considered in this entire expenditure. The profits went south with the oil and gas; the present exploitation of our resources by private interests, with their criminal support of successive governments over the past 30 years, is coming home to roost, but with a little public relations the Trust Fund in Alberta can be made to work and no doubt they will convince many people that is the proper way.

The answer to the second question is that the cost to Albertans will be plenty. It has already been costly. At a time when essential social programs like health, education and aid to municipalities are savagely being cut back, the Government is hoarding money for the so-called future benefits of Albertans. The point here, of course, Mr. Speaker, is that the 30 per cent figure of revenue to be allocated to the Trust Fund is quite arbitrary. It could equally be 20 or 25 per cent. The figure was just taken out of thin air without rationalization. And so to protect this arbitrary quota, essential services are granted insufficient funds. This was dramatically highlighted during the discussion on funding for education and that is available for all to see. An example is the cutbacks in university appropriations. We know about the libraries in Alberta because that has been well brought out by one of the previous speakers.

On the third question - who will benefit - Albertans should realize from the outset that it won't be them. Much of the money will go to the so-called diversification of the economy, which for the Tory Government almost certainly means handing out money in \$500 million packets as incentives for multinational corporations to come and exploit us again. So having practically given the oil and gas away, the Government is now busily planning to give away the comparatively meagre royalties that they produced to the same corporate monopolies and, no doubt, adding insult to injury, to some of the self same companies.

Mr. Speaker, this Government does not plan on giving away those royalties; they plan on returning those royalties for the benefit of the people of Saskatchewan in order to bring about the plans that we have seen.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I should just like to say one short word on the anti-inflation program. I commend the Minister for now stating that they will attempt to start getting out of the Public Sector Prices and Compensation Program by March 30th and then no longer than next September. We well know that the labour people of this country and of this province have been the ones that have been hoodwinked into accepting the control

that was meant only to control the wage earner and small income people. We know that The Citizen and many other papers as the Leader-Post, all the way down the line, say that the AIB is backed by wage controls only; AIB cards stacked against weak firms. We know that the professionals were never controlled, particularly the lawyers in this province and across Canada, but we know that it was only meant to hoodwink and play a mean hoax upon the working people.

I commend the Minister for saying that we are going to get out of it and I urge the Minister, however, to try and bring about an earlier end that has been announced at this time and in so doing, get back to the free collective bargaining table in such a way that that freedom of democracy can work in the collective bargaining process.

Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that I will not be supporting the amendment, but I will be supporting the Motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. H. H. ROLFES:— Mr. Speaker, it is certainly my pleasure to participate in the Budget Debate. I should like to join with my colleagues and others in this House in welcoming the two new Members for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) and the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. Lane). Let me say, Mr. Speaker, although I welcome the two individuals I also agree with the Minister of Finance that probably they will have one of the shortest lived lives in the Legislature and I hope they make good use of it in the next two years.

Mr. Speaker, I was looking forward to a new challenge from the present Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland because he had told me in 1975 that he would be back in 1979, but I think he found the road a little too rough to hoe in 1975 so he looked for greener pastures.

Mr. Speaker, having made those few remarks let me, however, say that in 1975, during the campaign, I had a lot of respect for the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland. There were a number of times during the election where we did manage to get together and discuss some of the items and some of the topics. I always felt that he was a straight-forward and honest individual. And until the last by-election I still held that high opinion of him, but some of the advertisements that they ran, and now I recognize that he probably had very little to say about the advertisements, some of them certainly did not represent the views of the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland especially the ones that referred to welfare. I am very disappointed that he lined himself up with the Member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) who loves to take a slap at the poor and the disadvantaged at every opportunity that he can and will take whatever opportunity he has to misrepresent the facts of the people of this province.

Later on in my speech, Mr. Speaker, I will try to correct some of those statements that the Members opposite have taken opportunities of making in the two by-elections.

In my speech tonight, Mr. Speaker, I will concern myself mainly with the Department of Social Services because there are a number of areas that I would like to talk about.

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First of all, let me turn to the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan. This, Mr. Speaker, is the major expenditure item in the Department of Social Services' budget and has in the past, unfortunately, been the subject of major criticism from Members sitting opposite. The area of social assistance has been surrounded by myths often perpetrated by people who know better, but use it for their own political interests. The public is often confused by misleading and erroneous information that is put out by Members opposite. I should like to take a few moments to try and dispel some of those myths surrounding this area.

It is particularly true in a period of economic constraint that the people of Saskatchewan would like to examine carefully the expenditures of their Government. Historically, social assistance payments, commonly termed welfare programs, have been the object of public concern especially during these restrained times. Some people have expressed hostility towards families and individuals who require social assistance payments. This hostility has been fostered by a mythology of welfare handouts and welfare bums.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity to examine this Government's expenditure in the field of public assistance. I want to deal with three questions which the public has a right to answers:

1. Who are the people who are receiving public assistance?
2. On what basis can people obtain public assistance?
3. Why have the costs for public assistance increased in the past few years?

First of all, Mr. Speaker, who receives welfare in this province? Our Government . . .

MR. MERCHANT:— Anybody.

MR. ROLFES:— That's exactly it, the Member for Regina Wascana says, "anybody", that is the kind of falsehood that they like to have people believe, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this Government is proud of its record in spending in public assistance. The total number of people receiving assistance has continued to decline year by year since this Government took office. Our Annual Report will show that since taking office as a government in 1971, the number of people receiving public assistance has been reduced by over 18,000 which is over 34 per cent. However, this still leaves approximately 19,000 families and unattached individuals in receipt of assistance. Who are these people? The myth is that they are layabouts or bums or transients and people who contribute nothing to society. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that 60 per cent of these people are either the aged, those in ill health, the disabled, the mentally retarded or children outside of their parental homes. Another 18 per cent consists mainly of deserted mothers who have no job and whose children require their full parental attention and care. These are the ones that Members opposite call bums, or transients or layabouts. Mr. Speaker, the remainder of these families and unattached individuals, 22 per cent of the caseload, are receiving assistance because the head of the family has either not enough income from his job to support his family, or is only able to find part time employment or seasonal employment, or is totally

unemployed . . .

MR. PENNER:— Or lazy.

MR. ROLFES:— As the Member for Eastview says, “or lazy,” that is the way they like to characterize these people. That is common, that is what they were doing in the by-elections, going from house to house saying that the aged and the ill and the mentally retarded were lazy. That is exactly what you people are saying.

Mr. Speaker, the fully employable person, the person who could work, if work was available, amounts to only five per cent of the total number of families and individuals receiving public assistance. Mr. Speaker, only five per cent; this is contrasted with the figure of 14 per cent of the families and individuals being fully employable when this Government took office in 1971. A nine per cent reduction! This decrease is a result of a number of factors including a significant improvement in the economic conditions of our province since 1971. At the same time, however, we have developed specific programs such as the Employment Support Program, which has provided jobs for those persons who find themselves on public assistance because they cannot find a job in the regular labour market.

While the number of employable persons on assistance has fallen, the number of individuals in receipt of public assistance in special care homes and institutions for the mentally retarded has increased over 100 per cent in the last five years. This is due to the increasing number of elderly and a greater need of the handicapped. In fact, Mr. Speaker, and I want the Members opposite to listen, especially the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. Lane) about 40 per cent of our SAP expenditures goes to the elderly in special care homes and the mentally retarded. Those are the people that you were criticizing in your ad; those were the people that you were convincing in Saskatoon-Sutherland that shouldn't be on SAP expenditures. I think, Mr. Speaker, that this is hypocrisy of the highest order and I think the Members opposite owe an apology to these people.

Mr. Speaker, the second question that I asked was: how do people qualify for public assistance? The myth, again, is that the public assistance is paid out for any reason, to anyone who comes along looking for a handout, and who can give the social worker a sob story. The fact of the matter is that the head of the family must make a written application and produce evidence that he or she has explored, within the limits of his or her ability, every possibility, and I wish to emphasize that, every possibility for self-support, rehabilitation and re-establishment. A person seeking public assistance must indicate that he is unable to work due to physical or mental handicap or the need to care for his children in his home; or they can't find work and have registered with Canada Manpower and are actively seeking work with all employers. He must have tried to avail himself of any other assistance, such as unemployment insurance, old age security, the Family Income Plan, or Workers' Compensation, etc. The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan is the last resort that a family has to support itself when all other avenues for self-support or for insurance are not available.

The third question, Mr. Speaker, I asked was: why has the cost of public assistance increased? Mr. Speaker, the cost of public assistance has risen from a total of \$41 million in 1971-72 to an expected expenditure of \$75 million for 1977-78.

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I am sure again, Mr. Speaker, that this is the figure that the Members opposite will bandy around in the public and tell people that all those bums are getting \$75 million. The truth of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is that much of this goes toward the senior citizens and the mentally retarded. Secondly, why it has increased is that the average cost of assistance has more than doubled since this Government took office. This increase is due to the greatly increased costs faced by people who require the services of a special care home or an institution for the mentally retarded. As I've indicated previously, Mr. Speaker, payments to persons in special care homes or in institutions for the mentally retarded amount to 40 per cent of all assistance paid, or about \$40 million this year. That's for the people in special care homes and the mentally retarded. The payment for assistance for persons receiving care and maintenance in a special care home or an institution for the mentally retarded has grown from \$650,000 per month in 1972 to \$2.9 million per month in the next fiscal year. This is an increase, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan should be proud of. They should be proud of the high standards of care and support that they have provided to those people who are aged and infirm and require special care homes, and for those people who are mentally handicapped and need the care and support of a residential facility.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, while the expenditures on the institutions for the retarded and for the special care homes have increased over 540 per cent, the expenditure for all other persons on public assistance has increased only 25 per cent since 1972. These are the ones that they should be referring to, or should carve out as on public assistance. I would like to make this very clear, Mr. Speaker, that if we subtract from the dollars allocated to the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan, expenditures on special care homes and on the retarded, the expenditure under the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan would have only increased by 25 per cent. Therefore, when I say that this Government is proud of the fact that public expenditure has increased \$41 million in 1971-72 to \$75 million in 1977-78 it is because the benefits of this increase have gone substantially to upgrade and improve the level of care provided to the aged and infirm, and the mentally retarded persons in this province. This is a record that we should be justly proud of. Having, I hope, Mr. Speaker, dispelled the myths about public assistance, I should like to turn to another welfare system in Canada.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that Canada operates two welfare systems. The first is the visible one that I spoke about and which is usually condemned by Members opposite, that provides highly visible assistance to the poor, the elderly, the disabled and the sick who are unable to provide for themselves.

The second system is the 'hidden' welfare system composed of special exemptions, fast write-offs, tax loop-holes and other provisions in the income tax system that allow the wealthy to avoid paying their fair share of taxes. Unlike the visible welfare system, in which the benefits went to the poor, the 'hidden' welfare system benefits the rich and powerful in this country.

The second welfare system, the 'hidden' welfare system that Members opposite don't like to talk about, is just as real as public assistance. While the visible system costs about \$1.6 billion throughout Canada in 1975, the invisible system, supported by Members opposite, will cost the Canadian taxpayer,

in the same period of time, over \$6 billion. Let me give you just a couple of examples of this invisible welfare system. The figures are for 1974 because they are the last complete figures that are available to us. In that year, the Federal Government wrote off \$513 million in taxes because of contributions made to the Registered Retirement Savings Plan. Who benefited from that? The low income wage earner either can't afford to purchase the Registered Retirement Savings Plan or can afford to pay only a few dollars in such a plan. He has too much difficulty just in making ends meet, and yet he continues to pay his income tax. Yet this year the Liberal and Conservative Members of Parliament voted to increase the exemption for Registered Retirement Savings Plans from \$2,500 to \$3,500 for those who were participating in other pension plans, and to \$5,000 for those who did not participate in company pension plans. In 1974, the Federal Government also lost \$546 million in revenue because of the interest income deduction. Of the total contributions to RRSP over 57 per cent were made by people with incomes greater than \$20,000. Persons with less than \$10,000 a year income were able to put away only seven per cent of the total. Again, you can only ask which group in society has the savings that allows them to take advantage of this type of tax write-off - certainly not the low income people. It is interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that of this \$6.4 billion, 33 per cent of it or over \$2 million, went to the 11 per cent of Canadians earning the highest income. This, I call the hidden welfare for the rich. This does not include the grants paid to corporations and the write-offs permitted to the poverty stricken oil companies.

Mr. Speaker, if the Members of the Opposition want to attack welfare, let them attack the real welfare, the welfare provided to the rich created by a tax system designed to help the rich get richer and the poor remain poor.

Mr. Speaker, our Government continues to be concerned about providing alternatives to public assistance. We believe that where it is practical and possible, both the individual concerned and society, are better off with the individual working than receiving an assistance allowance. We have attempted to devise programs and incentives to provide this. Too often in the past, some of the disadvantaged were written off simply because they had a particular mental or physical handicap. These people then felt they had been pushed aside by society as useless and unable to contribute. We have been able to provide work opportunities and training for many who would previously have been ignored.

This affliction was also felt by some who had no real mental or physical handicap, but who for social reasons were unemployed. We have developed a number of programs to assist in this regard. We make use of training on the job. We have work preparation centres and work activity programs. We also developed an entirely new concept in the Employment Support Program. The Employment Support Program has gone further to destroy the myth fostered by the Members opposite concerning those on public assistance than has any other program. The Employment Support Program has proven, that given a chance, people on assistance prefer to work if work is available for them.

Even during periods of buoyancy in the economy, the private sector does not create the number and type of jobs needed for some of the people on public assistance. The marginally employable are always the last to be hired and the first to be fired.

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It should also be noted that federal economic and manpower policies have not been effective in this regard. Indeed, the announced restrictions on unemployment insurance benefits will create even greater hardships for the under-employed, and will place a heavier burden on the resources of my department. The success of the Employment Support Program is apparent to everyone.

In 1974, 602 people received employment through this temporary program. Eighteen months after the projects were terminated, 80 per cent of these had not returned to public assistance. In 1975, 756 were employed through this program, and nine months after the termination of their projects, over 85 per cent had not returned to public assistance.

As you will understand, Mr. Speaker, statistics are not yet complete for the following year. It is clear, however, that the program has provided a start for many people to get out of the public assistance stream. This results, not only in substantial savings to the province in public assistance costs, but is of immense social benefit to the individuals themselves. Because of this, Mr. Speaker, we intend to continue and expand the Employment Support Program in the coming year.

We frequently hear that the establishment economists say that a certain level of unemployment is not only acceptable, but desirable. The reasoning is simple; as unemployment goes down, instead of individuals competing for a specific job, various jobs compete for an employee. The free market system then works for the employee and not the employer, forcing wages up. It also forces the hiring of less skilled or trained and therefore less productive employees.

According to these economists business interests are better served with a pool of unemployed. We believe that for social and economic reasons governments should work towards a goal of full employment, even if this upsets the normal marketplace relationships. We have consistently pressured the Federal Government to work with us in the development of a permanent employment program, rather than the present hit and miss programs instituted when unemployment reaches crisis proportions. We believe that this is socially desirable. If we believe that work is preferred to public assistance then we should be in a position to guarantee that work is available. Those who believe that unemployment is necessary must be willing to pay the price. For example, our research indicates that an increase in the unemployment rate in Saskatchewan, from the present three per cent to six per cent, will increase the public assistance payments by almost \$400,000 per month. This is a lot of money. But then, if our economic system demands unemployment, we cannot avoid our responsibility. Those who criticize expenditures on public assistance should recognize that they are directly related to the level of unemployment. Would they prefer that we maintain a pool of unemployed for the benefit of industry and then provide even greater hardships for the individuals by forcing them to live on starvation rates?

Mr. Speaker, I should like to turn for a few moments to the field of corrections. This is an area that frequently hits the headlines when events of a sensational nature take place. It is probably also an area about which there is less knowledge by most people than any other field.

Under agreement between the Federal Government and the

provinces at the present time, the Provincial Government is responsible for all those convicted for a period of up to two years less a day. Those convicted of offences and sentenced to two years or more come under the responsibility of the Federal Government. We operate in Saskatchewan three provincial correctional centres, one in Regina for men, and two in Prince Albert, one for men and one for women. I'll have more to say about these centres a little later.

In recent years, Saskatchewan has provided a good deal of leadership in innovative programming for criminal offenders. Our major concern, of course, has been for the safety of society. Since we are responsible only for those sentenced to less than two years, we recognize that the long-term safety of society depends on rehabilitation. It has, therefore, been our goal to attempt to develop those programs which would assist the offender to be reintegrated into society as a meaningful and contributing member of that society. Keeping people out of jail, wherever possible, also brings the benefit of reduced costs in the long run. We have been able, for example, to expand and develop a community training residence program. We now have five such residences. Inmates from a correctional centre can be moved to a community training residence prior to their normal release date. Or, in some cases, minor offenders are sent directly to a community training residence. While in the residence, staff assist them in finding work and in becoming reintegrated into society. During the period April 1, 1976 to December 31, 1976 our five residences accommodated 234 participants. During that period these inmates earned a total of about \$221,000. Out of this they paid \$40,000 in board and room, about \$17,000 to dependants for their support, almost \$20,000 in income tax, \$2,500 unemployment insurance and \$2,400 to Canada Pension Plan. They also, through their earnings, were able to pay out \$2,300 in fines and restitution and \$5,300 in debts. Mr. Speaker, had these inmates simply been kept in a normal correctional centre their families would have been totally dependent on public assistance. The community training residence program makes not only good social sense, but good economic sense.

We have also been able to develop a new program called FLEX, or Farm Life Experience. Through this program a few carefully selected farm families take incarcerated people and probationers into their homes. Without altering their own living habits these farm families have taken inmates into their homes, found a place for them, and have become the vehicle that has facilitated significant growth and individual change. By living with the farm family, the offender is relieved of negative peer pressure and the inmate code which could have affected him in the institution. This program is still in its early stages, but we believe it has been worthwhile.

The largest of the non-institutional services, of course, is probation. At the present time we have some 45 probation officers and supervisors, along with one coordinator for volunteer services. At the end of December of 1976 the probation caseload was 2,187 cases. This is an increase of almost 65 per cent since 1971. This indicates a growing use by the courts of the probation alternative.

In the fall of 1975 a new position was created, the position of coordinator of volunteers. It was our belief that it was time to involve the community more closely in the probation system. The coordinator's job was to recruit, train and supervise volunteers who would be looking after adult probationers. The attempt was to involve the community in a meaningful

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way in the correctional process. This experiment was launched in Saskatoon. We now have approximately 50 volunteers either working or being trained and supervising 35 probationers. In the next few months we will be evaluating the effectiveness of this program which has just completed a year of operation.

A new emphasis has been the increasing interest in the concept of restitution. This is an attempt, of course, to assist offenders to learn responsible behaviour. As of September 30th of last year, a check of our records indicates that \$68,000 in restitution has been ordered on those probation cases being supervised by our staff. It is estimated that the actual amount is higher than this, but in some cases was unknown at the time the restitution order was issued, and, therefore, was not placed on the computer. Restitution makes eminent sense, it is of little value to the victims of a crime if a fine is paid to the Government.

One of the most innovative programs developed by our Government was the Fine Option Program, which is completing its second year of operation. For some time we have been concerned about the number of people being placed in correctional centres only because they could not afford to pay the fine which had been levied against them. If they had been wealthy they would have paid the fine and gone home, but because they were not wealthy and could not afford to pay the fine, they were incarcerated. We decided to attempt to do something about this.

The Fine Option Program allows offenders to work off the value of the fine in community service activity. In the current fiscal year it is estimated that in excess of 3,000 people will take advantage of this method of payment resulting in a reduction of 35 to 40 per cent in admissions to correctional institutions for default of fines. Urban and rural municipalities and nonprofit organizations and Indian Reserves will receive an estimated \$250,000 in community service work from Fine Option Program participants.

Besides this, however, there have been many side benefits. A number of offenders have been given employment in their community as a result of their participation in the Fine Option Program. Community awareness to the problem of poverty and crime has been increased, resulting in co-operation of local agencies to initiate such things, as alcohol rehabilitation programs, employment programs and educational workshops on the criminal justice system.

Mr. Speaker, you will be interested to know that the Fine Option Program continues to generate a great deal of interest, not only from other provinces, but also from other countries. We have received, Mr. Speaker, 700 requests for copies of the Fine Option Program Review Committee Report which was released in March of last year. Two provinces, Alberta and New Brunswick have already patterned their Fine Option Program after the Saskatchewan model - another first for Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. ROLFES:— Mr. Speaker, I said earlier that I should like to say a few additional words concerning our institutions. Although we believe in community corrections and development of alternatives to institutionalization, we recognize that there will always be a need for some institutional services. Over the past few years,

we have been looking closely at the present institutions serving this purpose. The Women's Correctional Centre in Prince Albert is 10 years old and, although it has certain limitations, is able to provide adequate levels of custody and care to the inmates residing there. In fact, various national and international correction study groups and task forces have commented favourably about the amazingly positive relationship between the staff and inmates within that centre.

The two men's correctional centres are less fortunate. Their large size creates problems and, especially in the case of the Prince Albert Correctional Centre, the outmoded physical design and deteriorated condition of the building make it extremely difficult to provide the kind of care required in a modern correctional system. Because of this, Mr. Speaker, our Government has decided to replace the Prince Albert Correctional Centre with a more modern and efficient unit, taking into consideration the best possible professional advice available on this subject today. The Regina Correctional Centre underwent a \$4.5 million renovation approximately 15 years ago, and thus will not be replaced in the immediate future.

The 60-year-old correctional centre at Prince Albert will be replaced with a new 100 bed facility in Prince Albert. A new remand unit with a capacity of 20 will be constructed adjacent to the correctional centre in Prince Albert. The location of a second new 104 bed correctional facility and a 25 bed remand have not yet been finalized. The design for the correctional centres and remand centres have been awarded to a Saskatoon architectural firm, Holliday-Scott and M. Desmond Paine. Design is expected to be completed by the summer of 1978 and construction completed by 1980. Although firm costs will not be available until design is completed it is estimated to be in the \$15 million range in terms of 1976 dollars.

The new correctional centres will be designed so as to better meet the objectives of correctional centres which are to provide custody as directed by the courts and to provide opportunities for inmates to learn and practise responsible behaviour. By having inmates reside in smaller 13-man units there will be more opportunities to separate various groups of offenders, young, first time or chronic repeaters. From a staff perspective the smaller living units will enable staff to get to know each inmate in his unit as an individual. This will permit staff to provide necessary counselling to those inmates who want it and to observe other inmates who may create problems.

While the combined capacity of the two new correctional centres and remand units will be 245, as compared to the stated capacity of 300 at the existing Prince Albert Correctional Centre, it must be borne in mind that the present capacity of the centre includes up to 90 inmates who are actually held within various correction care. The capacity of 245 for the new centre does not include those inmates to be kept in correctional camps. The Government has considered a number of options regarding the size of the new prisons and has concluded that the 245 capacity of the new facilities will be adequate to meet the requirements for traditional security. Additional capacity will result from additional correctional camps and community training residences which require little or no capital construction and where inmates residing therein can work in real work situations, where they can have the opportunity to support themselves and their dependents as well as paying board and room during their period

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of incarceration.

Inmates placed in community correctional facilities will have been carefully screened to ensure community safety or may be placed directly by the courts, if the courts feel that the security provided in the conventional prison is unnecessary in specific situations. For example, there are on any one day over 100 individuals in our Saskatchewan correctional centres whose offences are directly related to the use of alcohol and a motor vehicle. In such situations there are less expensive and, hopefully, more effective methods of meeting the requirements of a prison sentence as determined by our Canadian law than our current ones. A program would separate such individuals from access to alcohol and from the operation of a motor vehicle, while at the same time providing a meaningful work experience and perhaps treatment for alcoholism or mandatory participation in courses dealing with impaired driving is envisaged.

Mr. Speaker, let me now turn to an area that is of particular concern and interest to me, that of our senior citizens. Early in our first term of office this Government made a very serious commitment to do all within its power to improve the lives of our senior citizens. We made this commitment for a number of reasons. In the first place, we look upon our senior citizens as the pioneers who established and built this province. Many of them came here in the very early days when life was very difficult, they battled the elements and fought their way through a depression to lay the foundation of a society which now benefits each one of us. We, therefore, in a very real sense owe a debt to our senior citizens, their spirit of dedication, commitment, perseverance and co-operation has indeed benefited the whole of our great nation. We then saw it was our responsibility to take some of the fruits which they had provided to us and use them for the improvement of life for our pioneers. We also recognize that many of our retired people were suffering from a lack of economic viability. They were living on a fixed income during a period of rising inflation. We believe that steps needed to be taken to assist in this regard, either by providing the senior citizens with additional services or with the income with which to purchase additional services. We also in our commitment recognize something which is more nebulous. We saw around us, as I am sure all Members will recognize, an increasing impersonality in society at large. While this has difficulties for all of us, we believe that it created some particular problems for senior citizens, it increased the feelings of aloneness and loneliness and even of alienation from society.

Finally, we looked at the record of seven years of Liberal Government in Saskatchewan and could only conclude that senior citizens appeared to be the most neglected segment of society during that seven years. There was then a need for a catch-up, Mr. Speaker. We recognized then that a great deal had to be done; we recognized also that everything could not be done all at once. There were those items on which we could move fairly quickly, there were others that would take some planning and research. Our records indicate that our commitment has been translated into action.

As Members opposite will remember, our first act, of course, was to remove the medical and hospital deterrent fees. This provided an immediate benefit to all citizens, but in particular to senior citizens who are the largest users of these services. We then removed the premiums for health care insurance; this also was of particular benefit to those on fixed incomes. We

then developed a program of community services which relates primarily to needs of our senior citizens through community service grants, we assisted with the provision of Meals on Wheels, special transportation services, home care, homemaker and other items of needed service. Through these same grants we have assisted in the development of 251 senior citizen centres throughout Saskatchewan. These centres, probably more than anything else, assist our senior citizens in overcoming the feeling of aloneness and alienation that is so real in our society. They provide opportunity for companionship, recreation and a sharing of interest and concern.

During this same period we introduced the first subsidies to patients in nursing homes to relieve a greater degree of this financial burden. We also changed the regulations under the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan so that a couple did not find all of their savings obliterated before they could receive assistance for the one member of the family who entered a nursing home, as had been the case under the previous Liberal Government. The fact is that in my department alone an estimated \$40 million in 1976-77 was spent towards the services and care of senior citizens and in the coming fiscal year we estimate that we will spend an estimated \$49 million. This means, Mr. Speaker, that over 25 per cent of my department's budget goes towards the services and care of senior citizens. We believe this is a significant fact to bear in mind when my department is criticized for not providing for senior citizens.

Let's look for a moment at the cost of nursing home care for senior citizens. In 1971-72 the average cost for a level III bed to the senior citizen was \$310 per month. The combined old age security and guaranteed income supplement for that senior citizen was \$135 per month, leaving the senior citizen to pay the balance out of savings of \$175 per month. At the present time the average cost of the same bed is about \$775 per month. Taking into consideration increases in old age security, plus \$20 from the Provincial Government's Senior Citizens' Supplement, and for the coming year a grant of \$398, it leaves the same senior citizen to pay \$115 per month out of his savings. Mr. Speaker, that is a decrease of \$60 per month, since 1971. I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that there will be increases in the rates of nursing homes for this coming year and they have not been taken into consideration in my calculation. Mr. Speaker, the subsidy grant for patients in level II will also be increased effective April 1 to \$133 per month.

Mr. Speaker, nursing homes alone are not, of course, the answer to the needs of senior citizens. I have already indicated some of the other steps which have been taken to assist, but there are more. The Senior Citizens' Home Repair Program has assisted many senior citizens to maintain their houses and to remain living at home for a longer period of time. Programs like the Hearing Aid Plan, and Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living and the Drug Plan have been of particular benefit to our senior citizens, along with programs such as Low Rental Housing and Property Improvement Grants. During this same period of time, in order to assess the real needs of senior citizens, we established a senior citizens' commission and as a result of that, a permanent Senior Citizens' Provincial Council. Information we have received from these bodies has been clear and unequivocal, we must further develop alternatives to institutionalization.

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Our studies indicate that the vast majority of our senior citizens want to continue living at home as long as it is humanly possible. It, therefore, becomes our responsibility to assist in this regard. Some action has already been taken, both by the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services, in developing programs such as home care nursing, homemaking, Meals-on-Wheels and like programs. For some months now, the Department of Health and the Department of Social Services have been engaged in the difficult task of developing the broad parameters for a more comprehensive and integrated home care program. While it will be available to all citizens who have need of it, it will be of particular benefit to our senior citizens. You will note, Mr. Speaker, that the Budget provided an additional \$2 million for the development of this program in its first year; this along with funds already available will bring the total to about \$6.3 million. The discussions and the negotiations need to take place with agencies presently involved in the services and with local municipal governments as to how they can and will assist us in the design and implementation of the home care program.

Mr. Speaker, if you take all these services that we have provided for senior citizens - I won't go through those again -this year the Provincial Government will spend approximately \$79 million for senior citizens in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. ROLFES:— Mr. Speaker, the last area which I should like to discuss before I take my seat, is the area of day care. Mr. Speaker, in February 1974, the Day Care Program was formally launched in Saskatchewan. Prior to this time, some day care centres were in existence but on an entirely ad hoc basis. Following a study, the Government of the day realized the need for increased and improved day care services. We recognized that there were a number of one-parent families with a parent working or two-parent families where both parents needed to work and where financial assistance was necessary to provide for the care of the child or children. At the same time we made the conscious decision not to introduce universally free day care. We did this because we could see no good reason for low income tax payers to subsidize the care of children for high income earners. We also made the conscious decision to place day care under Social Services rather than the Department of Education since we saw the program being designed to meet the social, emotional and physical care needs of children rather than the simple extension of the educational system. The Day Care Program introduced facilitates the development and provision of a range of day care services including neighbourhood day care and family day care services. We believe that the Day Care Program ensures that there are adequate standards of health, safety and care of children.

When we introduced the program we were convinced that parents are primarily responsible for their children and we insisted that day care boards be parent-controlled so that the type of programming and staffing would meet the needs and requirements of the parents having children in the centre. We want this to continue to be an essential ingredient in the Day Care Program. However, we now have under review a recommendation to broaden day care boards to allow non-profit community organizations to sponsor day care centres. We will only move in this direction if we are assured that community

boards guarantee strong parental involvement.

To assist with the development or expansion of day care centres we have provided \$200 per child space start-up grant and for renovations to existing centres up to \$100 per child space.

Mr. Speaker, we have come under attack in the past year for not providing a maintenance grant to day care centres for the purpose of assisting them in their operating costs. We have reviewed this method of funding very carefully and have come to the conclusion that we should continue to provide direct funds to families that most require support through the provision of a subsidy, rather than providing grants to day care centres which indirectly subsidize all families equally, regardless of income. We believe that subsidies are the best choice because they do not give money to those that can well afford day care services. We also believe that a maintenance grant is the first step towards a universal day care service, a direction that will prove to be extremely expensive.

We are also aware that there are day care centres that are in financial difficulty. However, it is our contention that the financial difficulty can be alleviated by increasing their fees. We understand that this will be difficult; therefore, to offset this factor we will be introducing one of the richest subsidy programs in Canada.

The subsidy structure we are proposing would allow a maximum subsidy equivalent to 90 per cent of the cost of care per child with a ceiling payment of \$140 per child. Families with an adjusted income of less than \$825 per month would receive maximum subsidy. The maximum subsidy is reduced by 33.3 cents for each dollar of income over \$825, adjusted with the break even point being \$1,200 adjusted salary per month.

This is a substantial subsidy increase from 1976-77. The present subsidy structure only allows a maximum subsidy equivalent to 80 per cent of the cost of day care to a maximum of \$100 per child. It allows that families with an adjusted income of less than \$450 per month receive the maximum subsidy. The maximum subsidy is currently being reduced by 25 cents for each dollar of income over \$450 with the break even point being \$800 per month.

Mr. Speaker, let me provide you with a couple of examples to show you what the new subsidy will do.

Example No. 1: A family with two children with one in a day care, where the day care rate is \$140 per month and whose employment income is \$900 a month adjusted, will receive a subsidy of \$112. This same family would receive only \$37.71 in subsidy under the old structure.

Example No. 2: A family with three children with two in day care where the day care rate is \$140 and whose employment income is \$1,000 per month adjusted, will receive a subsidy of \$225 under the new structure. This same family would have received \$139 under the old structure.

We are also proposing to raise the subsidy for families who have children in family day care homes.

We believe, Mr. Speaker, that we can continue to meet the

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needs for day care in Saskatchewan. We have adopted a program which provides for universal accessibility to day care services rather than one which provides for universal free day care. The use of the income test in our subsidy program allows us to do this.

Mr. Speaker, from the words that I have spoken tonight, you know that I will not support the amendment but I will support the main Motion. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. J. A. PEPPER (Weyburn):— Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I join Members on this side of the House in supporting this Budget.

You know, Mr. Speaker, an interesting attitude has developed across the way since this Budget was first handed down very ably by my colleague, the Minister of Finance.

You know, if a newcomer to the province happened to wander into the public gallery when Members opposite were on their feet, they would almost get the impression that as a province, Saskatchewan was on the brink of economic and social collapse.

The doom and gloom which has been heard from Members opposite would almost convince anyone, not familiar with the facts, that Saskatchewan was on the rocks, that we were going under, that the Government had failed. But, Mr. Speaker, we know that such a tactic only works on people who do not understand the realities of this province. That tactic only works, Mr. Speaker, on those who deliberately choose to mislead. However, Mr. Speaker, that tactic does not work on the majority of Saskatchewan people and one would think that the old-line parties would soon figure that out.

Their response to this Budget has been predictably negative. And again they have sidestepped their responsibility to take a positive look at these fiscal proposals with the views of providing the people of Saskatchewan with the benefit of an alternative. However, Mr. Speaker, on both counts they have failed and they have failed miserably. The financial critic for the Liberal Party had a particularly difficult time in understanding what this Budget is all about, and is not in a position to offer the people of Saskatchewan a choice. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, his strategy was quite simple. He felt that if he spoke long enough and loud enough and threw in the old 18th Century, 'red under the bed' scare, the people would overlook the fact that the Liberal Party does not have an alternative policy.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it is easy to criticize. Members opposite are masters at that trade. But the real test comes in the ability to propose concise alternatives to a particular proposal which the Government brings forward. The Liberal Party has obviously failed to grasp the significance of their diminishing role in this Legislature, Mr. Speaker. On one hand, they say that they are the only alternative; they say they are the true spokesman for anyone against the Government. Well, I am perfectly willing to let the Liberals and Conservatives fight it out to see who emerges as the real Opposition in this Legislature, however, I must warn Members opposite that their performance to date almost assures them a long and well deserved future across the way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. PEPPER:— I say this, Mr. Speaker, because to me it is obvious that the people of Saskatchewan are not going to take a chance on a party which can only say, “Let us govern; give us the reins of government and once we form the government, then we’ll decide what we can do.”

Mr. Speaker, this is not good enough and the people of Saskatchewan will never accept that because the issues are too important and the stakes are too high. Already the death rattle of the Liberal Party can be heard. All one has to do is read the recent editorial in the Leader-Post, Mr. Speaker, which says:

Following three months with Ted Malone as the new Leader, all is not well within the Liberal Party.

Tom Townsend, another strong Merchant supporter, said in a telephone interview he is fed up with the Liberal Party and has stopped working for it altogether. Sounding disenchanted and somewhat bitter, Townsend said after spending eight years working in the Liberal Party, ‘I’m not there any more.’ He pointed to the results of the leadership contest as a sign that old, established Liberals will continue to be the motivating force behind the party and that it will not shed its self-appreciative fat cat image.

Mr. Speaker, this might sound like bad news for the Liberals and it might sound like good news for the Conservatives, however, based on what we have seen so far, I do not see the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan as the answer either.

Faced, Mr. Speaker, with the chance of asserting themselves in a positive manner, they too have chosen to remain critical and evasive. Recently, former Prime Minister John Diefenbaker said the Conservative Party should have as its motto, ‘me too.’

In referring to the position of Leader Joe Clark and his refusal to announce specific Conservative policy, choosing rather to say, “elect us and then we will tell you what we will do,” Mr. Diefenbaker correctly stated that this was not good enough, Mr. Speaker. It was not good enough. The Member for Nipawin might be well advised to listen to his former Conservative Leader. When the Member for Nipawin and his small caucus first entered the Legislature in 1975 all Members, Mr. Speaker, were fully prepared to accept their initial difficulties in coming to grips with the legislative process. However, surely it is not unreasonable to expect that now, after two years in their seats, they have had a chance to learn the system.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Members opposite can only agree on how to disagree. Collectively they oppose this Government. Their approach is similar, their philosophy is similar and if given a chance they would run this province in a similar fashion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. PEPPER:— I say, Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to let that happen. Only now are we beginning to fully recover from those seven years of Liberal rule in which the economic and social fabric of this province and its people was worn dangerously thin.

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Mr. Speaker, by any and every economic yardstick, Saskatchewan's economy boasts confidence. Granted, the last two years have noted growth which is normally foreign to our economy, however, the gains achieved can be reflected as part of the initiative of this New Democratic Party Government.

When things go badly for Saskatchewan people, the Government is the first place where the blame is placed, so perhaps we should also accept the credit when things are going well.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. PEPPER:— However, Mr. Speaker, rather than sit back and accept that credit, we choose rather to spend our energies developing new policies and programs for the people of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. PEPPER:— It is an interesting situation. If you remember, last year we brought down a budget which reflected responsible restraint. As a partner in confederation we were fully prepared and willing to join in the national fight against inflation. Our budget reflected this co-operation. Well, Mr. Speaker, Opposition Members, one would have thought, should have been willing to join in the fight as well. During the debate they were particularly critical of the budget saying we were spending far too much money. Yet almost daily, motions would appear on the Order Paper pleading with us to spend thousands on this program and millions on that program. Now, Mr. Speaker, they wanted it both ways.

Then came this year's Budget. The Member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) you well remember, says there is absolutely nothing wrong with deficit financing, nothing wrong whatever, except when this Government chooses that route. Then it is wrong. He says we shouldn't be spending so much. He says there are too many people in the civil service but we shouldn't cut any positions. He says we aren't doing enough to fight inflation, but we should eliminate the sales tax. He says we should cut the Health budget, but retain the level of service. And he finally announced that the Liberal policy on health is, by stating in this Legislature, that the users of our hospital beds should pay for their service. Now, Mr. Speaker, I thank the Member for Thunder Creek for finally coming out of the bushes and telling the people of Saskatchewan that the Liberals would bring back deterrent fees, if ever given the chance to form the government. The Member for Thunder Creek made it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that deterrent fees are the answer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear to the Legislature and to the people of Saskatchewan that Members of this New Democratic Party Government reject outright this position. Deterrent fees are not the answer. They are a vicious and unjust tax on the sick and we will never allow them to be considered as long as we are the Government of this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. PEPPER:— This Budget is a good budget. It comes at a time when there is a levelling off in terms of the unprecedented growth recorded

over the past two years. In Saskatchewan we have become accustomed to economic cycles. The ups and downs of the economy are part of our way of life.

One of our commitments, when forming the Government in 1971, was to develop policies and programs which would make us less vulnerable to these outside influences. In many instances our efforts have been successful. The ability or inability of any government to plan for the future goes a long way in determining whether or not a province can indeed dictate the success of its economic planning.

I say, Mr. Speaker, look at the record. We have the record of the lowest unemployment in Canada, we have a double A credit rating, we have unprecedented investment, regular population growth, more jobs, more housing, greater disposable income.

Mr. Speaker, these things just don't happen. Members opposite don't like talking about it, but it is true. Our policies are having a positive effect. They are working and we are having success in developing the kind of economic and social program which ensures that the public is getting the best possible deal for the money invested.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear.

MR. PEPPER:— Our commitment is not restricted to any one sector of the economy. We all recall the preoccupation of the former Liberal Government with its pet project, 'economic development'. Do you remember, Mr. Speaker, what they said about bringing Saskatchewan 80,000 new jobs? Do you remember what they were going to do about helping Saskatchewan realize its full economic and industrial potential? Yes, Mr. Speaker, we remember well. Empty promises, onerous taxation, and callous disregard for the individual are trademarks of seven years of Liberal rule.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it is unfair to zero in on the Liberals too much, but it is difficult to be too specific with respect to the Conservatives because, Mr. Speaker, not only do we not know, but I do not think they even know where they stand in terms of specific policies and programs for this province. The Member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) will only say that a Conservative Government will restore Saskatchewan to its rightful place in Confederation. That's what he says . . .

MR. SPEAKER:— I think the Members should refrain from making loud personal remarks about the person speaking. I know I want an opportunity to hear the Member and I am sure some Members over there do too.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear.

MR. PEPPER:— The Member for Nipawin will only say that a Conservative Government will restore Saskatchewan to its rightful place in Confederation. He says that under a Conservative Government, Saskatchewan will stand out as a 'sparkling jewel'. Now, Mr. Speaker, how could anybody argue with that? The only thing that we question is how are we going to make that jewel sparkle? We're trying I can assure you. Anybody knows it takes a lot of polishing and a lot of elbow grease to get a jewel to sparkle. Well, we are doing our part, but what are Members opposite doing?

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I say rather than pitching in, they choose the easy route. They sit back and they criticize and fail to offer the kind of positive direction which is their responsibility. Mr. Speaker, by any yardstick whatever, this Budget is a responsible Budget - in health, in education, in social services, in northern development, in resources, in municipal services. It's all there, Mr. Speaker, a record of accomplishment.

A moment ago I talked about economic cycles. Then there are political cycles. The latest being, the hysterical outcry, Mr. Speaker, from the Members opposite in respect to our resource policies as they relate to potash. Before dealing with that however let's review the record.

A few years ago it was medicare, remember the outcry. Well now Members opposite support medicare. Then it was the Land Bank Commission. They said it was 'a communist plot'. I think that is the term they used, I think that was it. Well, they slowly got tired of opposing a program which had support of most people so they quietly died away on that issue. Then it was Bill 42. I well remember that. They again got very emotional about this issue claiming our legislation was going to literally destroy the oil industry in Saskatchewan. Well, again, Mr. Speaker, history has shown that they were wrong and they quietly have backed away from that debate. Now comes the potash and they are at it again. Somehow, they cannot, Mr. Speaker, they cannot seem to grasp the significance of what we are doing. Somehow, they feel it is still publicly acceptable to allow the multinational corporations to come in and enjoy a field day with our non-renewable resources and then leave with most of the money. They somehow do not think it is a good idea for the Government to get involved. They say it doesn't make sense. They say Government has no right in the potash business, the oil business, the timber business and the uranium business. They somehow think that morally or economically it is wrong.

Mr. Speaker, again their consistency and their batting average remains intact, again they are wrong. Other speakers in this debate have, and other speakers in the future will, I am sure, detail the commitment we have in terms of these resources, so my remarks on this topic will end here.

Now, Mr. Speaker, at the outset of his remarks on Budget Day, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) noted the cautious optimism we feel in terms of the next 12 month period of time. He pinpointed the strengths while noting the dangers which exist. I feel his budgetary approach to the affairs of Saskatchewan were indeed positive and responsible. We have been able to retain the vast majority of services and programs that we currently have in place while, at the same time, devoting further money and energy towards new policies for the future. It would have been easy to say to the people of Saskatchewan, "Look, the Federal Liberal Government has reduced its funding for cost-shared programs so we are going to have to reduce some services or increase taxation." That would have been the Liberal way or the Conservative way, but we said, No. Because of past fiscal responsibility we have been able to retain what we have and improve on what we have. We are not saying that the next two years are going to be easy for Saskatchewan. We are not immune to the fluctuations of the international market place and we have certainly no control over the weatherman. But I say, Mr. Speaker, what is important is this - it is important for this Government to take hold of those areas we can influence and do

whatever possible to ensure that no stone remains unturned in our ongoing commitment to build a better Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. PEPPER:— You know, Mr. Speaker, at times I find myself at odds with my usual easygoing temperament, my frustration I guess brought on by my unqualified faith in mankind. I believe in this province and its potential. We have not been blessed with some of the natural advantages found in other provinces, but we have much to be thankful for. Our potential is great and I find myself willing and enthusiastic to do whatever I can, as a Member of this Assembly, to offer a positive contribution to the affairs which dictate the future of this province.

It is the obligation of each of us, I says Mr. Speaker, to do our part. We share a common responsibility. That responsibility is to build a better Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it is a task which needs the support of not 38 Members, not 40 Members and not 55 Members, it takes the dedication and commitment of each Member of the House.

I say, Mr. Speaker, it is not happening. There are destructive forces about and I don't have to look too far to find the source. It troubles me, Mr. Speaker, and I sincerely hope, that, in the not too distant future, we can expect some form of new commitment from Members opposite in terms of their responsibility. We are on the threshold of shedding the image of a 'have-not province'. It is going to take collective effort to push us the rest of the way. I know Members on this side of the House are lined up to do their part. I wonder when we can expect some positive effort and assistance from Members across the floor.

Mr. Speaker, because this Budget will add to the growth of the economic and social fabric of this province and because it is the kind of a budget which maximizes our strengths and minimizes our weaknesses, I offer you and Members of this Assembly my unqualified support for this important Budget. You can take from my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I support the Budget and I oppose the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. B. M. DYCK (Saskatoon Mayfair):— Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak on this Budget, I would like to congratulate the Member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (Mr. Wipf) and the Member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. Lane) on their recent election to the Legislature. I would also like to congratulate the Minister of Finance on his very responsible Budget in a series of responsible budgets that the New Democratic Party has given to this Legislature and the type of responsible budgets that the people in Saskatchewan are accustomed to seeing when the New Democratic Party is in power.

SOME HON. MEMBERS:— Hear, hear!

MR. DYCK:— The Budget, Mr. Speaker, in my view, is again a very progressive Budget and it is a progressive Budget because it contains a number of new programs that are important. It provides additional funds for existing programs that are much needed. I am particularly impressed and pleased that we will

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be providing a comprehensive Home-nursing Program which will allow the elderly and the handicapped to remain in their homes. Certainly this is most desirable and exactly what these groups of people want.

The Family Court is certainly a step in the right direction where families can find solutions to their problems in less formal and more understanding situations.

I am happy, Mr. Speaker, also that our Government does not anticipate that there will be any controls on contracts settled on or after September 30th, 1977.

I would like to turn for a moment to health care, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan has the best health care system in all of Canada and I challenge anyone to dispute that statement and I challenge you now.

Nevertheless, there are a number of things that can be done to improve the health delivery system. As with any system, it can always be improved and in order to accomplish this we are going to require, in the years ahead, close co-operation between the consumers, the Department of Health and the health professions and administrators in the field of health. I want to emphasize that it cannot be done by the Provincial Department of Health alone. To summarize in this area, Mr. Speaker, I want to say that a number of things can be done to make our health delivery system even better than it already is. In my view, through the use of para-professional or para-medical people, through more medical clinics, through better out-patient health services, through preventative medicine and through shorter stays in the hospital including the process of doing surgery, we can accomplish a more effective system. These are certainly techniques that should be studied in the years ahead.

But, you know, in the two by-elections we heard some of the most hypocritical statements emanating from the Conservative Party. They talked about putting care back into Medicare. I say, Mr. Speaker, this is the height of all hypocrisies because these same people, these same Tories and these same Grits back in 1962 joined forces with all kinds of groups around this province in order to stop the implementation of the Medical Care Insurance Program, a program that is now accepted by every provincial jurisdiction in this country. Now actions about putting the care back into Medicare, in my view, were the most reprehensible in those two by-elections campaigns. For example the Member for Swift Current (Mr. Ham), speaking to a meeting in Saskatoon in October of 1974, said that he was personally in favour of re-introducing deterrent fees. These same people, Mr. Speaker, are now saying, "put the care back into Medicare." Now, Mr. Speaker, the question is can these people be trusted? Can they be trusted? Some Conservatives support deterrent fees and if they say put the care back into Medicare, the question is, can they be trusted?"

Mr. Speaker, in the recent two by-elections the Conservatives expressed real concern about the alleged increase in crime, the declining level of public morality and a greater need for Christianity in our society but they never did quite say what they are going to do about it. Of course they don't say what they are going to about much of anything these days. They might start another, 'back to the bible' broadcast or something like that; I'm not sure. But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, when you

have large disparities of income, when you have poverty amidst affluence, then you are going to have unrest and we have poverty in Canada. You are going to have social unrest and you only need to look at the United States and many of the underdeveloped countries of the world including South America, to determine this.

In this context, Mr. Speaker, I should like to refer to a report recently prepared by the National Council of Welfare and allow me to quote:

Wealthy Canadians are receiving billions of dollars in hidden welfare, according to a report by the National Council of Welfare. High income tax payers receive the greatest benefit from 17 tax subsidies which cost the Federal Government some \$16.4 billion to 1974. There are about 40 additional tax subsidies that run into additional billions of dollars but the exact amount of these subsidies will never be known because no records are kept.

Says this report. This 21 member Council is a Government funded advisory body to the Federal Health and Welfare Department. The report says:

Persons earning less than \$5,000 per year receive an average of \$244 from the 17 tax subsidies since 1974 but those with incomes of more than \$50,000 save a total of \$4,000. One example of a tax subsidy that benefits the rich more than the poor is the Registered Home and Ownership Savings Plan. Persons earning \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year can receive \$264.93 by placing \$1,000 in a savings plan assuming that they can save \$1,000 for that purpose. A person making \$15,000 or \$20,000 will save \$385 under this plan.

The report states that no taxes at all were paid by 252 persons who made more than \$50,000 in 1974 including 17 persons who made more than \$200,000, Mr. Speaker. High-income persons and managerial and professional positions for example, can often set up dummy companies whose only real purpose is to assist them in avoiding taxes.

There are in fact, two welfare systems in Canada, one for the poor and one for everyone else.

The Income Tax Act conceals millions of dollars in government spending, the spending which makes up Canada's welfare system for the non-poor. Ordinary citizens, middle income, and low income tax payers, are almost totally unaware of its existence. Ordinary citizens are also unaware that it is they who bear the greatest burden of the costs, while it is the wealthy who reap the greatest benefits. And I am suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that the answer to this problem lies in a more progressive tax structure with a much higher exemption level, so that larger amounts of federal tax revenue come from the higher income. And I am pleased that the Province of Saskatchewan, the Government of Saskatchewan has taken some concrete action in this direction.

You know, if there was a stigma which sometime comes from receiving social assistance, receipt of tax benefits is seen as the mark of the judicious organization of one's personal financial affairs. Maximizing benefits, received through these benefits are never described as an abuse. In fact, it is viewed

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as a rationale by at least the uninformed. Moreover admiration is bestowed upon the astute company lawyer who by some sophisticated scheme obtains a tax subsidy for his clients. Even the unlawful evasion of taxes is regarded by many only as a slight transgression. While obtaining Social Assistance, when one is not entitled to it, is viewed as a grave offence.

Finally, and perhaps this explains some of their unique characteristics, the tax subsidies to the greatest extent help the well-to-do. Certainly, there are no benefits whatsoever to those who are outside the tax system, because their income is too low.

And so, Mr. Speaker, in summary, the rich get richer and the poor get poorer, because to a large extent, of an unfair federal tax system. And I submit to you, that in a society where there are large disparities of income you will not have a healthy society. There will be crime. There will be social unrest and in the long term these kinds of societies will, in fact, threaten the process of democracy itself.

Mr. Speaker, the Opposition Parties are suddenly interested in crime in the streets, but I say that that concern of theirs is nothing less than a cheap sham, because their political history proves that they have done virtually nothing to eradicate poverty in this country. And poverty is one of the root causes of a good deal of social unrest, Mr. Speaker.

The Tories and the Grits are today, as they have been in the past, fighting against our policy on resource development and we can understand why they fight against those policies.

Allow me to repeat for a moment some of the information about where these political parties derive their campaign funds. Very recently in New Brunswick, for example, it has been shown that local government members there, on the Conservative side of the House, have been receiving regular kickbacks from people in industry in that province. Now, this does not surprise me because these two parties have been receiving this sort of financial assistance for years and this is why they owe their allegiance and their soul to the large corporations.

I will not go over the list of the contributors given in this House last autumn, Mr. Speaker, by the Member for Biggar. Certainly those figures demonstrate who supports the Conservative Party. And while the Tories say they are for the little guy, the fact remains that they are deeply in hock to the community.

Mr. Speaker, I will, as you can conclude, be opposing the amendment and supporting the motion. However, since I have a few more words to say, I should like to beg leave of this House to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:07 o'clock p.m.