

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session — Eighteenth Legislature

November 22, 1977

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. P.P. MOSTOWAY (Saskatoon Centre): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to this House 50 Grade Twelve students from Bedford Road Collegiate in Saskatoon. They are accompanied today by two teachers, Mr. Serienko, who I believe is not in the Speaker's Gallery at this time — or yes, there he is, and also Mrs. McKenzie, two teachers on staff.

I understand that they have visited the RCMP depot this morning and that they will be in the building this afternoon. I will be meeting with them later on. I certainly hope that you find proceedings in the Chamber this afternoon as stimulating as say they were yesterday. Thank you.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. A.S. MATSALLA (Canora): — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of my seatmate, the Hon. John Kowalchuk, who is ill today, I would like to introduce to you and to the members of the House 58 Grade Eight students from the St. Henry's Junior High School at Melville. They are seated in the west gallery and they are accompanied by their teacher, Garth Gleisinger.

I will be meeting with the students at 3:00 o'clock to discuss the proceedings and parliamentary system. I do hope that they have a very interesting and enjoyable day here.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

RISE IN THE COST OF LIVING

MR. J.H. PENNER (Saskatoon-Eastview): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. It is reported today in the press that the rise in the cost of living, as reported by Statistics Canada, in Saskatchewan is the highest in the dominion. The figures for Saskatoon show an accumulative factor of an increase of 10 per cent during the year, a rise of 1.5 in October; for Regina 10.3 per cent, a rise of 1.6 in October compared to Canadian averages of 8.8 per cent accumulative and 1 per cent for the month of October.

I would like the minister, if he would, Mr. Speaker, to comment on these increases in light of the fact that had there not been a gasoline price war in Regina and Saskatoon it is likely the figures would have been higher. And also since the factors that have been named as being the major contributors for the increase are taxation, Crown corporation rate increases and university fee expenses, would you not agree that the major cause of these rate increases is the government itself?

HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance): — Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. Looking at the Consumer Price Index, in Saskatoon the main contributors to the advance in the Consumer Price Index are higher food prices, which as the hon. member knows were not subject to controls at the farm gate, especially meat and bread and fresh fruits. The other major factor was the property tax which is in the control of local government. It is true that in the figure are also university tuition fees which are really a small component of the total cost of the university.

In the case of Regina, the higher prices again were for food, particularly beef, pork and fresh products, soft drinks and restaurant meals, along with the increase in property taxes. Those were the main contributors. In Regina, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what further we can add. Certainly we are concerned about the rise in the cost of living as it also indicates that the federal program was not effective in controlling prices and this we regret very much.

MR. PENNER: — Supplementary. During the month of September, SPC was named specifically in terms of its rate increase. The minister has indicated municipal affairs, he tends to want to slide off that, not recognizing the indirect responsibility that his government has toward assisting municipal governments to be able to pay their way through property taxes. He has mentioned the university fees which again his government must take indirect responsibility for. I ask this minister again if he is not prepared to stand up and take some responsibility for the fact that we have the highest inflationary rate of any province in the dominion and if he is not now prepared to roll back the rate increases in Sask Power and Sask Tel to provide some real benefit as we earlier suggested?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, in the case of Sask Power and Sask Tel, is the hon. member suggesting that there should have been no increase in the electrical rates and that somehow money should have been taken out of consolidated funds to subsidize the users of electrical power? The hon. member will notice if he looks at the last annual statement of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation, it did not make any money on the electrical power generation and I think it would be unfair to ask the Consolidated Fund to subsidize Sask power. In case of Sask Tel, it's true there have been some increases, but I invite the members to compare the rates of Sask Tel with the rates of any place in Canada and you will find that the telephone rates of Saskatchewan are the lowest in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of property taxes, I invite the member to take a look, and since our government took office in 1971, the grants to local governments have increase by 3,000 per cent. I think that our government has provided local governments with a great deal of financial assistance, and we are at the present time working with SUMA and SARM towards a revenue sharing formula which we hope to be able to arrive at at a later date. Now, Mr. Speaker, the property taxes, as I said, are the responsibility of local government. They were not subject to control under the federal program or under the provincial program, and those are areas which were not controlled by AIB.

MR. SPEAKER: — Supplementary, the member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Indian Head-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, I direct it to the head of the government, and ask the Premier if in the year 1977-78 that the government will establish a policy, unlike the previous year, that no Crown corporation, government

agency, or department will increase fees, charges, of any kind or description, above the federal anti-inflation board of guidelines?

HON. A. BLAKENEY (Premier): — I think the hon. member is unaware of the anti-inflation board guidelines with respect to corporations and pricing. Contrary to news reports, and contrary to the suggestion of the hon. member, the federal government guidelines do not provide a ceiling of 6 per cent, or 8 per cent or any other per cent for prices. Rather, it is a cost pass through ceiling which is provided. We have adhered to that in Saskatchewan, we have adhered to the fact that increases in rates have been designed to reflect only higher costs. Clearly there will be instances where they have been undershot modestly, or overshot modestly. These will be resolved and I can assure the hon. member that where increases in prices in the past have produced significant increases in the profits of any corporation, this will be taken into account and the next increase, if any, will be moderated so that any excesses in the prior year are taken into account and are reflected in lower rates in a subsequent year.

MR. SPEAKER: — Final supplementary.

MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle): — To the Minister of Finance, and I know you won't have a written answer because you don't know what my question is going to be, but the government opposite has imposed a surcharge on the Crown corporations by way of a contribution to the ad campaign to the family of Crown corporations.

In light of the rate increases announced and the cost of living increases announced, would the government be prepared to rebate back to the Crown corporations and their share of the surcharge that they are forced to contribute to the Crown corporation family ads and take one small step to reduce the rates to the people of Saskatchewan and not have our rate increases being used for political propaganda?

MR. SMISHEK: — The stumble-bum member is obviously very poorly informed. There have been no such surtaxes, or surcharges placed on the charges that are made to the consumers by . . . whether it is Sask Tel, Sask Power or any other corporation.

FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES – INTERCON, SASKATOON

MR. H.W. LANE (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — Mr. Speaker, a question to the member for Melfort (Mr. Vickar).

One of the largest employers in Saskatoon is Intercontinental Packers, and there have been some disturbing signs pointing towards financial difficulties, namely lay-offs of employees, etc. Would the minister be prepared to admit this to this House today that there have been financial losses suffered in terms of the capital placed into the venture by this government?

HON. N. VICKAR (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — Mr. Speaker, I haven't official data that there have been some losses incurred by Intercontinental. I know that there are some difficulties in the cattle slaughtering markets. I know Intercontinental is going through some difficult times. I don't know, and I haven't heard as yet, whether there are any actual lay-offs to this point.

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. The government of Saskatchewan, of course, has injected some, I believe \$11 million odd into this project, and what I am wondering, and the question is directed to the same hon. member, is the senior official

that has been assigned to Intercontinental Packers from SEDCO, is he there as a receiver manager, or is he merely there studying the possibility of establishing a receiver manager?

MR. VICKAR: — Mr. Speaker, it is the privilege of all people employed anywhere to work in any particular field if they so desire, and the senior official that the member is alluding to, was a senior official in SEDCO and he accepted to take a position with Intercontinental. That's his business.

MR. H.W. LANE (Saskatoon-Sutherland): — The evidence would indicate that Saskatchewan people's money might now be in jeopardy, and the question that I'd ask the same member is, how much money is this government prepared to pour into ICP to keep it floating?

MR. VICKAR: — Mr. Speaker, I think maybe the member is just assuming things. I think maybe he better wait and see.

MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition): — I wonder if the government through SEDCO has received an application from Intercon for financial assistance by way of loan, mortgage or any other device, and if you receive such application whether you're going to grant the request.

MR. VICKAR: — No, Mr. Speaker. To my knowledge at this point SEDCO has not received any application from Intercontinental Packers.

GOVERNMENT BORROWINGS ON THE AMERICAN MARKET

MR. S.J. CAMERON (Regina South): — Mr. Speaker, a question again along the lines of the question I asked yesterday the Minister of Finance.

Last year, about this time, you had indicated that there were government borrowings for the purpose of power corporation and telephones, of some \$125 million on the American market, payable in American dollars. I presume that you are facing an interest payment, either this month or next month, in respect of that borrowing and I am anxious to know how much additional money it is going to cost the Saskatchewan government in interest payments with respect to these foreign loans by reason of the difference between the value of the Canadian dollar and the American dollar.

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is interested in what additional costs there might be. The loan was for a period of 30 years, and if one looks at the long-term experience over the last 25 years, or any 25 year period, the rates, the exchange, the American-Canadian exchange have generally been over a long period of time at par. We expect that over a 30 year period the same thing will happen. Certainly, historically that has been the case and there is no reason to believe that that is not going to be the case. In any particular or any one year period or two year period, there might be variations both ways. The Canadian dollar could be higher as we've seen about a year ago. It was about 2 or 3 per cent higher than the American dollar; now the Canadian dollar is approximately 10 cents below. But the important thing to recognize is the long-term experience and the Canadian dollar would have to be, over a period of 30 years, 12 per cent below the American dollar before it would start costing us any money because of the preferred interest rates that we were able to receive by borrowing in the American market.

MR. CAMERON: — First supplementary in several, Mr. Speaker, if you will permit me because it is a complex area.

Did you in any way whatsoever hedge against the possibility that the Canadian dollar may decline as it has done relative to the American dollar, when you decided last year to make this massive borrowing repayable in American funds? Is there any hedging device of any variety?

MR. SMISHEK: — I don't know what the member means by hedging devices.

MR. CAMERON: — Well I hate to waste a supplementary by telling the minister what I mean. It's this, Mr. Speaker.

You, a year ago, chose to borrow \$125 million on the American market, payable in American funds. This year, in the next month or so, you face paying the first interest payment in respect to that borrowing. You were warned at the time by the Canadian government not to be borrowing those massive sums of money on the American market. Now, since you made the borrowings, the Canadian dollar has declined 10 per cent, relative to the American dollar, which means your interest payments are 10 per cent higher. Did you in any way hedge against that possibility in view of the warnings that you were getting from the Government of Canada not to be borrowing as you were on the American market?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is poorly informed, that somehow the interest rate is affected. We borrowed in the United States at the last issue, where the interest rate was 8.7. Had we borrowed on a Canadian market, we would have had to be paying 9.95 for that type of a loan, so because of the preferred interest rates, the interest rate is not affected — it stays at the same rate that it was, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CAMERON: — Will the minister not agree with me that you have to make an interest payment this year in American dollars? To buy the American dollars, you need 10 per cent more in the way of Canadian dollars to make your interest payment. Therefore, is it not true that your interest this year is going to be 10 per cent higher than what it would have been had there not been the depreciation of the Canadian dollar below the American dollar?

MR. SMISHEK: — Well that is true. We have to pay in the American dollar, but despite that, Mr. Speaker, one has to look at the loan over the period of the loan, not over any 12-month period or six-month period, so in the case of this year, it's true that there will be that slight increase, but we borrowed on a long-term basis, and Mr. Speaker, on a long-term basis it is very possible that the Canadian dollar will be higher than the American dollar, and then the whole thing will balance itself off. We are still going to be ahead as far as we're concerned because we don't foresee that the difference is going to remain over a 30-year period as it is at the present time.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, the hon. member yesterday asked the question of what portion of the funds that were borrowed for potash . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order!

MR. SMISHEK: — There was a question yesterday of what portion of the funds which

were used for the purchase of potash mines are payable in US funds. The answer is: None.

MR. CAMERON: — Was there any borrowing then on any other foreign market to the purpose of acquiring potash companies, and is any of that foreign borrowing in other countries payable in American funds?

MR. SMISHEK: — Mr. Speaker, we did borrow in the European market, in the private market last year, but it was in Canadian funds and therefore it's payable in Canadian funds.

CABLE TELEVISION

MR. E.F.A. MERCHANT (Regina Wascana): — I have a question to direct to the hon. Attorney General, and as you can hear, I have a sore throat so I'm sure Mr. Speaker will be even more patient with me when I'm at the mercy of the . . .

Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General said on Friday that the CRTC has agreed that Sask Tel will have exclusive rights to the mid-band, and I'm assuming that means the guarantees were made that the CRTC would, or guarantees were made to CRTC that Sask Tel would look after both conventional cable operators and also CPN in the mid-band. And I ask the minister whether I am not correct in saying that in making that guarantee, the government of Saskatchewan will have to provide to every person who takes both services, a converter at a cost of \$60 to \$100, and a trap or an amplifier on the set at a cost of up to \$200, if your engineers can develop that kind of a trap, so that someone taking one service or the other won't be able to pirate the other service because, as Mr. Speaker may recall, when you were in charge of the ministry, once you activate the cable, both CP and the other channel will come in at the same time.

HON. R. ROMANOW (Saskatoon-Riversdale): — Mr. Speaker, I will have to check through the press report that the member alludes to, but I don't believe that I indicated that CRTC has given exclusive jurisdiction of the mid-band to Sask Tel. I think what I've indicated is that the CRTC approved the agreement of Sask Tel in the Battlefords is an accommodation of the interests of Sask Tel and the proper licensing interests of the CRTC. Secondly, that doesn't matter. I think it's peripheral to the member's substantive question which is relating to the technology for converter traps of an alternative competitive service and the costs thereto.

I am advised, Mr. Speaker, that the technology is here. The hardware may not be developed but can be relatively easily developed, the traps and the converters. I cannot comment as to the cost estimate the hon. member gives — \$60 to \$200, other than to say my recollection is that Sask Tel advised me that it should be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$100, a once-in-a-lifetime cost, and finally, that that figure is recaptured and built into the subscriber fees which CPN is asking subscribers for in its offerings to the public.

MR. MERCHANT: — Mr. Speaker, I suggest to the minister that there are two separate costs. One is the converter; I have one in my home and it cost \$99, and the other is the trap which will cost anywhere up to \$200, and that none of those costs are to go to the cable operator. I therefore ask the minister whether the cost to the government of 2.6 million dollars the CPN requests, the additional cost to the government of a converter, and also of the trap which is made necessary by CPN, and the additional cost of the delay caused by laying the cable and Sask Tel bearing the interest on the expense of the cable, whether it's not the case that all of that cost is falling on the Saskatchewan taxpayer? Because your government, or your predecessor, for some narrow political reason decided that he was going to have CPN in this province even though we would then be leading the technology of the world, and providing better service than any place in the world because no government in the world believes that we can afford it except your government.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I note that the hon. member says that we would be leading the technology of the world, and having just previously said that he apparently has at least one of the devices in his own possession. It cost him \$99 so somewhere the technology is around because the hon. member has it, does not necessarily mean that you need both of these two equipments. I am not a technological expert but some people advise me that it depends on the nature of the service, or services, that you buy in terms of the two costs. I repeat again, out of recollection (I stand to be corrected), the information I have is that the cost of the technology is \$100.

Let me finally conclude by saying the \$2.6 million proposed guarantee does not involve that aspect of the cost. The \$2.6 million guarantee involves the seed money and the guaranteeing of the operation of the films and the equipment and things of this nature, the actual programming costs for the CPN operation. The cost of the technological equipment, such as it may be to Sask Tel, I repeat, it is hoped will be recovered from the charges which Sask Tel will levy as it would to any other customer if CPN gets going on CPN.

MR. MERCHANT: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: — Final.

MR. MERCHANT: — Could I ask why you have so obviously favored CPN over conventional cable, sending Gerry Parfaniuk right out of the cable secretariat to set up CPN as part of a negotiating tack with the CRTC, having George, a well-known NDP as the nominal chairman, by supporting it in the way that you have, and now dragging your feet in granting the loan because I suggest to you that you got into this mess for narrow political reasons . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — I will take the next question, the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake.

RCMP INVESTIGATING REHAB PROGRAM IN DNS

MR. G.N. WIPF (Prince Albert-Duck Lake): — Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the Minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. Would he explain to this Assembly the reason that the RCMP were called in to investigate the administration and operation of the RRAP program in the North, which is administered by his department, and when did the RCMP become involved in this?

HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan): — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raised a question, I believe it was in Estimates last spring, about some person who was an employee of the department, who had formed a company and who was doing certain work under the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program. As a result of the information to the department and the question raised by the member, further investigations were undertaken by the department and as I answered the question the other day, we sought the assistance of the Attorney General's department in them providing for a proper investigation into the alleged activities of the member opposite, as well as some findings of the department itself. The department has further requested the co-operation of the Central Mortgage and Housing people to co-operate with a separate audit of the RRAP program, as is implemented in the North. It is a federal program as you can understand; it is carried out by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

MR. WIPF: — Were any other companies involved, or have you found any other companies involved that had to be investigated as a result of your investigation that started other than the one that was brought up last spring?

MR. BOWERMAN: — I don't have a final report of the investigations of the Attorney General's department, nor does my department have any final conclusions as to others that may have been involved, so therefore, I am not able to give the member a precise answer with respect to other implications, or implications beyond those which were raised by himself a year ago.

PURCHASE OF LAND BANK BY LESSEE

MR. J. WIEBE (Morse): — A question to the Minister of Agriculture. In just over 30 days the first Land Bank applicant will have an opportunity, or the first Land Bank lessee will have an opportunity to apply to the provincial Land Bank Commission to purchase the land which he now leases. I am just wondering if the minister could outline to me and to the House the guidelines and the criteria and his government's policy in regard to how they will accept that application and how they will handle that application once it is

received?

HON. E. KAEDING (Minister of Agriculture): — Mr. Speaker, the decision on how the Land Bank will sell its land is in the final stages of decision-making at the present time and we will be making an announcement in due course.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Lusney (Pelly) for an Address-in-Reply.

MR. E.C. MALONE (Leader of the Liberal Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, until this time it has been the tradition of this Assembly that the opposition use the time allotted for the Address-in-Reply to the Speech from the Throne to simply heap abuse on the government, to hold up to scorn and ridicule government programs and government policies and to criticize and condemn wherever and whenever possible — the individuals who are responsible for those policies, be they members of the government or be they members of the back benches who support it.

Indeed there are many who are less charitable than myself who would say with considerable justification that the short period of time allotted for this particular debate is not sufficient for the opposition to address itself properly to all of the faults, errors and examples of incompetency of the Blakeney regime, a government that has become so bloated with arrogance and so swollen with its own sense of self-importance that it fails to listen or heed the people that it was elected to govern, a government that seeks to justify all of its actions no matter how arbitrary, no matter how damaging to the future well-being of this province, by saying that they are being done for the good of the people. This is the same justification that most dictators use to defend and excuse their actions. We see something in common between the NDP Blakeney government and those dictators, in that both fail to consult the people they say they are acting in the interests of.

In the case of the Blakeney government the people were not consulted about the takeover of the potash industry. They were not consulted about the spending of the millions of dollars that have accrued to the energy reserve fund. They were not consulted about the spending of the taxpayers' dollar to advertise and promote the political programs of the NDP. They were not consulted about less important things such as laws that make it compulsory to wear seat belts. This government no longer, if it ever did, govern for the public good . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — . . . but only for the sake of the few doctrinaire socialists who have its ear. It is a government that can be aptly described as an organized hypocrisy, a government that pays lip service to the concept of being the spokesman for the people but, when examined, really only speaks to and at the people and not on their behalf.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Liberal Party now feel that more is required than mere criticism. We are aware how easy it is to criticize this government, we are aware how much easier it is to be critical than be correct. We are also aware that the people of Saskatchewan are sick and tired of the atmosphere of negativism, backbiting, squabbling, bickering, animosity and hate that pervades politics in this province now and in the past. We are also aware that public esteem for the politician, whether he holds high office in the government or a less glamorous position as a backbencher or opposition member, ranks somewhat higher than Richard Nixon and somewhat lower than that of a fraudulent used car salesman. We, as well, are prepared to acknowledge that

politicians are to a significant degree the authors of their own misfortune and perhaps deserve the reputation that has befallen them. We are concerned that because of the general low reputation in the public eye of the politician, of whatever party, that the political process is itself suffering and people who should be attracted to a career in public life are hesitant to let their name stand for office, for they look at the antics of politicians and they do not like what they see at the present time.

What is required by all politicians is a fresh approach, a new politics, a positive sense of political purpose, that puts the well-being of the province of Saskatchewan above political in-fighting and above political jockeying for advantage. With this in mind, Mr. Speaker, we in the Liberal Party, therefore, propose that this and future sessions to continue to be as critical of the government and its policies and programs as we have in the past. At the same time we will be offering what we feel are constructive suggestions to improve upon existing policies and programs, innovative ideas of our own to solve the problems of the day that the government has failed to recognize, and positive suggestions to make Saskatchewan the greater and better province that it can be.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — In the weeks ahead the members of the Liberal opposition will be introducing, wherever possible, bills for the consideration of the members of this Legislature, where government spending is not involved, and where it is, resolutions that will attempt to deal in a meaningful way with the issues that we determine to be of importance to the voters of this province. We hope in this way, in our way, to re-establish within the public of Saskatchewan the confidence in the political process that we sense is waning and we ask the voters to compare our approach, our methods and our ideas with those of the other two parties. Compare our speeches with the tired, trite, repetitious utterings of the NDP. Compare our approach to the negative approach of the Tory. Compare our representatives to the Tory and the NDP and ask who should have your confidence as the party which seeks to represent all of the public of Saskatchewan and not just a select few. We believe that the public is looking to its elected representatives for such basic and fundamental values as honesty, decency, competency, compassion and efficiency. And we invite the people of Saskatchewan to watch in the months ahead, what happens in this House and outside of it, and to determine in their own minds which party, through its public statements and actions, best exemplifies those values and ideals.

What the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are looking for, is a political party that they can trust. A political party that will act not only in the self-interest of the people who are its elected representatives, a political party that will act not only in the interest of its supporters, but a political party that will act in the interest of the public good, and the public well-being. The political party that between now and 1979 can best establish that they are a party that the people can trust, will be the political party that forms the next government of this province.

I do not believe that the New Democratic Party, neither in 1975 nor at the present time, is trusted by the majority of the people in this province to manage their affairs. In the Speech from the Throne, the government has failed to produce any meaningful proposals that will deal with the problems of the day. Indeed in most cases they have simply ignored those problems and I will deal further with those problems in a few moments.

I do not believe either that the party that sits to my left, the Progressive Conservatives,

will be trusted by the people of this province to form the next administration. Indeed if trust is to be the criterion of electing a new government, I suggest that the people of Saskatchewan will reject the Progressive Conservative Party simply on the basis of their record to date.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — Indeed the people of Saskatchewan will remember that the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) and the member for Qu'Appelle (Mr. Lane) could not even be trusted by the voters in their own constituencies to remain loyal to the party that elected them. They will remember that this party cannot be trusted to even abide by an all party agreement as to the procedure to be followed at the opening of the Legislature two years ago. They will remember that at least one member cannot be trusted to say the same thing outside the Legislature that he says inside of it.

The people of Saskatchewan in due course will have to ask themselves whether they are prepared to put their faith and trust in a party led by the member for Nipawin (Mr. Collver) to conduct and manage the affairs of Saskatchewan pursuant to the values of honesty, decency and integrity. They will remember that this party's success to date has been based on an approach of hating the government in Ottawa and hating the government in Regina. A politics of hate that demonstrates a meanness of spirit, a desire to gain power simply to even old scores, to fight old battles.

The Tories have been out of power in this province for a long time and they will continue to remain out of power because during that period they have forgotten nothing and they have learned nothing. Since being represented in this Assembly they have said nothing positive that can be remembered, nor have they done anything positive that can be recalled. They have no plans for the present and have offered no programs for the future. They have failed to participate in the debates of this House, either through a lack of courage, conviction or ability and have directed what little energy they have to lecturing the members of this Assembly on such weighty matters as decorum during the session and smoking during Committee of the Whole or Committee of Finance.

The people of Saskatchewan have no idea what they stand for but this should come as no surprise to anybody because the Conservative caucus itself has no idea what it stands for. I invite them at this session to tell us and to tell the people of Saskatchewan what their philosophy is, what their programs are, what their policies would be if they were the government and to do so by rising in this House, not by currying favor with the press in the corridors outside of it, so that their views and opinions can be debated and challenged by the members of this Assembly.

It is easy to make a speech in the corridor but it is not so easy to make one in this Assembly. I believe that until the Conservatives are prepared to do this that little attention should be paid to them by the members of the Legislature and even less by the members of the media.

Mr. Speaker, I should now like to turn to more specific issues in matters of greater concern to the people of Saskatchewan, matters that I believe are not dealt with adequately or at all in the Speech from the Throne. I would like to begin by making some remarks about the problem of law and order within this province.

I should say first, that the term "law and order" is really one of those catch phrases that has become popular but really is not descriptive of the problem that

we face. That is, we can have law without order and we can have order without law, but what we need and require is order within the rule of law which basically amounts to the proper and effective administration of justice. I believe it is the first fundamental duty, the first priority of any government to ensure that justice is administered impartially, fairly and efficiently in order that the citizens that are governed can be secure in the knowledge that they will be protected from the law breaker and that the criminal will be quickly apprehended and dealt with according to law.

Unfortunately in this province this basic, fundamental obligation has not been the NDP's first priority because of its preoccupation with imposing its socialist philosophy on the private sector. Indeed the Attorney General who is the chief law enforcement officer in Saskatchewan is also the Deputy Premier. He is the House Leader, he is the government's legal advisor on the takeover of the potash industry. He is the government's legal advisor on the oil industry. He is the Premier's political mouthpiece. Only after all of these tasks have been performed does he try to find time to be Attorney General, the chief law enforcement officer of the government.

While he is performing these political duties we see an appalling increase in the crime rate, in violent crime, in offences against the person as distinct from offences against property. And not only in our major cities, but in our towns and villages. In Regina alone, the number of offences involving violence against people has grown dramatically since just last year. To the end of October, 1977, murders or attempted murders have increased by 10 per cent over the entire year of 1976. The same number of sexual offences have been committed in 10 months in 1977 that were committed in 12 months of 1976. Robberies have increased by 10 per cent and there have been 267 assaults causing bodily harm to the end of October, versus 190 for the entire year of 1976.

These statistics to most people would be alarming and they should cause grave concern to this government. In addition, we find that even once criminals are apprehended, that when they are incarcerated, they seem to continue with the same outrageous conduct in our penal institutions. It seems that a week does not go by that we do not read about an escape, or a hostage taking incident, or some other form of criminal conduct that they public simply will not tolerate any longer. And indeed, Mr. Speaker, on the way here today, another news broadcast of an escape from the Regina court house.

The incidents in our jails should not come as any surprise to this government. Every year since I've been a member of this Legislature we have questioned the minister responsible, the Minister of Social Services, about our jails, and have asked him to give his assurance that these incidents would not continue. That assurance was always given, although the situation has not been improved upon, but that it has deteriorated. Let me therefore suggest to the government some immediate actions that it could take to more effectively administer justice in the province and within the penal institutions:

1. It should first of all acknowledge that there is a problem and give it a priority that it deserves, rather than ignoring it. The only references in the Speech from the Throne to the administration of justice deal with the operation of the provincial courts and an indication that stiffer laws will be imposed to prevent cattle rustling. This is hardly sufficient – this hardly indicates a determination to come to grips with the problem. Indeed in last year's budget the government allotted only slightly more than 4 per cent of the total budget to the enforcement of the criminal law.
2. Relieve the Attorney General of his political and other duties so that he can function as a full time Attorney General, a full time chief law enforcement officer, or appoint a new one. The position of Attorney General, historically, has been one of almost independence from the political arena. Unfortunately this government, and indeed the previous government, has turned the Attorney General into very much of a political person, and for him to properly fulfil his role as the independent legal adviser to the government, as its chief law enforcement officer, he should not be saddled as well with political considerations and duties, at least not to the extent of the present one.
3. Provide sufficient money for law enforcement agencies to hire personnel so that they can more effectively and efficiently perform their allotted duties.
4. Permit courts more time to deal with serious criminal matters by taking out of the criminal justice system those offences that are only quasi criminal in nature, such as breaches of provincial statutes and municipal by-laws. This may require the retaining of more provincial court judges to deal with all of the offences be they minor or major, but it is required if a serious criminal offender is to be properly dealt with.
5. Ensure that the charge laid under the Criminal Code or the appropriate statute, fits the crime, and that prosecutors are not permitted or tempted to lay less serious charges on the assurance by defence council, that there will

be a guilty plea if they do so. This may well require the retention of more prosecutors because many now are forced to consider plea bargaining because they simply do not have the time to properly prepare for all of the cases that come before them.

6. Acknowledge that a great number of our criminal offenders are of Indian or Metis origin, and that they are simply not equipped to adjust to our white man's society, and as a result, find themselves in difficulty with the law. I do not suggest for a moment that they should be treated any differently than a white offender, nor do I suggest that I'm a racist in these remarks. What I do suggest is that the government take off the blinders and admit that there is a growing and serious social problem resulting from the movement of Indian and Metis people into our cities. And I will deal further with this problem later in my remarks.

7. Acknowledge as well that our penal system has failed in its goal to reform and rehabilitate the offender, and that our existing institutions are simply not equipped to permit this type of re-education to take place. The criminal offender must be made to realize that when he is being incarcerated he is being taken out of society because he has failed to comply with the rules of society. He has become a menace to society, and he is being kept apart from it to protect society, and to be punished for his behaviour.

8. Provide work programs for the inmates of our correctional centres so that they do not spend their time in idleness which in itself results in many of the violent incidents which we have been plagued with. The inmate should be required to work a normal day, and he should be paid a nominal sum for his labours, and he should be made to understand that the penal institution is simply not a place to spend the winter, nor is it a place to engage in social activities to help him while away his time.

These are but a few suggestions which if adopted, I believe would show the criminal element that their conduct will no longer be tolerated, and it will result in a reduction in the crime rate if imposed swiftly and with the determination that the problem is going to be solved.

All members of this House will be given a further opportunity to debate this issue when the member for Regina South introduces a number of resolutions in this regard.

I would now, Mr. Speaker, like to direct some remarks to the government's position to date on the issue of national unity. Let me say first, that I have followed closely the public statements made by the Premier both within the province and outside of it, and I'm in basic agreement with many of the positions he has taken. However, there are a number of concerns that I wish to raise about his approach and I hope that my remarks will be taken in the constructive sense in which they are offered.

1. I believe that the time has come to recognize that Mr. Levesque and his colleagues in government are not prepared to negotiate any meaningful re-alignment of confederation, and that they are simply determined to separate the province of Quebec from Canada. It is therefore, in my view, a waste of time to seek to come to some accommodation with them because it is obvious that they are not interested in any compromise short of total independence. For every concession that is granted to the Levesque government, they will simply ask for another. Indeed, they will regard concessions or offers of concessions simply as weakness on behalf of the other

provinces or of the federal government. The so-called offer of a compromise on the issue of education by Mr. Levesque is a perfect illustration of this. If the provinces had been prepared to accommodate him, he would simply then have asked for something more, and would also have used the accommodation as a device to avoid dealing with the federal government in Ottawa. He would have said to the provinces, "See how easy it is to get along with me. Don't pay any attention to Ottawa, we can settle our own difficulties together. We can resolve such problems as an economic association ourselves because we just resolved the problem of education."

I was surprised when the Premier gave an indication initially that he was receptive to this approach on the proposals on education by Mr. Levesque. I was pleased that he eventually acknowledged it for what it was — a ruse that would further divide the country and reject it, and the Premiers conference earlier this year.

However, this is not to say that the people of Quebec are not entitled to have their legitimate grievances aired, and support given to their legitimate aspirations. However, the matter is a delicate one. When the present government of Quebec uses those legitimate claims simply as a device to further their own ends of separation, what of course is required is that an atmosphere must be created across Canada that tells the people of Quebec that they can find justice within the framework of confederation, but that separation itself is not a negotiable item.

2. References to the use of force to keep confederation together, no matter how guarded, no matter how constrained, will simply be construed by the people of Quebec as a threat, and will be used by the Levesque government to further their own interests. These comments about the use of force, in my view, do not bring any better understanding or appreciation of the problem, and indeed works against this because it simply further inflames emotions and feelings that are already running high. Now is not the time to be talking of force and such comments add little to the debate that is being carried on by those of good will within Quebec and outside of it.

3. The approach to the whole problem simply should not be based on short run economic advantage which in itself may be doubtful, but may or may not accrue to Saskatchewan if Quebec separates. Surely we must approach the question at a higher level and be concerned not simply about a protective tariff on textiles, but on the greater issue of one country from sea to sea.

We should be asking ourselves what sacrifices we are prepared to make to maintain Canada, and what sacrifices we are prepared to ask of others to make in return for our concessions. The whole issue is something that cannot be determined on the basis of short run political or economic advantage, but what in the long run will work to the general advantage and well being of all people whether they live in Newfoundland or British Columbia or in between.

This country has a history as a confederation of just over 100 years, and we are still to a large extent feeling our way as a country and as a people. Other countries in the world have taken hundreds of years to develop their political and social institutions to what they are today. Surely we in Canada should not be making decisions in haste that could result in the break-up of a country that is the envy of the rest of the world.

4. More must be done in Saskatchewan to bring about an understanding of all of the implications of separation, so that the people of this province will be able to decide out of intellect, not out of emotion, what sacrifices they are prepared to make and what

sacrifices they will ask of others to keep this country together.

Many of the people in Saskatchewan simply do not appreciate all of the issues involved, and this is a tragedy. Nor do they understand what the effect on this province would be if Quebec does leave. I do not believe that most people in this province realize that there are more people in Quebec who speak only French than there are in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta combined, who speak only English. Many do not appreciate that if there is a separation, that the country will be physically severed, and that it will be impossible to go from Ontario to New Brunswick without passing through a foreign country. Many do not realize that the control of our lifeline to the rest of the world, the St. Lawrence Seaway and the St. Lawrence River would fall into the control of a foreign country, Quebec, who would obviously be tempted to impose tolls on the good we transport out of western Canada and out of Ontario.

I urge once again of the Premier to consider my suggestion of a tour of this province by himself, by the member for Nipawin should he be willing, and myself, jointly, on a non-partisan basis to discuss these issues in the hope that a better understanding will be fostered in the minds of the people of Saskatchewan.

The uniqueness of three party leaders sharing a platform on a non-partisan basis would, I believe, focus the attention of all of the people in this province on the issues involved. It would create a greater appreciation of the problem that we face. I believe all of us in this Legislature are strongly committed to Canada in our own way. Surely we can put aside the lesser issues that we debate here on a daily basis and come together and decide on a common approach to the greater issue of one country.

Mr. Speaker, I should now like to say some remarks about the government itself, or perhaps more properly I should say the government bureaucracy. There is a widespread feeling among the people of this province that this government has become so large and so unfeeling that it no longer serves the people that it was elected to represent. There is a feeling that the government bureaucracy is growing unchecked and that it staggers from one program to another, uncontrolled, and exists only to further its own interests with little or no concern for the taxpayer who is footing the bill. I believe that no one minds paying taxes if he believes he is going to get one dollar's worth of value for every dollar paid. I believe as well that the suspicion of the taxpayer is well-founded and that his money is not being well spent, that there are many unnecessary programs, a duplication of effort and too many government employees who show little care or concern for the trust that has been put in them to spend the taxpayers' dollar wisely.

One only needs to refer to the newest edition of the government telephone directory to discover that there are 107 pages of government departments, boards, commissions, agencies and Crown corporations listed that are supposed to be serving the interests of the people of this province. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to refer to this document which is very revealing and which really illustrates the point that I make. I would like to just turn to one of the pages, page 25, where we have a department of Information Services, a department which we all know in this Legislature is simply the propaganda tool of this government.

I pick this department advisedly because it is the Premier's department, he is the man responsible for it and he is the man that presumably conducts the day to day operations

or sees that they are conducted in a proper and efficient way. Now I look at the titles and the people who are listed in this particular department. First of all, there is a director, and that seems to be reasonable. There is a secretary, that seems to be reasonable. There is something called advertising, and I suppose that's reasonable, when we understand that this is the advertising agent of this particular government.

Then we get to some other positions; we have something called a visual identity co-ordinator. I wonder if the members opposite could tell me what the function is of a visual identity co-ordinator. Does he determine whose picture it is that he has in front of him, whether it is the Premier's or the Minister of Highways'? One will recall a few years ago the report of the Department of Highways, where the minister's picture appeared I believe no less than 13 times. I suspect that this is one of the functions of this department to make the minister pretty and beautiful, if at all possible, to have these pictures of him. But here we are — visual identity co-ordinator. I suspect that even the Premier doesn't know what the function of this particular office is.

Then we go on further. We have three information officers; now I am not sure what those three officers' functions are. Surely the propaganda mills don't churn out so much stuff that in one day it keeps three people busy. Then we have a functionary in charge of radio and recording. Now I am not sure again what, on a daily basis, the government does on radio and recording. We're all familiar of course with the Attorney General's recent political message to the people of Saskatchewan about the tea party that he was hosting in the Davidson area and that his colleagues and Cabinet were going to be having other tea parties in the same area. I suspect that he went to the radio and recording department to have that message taped, a message that was paid for by the people of Saskatchewan.

Then we go to a department within a department, this is called Photographic Art Services. There are nine people apparently in Photographic Art Services. We have a receptionist; we have a supervisor. Here is the interesting one, we have a librarian. Now I ask you, what does the librarian in the Photographic Art Services of the government Information Services do? I suppose they keep track of all the press releases and all the propaganda that is churned out by that government at the taxpayers' expense in order for them to look back to see what they have said in months past. In addition to the librarian, we also have a requisition clerk. I assume that the requisition clerk works at the direction of the librarian, so that when the Attorney General or the Minister of Finance comes in and says, "I want to see my picture as I was in 1971," the librarian turns to the requisition clerk and says, "Go to the minister's file for 1971 and pick out some pictures of him." Again the mind boggles.

If that's not enough we have as well two, not one, two full time photographers in the pay of the Photographic Art Services. I forget how many there are over there, Mr. Speaker, 38 or 39, but surely if every one of them went in and had their picture taken once a day, surely you would not keep two full time photographers busy. One must wonder what these people do on the days that they are not taking pictures of the ministers and the members opposite. I suspect around this time of the year when people are getting Christmas cards printed that they could be very busy indeed, but on a daily basis, surely the people of Saskatchewan should not be required to hire two photographers to take the picture of the Premier and his colleagues.

Now if that's not enough, Mr. Speaker, there are two lab technicians as well. I suppose that makes sense, if you have two photographers they have to have their photographs developed, so they have a lab technician to perform this function for them. In addition

to that, we have an editing room. Now I would be very intrigued, Mr. Speaker, to pay a visit some day to the editing room because I suspect that this is the room that tries to bump up the contents of government propaganda that goes out, that tries to touch up pictures to make the members opposite looks better than they actually do.

Mr. Speaker, they treat this in a light hearted manner but surely it is more than that. Surely it is a very serious situation when the government can have, in effect, its own propaganda publicity agency quartered in the Premier's office and being paid for by the taxpayers of this province.

There are more examples, Mr. Speaker. I would like to turn for a moment to the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. When we look at this, we find that there is absolutely enormous quantities of employees, I think five pages of phone numbers to contact those employees that have a phone. Heaven only knows how many there are that doesn't have a phone. Just look at this, Mr. Speaker.

AN HON. MEMBER: — How many are tapped?

MR. MALONE: — Well, knowing the operation of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan I wouldn't be surprised at all if they were all tapped.

To be fair, Mr. Speaker, it is a unique department because it covers many other agencies of government. Even with that in mind, Mr. Speaker, we have a minister which is understandable; we have a secretary, presumably in Regina; we have an assistant secretary in Prince Albert; we have an executive assistant to the minister in Prince Albert; we have a legislative secretary to the minister; an executive assistant to the minister, with a secretary — it doesn't say where he is, that's two executive assistants; a deputy minister in La Ronge; secretaries in Regina, secretaries in La Ronge; then executive assistants to the deputy minister, two of them, one in La Ronge and one in Regina; then a special assistant to the deputy minister — nobody knows where he may be; an assistant deputy minister in Prince Albert; a transportation planner, which is an intriguing title, and assistant deputy ministers in La Ronge, another assistant deputy minister in La Ronge, and executive assistants to the assistant deputy ministers. In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, in addition to the deputy ministers, the assistants to the deputy ministers, the executive assistants to the minister, we also have an administrative assistant. I suspect he is the most busy man in the department, trying to determine what the executive assistants, the special assistants, the deputy ministers and all the flock that are around him try to do on a given day.

We go further than that, Mr. Speaker. There is also an administration branch that is separate and apart, apparently, from the minister's office. In the administration branch we have directors, auditors, accountants, budget officers and so on but there is also somebody there called a transportation supervisor. As the member for Shaunavon said who just stole my line, he's the person who's in charge of getting them all together. He also seems to have some assistants as well. He has an aircraft co-ordinator and as well as an aircraft co-ordinator, we have a chief pilot. Now a chief pilot to me presumes that there is probably other pilots beneath the chief pilot who are assistant pilots. So here we have, Mr. Speaker, three, four or five people that are shown in this government department just to plan the travel arrangements for the minister and his overgrown staff.

MR. MERCHANT: — Overgrown minister.

MR. MALONE: — An overgrown minister as one member points out. Mr. Speaker, you go through this document, through this book with a sense of outrage. There is page after page after page of government department, government agency, government functionary, and one must ask himself, are all of these people necessary? Now I am not in any way trying to take exception that these people aren't good people, that they don't try to perform a job that has been offered to them. But I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and I ask the members of this Legislature whether all of these people are required.

I turn to another department, the Department of Culture and Youth. Now I suppose the Premier or whoever is going to follow me today is going to get up and say, "Ah, Malone is attacking the Department of Culture and Youth," because I refer to it in my speech. Now let me make it very clear, Mr. Speaker, that I am obviously not against culture and indeed I commend the members opposite, culture, and I am certainly not against youth. But really, Mr. Speaker, do we need 97 people in the province of Saskatchewan looking after our culture and having plans for our youth? That was 97 people that I counted in the last budget estimates and heaven only knows how many more people there are there now.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that this department indeed has many valuable tasks that it performs but surely the functions of this department could be performed as an agency within another government department, so we can get away from another deputy minister and other agency heads and all the functionaries that surround these people that I have mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on for hours pointing out examples just in this one book alone but I think I make my point simply by saying that this government, a government that is responsible for governing less than a million people, has to have 107 pages in a telephone book to list the various government offices, departments, agencies and so on. Surely the time has come, Mr. Speaker, to re-examine the functions of these departments and the personnel that they contain to ascertain whether or not they are required and whether or not they are performing a useful service that is of value and beneficial to the people of Saskatchewan. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the following steps could be taken to determine whether or not the taxpayers' dollar is being wisely and well spent:

1. An independent commission be established to determine whether existing government departments, agencies, Crown corporations, etc. are functioning on a businesslike basis and whether they are fulfilling the function for which they were created without duplication and waste.

I heard a member opposite say, "Get back to the days of Thatcher," and I say, Mr. Speaker, right on. Because at least, Mr. Speaker, under that government the people of Saskatchewan realized that their tax dollars were being well spent, they realized that their programs were being run in an efficient, proper manner. I say to the government opposite, Mr. Speaker, that most people in this province want to get back to that form of efficient, businesslike government.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, this independent commission should function as an ongoing process and the members of such a commission should not be appointed because of their political beliefs but because of their expertise in the field of management and should be independent of government influence and government

interference. Such a commission could make its report to the Legislature and recommendations and findings would be open to the scrutiny of members and assessment by the public.

I believe that no government would dare ignore such a report; that the result would be a more efficient government and a resulting saving of the taxpayers' dollar.

2. The concept of zero budgeting should be examined and implemented throughout the term or office of any government so that a certain number of departments would be required each year to submit their budget on this basis. I was not surprised yesterday, Mr. Speaker, to hear the Minister of Finance say that he didn't know what zero budgeting was. I am sure that this concept has never occurred to anybody in the party that sits opposite. Indeed there is nothing new about the concept, Mr. Speaker. But each department would have to justify every chair, every desk, every employee on the basis that they were required for the department to properly fulfil the role that has been given to it. This in itself, in my view, would cut out duplication and would make the employees of each department or agency conscious of the fact that every dollar that they spend must be justified as a necessary expenditure. As I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing new in this concept. There is no reason why it should not be initiated.

3. There should be as well a periodic mandatory review of all boards, commissions, agencies and programs to determine whether or not they have fulfilled their purpose for being in existence and, if not, their continued operation should be terminated. This review could be undertaken by a committee of the Legislature and would not in itself involve any significant cost to the taxpayer.

Once again a bill will be introduced at a later date to give members an opportunity to discuss this concept in greater detail.

4. Finally, Mr. Speaker, this government itself must become more open and afford the opposition a greater opportunity to examine government spending and the day to day operations of Crown corporations.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — This can be easily accomplished by simply providing that the Public Accounts Committee and the Crown Corporations Committee be allowed to sit while the Legislature is not in session and that they be empowered to review the actions of Crown corporations and the government on an up-to-date basis.

I believe that if the officials of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation had known that they would have to justify immediately their recent power rate increases before the Crown Corporations Committee they would not have been so hasty to make the dramatic increases that they did. Indeed even if the increase was justified, which I find hard to believe, when one remembers according to information from members opposite that last year the Saskatchewan Power Corporation paid approximately \$10 million into general revenues, it would still afford the Crown corporation a forum to explain their actions and put to rest public concern. A government that has faith and trust in its own programs and policies would not shrink from such scrutiny and indeed would be encouraging and welcoming it.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, to you that the government opposite is afraid of such scrutiny.

The government opposite does not want members of this opposition comparing the day to day operations of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan with the day to day operations of private potash companies, because they realize — the Premier shrugs — if there is a willingness on behalf of the government to let us have this information why is it not presented to us? Time and time again we have asked the minister responsible to let us have a breakdown of the financial statements to date of the mines that have been operated by the government owned potash company. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, one of them has now been operating for just over a year and I think, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan are entitled as a right to information by which they could then judge whether or not this corporation is being operated in an effective way.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the failure of the government to give us this information, or to give us some indication of how that company is doing, can be construed as an admission on their part that the company is not doing very well at all. But the point is, Mr. Speaker, why should there be any secrecy about these matters? We are not trying to determine about customers or we are not trying to interfere with the operations of that company on a basis that would harm them in future dealings with their customers, with their employees, with anybody that they come in day to day contact with. But as shareholders of that company, Mr. Speaker, we, the citizens of Saskatchewan, are entitled to examine the actions of that company. We are entitled to know what their financial position is. We are entitled to be able to compare the sales of this year to the sales of the former Duval Corporation. We are entitled to know what the labor relations are in that particular company. We are entitled to know everything about that operation because we own it. We don't want to own it. We had no input into the decision-making process as to whether we should own it or not but now that we do, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that we are entitled to this information as a right.

I wonder why the secrecy. I wonder why the refusal to provide this information not only to the opposition, not only to the Crown Corporations Committee but to the people of Saskatchewan. What I say, Mr. Speaker, applies to Saskoil, to SMDC, to all these government operations. They are hidden by the cloak of the corporate veil, they are hidden behind this Crown corporations procedure that does not permit any in-depth examination until over a year after something has occurred. And I say, Mr. Speaker, that that policy must be changed and that policy must be changed now.

I anticipate, Mr. Speaker, that because of the remarks that I have made about the bureaucracy members opposite will rise in their places and say that I am attacking the civil service, that I am attacking the integrity and honesty of the people who are employed by the NDP government. Let me say, however, Mr. Speaker, that this is not the case and that those civil servants who are indeed public servants and who are dedicated to furthering the public interest would welcome the suggestions that I have made. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to many of them about these suggestions, and many of them have welcomed my advice to them that I would be speaking about it today. Indeed, the public servants are probably more sensitive than anyone to the criticism that is often directed towards the people that they work for. Because of the employment of many whose only qualification for their job is because of their political allegiance, the true public servant is as determined as any taxpayer to remove these people from the government payroll. He knows better than anyone that they are not properly fulfilling the job that they were hired to do. No dedicated public servant of whatever political stripe would have anything to fear from the examinations that I have suggested. However, those who do not properly perform their job, or those who hold that job because of their support for the existing government, would indeed have very much to fear. Mr. Speaker, I think it is time that we started looking at whom this

government hires. It is time we started looking at the Order in Council appointments; it is time we started adding up the cost of these people who are nothing more than political hacks to do the deeds of this government, and try to determine what it is costing us, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, nothing arouses me more than the cavalier attitude shown by the Premier and his colleagues in Cabinet when it was suggested that it was highly improper for government employees to be allowed to go to Manitoba to fight in the election campaign there that was held this summer. I was not surprised, Mr. Speaker, when this advice came out; I was not surprised because I personally was aware of this happening when I first ran for office in 1973 in Regina Lakeview, in a by-election, when civil servant after civil servant suddenly appeared in the Regina Lakeview area, knocking on doors, carrying the NDP gospel to the people of that constituency. Indeed I believe one of the members, one of the workers at the time, sat at that desk as an assistant clerk to this Assembly. But all of a sudden he had this leave of absence granted to him to go out and work for the NDP. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that that is basic dishonesty of any government to permit those actions of the people that are paid for by the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

The taxpayers of this province are not going to stand any longer to pay for a pool of people who are available of the NDP across Canada to go out and fight in federal elections, or provincial elections, or by-elections. That is improper use of the taxpayers' money. It is a dishonest use of the taxpayers' money and, Mr. Speaker, over the past few days we have been talking about dishonesty in this House and integrity and some of these other values that we in the Liberal Party think are significant values, values that should be protected. We have been talking and directing our remarks to those people who sit to my left, the Conservative Party, who obviously do not share our concern for these values, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we often forget that most of the attacks, most of the comments we should be making should be directed to the members who sit opposite us — not to the members who sit to the left of us.

MR. ROLFES: — What is Davey Steuart doing now?

MR. MALONE: — The Minister of Social Services (Mr. Rolfes), Mr. Speaker, says, "What is Davey Steuart doing now?" I will tell him what Davey Steuart is doing now, he is a member of the Senate of Canada, and the reason he is a member of the Senate of Canada is because of a lifetime of dedication to serving the public good.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — Dedication by going to a war when a war was on, by sitting on a municipal council in Prince Albert, by being Mayor of Prince Albert, by being a member of this Legislature, by being a member of a Cabinet, and by leading this Party. All of those things I suggest to you, Mr. Minister, indicate a dedication to serving the public good. Now you may not agree with the method in which he serves the public good, just as he deplores the way you try to serve the public good. But I will tell you the difference Mr. Minister, is that Senator Steuart would stand up and honor you, he would honor you because he acknowledges that you are a politician and that you are striving to do something for this province, different than what you would be doing, Mr. Minister.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne is completely silent on the most significant social issue facing the people of Saskatchewan today. That is the problems and concerns of our Indian and Metis people who in a very short period of time will be approximately 10 per cent of the population of this province.

I referred earlier in my remarks to the large percentage of Indian and Metis people who are dealt with by our courts, and who are incarcerated in our penal institutions. I want to make it very clear that no special treatment should be afforded to those who run afoul of the law. They should not receive any lighter or any heavier sentence than a white person would receive, and they should be afforded all of the protection that the law allows when they come before the courts. But we must again acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, that there is a problem.

For too long all governments, not just the one that sits opposite now but all governments, have ignored this segment of our society and indeed the people of our society have tried to justify this non-attention on the basis that Indians are uneducated, or alcoholics, or ignorant and do not need to be given any special or any consideration whatsoever. We sit back and smugly criticize our American neighbors for their treatment of their black population, and yet we act in many respects in a way that is equally demeaning and equally inhuman in our treatment of Indian and Metis people. This attitude will obviously have to change, it obviously will not change overnight or even in a short period of time. But obviously there must be a change in the attitude of the white person, whether he is sitting in this Legislature or outside of it, to the Indian and Metis, and as well a determination by the Indian and Metis to change his unfortunate role within our community.

I believe that many of the aims and goals as expressed by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians are worthwhile. Their attempts to get away from the big brother of government and run their own lives on the reserve lands is a first step to them regaining their human dignity that is so necessary for them to improve their quality of life.

No one knows better than the Indian of the devastating effects of having government, no matter how well meaning, determine how they are to conduct their everyday lives.

I believe that this government and all political parties should give full support to the FSI in their desire to free themselves of this government control regulation and domination.

However, it is also important for the FSI to more precisely define their aims and ambitions for this form of Indian government on reserves and for their spokesmen to explain their goals if they hope for acceptance by the white man's society. It is not sufficient simply for their spokesman be they the FSI or the Metis Association, or any one of these associations, to simply explain their demands to government, and have government recognize the legitimacy of those demands. They must go further, and they must explain it to the people that are governed so that there will be an acceptance, not only by government, but by the people who vote and elect governments into office.

But I fully endorse the FSI's determination to end the system whereby they are treated as wards of the government; where they have no decision-making authority of their own; where indeed they don't have the right to be wrong. But more is required of us. We must examine those programs that encourage Indian and Metis to resettle in our cities

where they are completely unprepared to adapt to a white man's society. We do not want to replace the welfare of the reserve with the welfare of the city. We must ensure that those who choose to come to the cities have the proper training and education to adjust to our society, and that there are jobs available for them before we encourage them to make such a move. This is something that can only be done in conjunction with the federal government and with the Indian and Metis organizations. I would urge this government to take the initiative in this regard before the problem that we are now facing, particularly in Regina, becomes even worse than it is.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear from the Speech from the Throne that this government does not share our concern about the administration of justice, about the growth of the government bureaucracy, about the problems and concerns of approximately ten per cent of our population.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, it is apparent that this government does not share our concern about the ever-increasing cost of living, about the ever-increasing rate of inflation. We asked today in question period, as we have asked before, where we have issued press releases before, to ask this government to interfere in a way that will help the people of Saskatchewan fight this daily battle against inflation, against the raging, rising cost of living. It would be so easy for it to do so, Mr. Speaker, because there are many things in society today that are under the direct control of this government — the power rates, the telephone rates, insurance rates, the cost of beer and liquor, the cost of a university education, taxes, cigarettes, many of the amenities of life. But, Mr. Speaker, this government has decided in its wisdom to turn a cold shoulder to the requests of this Opposition, and particularly to the requests of many of those who are on a fixed income and who can't adjust their demands to their employer or to their profession and simply increase the money they received for their daily work.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it is a heartless view that this government that prides itself of supposedly being the defender of the downtrodden, that gives speech after speech in this Legislature about their medicare plans and how they have helped the sick and the lame and so on have decided in their wisdom that this is not an appropriate time to help most of the people of Saskatchewan get through this period of crisis in this country because of its ever increasing cost of living. Today's figures from Statistics Canada once again dramatically illustrate just how desperate the situation can be. In this province alone, or in this city alone, the increase over last year was a dramatic 10 per cent. I suggest to the government opposite, Mr. Speaker, that firstly they shouldn't have been so quick to remove their wage and price controls in the public sector. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I worry that in the days ahead some of the demands that are going to be made of government, for catch-up, are even going to further increase the cost of government, the cost of the taxpayers of this province. If those controls had been left on, if nothing else, they would have shown a determination on behalf of this government to try and come to grips with the problem within the sector that they control. I must say as well, Mr. Speaker, that I hope that the federal government does not give in to the pressures of big labor and big government and big business and remove the controls across Canada, unless it's absolutely necessary to do so. And when they are removed, Mr. Speaker, there must be a provision, a monitoring provision has been suggested, so that we do not have dramatic increases in prices and dramatic profits that are unnecessary, any more than we need dramatic increases in wages.

Mr. Speaker, inflation has not been licked, inflation has not even been touched really by the existing government programs that we have. I'm always very suspicious, Mr. Speaker, when I see big government and big labor and big business get together

because it always worries me, Mr. Speaker, that the person that is going to suffer the most is the guy who isn't a part of big labor, or isn't a part of big business, or isn't a part of big government, which is most of the people of this country.

Mr. Speaker, this government can do more. This government can start by simply reducing the SPC rates, and increase of 18 per cent on the average, that were announced this summer. And really the effect of that increase, Mr. Speaker, has not hit home as yet. It has not hit home because we are just now entering the winter months. Mr. Speaker, I said earlier, and I say again, the information we received was that SPC paid to the general revenues last year a sum of approximately \$10 million. Now I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if a Crown corporation is making a profit of this nature, if it can pay into general revenues a sum of \$10 million, it's hardly necessary for that corporation to increase its charges to the people of Saskatchewan by 18 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, I think a government that had some feeling for the people whom it governs, a government that cared, would not have allowed that corporation to make those increases, Mr. Speaker. Indeed, I think a government that cares would have directed the corporation to reduce the rates, so that people would be helped through this critical period.

The same thing applies, Mr. Speaker, to such other things as Sask Tel rates, SGIO rates and the other things that I have referred to — the tax on cigarettes, the tax on liquor. You can talk all you like about putting the price of liquor up high and that the people aren't going to drink. Mr. Speaker, they are going to drink just as much as before the price went up. All that does is bring more money into the government coffers; all it does is further enhance the government's position.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance as well indicated yesterday, in his remarks to the member for Eastview, that the government was not going to have any greater deficit than that which was projected already of approximately \$40 million. He tried to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the federal government in some way erred and as a result caused him some concern and distress. I really couldn't quite follow what he was saying at that time, Mr. Speaker, but it is apparent to everybody in this province at this time, Mr. Speaker, that we are going to have less revenue in Saskatchewan. We are going to have less revenue in Saskatchewan because the price of grain has gone down. Now I'm not a farmer, Mr. Speaker, but I think that I know enough about this province that I have lived in all of my life that when the price of grain goes down, the revenue goes down. When the revenue goes down, Mr. Speaker, it's abundantly clear to me that the money that is coming to the government is going to go down as well.

Mr. Speaker, I suspect that the minister opposite, when he starts to put his Budget in, in a few months from now, is going to have to eat those words and he is going to have to advise this House that we not only have a deficit of \$40 million but a deficit, as predicted by the member for Eastview, of about \$100 million. And indeed, Mr. Speaker, there was an announcement yesterday of a further government payment of approximately \$7 million to several agencies which was not budgeted for. Presumably, Mr. Speaker, that causes a deficit to rise by a further \$7 million.

Mr. Speaker, it is so frustrating to be in opposition and to see the things that need to be done in this province, to make this province a greater and a better place to be — from simple things, Mr. Speaker, as reducing utility rates, to getting out of the potash industry, to decreasing taxes, to doing the many things that the people of Saskatchewan are concerned with. Mr. Speaker, I have enumerated some of those

concerns in my speech today, things that I think are of urgent public concern to the people of this province.

First and foremost, Mr. Speaker, is the issue of law and order or the administration of justice. Secondly, Mr. Speaker, is the position on national unity and I repeat as I said earlier that I have agreed with many of the statements that the Premier has made; my criticisms today were offered in a constructive manner and, Mr. Speaker, as well, the question we are facing about his ever growing, ever burgeoning bureaucracy. Those are the concerns of the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, not potash industries, not laws to prevent cattle rustling, Mr. Speaker, not laws that are going to pay more money to the judges of our provincial courts. These are things that are problems indeed but they are not major problems; they are not significant problems. This government, Mr. Speaker, has failed to deal in any meaningful way with the major and significant problems that are facing the people of Saskatchewan. Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, we in the Liberal Party will not be able to support the motion that was presented by the member yesterday. And I would like, Mr. Speaker, to present to you the following amendment.

Mr. Speaker, we present this amendment because we do not have confidence in the government that sits opposite. We do not have that confidence, Mr. Speaker, because they have failed to deal with the matters that I have referred to in my speech. There are other matters as well, Mr. Speaker, that my colleagues will direct themselves to in the days ahead. Mr. Speaker, therefore, I move, seconded by the member for Eastview, Mr. Penner, that the following words be added to the motion:

That this Assembly has no confidence in the government and condemns it for its failure in the Speech from the Throne to:

- (1) take any action whatsoever to halt the rising violent crime rate in the province of Saskatchewan and to improve the quality of the administration of justice in this province.
- (2) halt the growth of the government bureaucracy and improve the efficiency of existing government departments, agencies, boards, commissions and Crown corporations.
- (3) include any proposals for dealing with the problems and the concerns confronting our Indian and Metis people.
- (4) provide any means to protect the people of Saskatchewan from the rise in the cost of living caused to a large extent by increases in rates charged by Crown corporations for services provided to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY, Premier: — Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to join in this debate, and may I say at the very outset that I was startled by many of the remarks of the member for Lakeview, the leader of the Liberal Opposition; startled by what he said and startled by what he failed to say. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, a leader of the opposition saying that there is a serious problem in this country, a serious problem of inflation; that the government of Saskatchewan should act and it should act by lowering liquor prices. I wonder if that is our most crucial problem — the price of liquor and our need to lower the price of liquor in order to deal with the inflationary pressures. That is not the

view of this government and we do not propose to lower the price of liquor, notwithstanding the urgings of the member.

I want also to point out what the speech did not contain. It did not contain any reference to any problems which may be confronting farmers with respect to rail line abandonment. It did not contain any reference to the Hall Commission, and the need for everybody in this province to rally behind Mr. Justice Hall and his commission to see that the recommendations of the Hall Commission are implemented and that rural Saskatchewan is saved from wholesale rail line abandonment.

The views put forward by Mr. Justice Hall have not been adopted by our federal government. That view is not my view only; it is the view of farm organizations and the view more particularly of Mr. Justice Hall. I would suspect that even the hon. members opposite would agree that Mr. Justice Hall might know whether or not his recommendations were being adhered to. He has made it clear that in his view they have not been. I agree with Mr. Justice Hall and I agree that the fact that Mr. Justice Hall's recommendations are not being adopted is a matter of urgent concern in Saskatchewan and ought to be a subject of very considerable concern to this Legislature. But they did not merit one minute in a 75-minute speech by the Leader of the Liberal Opposition.

These concerns felt by many people in rural Saskatchewan about whether or not the Canadian Wheat Board is being fully supported by the government of Ottawa, is one which I would have hoped would have been the subject of some comments by the hon. member. Certainly the Canadian Wheat Board is under attack now by federal Liberal members and federal Conservative members. It is under attack by Joe Clark I believe the name is. It is under attack by a Mr. Murtagh, it is under attack by leading Conservatives, and it seems to me that this ought to be the subject of very real concern and consideration by this Legislature. It seems to me that these are issues which we ought to direct our attention to in this Legislature, and I want therefore, in the course of my remarks later today or tomorrow, to go into those matters more fully. Before doing so, Mr. Speaker, I want to take the opportunity to congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion.

The member for Pelly won a great victory in Pelly, he won a great victory in Pelly, certainly because of the policies of the New Democratic Party, but also because he is widely recognized as a good citizen with a personal record of service to his community. He is doing a good job representing the Pelly constituency and is going to continue to do a good job of representing the Pelly constituency for many years to come.

I want, too, to congratulate the seconder of the motion. The type of representation which the Meadow Lake constituency is now receiving is one which is new to it and is very much appreciated by the Meadow Lake constituents. In his speech he demonstrated his knowledge of his constituency, his concern for its needs, he has established himself as the voice of Meadow Lake, a voice which will be a strong voice for the people of Meadow Lake now and after the next election.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to a number of points raised by the member for Lakeview, and one is somewhat at a loss to know where to start. He indicated that there was going to be what might fairly be called a new look from the members of the Liberal Opposition. We were going to have some constructive suggestions. We were going to have a good

number of constructive suggestions. Indeed, the party was going to put forward their program. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether the speech we have just heard is the program of the Liberal Party for the next election. I somehow doubt that they would venture even into a by-election on that program. I commend to them the idea of putting forward their program in advance. I commend that to all hon. members, to the Liberal Party and to the Conservative Party. I commend to them the example which they may have seen in 1971 when prior to the election we published our program — New Deal for People — four months before the election so that everyone may know what we stood for, could know what we stood for. We fought the election on that program and we won the election on that program. It had many specifics. There was a paucity of generalities in it. No great calls to woolly headed ideas, but rather very, very precise ideas of what we believed this province needed, what the people believed this province needed and which was subsequently enacted.

I clearly cannot deal with all matters raised by the hon. member. I noted a couple of them. He reviewed the estimates, or a telephone book I believe it was — I suspect that is preferred reading for members opposite — and he outlined some of the areas where he felt there were too many people working for the government. He said that we should have a return to the efficient, business-like government that was in office prior to our taking office, and when the member for Indian Head-Wolseley was in the treasury benches. Any specific instances as I recall it, of an agency called Photographic and Art Services. And he dealt with the fact that this agency had nine members. He alleged that they spent their time taking pictures of MLAs and cabinet ministers when he well knows that agency is a federal photographic agency for the government and does much of the still photography and films for all government agencies. Nine people — nine people uttering, if I may paraphrase members opposite, issuing propaganda as they would say on behalf of the government of Saskatchewan. And we are asked to return to the efficient, business-like days of the Thatcher government. I have their 1970 estimates here, the last full year of the Thatcher government, and I have Photographic and Art Services, and during that time of efficiency and business-like government, they had eleven people putting out presumably more propaganda on behalf of the government which certainly needed it more.

Another point that was made with some conviction was that we should have a royal commission dealing with the efficiency of government, and we should have people who were beyond the political arena. We had one of those when the member for Indian Head-Wolseley was also in government and it was headed by now Chief Justice Johnson, then ex-Liberal candidate Johnson, to give it a nice impartial touch. The Johnson Committee examined the government of this province and it made many recommendations, including one saying that we should attempt to standardize the annual reports put out by the government and to standardize the graphic arts displays used by various government agencies. We have made a move to do that and engaged a small group of people who would do that job for us, that is, the Visual Identity Program, which is pursuing the recommendations of the Johnson Committee — that was all outlined in some detail in a press release a couple of weeks ago for those who can read — and because we have started to implement the recommendations of the Johnson Committee, it is suggested that we now have too many bureaucrats on staff and that we should, instead of implementing the recommendations of the past efficiency report, lay them aside, keep forgetting them as the old government did and appoint yet a new commission. That's the sort of arguments we are met with. It seems to me that many people in this country believe that we have enough commissions, enough people examining into efficiency and what we need is rather more attention to achieving the efficiencies which can be achieved with the knowledge we now have.

We are proceeding in that direction. I noted once again the ongoing attack on Crown corporations which comes from both parties across the way. They indicated that we should be publishing information of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, and we should be exhibiting a willingness to compare our information with that of private potash companies. Let me say we'd be more than willing to compare our information to that of private potash companies but we are not able to get the private potash companies to give the information which hon. members ask us to produce with respect to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. If members opposite can ask their corporate friends to lay their facts on the table, I can tell you, on behalf of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, we'll lay our facts on the table and we'll see them all.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I will tell hon. members that in a very few days or weeks the annual report of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan will be tabled in this House. It will show the results of potash mining in Saskatchewan by mines in Saskatchewan. When it is laid on the table of the Saskatchewan Legislature, that will be the first annual report showing the results of potash mining in Saskatchewan ever published in Saskatchewan since the first ton of potash was mined in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — No private potash company in all their years of existence have tabled or published, or published, a financial statement dealing with their potash activities in Saskatchewan, not even do they publish them on an annual basis. The hon. member for Lakeview is saying that we should publish ours not an annual basis but on an ongoing basis, he asks our corporations to give their commercial information to the public on a daily or weekly or monthly basis. And he and his party did not even ask the private companies to publish their information about potash mining in Saskatchewan in 15 years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The reasons for this are well known, it is because they wish to hobble public enterprise. Members opposite, and both parties are the same in this, do not believe in public enterprise, they believe that it ought to be put under much more severe restraints than private enterprise. They believe that private companies should be able to have a proper privacy; public corporations should have none, they should not even be able to do what a private company does in publishing an annual report and having an annual shareholders meeting. We now asked to have presumably quarterly or monthly disclosures of our affairs when nobody is asking IMC, or Cominco or PCA to publish one financial statement about the operations of their potash mines in this province and none have been published since the first ton was extracted.

MR. MERCHANT: — . . . quarterly reports of Hudson Bay Mining.

MR. BLAKENEY: — The member for Wascana is saying that Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company Limited puts out a quarterly report. It certainly does not put out a quarterly report or an annual report or one report every decade on its potash activities in Saskatchewan.

It is rather clear that when they ask our corporations to disclose on a monthly basis, what they would not ask the private corporations to disclose in ten years, they are showing where their hearts are, they are showing how they believe corporations should be organized. Members opposite are suggesting that since they are shareholders of public corporations they ought to have the right to this disclosure. I am glad that they acknowledge that the public corporations of Saskatchewan are owned by all of the people of Saskatchewan and that they are shareholders and I readily concede that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — It seems to me they should have fully as much right as the shareholder of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company to have disclosure of information. I suspect, therefore, that the member for Wascana who is familiar presumably with Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company will know how many shareholders' meetings Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company Limited hold during the course of the year, so that those shareholders may examine the financial affairs of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting prior to the publication of the annual report. If in fact none is held, as I suspect is the case, and if in fact they are calling for us to hold such meetings as we know is the case, they are once again showing where their hearts lie. They want to protect Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting, they want to penalize the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. They want to see that the financial information of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is readily available to IMC but they do not want IMC's information to be readily available to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, even though they are very clearly competing one with the other. That is because they wish the private corporation to have an advantage, I understand that, because they believe that's a better way to organize the development of our resources. I appreciate their point of view, I do not agree with it.

Now let me touch on one or two other points. May I deal with the comments of the hon. member for Lakeview yesterday, when he was critical of our Cabinet for going about this province and holding meetings with the public; critical I may say yesterday about that type of open government; today he was critical because we don't have more open government. It is my view that it is entirely proper for a Cabinet to go beyond Regina to have meetings in Davidson, to have meetings in Canora, to have meetings in Kelvington, to have meetings in Kindersley, to have meetings all across this province to give people an opportunity to meet with us, to have meetings in the evening, at which questions may be asked . . .

MR. MacDONALD: — Would the Premier answer a question?

MR. BLAKENEY: — I'd be delighted to answer a question.

MR. MacDONALD: — Would the Premier be willing to pay so that the people can meet me, ask me questions? I am sure that they have many, many important things to ask.

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I know when the hon. member was a minister of the Crown, he went about the province and he endeavoured to answer questions on behalf of his government. He didn't do it very successfully with the result that he is no longer a minister of the Crown but I certainly commend him for his effort. I believe he was right in doing that, and I believe we are similarly right in going that. I will assure him that I will pay for his meetings, as many of his meetings as he paid for me when I was in the opposition and he was on the Treasury benches.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I think it is clear that when we go about answering questions about government business we are performing a public function and I consider that to be entirely appropriate.

I know that members opposite are critical about the bus tours that I did this summer. I believe they are a proper function. I believe it is entirely proper for me to go about meeting with people on their own home grounds and giving them an opportunity to raise with me their concerns about their locality. Members opposite may feel that that is not appropriate. I believe it is and I believe it is a positive contribution to government in Saskatchewan to the sort of open government which they profess but which they attack when it is before them. Interjection and laughter.

Members opposite are attempting to make light of the obvious failure of their leader to make some impact. They are attempting to buoy their spirits with some rather weak witticism but I think it will not be successful, not because of the fact that their leader did not present his views in any way that was very comprehensible to those listening but rather that the views which he expressed were such as not to find any favour with the people of Saskatchewan. I had hoped that when the hon. member started and indicated that he was going to outline in a constructive way the programs which he had in mind, we would have in some detail his proposals for dealing with the problems of the province. Instead of giving us any constructive proposals he listed in a one, two, three, four considerations should be given, we should spend more money on, we should approach this problem, but he did not indicate with any degree of precision what he would do if he were in government and how he would deal with the problems being faced by this province.

The member for Nipawin is even more obscure in his approaches to what this province needs and how these problems should be solved. His technique of leadership is rather simple. It is his view that the way to lead is to watch which way the crowd is going, to run out in front and to assert that he is leading it. I have watched this technique on many occasions. When he expects something to happen, he calls for it to happen or if he is absolutely pressed and is unable to call for it to happen, then he alleges that it is all due to a great conspiracy. We have seen this on many occasions. His latest manifestation was one whereby he senses that something is happening in this province, he senses that there is a coalescing, there is a coalescing of liberally minded persons, if you will include New Democrats under that rubric, liberally minded persons who are determined to see that the Progressive Conservative Party does not come to power. He sees these people coming together, very loosely admittedly, but coming together in a firm determination to see that that party does not achieve power in this province. And seeing this coming together and this being one of the items which he obviously cannot call for, he must attribute this coalescing to a plot, a conspiracy or a deal. And he has done just that in the hope that someone will believe that this coalition which is obviously emerging in this province will somehow be attributed to some organizational union between our party and the Liberal Party, that which nothing is less likely to happen in this province.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — But whether our party or the Liberal Party or any other party wants it to happen, it is happening anyway. People are coming together, they are examining

what the Progressive Conservative Party means, not what its program is because that's incapable of examination but what it holds for this province and they are reaching the conclusion that that must not happen and they are going to act to see that it does not happen.

I will turn now to a number of topics, I want to raise some tomorrow but I want to touch upon a few today. The Speech from the Throne deals with many items, I will comment quickly on some.

The matter of school law is referred to and I will be saying more about that tomorrow, but I do want to say that the White Paper on School Law was promulgated by our government. It was the subject of extensive consultation across this province, a process which I think does credit to our democratic process. Many, many representations were made, many points of view were put forward, and I want to assure all hon. members that the process was one not only of people talking to us but of us listening to them. And as a result legislation will be brought forward, there will be extensive changes from the white paper proposals and that's good. It means that we are prepared to work for the best possible framework for education for our young people. It means that we are trying to find that best compromise between the concerns of parents and the concerns of trustees and the concerns of teachers. The best possible compromise between advocates of greater flexibility in language education and advocates of less flexibility in language education. Advocates of people who believe strongly in the separate school system. We believe that all of these compromises will be included in our school law bill and will, we hope, offer to the people of Saskatchewan the best possible framework for the education of our young people.

I want to say a word about health because if there is one area that the New Democratic Party can call its own, it is the area of health care. Over the years almost every pioneering advance in medical and hospital services to the people of this province has been initiated by the New Democratic Party and almost every one of them — the member for Nipawin is making some notes, I would be delighted to know what possible notes he can make which would shed any light on the Conservative health policy but we will be waiting with bated breath on what the Conservative health policy is.

The Swift Current Health Region was indeed established — members opposite appear to be creating a distinction between the New Democratic Party and the CCF — I will be forgiven if I don't appreciate that distinction since I have run under both labels. I have run three times as a CCFer and three, I guess, of the New Democratic Party. I think that only those who are plaintively trying to establish that somehow the record of this government and its predecessor CCF government, they are plaintively trying in some way to establish that this record is not to be attributed to our government but is to be attributed to some other government. And they will be unsuccessful in that because the people of Saskatchewan know where the hospital plan came from, they know where the cancer program came from, they know where air ambulance came from and they know where the medicare program came from, and they know who fought them in each case, they know it was the Tories and the Liberals in their serried phalanxes which fought all of those programs, and they know that if those programs are to be protected it will only be done by the New Democratic Party.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The facts are that the other two parties opposed and opposed

viciously these advances in health care. Almost every one of our efforts to create a fair society, a society where people could have available to them health care substantially without charge have been opposed by the representatives of the two parties opposite.

Last week I participated in an unveiling ceremony of a portrait, a portrait of the honourable Woodrow S. Lloyd, Premier of Saskatchewan in 1962. Mr. Lloyd was the Premier of this province at the time medicare was introduced. Mr. Lloyd was the Premier of this province at the time that this province went through a catharsis, a travail to get that plan implemented. It was a catharsis, it was a battle because that plan was quickly opposed, hotly opposed by Tories, hotly opposed by Liberals and to suggest that members opposite or their predecessors in their parties did not oppose those programs and oppose them viciously, is to rewrite history. Well today Saskatchewan still leads the way, still leads the way at a time when other provinces led by governments of other political persuasions are freezing the budgets of their hospitals and nursing homes, and charging heavy health premiums, Saskatchewan is providing hefty increases for our hospital workers, hefty increases in the budgets of hospitals. Wherever Liberals or Tories get a chance to show their concern for the health of all their citizens, they respond by introducing deterrent fees, and I note that the member for Indian Head-Wolseley has wisely absented himself, because he was part of the government which imposed those deterrent fees, or freezing health funds, or closing hospitals, or charging up to \$400 a year for family medicare premiums. In Ontario hospital administrators are talking about being forced to charge patients five dollars a day and abolishing another 4,000 hospital jobs. And here is a copy of the Globe and Mail of November 7th — big headline, “Hospitals are facing lay-offs — rise in fees O.H.A. Director warns.” Another headline, “Lay-offs in Hospitals” and this is in Tory Ontario and this is this month, this is not last year or the year before. This is this month. This is the Tory approach to health care. We will be watching with interest what happens in Manitoba. We already have a freeze over there on hospital construction and a freeze on hospital budgets and we will see whether or not they will go further.

The government of Ontario is offering an increase in hospital budgets, this year's are 4 per cent, 4 per cent in Tory Ontario, 4 per cent in wealthy Ontario, the same Tory government which allows INCO to take \$50 million a year in profits. You and I know by looking at the record in province after province, the Tories simply do not exhibit any interest in health care when they have some opportunity to do something about it.

I ask you to look at the record in Ontario and look at the record in Alberta. Compare the wealth of those provinces with our province and ask yourself whether or not that record of a 4 per cent increase in hospital budgets is an acceptable record for a province which is wealthy, and supposedly concerned about health care.

The Tories in Saskatchewan are following in the same line. The member for Thunder Creek is a well known advocate of deterrent fees. Other members of the Legislature have called for deterrent fees. They would slash by two-thirds the benefits of our drug program. The finest and fairest comprehensive drug program in Canada, indeed in North America, would they undermine if that party came to power.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Lakeview talked a good deal about wage and price control, inflation. He said we have inflation still with us. I thought inflation had been wrestled to the ground a couple of times by his federal leader. The member for Lakeview indicated that somehow the failure of the federal Liberal government to come to grips

with the real problems of our economy, could be visited upon the government of Saskatchewan and could be solved by us cutting telephone rates. I think that everyone knows, everyone in this country knows that the federal government has failed to manage our economy properly and that no amount of attempting to shift the blame will in any way remove from the shoulders of the Liberal Party their responsibility for the mismanagement of our economy.

For the first 10 months of 1977, the national unemployment rate has risen to more than 8 per cent of the labor force. This is the highest level since the dark days of the depression. It is an intolerable level for a rich country like Canada. And I want to say that our government proposes to continue to act, to do what is in our power to combat unemployment. And this will mean, it will mean indeed spending money, and I know members opposite will call for us to remedy unemployment and cut budgets. That is not possible, they know that is not possible but they will call for it nonetheless.

In the good years we set aside money to be used when things were less good, things are now less good in Canada. There is the risk of unemployment in this province, that must be acknowledged. It must be acknowledged that there is the risk of rising unemployment and it is the obligation of our government to take such steps as are open to us.

Mr. Speaker, the figures of unemployment are even worse than they appear because they apply very unevenly to the labor force. Some parts of the country, and I think particularly the Maritimes, have disastrous unemployment levels. And certain age groups suffer more. The unemployment of young people between 15 and 24 years old is nearly 15 per cent in Canada. That means a large number of people who are not learning job skills, are losing some of their most productive years. We've seen the Canadian dollar drop to its lowest level in many years. This is not in response to separatism. It is in response to the international community and their assessment of the high economic facts in Canada. Our trade deficit has now broken all records. Consumer spending in Canada has started to decline. Our manufacturing industry is in trouble. Sixteen per cent of all industrial plants and equipment in Canada is now idle. Our gross national product, that figure which we use to measure growth, has fallen during three of the last four quarters. Members opposite attempted to attribute the unemployment to the nationalization of industry. Nothing could be more spurious. The old line governments in the Atlantic provinces are not talking about nationalization of industry. Indeed, they are still talking about the resource giveaway and even in the face of resource giveaways, unemployment is higher there than anywhere else in Canada.

In the meantime, we continue to suffer from regular increases in the cost of living. Federal wage and price controls have had very little effect on inflation. They have had very little effect on inflation. We moved in with the federal government in October of 1975. We were prepared to give that program a chance. If they had moved to control not only wages, but also prices in a firm and resolute manner, that program would have worked. Instead they decided that they would embark upon a program which as it developed was primarily a program of controlling incomes and only secondarily a program of controlling prices. They were unable to convince working people that they were not the butt of the program. They were unable to convince working people of that, and as a result public confidence was eroded. And because public confidence was eroded the program did not work and is not working.

I think that members opposite are suggesting that the polls indicate that the people would like to have wage and price control. I am sure that people would like to have

prices controlled but I am equally sure that they have no confidence in the government of Ottawa to control prices. They have no confidence in that government to control prices, nor do we, nor do we. Last March the federal Minister of Finance predicted that the real growth for the year 1977 would reach 4 per cent. Last month Mr. Chrétien said it wouldn't be 4 per cent, but it would be 2 per cent. Even the federal government knows that something is wrong. Saskatchewan is part of Canada and these failures do affect our province. We will not be able to avoid all the economic difficulties of the rest of the country. The price of goods we sell will largely be determined elsewhere and so will the price of the goods we buy. But as a province we can take some action ourselves. We in the prairies know very well that bad times follow good times, and good times follow bad times, and we have a cyclical economy and so it has been a policy of our government to save money in good years so that we can spend it in bad years and that we've done, and we've done by starting in the good years. Lots of people talk about cyclical budgeting but they always want to start when the need for spending arises, and not when the need for saving arises. We started the other way — we started in the good years and we saved some money, and that is simply good housekeeping. I know that members opposite believe that governments should not run government surpluses in good years, and should not run government deficits in bad years. They believe the government should not attempt to influence the economy and if people are unemployed that's just their tough luck. But that is not the philosophy of our government. We believe that in times of high employment we ought to try to save, and we did, and we believe that if unemployment stalks this province, we should act to do what we can to see that that unemployment is mitigated, and that we will do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will spend money to create employment, to create buying power, and will make no apology for it. This policy will also compensate to some degree for the difficulties which we are experiencing in agriculture.

Members opposite were making very clear that when the agricultural economy goes down our provincial fortunes go down, and they are right, and when the agricultural economy is buoyant our provincial fortunes are buoyant, and they are right again. Accordingly we should act during the good times to lay aside something for the bad times. We have done that and we intend indeed to do what we can to mitigate the rigors of unemployment.

We are facing, on the agricultural front, lower prices for grain, still inadequate prices for livestock, and we are facing the fact that unemployment (or at least recession) is being imported into our province willy-nilly from outside this province. Into the teeth of this double blow of reduced farm prices and recession elsewhere, in the teeth of this double whammy we have still been able to keep up our employment rates so that our unemployment rates are the lowest in Canada, and I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that is no small achievement.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — In the last 12 months we have been able to create 14,000 or 15,000 new jobs in the face of very considerable agricultural adversity, and that's no small achievement.

There are many indications to show that the great prosperity we achieved since the dark days of 1970-71 has been quite outstanding. The people of Saskatchewan don't need

tables that tell them what has happened in this province since 1970 or '71; they don't need statistics, they can look around them. They can see people pouring back into this province from Alberta, pouring back into this province from Manitoba, pouring back into this province from British Columbia. Members opposite chuckle, members opposite say that this is not true, but I tell them that each month I obtain figures of who has come into this province, or at least who has registered under our health plans. We do not know who leaves, but we do know who comes in, and we know where they come from, and we know how old they are. I tell you that during the last three or four years there has been a steady influx of people, the greatest number coming from the province of Alberta, the second greatest number from the province of British Columbia, and most of these people are either in their twenties or under five years old. That is a very interesting group of figures because it means that we are attracting back to this province many of the people who left when this province was managed by old-line free-enterprise economic doctrines.

I regret to say that the greatest exodus of people in this province was not during the 1930s, but 10 years ago . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — . . . when the doctrines of free enterprise held full sway and people had to leave this province if they were to have any prospective employment.

Let's give you a few figures just to indicate what things were like, and it is not so long ago, 1970 is not that long ago.

Interjection by an hon. member

MR. BLAKENEY: — Just any year but the one you left office.

Mr. Speaker, the number of houses built in this province in 1970 was 1,500. Last year the figure was not 1,500 but 13,000.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Seven and a half times increase — 750 per cent. Clearly, clearly the credit does not go to any one thing, to any one government, to any one event, but I say to you that the programs of our government which have led to the building of thousands of houses in smaller centres of this province, smaller centres which had been written off by the previous government, have contributed in a major way to this amazing increase in house construction.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I can think of dozens of little communities where there was no house building and no prospect of any house building, and no government support for house building, and I say to you that those rules have been changed, houses are being built in tiny places, places which members opposite had believed would not live but in fact would die, believed that because they had no confidence in the future of rural Saskatchewan, I say to you that the doctrine of centralization that they promoted at that time was a doctrine adverse to the future of rural Saskatchewan. We reversed it, we built the houses, we put in natural gas, we built small nursing homes in those small communities. They are now thriving, and that's why the number of houses is so great.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I could give you any number of other indices, but the point I am making is that 1976 was a good year, but because of the double whammy I mentioned 1977 may well be not as great a year of advance. Nevertheless, 1977 is a good year. We are having a high level of employment, we are having a relative level of prosperity, with careful planning and sensible policies, and with the expenditure of some money we saved in the bumper years we believe we can keep that level of prosperity continuing.

Not everywhere, but I believe our record will compare very well with the record of any government of any other political persuasion in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, much of this prosperity is because of our resource policy. I will deal at some length tomorrow with our resource policies.

Yes, members opposite I know will chortle if by any chance we find that Saskatchewan people, Alberta people and British Columbia people do not have the power to control their own resources, if that should turn out to be the law. But I say to you, that if that should be the case we will take all steps open to us to see that our rights to those resources are protected.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Speech from the Throne sets out our position with great clarity. My government believes that Saskatchewan people wish their government to take all appropriate steps to preserve and protect their right to develop mineral resources for their benefit and for the benefit of future generations of Saskatchewan people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — Members opposite, members of both parties opposite will soon, I suspect, have an opportunity to vote on whether they agree with that proposition in the Throne Speech and they may well, for all I know, have an opportunity to state where they stand on this issue of whether Saskatchewan people should have the benefit of their resources developed for their benefit.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — I tell them that our policy will remain unchanged. Our policy of developing Saskatchewan resources for Saskatchewan people will remain unchanged. Their policy of saying that those resources should be developed by multinational corporations may, or may not be changed. We will find out.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. BLAKENEY: — We will find out when they vote for the Throne Speech, and we may well find out on other votes in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

November 22, 1977

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a good deal more to say, and accordingly I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

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