

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**March 16, 1979**

The Assembly met at 10:00 a.m.

On the Orders of the Day

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to this Assembly, a group of 12 or 13 students from the Saar School at Kronau. They are Grades 4 to Grade 6, I believe. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Gieger, and the bus driver, Mr. Eberle.

Now, we have had the good fortune, Mr. Speaker, of having students from Kronau in the past. Kronau, as most of the members know, is one of the real hotbeds of junior curling. It has one of the finest junior curling programs in the province of Saskatchewan. At one time a community the size of Kronau had both the junior girls and the junior boys champions in the same year. It is a community that is attaining a fair degree of prominence as a result of its curling.

I know that we all welcome the students. They represent their community with pride, and I hope they have an enjoyable day and an educational day.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Regina North East):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and to the members of the legislature a group of 25 students. They are Grade 8 students from the St. Gregory School in Regina North East, the Regina northeast part of the constituency in the Uplands area.

The students are accompanied by their teacher, Judy Cooper and their principal, Ted Zurowski. They are seated in the Speaker's gallery. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the students and express the hope that this morning they will have an enjoyable stay for a brief period with us, and that it is going to assist them in their social studies. On behalf of the members of the Assembly, I extend a warm welcome to the students.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, while I am on my feet, I would like to also extend a welcome to Mr. John Rodriguez, who is seated in the Speaker's gallery. He is a member of parliament, representing the New Democratic Party, from the Nickel Belt area of Ontario. He is visiting Regina. I would like Mr. Rodriguez to stand and be acknowledged. I hope he has a good day in Regina.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. R. KATZMAN (Rosthern):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce through you and to the House, a group of Grade 11 and Grade 12 students in the east gallery, from Hague. They kept me up rather late last evening, watching them play one of their games.

I hope they will enjoy their day in the House today, and I will be chatting with them later.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

## QUESTIONS

### Transfer of Weather Office

**MR. P. ROUSSEAU (Regina South):** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman). Is it true, Mr. Minister, that your government approved the transfer of the Regina weather office to Winnipeg?

**HON. G.R. BOWERMAN (Minister of the Environment):** — No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I have a letter from the Department of Environment Canada and I shall quote from the letter that states:

The relocation of the forecast function from Regina to Winnipeg has been discussed with and agreed to by the Saskatchewan government.

How do you explain this letter?

**MR. BOWERMAN:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't have the letter at hand. Perhaps the member could table it. Maybe I could get a copy of it. I don't know. Maybe a copy has been forwarded to the Department of the Environment in Saskatchewan. I'm not sure. But, Mr. Speaker, the transfer of weather facilities and weather reporting facilities is a matter for the federal government to decide upon. There have been discussions; it has been aired publicly in Saskatchewan. The Department of Agriculture was first involved and subsequently the Department of the Environment was. There is, as I understand, going to be retained in Saskatchewan, a small group of weather reporting staff — one senior executive person plus some additional persons. But I can't account for the decisions of the federal government.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Did your government not, in fact, approve the Maybank report?

**MR. BOWERMAN:** — I have consulted with my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Kaeding), who was administering the relationship between the federal government and ourselves with respect to this. He said — I'm reporting the Minister of Agriculture saying — that the report was received. There was no approval or acceptance of the report in the sense that we agreed with it.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, that we did, as the province of Saskatchewan will know, offer in excess of \$200,000 to retain the weather forecasting service in Saskatchewan. We think we did all of those things which were in our jurisdiction and power to influence the federal government to retain the weather forecasting service here. Unfortunately, they've decided not to go that route.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### Responsibility of Environment Department Officials

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — New question to the Minister of the Environment. Would

the Minister of the Environment undertake to check with his officials, based on the track record of that department in not informing the minister, to see whether in fact, some officials may not have agreed, as indicated by the Department of Environment Canada? It is a rather severe, serious allegation made by the Department of Environment Canada in light of public statements by the government opposite.

**MR. BOWERMAN:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm certainly prepared to discuss with the officials. I think the reference by the member for Qu'Appelle is rather a cheap and low shot at the officials of the Department of the Environment. I know that they like to badger public servants. I know that they like to, on occasions as I recorded in the House last night. . . they even suggested at one time prior to October 18 that they were going to fire a whole number of public servants because they didn't like the way they approached things and did their job. But with respect to the member's question, yes I'll consult with the officials of the Department of the Environment, and I have no fear that they will not report to me the discussions which they've had, or the communications which they have had with the federal government.

### **Amending of Expropriation Procedure Act**

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — New question, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure I will obtain the apology from the Minister once he has talked to the officials.

I'd like to direct the first question to the Deputy Premier, the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow). You've indicated recently that the department is considering amending legislation to the Expropriation Procedure Act because of the difficulties that Sask Tel has run into in attempting to acquire land in downtown Regina for the Cornwall development. I am advised that in fact it's much more than being considered, that you have in fact amending legislation. My question, Mr. Speaker, is the problems that Sask Tel, if I may explain quickly, are that requirement of the Expropriation Procedure Act is that the expropriating authority make reasonable endeavour to acquire by purchase. Is that the specific provision and is that the area that the department is considering amending?

**HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General):** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I ever indicated that there were amendments to the Expropriations Procedures Act related to Sask Tel. I recall being asked by members of the press and I think my response was to the effect that no decision by government in this regard has been taken, and I think that is the position. I think with respect to the substance of the question that the hon. member asks, namely, what legislation if and when it surfaces will show, really has to await the introduction of the bill. I think it's a fair position for me to take that until there is a bill introduced and read a first time and put on the table wherein you can draw your conclusions as to what that bill, or any other bill if that bill surfaces, does, is the correct way to proceed in the House and I, accordingly, will refuse to make any comments on legislation which may or may not surface.

**MR. LANE:** — Well, will the Attorney General not admit that the statutory requirement that an expropriating authority make a reasonable endeavour to acquire the property by purchase before it just steps in and grabs someone's land is a highly advisable practice, and a highly advisable right, and that tampering with that right would, in all likelihood, affect every landowner in the province of Saskatchewan, and that to change that very position is a highly dangerous direction for the government to take.

**MR. ROMANOW:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I personally believe that this is a desirable

procedure. I might point out to the member, while I don't have any documentation in front of me, I believe that if he does a check of other provinces, particularly the province of Ontario, such similar provision does not exist. That's not an argument for following the province of Ontario, since I think that we make a good point of doing the reverse of what they do very often, and that's pretty good political ground to be on.

Being serious, most provinces don't have that requirement. I believe that it's a worthwhile requirement, but that's not the full aspect of the problem. Having a requirement's one side. The other side of the problem is, if an expropriation body fails according to law to live up to that requirement and expropriates, does it invalidate the expropriation? That's another side of the problem, because it may very well require that there's some form of extra compensation for not having lived up to that requirement, but does not invalidate the actual act of expropriation. I think that's basically the way the other provinces are heading their legislative direction in this particular area. While I think there's a lot of merit to it, I think the problem is a little more complex than simply saying that concept is good or bad.

**MR. LANE:** — I'd like to direct a supplementary to the minister responsible for the downtown redevelopment. I believe it's the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek). You have engaged a company called Chartwood Developments Limited I believe, a company, on our latest check about two days, still not registered in the province of Saskatchewan. We have been unsuccessful in finding one other project, anywhere in Canada anyway, that Chartwood Developments has developed. Would you not think that it would be a more preferable practice for your government to take rather than engage some newly formed out of province company without any track record, to use local developers and have at least given the local developers an opportunity to develop a project of this magnitude, and obtain the benefits therefrom?

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance):** — Mr. Speaker, in the case of the Cornwall Centre, certainly during the period of planning for development, there were no local groups that made any offers for development in the area.

Mr. Speaker, the initial plans were for the Sask Tel government insurance to undertake the development. We had lengthy discussions with the city of Regina. The downtown area is in bad shape; we've been assembling land. We did explore the possibilities of private developers; we had a developer that assisted us. It was finally decided to invite Chartwood. We've had negotiations with various department store people. Eaton's made an offer and they are certainly a company that knows how to run a department store. We believe they will add a great deal to that development. It's going to be in the order of a \$15 million department store that they're going to be putting up there, and Chartwood are going to be putting up, in conjunction with the Sask Tel and government insurance, the balance of the retail development. I am not sure whether they have registered in Saskatchewan. In the case of Chartwood, they are a company that has had — or certainly the principals have had — a great deal of experience in shopping centre development. Now they were first of all the people that were there — had the Cambridge group and sold the Cambridge development. We are familiar with the people they have and at the present time they are developing in Canada a number of new projects.

### **Chartwood not Employing Local Firms**

**MR. J.G. LANE (Qu'Appelle):** — A new question then to the minister. The use of the words 'invited Chartwood' seems to exclude the fact that you invited any local

developers. Chartwood is telling local businessmen in Regina that they intend to use out-of-province architects and they intend to use out-of-province leasing agents. They are not giving the local business community an opportunity to participate. I say that advisedly, knowing full well that if a local architect was chosen, we all know who it would be. But I would still prefer that at least the NDP designer would have the opportunity of making the money. Would the minister not agree that he has an obligation to make it clear to this out-of-province developer that he is insisting, as the provincial authority, that in fact they use local people who have the skills and the abilities to handle this project, rather than just divorcing himself from the position and saying, we just found these people, we invited them and give them the chance to make all the big money on it?

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, in the case of the architects and other consultants I can assure the hon. member that in the case of the Sask Tel building it's a local architect that is developing it . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . that's part of the complex. You can't divorce the Sask Tel building from that nine acre development that's going to be taking place. Sask Tel is part of it. Certainly we have a local architect in the case of the Saskatchewan Telecommunications Building and that's the biggest component of that project. In the case of Eaton's, they have their own architects. In the case of Chartwood, they too have their architects but they assure us they will also be contracting with local architects and employing quite a few local consultants and architects to do the supervisory work while the initial planning is going to be done by their architects at their head office.

### **Bill C-42 — Energy Supply Emergency Act, 1979**

**MR. R. ANDREW (Kindersley):** — A question to the Premier. With regard to Bill C-42, presently before the Parliament of Canada, relating to the Energy Supply Emergency Act, 1979, I take it the Premier is aware that that legislation apparently gives sweeping powers to the federal government to control and regulate the energy supply during an emergency situation. In light of that fact it would appear that the federal government potentially has the right to interfere with a provincial right. My question to the Premier is, has the Premier made any representation to the federal government with regard to that legislation?

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):** — Mr. Speaker, I am not certain that I have made it specifically with reference to C-42. We certainly have made it with reference to legislation approximately like that; the nuclear bill is the same. I have recently had some correspondence with the Prime Minister, within the last week or two, with respect to what we call intrusions into the resource area which will be the substance of C-42. We as four western Premiers will be meeting in 10 days in Prince George, British Columbia and continuing to make the representations we have made as four western Premiers over a period of some years now, about the federal operations in areas of provincial jurisdiction — intrusions as they are called. We, in our judgment, make a better case by putting our case from four Premiers rather than from one. This is not to suggest that we have not made representations with respect to the specific bill you referred to. I would need to check. I am simply outlining what we have done consistently.

Let me be clear; in my judgment the Government of Canada has powers under the peace, order and good government clause, to act in an emergency and there's nothing we can do to stop them. So it doesn't much matter what representations we make. With respect to the use of that power in the area of resources, our position on that is abundantly clear. Whether or not we have made a representation with respect to that

bill at this time and under that name, we have certainly made, in the last four weeks, representations to the Prime Minister about intrusions in the resource area.

**MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Opposition):** — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In light of the upcoming potential federal election, in the light of the representations made by the government of the province of Alberta on Bill C-42, in the light of the representations made by the Government of Ontario on Bill C-42 and in the light of the fact that only the province of Quebec seems to be in favour of Bill C-42, would the Premier not think it absolutely essential that the Government of Saskatchewan make a specific representation on Bill C-42? This would tell not only the parliament in Ottawa and the present government in Ottawa but all the people of Canada — not just on the past history and where he stood before, but on that specific piece of legislation — that the government and the people of the province of Saskatchewan will not be subjected to having their resources overwritten by the parliament in Ottawa as a direct result of that bill.

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I do not feel that a specific representation, at a specific time adds anything to the position taken by the Government of Saskatchewan with respect to the protection of our resources. With all deference, I do not think we need much advice from the official Opposition on taking a stand on behalf of Saskatchewan on the protection of our resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — They have consistently suggested that we should take steps which would have these resources, in effect, be directed towards the resource companies and not the people of Saskatchewan. For our part we think our position on resource protection and on legislation with respect to resource protection is clearly stated and clearly in the minds of the people of Saskatchewan. We don't need to impress them. With respect to advising the federal government where we stand, they don't need much more assistance either, having a regard to the exchanges we have had in the past.

**MR. COLLVER:** — A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Premier not agree that if he is silent on Bill C-42, the Emergency Powers Act — as the Premier well knows, we have supported him in his stand with reference to Saskatchewan resources in the past — would the Premier not agree that if he is silent on this bill it may be misconstrued by the people of Canada and by the Government of Canada that Saskatchewan is going soft on resources? Might it not also be misconstrued by the government in Ottawa and by the people in Canada, since the Premier is not taking a stand, having said that the powers already exist, in terms of peace, order and good government? What is the reason, then, for Bill C-42? Certainly the Premier is well aware that that same position has been put forward by the government in Edmonton, the government in Toronto and many other people in Canada. Why is the Premier remaining silent on this particular issue?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — Mr. Speaker, I simply don't believe that anyone in Canada is going to draw the conclusion that he says, that somehow the province of Saskatchewan has abandoned its position with respect to resources.

This particular bill is a successor to an earlier one, passed in 1974, in respect of which we had some comments to make at numerous federal-provincial conferences and in respect of which our position, I think, was stated with a great deal of clarity and understood very well across Canada.

I say the same with respect to the comments of the hon. member. It may be — and I would need to check the correspondence — the last long comment I have made to the Prime Minister on resources and their intrusions was about four months ago and it may well have included this bill. I am saying I don't recall that in specific terms, but if he is suggesting that anything we could say now would add one jot or tittle to the knowledge that the federal government has of our position with respect to resources, he is quite wrong . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . the word is 'jot' or 'tittle', and for those who are not familiar with it, you can find it in the Oxford English dictionary.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

### **Rise in Teenage Pregnancies**

**MR. G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley):** — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Continuing Education. In light of the recent statistics published showing our shocking increase in teenage pregnancies and in view of a very good response, I should say, to community college courses, would the minister be prepared to suggest to the community colleges that they provide a course for interested parents in how to counsel their children in sex education?

**HON. H.H. ROLFES (Minister of Continuing Education):** — Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me say that I am also concerned as the member for Indian Head-Wolseley is about the number of teenage pregnancies in Saskatchewan. Let me, however, say that the way the community colleges are set up, they are completely at freedom to establish any particular courses that the particular community desires and they are doing so. Having said that also, Mr. Speaker, I think it should be drawn to the member's attention that many of the school boards presently have under advisement a particular program on family life education and my understanding is that 16 to 20 school boards have implemented a program now. I would hope that we could convince them to continue to expand at a much more rapid rate so that we can make people more aware of family life education and their responsibilities as parents and young teenagers in this regard. Certainly, I will take it under advisement. I would however, say that his particular suggestion is not in keeping with the former member of Rosetown-Elrose who advised us very strongly last year in this House to cut back on community college programs.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to see that the minister shares my concern and also, being a teacher I think you must realize, Mr. Minister, that the implementation of sex education in the schools has certain problems regarding the view of parents and the reluctance of some staff members to hold this. I do believe you have some influence on the community colleges; you can suggest programs and again, I repeat, would you please give this consideration, Mr. Minister.

**MR. ROLFES:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to turn a question back to the member in his very important position — as I also was a principal of an elementary school, I know that principals are very influential on directors of education in school boards — did he present such a proposal to his particular board and . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order, order.

### **Highway Markings**

**MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current):** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the

Minister of Highways. As drivers in the southern portion of the province of Saskatchewan are being faced with a persistent continuance of winter storms and blowing snow, when does the minister intend to properly mark our centre lines and shoulder lines with a reflective apparatus to allow safe driving in winter conditions?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the member that we are continually marking our highway system. We have upgraded our marking system and marked more miles of highway system last year than ever before. Mr. Speaker, we have had reports from this member before about multiple accidents that never occurred. I wish this member would just simply tell us where he would like us. We get these reports all the time. We ask people. We have a management district in Swift Current. He is free to go there any time he chooses and point out to people where those dangers are if he accepted his responsibility.

**MR. HAM:** — Mr. Speaker, I am exceedingly disappointed in the minister's answer. Mr. Minister, are you not aware that in many states and provinces on the continent there are reflective apparatus and reflective lights installed on centre lines. Where in Saskatchewan are these installed now, and when will you install them?

**MR. KRAMER:** — If the member is talking about a glass bead process (if I may answer the question, Mr. Speaker) it is impossible to use that particular process in Saskatchewan because of the continual need to remove snow and ice from the highways. They would be torn up as fast as we installed them.

### **ADJOURNED DEBATE**

### **BUDGET DEBATE**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of Mr. Smishek (Minister of Finance) that this Assembly do now resolve itself into a Committee of Finance.

**HON. E.C. WHELAN (Minister of Consumer Affairs):** — Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that in my years of experience in this House (I've seen other Speakers; this is my twenty-third session, I believe) I feel you are as good a Speaker as this House has had during my term of office. Mr. Speaker, we have had some good Speakers during that time and I want to congratulate you on your re-election as Speaker of this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, I want to express to you on behalf of the people in my constituency, who knew your mother, our sincere sympathy in your loss. Your mother was personable, alert, able, influential, and aggressive on behalf of the CCF and the New Democratic Party. It was my good fortune to work with her in election campaigns. I considered your mother a good politically astute individual and a good friend of mine.

Today, Mr. Speaker, our desks are decorated with the shamrock of St. Patrick. To the people in this province, to the Irish people, best of luck on St. Patrick's day. As an Irishman I know well the qualities of the Irish. They are responsible, witty, charming, intelligent, hard-working, forceful, likeable, and in addition, Mr. Speaker, they are the most modest of all the people who make up the population of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as I take part in the budget debate may I say that as a member of the



Treasury Board I know that many hours are spent by the minister, the Budget Bureau, the Treasury Board and by the staffs of the department to put together this budget. I want to pay tribute to them and to the minister for their ability to scrutinize effectively, efficiently, completely and constantly the expenditures of this province.

Under my jurisdiction are departments, corporations and agencies. I intend, Mr. Speaker, to report to this legislature and to the people of this province, briefly on their operation. First the Department of Consumer Affairs. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Consumer Affairs has a staff of 50 people or so. They have two main offices — one in Regina and a small office in Saskatoon. Each year the consumer affairs people handle an increasing number of complaints. Whether it is in administration or public information, they turn out more work with a small staff than probably any similar staff in any government. The department administers bingo and lottery licensing, operates a Trades Practices Division, a Licensing Division, Complaints and Inquiries Division, a Planning and Policy Analysis Branch, resource centre, information division and an education branch.

Mr. Speaker, this department is responsible for The Direct Sellers Act, The Motor Dealers Act, The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act, The Collection Agents Act, The Unsolicited Goods and Credit Cards Act, The Credit Reporting Agencies Act, The Sale of Training Courses Act, The Pyramid Franchises Act, The Auctioneers Act and The Consumer Products Warranties Act. At the present time the new warranties act is being discussed with the business community. It has been proclaimed and is being administered on behalf of consumers who are protected because of the warranty that is legislated and is automatically assumed when a transaction takes place between a consumer and retailer, wholesaler or manufacturer. The written or expressed warranty sections are not proclaimed as yet, Mr. Speaker. They are being delayed to give manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers an opportunity to examine written warranties and to comply with the new legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to pay special tribute to the Planning and Policy Analysis Branch. They have prepared a number of papers on behalf of the consumer, particularly a provincial position paper on the federal competition bill, by means of an interdepartmental committee. The Planning and Policy Analysis Branch worked with the Departments of Agriculture and Health in preparing the provincial submission to the National Food Policy Conference in February 1978.

Mr. Speaker, at the present time we are organizing meetings to make representations to the federal government regarding bingos and lotteries and also examining the possibility of legislation as a result of circulation of a White Paper on trade practices. Our experience indicates clearly that the regular businessman does not offend and there is no need for trade-practices legislation because of his long-established procedures. However, there is a group of people who misrepresent, who take advantage of the elderly and the innocent. Trade-practices legislation such as there exists in Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia is a necessity in Saskatchewan. I look forward to its introduction, Mr. Speaker, in this House.

Let me turn to the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office. SGIO began in 1945 with a \$12,000 loan from the provincial government. SGIO is different. It is more effective and more sensitive than any other insurance company operating anywhere. Why do I say SGIO (Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office) is different? It is different because its head office is in Saskatchewan. It's different because it builds service centres for the convenience of the public, and because it has the support of

only Saskatchewan people. SGIO is different because it hires Saskatchewan citizens — 1,300 employees who work for SGIO by and large were born and trained in this province.

SGIO has the most effective agency operation I know of. There are 514 agencies. SGIO registers motor vehicles. There are approximately 500 outlets that issue motor licences. SGIO operates its own salvage depots — nine of them — and returns \$450,000 to the people of the province as a result.

In addition to supplying 20 per cent of the parts used in repairing damaged vehicles, SGIO has a good working relationship with the employees through their union.

SGIO operates an experimental centre to improve on the method of repairing motor vehicles and to study weaknesses in their design. In the past four years, SGIO has constructed new service centres at Saskatoon and North Battleford, and at Regina opened a centre for trucks, heavy equipment and commercial vehicles. The corporation, Mr. Speaker, has opened for service to the public centres at Weyburn, Meadow Lake, Lloydminster and Tisdale, and has completed, or has under construction, new service centres at Tisdale, Moose Jaw and Swift Current. The head office building, the highest and most modern building in Saskatchewan, is nearing completion in the city of Regina.

Members opposite criticize the most modern structure being erected here in western Canada — the new head office building has many progressive features but, particularly notable is the saving of energy in its operation. It's a most noteworthy feature because, for air-conditioning and for heating, it will save energy. Features in the new building are the most advanced in this respect of probably any building in this country. Let me say this, the philosophy enunciated by the members opposite, which is as outdated as the Bennett Buggy, Mr. Speaker, would have us building these buildings at the intersection of Yonge and King Street in Toronto — 50 or 60 stories high. There would be no service centres, insurance would be administered from eastern Canada on a take it or leave it basis with no assurance of proper coverage. I want to say this to members opposite, and I want to say it most emphatically, the buildings we build are justified because the people support SGIO; they are justified on a decentralization plan because the people need them, and, Mr. Speaker, they are not being built in Toronto. They are built here. They will be used by Saskatchewan people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHELAN:** — Aside from alleviating the unemployment situation, the employees who work in these buildings will be Saskatchewan people, and the return from the operations of SGIO, Mr. Speaker, will be invested in Saskatchewan. SGIO belongs to Saskatchewan. SGIO is different and, Mr. Speaker, we're proud of it.

Mr. Speaker, SGIO is advancing at a rapid rate. The corporation gives leadership in every area of insurance and technique, and management and staff are trained and sensitive. Four of the executive officers have between them 114 years experience in the insurance industry. I want to pay tribute to the directors in the corporation too, to the officers and to the staff, because there's an increase in policies written — an increase of 6 or 7 per cent each year — there are more claims. Last year we handled more (and I'm estimating the figure) than 280,000 claims. The total number of letters received on my desk objecting to the manner in which claims are handled represents about one-quarter of one per cent of the total. In passing, may I tell this House that each adjuster

handles on an average (1978), 1,250 claims per year. This year, Mr. Speaker, the general insurance business will pay the highest dividend ever paid to our central agency, the Crown Investments Corporation.

Beginning in 1977, SGIO took over the motor vehicle registration in the province. Today, in this country, we are the only province that administers and sells the insurance coverage, the motor registration and the driver's licence in the 12 regular months of the year. When we began the operation, there were thousands of files in arrears. It was a difficult and trying time for the staff. At the present time, Mr. Speaker, files are current.

Complaints regarding operations indicate clearly that the staff solve the administrative problems. They have registered the vehicles, they have changed the wheelbase formula, they have met the demands of the public, and they have tackled the toughest administrative situation, and won, Mr. Speaker, this is typical of SGIO.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHELAN:** — Mr. Speaker, in addition to insurance and vehicle registration, SGIO administers the Provincial Disaster and Financial Assistance program. In 1975-'76 and 1977, it dealt with flood, wind and hail catastrophes.

Mr. Speaker, the board of directors of SGIO is made up of two cabinet ministers, two homemakers — one rural and one urban, a firefighter, a businessman, a police sergeant, a lawyer, a professional auditor, two farmers — one of them the chief of an Indian reserve. The board is divided into committees — audit, safety, and executive. The expansion of facilities, Mr. Speaker, the decentralization program, the construction of the head office building, a record shattering dividend, and the recent increase in coverage and general insurance all tell the story. This is a successful, effective, well-managed and sensitive organization. I am proud to be associated with these people.

We say that SGIO is different. Let us turn to some of the many progressive achievements of this Saskatchewan corporation. SGIO achievements include the safety program, recognized across North America, Mr. Speaker, designed to convince you of and illustrate the need for seat belts. The road show, Mr. Speaker, which has appeared at fairs and exhibitions across the province, is designed to test the driving ability of Saskatchewan people. In addition there are defensive driving courses, grants to municipalities for safety programs, safety coloring books for children, handbooks for teenaged drivers, and safety bulletins with many subscribers. Furthermore, safety representatives in the field work with teachers, municipalities, boards of trade, and sponsor a poster and essay contest which involved thousands of young people.

These are, Mr. Speaker, all a part of the program to make Saskatchewan people safety conscious. The SGIO program is most effective.

In addition we paid taxes, Mr. Speaker, to municipalities to the tune of \$446,000 in 1978 and general insurance and compulsory insurance premium taxes amounted to \$4,565,000 to the government's consolidated fund in the year 1978. We have acquired assets, Mr. Speaker, in the period from 1975 to the present. They have increased at an amazing rate from \$96.9 million in four years to \$180 million. Our investments in this province on behalf of the people who insure with SGIO (Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office) have increased from \$52 million to \$110 million in four short years.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHELAN:** — If we divide the number of vehicles we registered under the compulsory plan (AAIA) Automobile Accident Insurance Act, into the total insurance that is paid, the average is \$115 per vehicle. This, Mr. Speaker, is the lowest rate in Canada. Because we have a good agency system, because we have income from investments in a salvage operation, we are able to provide insurance at this low cost to motor vehicle operations in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, because of our loss prevention program, effective re-insurance policy and because there was no province-wide disaster this year we have had a successful year in general insurance. This means we are able to provide extra coverage in four or five areas. Effective April 1 regardless of age, sex or marital status, if the driving record is good and has been established, everyone will pay the same rate for the package policy. Previously there was a different rate for the young male driver and if he operated the family car there was an added charge on the package policy for the family car.

### **WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. WHELAN:** — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might interrupt for just a moment to introduce to you and to all members of the Assembly 120 Grade 12 students from O'Neil High School in my constituency. They are seated in the west gallery with their vice-principal, Garth Schuett, their history teacher, Harry Berezny, social studies teacher, Jim Hudson. We welcome them and hope that their stay with us will be pleasant and informative.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

The Assembly resumed the budget debate.

**MR. WHELAN:** — Mr. Speaker, the new insurance program will recognize that all drivers are equal and that all drivers are good until they have an accident or are assessed points. Then their insurance rate will be increased. If there is a continuous bad driving record the maximum insurance that could be charged to this type of driver, together with the registration fee, could run as high as \$1,000 before he would be allowed to drive again.

The second increased coverage will be for all those buying dwelling or personal insurance. If they are out of Canada, visiting another country and this means any country, Mr. Speaker, they will have an additional \$10,000 medical coverage in case of an emergency.

Mr. Speaker, there will be a reduction in premiums for those who install proper smoke detectors beginning June 1. The smoke detector will have to be ULC (Underwriters' Laboratories of Canada) or CSA (Canadian Standards Association), approved and installed in each and every living area. There will be a 5 per cent reduction in the insurance premium. Finally for farmers, Mr. Speaker, there will be additional coverage in the farm pact to cover situations where wind storms, floods, or some disaster deprives the farmer of the use of his machinery. The cost of renting the machinery in this set of circumstances will be borne by the insurance company.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, for the first time in the history of Saskatchewan insurance, we will insure farm buildings to their full value that are on a cement foundation or if they're a certain age. This is the first time this has happened in the insurance business in this

country. This extension coverage is aimed, in the case of smoke detectors, at saving human lives, and in the case of automobile insurance, at providing full coverage at a fair rate. This is possible because we've had a successful year in the general insurance business, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHELAN:** — Let me turn, for a moment, to the Automobile Accident Insurance Act. Mr. Speaker, this is the insurance that is administered by SGIO (Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office) and purchased with your automobile license. Last year, we reduced rates; for example, private passenger vehicles were reduced 7 per cent. SGIO package policy was reduced \$5. This year, although the number of claims has remained static and our accident record is better, the average cost of repairing a vehicle has increased as a result of increase costs of parts and materials. In some instances, these parts come from countries beyond Canada and because of the Canadian dollar situation they are very expensive. We are fortunate, we think, that the rate for 84 per cent of all vehicles in the province will remain the same. That will cover the reduction for last year until June 1 and beginning June 1, the rate will be the same for 84 per cent who are covered under AAIA.

However, some categories of vehicles — 16 per cent of the total, rates on approximately 118,000 vehicles — will be increased. It costs approximately 20 cents to administer \$1 worth of insurance if SGIO is to break even. This means that to meet insurance costs we should spend approximately 80 cents of the insurance dollar, otherwise, we'd go in the hole. The categories of vehicles where rates are being increased are areas where we — and when I say we, I mean the corporation — are paying over 80 cents for claims out of each dollar. Categories where increases are being allocated include city buses, motor toboggans, commercial vehicles, public service vehicles, ambulances, u-drives, police cars, farm trucks over 11,000 pounds, commercial trailers, private trucks — these are trucks used for campers and for passenger conveyance — and a selected group of 20,000 private cars for which we have had a bad loss experience. Some examples of these cars are the BMW, the Fox, the Datsun 280, the Ford Bronco and Mustang, the IHC Scout, the Jaguar, the Mazda, Mercury Cougar, all of the MG models, the Opel, the Plymouth GTX and Roadrunner, the Selica Toyota and so forth. In every case these are vehicles where the claims cost is well in excess of 80 cents on the insurance dollar. Some increases should be more but we feel it is only reasonable to make these increases by stages. Using a 1975 vehicle for comparison and quoting the rate for Saskatchewan after the increase we find: In Saskatchewan a city bus would be \$268 a year; Calgary — \$506 a year; Manitoba — \$771 a year. A taxi cab in Saskatchewan — \$679; in Calgary — \$1,027; in Manitoba — \$912. City police in the city of Regina, for instance, or Saskatoon — \$210 after the increase; Calgary — \$742; Manitoba — \$502. Mr. Speaker, private trucks, a vehicle used for passenger service or used in driving back and forth to work, similar usage you would give a passenger car, in Saskatchewan the new rate will be \$142; in Calgary — \$338; in Manitoba — \$165. A farm truck over 11,000 pounds in the province of Saskatchewan — \$60; in Calgary — \$254; in Manitoba — \$83.

Mr. Speaker, let me emphasize the objective is to cover vehicles so that each category will stand on its own feet and so that the pay out on claims is not more than 80 cents on the insurance dollar. This means that drivers with a high-repair-cost car or a bad claims record will be asked to take the rate much closer to the actual pay out in each of their categories. The total income from these increases for the remainder of this year will be \$1,142,000.

Mr. Speaker, let me turn to the case for personal injury security insurance. I believe there is a need to cover almost immediately anyone injured in an automobile accident at a rate that will guarantee a reasonable income. We believe there should be a rehabilitation plan for anyone injured in an automobile accident. We feel, and we have advocated as a party and as a Crown corporation, that the scale of pay for the care of those injured should be based not on who is at fault but the need of the individual.

In the province of Quebec, where in March of last year they introduced a personal accident insurance policy, claims are dealt with by the government agency quickly and effectively in any set of circumstances.

Let me turn for a moment to Saskatchewan Minerals. Saskatchewan Minerals operates the sodium sulphate plants at Chaplin and Ingebrigt. The earnings from the operation of this corporation over the years dating back to 1948, total \$23 million. The market has recovered to some degree and this year we will return to the Crown Investments Corporation earnings of \$1,300,000. We are experimenting, Mr. Speaker, with the use of sodium sulphate for solar energy because of its qualities as a storage chemical.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. WHELAN:** — Mr. Speaker, there is a rapid increase, particularly among native people, in debt problems. Because of this the Provincial Mediation Board and the Department of Consumer Affairs will be working together to establish a debt counselling program.

The rentalsman, under my jurisdiction, has operated fairly effectively this year. In some communities, as a result of surveys, we will consider reducing the rental controls to a review system. We will be making an announcement in this regard as soon as the final decision has been made, Mr. Speaker.

I've tried to tell the House about the Department of Consumer Affairs, how it operates and its effectiveness. I reported to some degree, Mr. Speaker, about the successful operation this year of SGIO. I have touched on Sask minerals, the provincial mediation board, and the rentalsman's activities. There will be opportunities later on to discuss each of these more fully. All in all, Mr. Speaker, I think the province of Saskatchewan is fortunate to have management and staff in each of these organizations that provide excellent service. Each area where I operate except Sask minerals is extremely sensitive and constant adjudication of the manner in which the public accepts our programs is necessary. The employees adjudicate and make every effort to meet the needs of the public. The province of Saskatchewan is most fortunate to have these people working for them. Mr. Speaker, I will support the budget.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. F.J. THOMPSON (Athabasca):** — Mr. Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to take part in this budget debate. First I would like to add my congratulations to your appointment as Speaker of this Assembly. I would also like to congratulate the Minister of Finance (Mr. Smishek) on a well-planned and progressive budget.

Before I get into my speech, I want to congratulate the member for Shellbrook, Mr. Bowerman who was the first minister of DNS (Department of Northern Saskatchewan). Ted Bowerman brought DNS from its infancy to what it is today. . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THOMPSON:** — . . . what I consider one of the finest departments in government. On behalf of myself and the constituents of Athabasca, we thank you for all your efforts in making life what it is today in northern Saskatchewan.

Representing Athabasca constituency as I do I am proud of the prominent place northern Saskatchewan was given in the budget speech. The budget speech made it clear, Mr. Speaker, that the great advances made in northern Saskatchewan in the past seven years will continue at an ever increasing rate in 1979-80.

Mr. Speaker, I have a number of things to say about the budget, but first I want to spend a moment or two talking about the constituency I have the honor to represent. The Athabasca riding covers approximately 48,000 square miles. Its boundaries run from the northern fringe farming area to the northwest territories and from a north-south line down the middle of the province, all the way to the Alberta border. I also want to thank my constituents for giving me the opportunity to represent them for another four years. Mr. Speaker, there are approximately 16,000 people in the Athabasca constituency. There are miners, trappers, fishermen, teachers, nurses, forestry workers, pilots, storekeepers, prospectors and many more. Mr. Speaker, I give thanks to the policy of the Blakeney government for ending the years of neglect in the North and including the northerners in the New Deal for People.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THOMPSON:** — Mr. Speaker, in the general election last October in the Athabasca constituency, the New Democratic Party took over 58 per cent of the vote and won 27 out of the 37 polls, many by a wide margin. I would like to take this opportunity to say publicly, Mr. Speaker, that I could not live anywhere else but in the North. It is my home and I love it, and being a politician in the North and watching the way various governments treat northern people I cannot possibly be anything but a New Democrat.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THOMPSON:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes now to talk about the new projects in my constituency. The new maintenance headquarters for heavy equipment will be built at La Loche and Pine House and the skilled jobs that go along with the new buildings will also come to the Athabasca riding.

I want to, now, touch on highways and roads in the Athabasca constituency. It is quite interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that between the years 1964 and 1971 there wasn't even a highway program in northern Saskatchewan. Since 1971 Highway 155 has been rebuilt from Green Lake to Buffalo Narrows and in the next two or three years will be completely rebuilt from Buffalo Narrows to La Loche.

Bridges have been put in place at Green Lake, the Canoe River, the Cowan River, the Beaver River and the Waterhead River on Highway 155. At the present time a new bridge across the channel at Buffalo Narrows is being constructed.

I also want to talk about the roads in northern Saskatchewan — roads that are not on the highway system. In 1971, such communities as Patuanak and Pine House were

completely isolated. I am very pleased to say, today, that Pine House and Patuanak have good all-weather roads and are completely de-isolated. This coming year we will see a finish to the road — to the access road — to Dillon, St. George's Hill and Michel village. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan will be spending approximately \$1,600,000 on this road and, hopefully, by this fall that will end isolation in those three communities.

We will also be putting major extensions at Uranium City, on the Uranium City by-pass and the road to Eldorado. It is quite interesting when you travel through the North and you take a look at these projects and see just how many northern people, Mr. Speaker, are working on this highway construction and road construction.

The Department of Northern Saskatchewan's construction branch, at its peak last summer, had over 60 per cent northern people working on their construction branch building roads and doing a good job of it.

The highway department, which is working in northern Saskatchewan, is doing the same. Just the other day, I was checking out a highway camp north of La Loche where we have 49 people working and it was nice to see that out of the 49 people working there 26 of them were northerners.

Many new public buildings are being started or are already underway in various centres in my riding. Buildings that will permit government programs to be delivered in a more effective way. The provincial government has done a lot for the residents of the Athabasca constituency, Mr. Speaker, but not in any other area have the achievements been more noticeable than in providing safe community water supplies.

Once again in 1971, Mr. Speaker, there weren't any communities in northern Saskatchewan that had sewer and water facilities. Today, we now have complete systems operating in the communities of Green Lake, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Buffalo Narrows and La Loche. By the end of this summer, we will have systems operating in Pinehouse and Beauval and we'll be making a major start on the system at Turnor Lake.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THOMPSON:** — Other utilities have also been expanded in the North. In 1971, before the Blakeney government came into office, only 24 per cent of the homes in the northern administration district had telephone service. Today, 96 per cent have telephone services, Mr. Speaker, that is a four-fold increase in services since the New Democratic Party was elected.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THOMPSON:** — In 1971, only a little more than 40 per cent of the homes in the North had electricity. Today, Mr. Speaker, over 90 per cent of the northern homes have power and many more soon will have it. Mr. Speaker, another area where there have been major advances made in my constituency is health care and more will be built at La Loche this summer. Mr. Speaker, to add to the growing number of new hospitals built in smaller rural centres all across Saskatchewan, a new road ambulance program is being set up in the North. I am sure it will be just as welcome as the air ambulance was when the government of Tommy Douglas set it up 30 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many improvements under way in the North and life has been



so much better for so many northern people. I cannot possibly hope to put all of it on the record, but I do want to say this, Mr. Speaker, Northern people are no longer left out of the mainstream of Saskatchewan society. We now feel as though we belong to Saskatchewan. We no longer suffer the highest unemployment rates in the nation. Jobs, many of them highly skilled jobs, have been created in northern centres. We no longer have to do with the basic services and utilities other parts of the province expect as a right. We now have those services. The Department of Northern Saskatchewan was set up in the spring of 1972 with a mandate to bring northern Saskatchewan into step with the South. Changes made in the seven years since have been unparalleled anywhere else in Canada. Meaningful local governments have been set up in the North. The provincial civil service now, for the first time in the province's history, includes northern native Metis people in large numbers.

In the area of education, the new department put as many people through its adult education program in its first year as had previously gone through upgrading in four years. Mr. Speaker, I want to discuss education facilities in northern Saskatchewan. In 1972, when the Department of Northern Saskatchewan was created, education and educational facilities were given a high priority. New schools and additions have been built at Dore Lake, Beauval, Cole Bay, Jans Bay, Patuanak, Pinehouse, Uranium City. New schools are now being built at Michel village, St. George's Hill, and Turnor Lake. Another important part of the educational system in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, has been the addition of gymnasiums. In 1971, there were also no gymnasiums in northern Saskatchewan. We now have new gymnasiums at Green Lake, Beauval, Buffalo Narrows, La Loche. One has to live in northern Saskatchewan to see the effects of good educational facilities such as gymnasiums. When I see northern students compete in winter games and listen to them discuss their plans for the future it makes me feel very proud to represent such a fine group of young people.

Direct grants to local governments were under \$35,000 when the Blakeney government took office in 1971. Last year these grants were worth over \$1.5 million.

Housing has been improved in the North in recent years. In 1970 only 23 public housing units were built, and in '71 only 23 units were built all across the North. That has changed, Mr. Speaker. Until now DNS regularly built over 130 public housing units annually. Up to 1978 DNS has delivered over 800 public homes. Mr. Speaker, the last seven years have created great changes over the North. Our local communities, our economic and social conditions that were so severely depressed now have a bright future — a future we in northern Saskatchewan are very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, because I believe this budget will continue the progress made in the northern part of our province I will be supporting the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. R.J. GROSS (Morse):** — Mr. Speaker, I am proud of this budget because it earmarks another dynamic era of growth yet to come for this province. I am also proud of this budget because it also takes into account, and enacts a great number of election promises made in the fall of 1978 — promises made and promises now kept. This budget will do a great many things in a great many areas.

One area of agriculture has some very exciting implications. The new agricultural research fund that has been established because of this budget, will bring a new dynamic to the area of agriculture. It is planned that this fund will involve itself in many

new types of research rather than just the standard research of grain. I hope to see it involve itself in many new facets of agriculture and I dare to say, Mr. Speaker, that agriculture will change its style of operation many times in the next two or three decades. What are conventional agricultural practices may not be conventional agricultural practices 10 or 20 years from now. That is why, Mr. Speaker, a new type of agriculture research is so very important and so very key at this time. Some of the new dynamics that will have to be researched will be in very many areas — zero tillage, and soil salinity and beyond. I dare say, Mr. Speaker, that this research will lead the way in many areas of this country. The conventional wisdom that farmers have today of 50 per cent cropping and 50 per cent summer fallowing is now showing to have some harmful effects on our land in this province. The area that has been announced lately, zero tillage, could be an alternate to the present system but little or no research has been done and it is very important that more research be carried out. One could go on all day talking about the new concepts of zero tillage. The technique itself will require lower energy requirements; it will provide higher yields; and it will improve soil conditions and make for more effective management of weed populations presently around.

There are other areas of research that are also important, like soil salinity. Farmers are now finding that soil salinity is not decreasing, is not stabilizing but rather is increasing. It is increasing for a number of reasons. One of the reasons is that our present cultivation practices have induced the soil salinity and farmers have no known cure for it. That is the kind of research farmers are looking for, Mr. Speaker. It is the kind of research farmers need and want.

Another area that is important in this budget, I think, Mr. Speaker, is transportation. I think it is probably the most important area in this whole province we must look at, as the government, and try to do something about.

This government has renewed its intention to fight once again to save our transportation system. Beyond any doubt, Mr. Speaker, transportation is probably the most devastating issue for rural Saskatchewan. The people of this province can be reassured that this government will take that task up. They will take that task on and will be fighting in conjunction with many of our allies — allies that have been allies in the past and will be allies in the future, like the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, our Saskatchewan co-operatives and our farm organization and farm movement, the National Farmers' Union. Our enemy on the other hand, Mr. Speaker, as usual, as has been our enemy for many years, is the federal Liberal government and the Conservative Party federally and now provincially. Other enemies that we have had over the years have been railroad companies. We have had other enemies in a farm organization and that organization, I repeat, is the Palliser Wheat Growers. Another enemy is the private grain trade, people like Cargill and Continental. They will be our enemy; our allies will be the pools and the co-operatives. There is nothing very new about that fact, Mr. Speaker. That struggle has been around for a long time. That struggle is now marking its 50th year and beyond. We now find ourselves back again fighting the battle.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are two main areas in transportation that are important in this province at this time. The two areas I suggest to you are rail line abandonment, more commonly known today as the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) report and the second area is the crowrate abandonment. Now, as you aware, Mr. Speaker, my friends opposite don't want to talk about those issues. It's sort of like the cat has their tongue when it comes to PRAC or crowrate. Whenever they do talk about it, Mr. Speaker, and that is very rarely, they take the easy political route out. They tell us, they

tell the people of this province, the farmers and producers, tell us we're right behind you fellows. We are right with you. But I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, in observing the debate thus far in this House, I ask you how far behind are they? Are they right behind us? Are they 10 miles behind us? Are they 20 miles behind us? Or are they 100 miles behind us? I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, as members on this side suggest, they aren't even close. They are out in right field. They are so far out in right field, Mr. Speaker, that they are noticeably present with their buddies, their buddies being the Palliser Wheat Growers, Cargill, Continental and the rail companies. One would have to be awful naive to think that the Tory Party provincially and the Tory Party federally weren't part of the contingent, the wrecking crew.

Mr. Speaker, and the good people of this province, the Tories opposite are no different than the Tory clowns who were around this country in 1961. In 1961 they had a leader, the former leader and current member for Prince Albert, a leader who was supposed to solve our problems in western Canada, a party that was supposed to solve our problems in western Canada. What did they do, Mr. Speaker? They commissioned a study on rail transportation. They commissioned a study they called the MacPherson Royal Commission. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, what did that MacPherson Royal Commission recommend? — a Tory commission. They recommended 8,600 miles of prairie branch line should be abandoned.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as much as this party on this side of the House dislikes the federal Liberal government in Ottawa, I suggest to you their medicine is not quite as tough as our Tory friends opposite was. While the medicine isn't good, it isn't as bad as what our Tory friends would have proposed. After a half-a-dozen studies, Lang and company commissioned, instead of 8,600 miles of branch lines to be abandoned as recommended by the Tories, a study, the PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee) which recommends that 1,465 should be abandoned. I suggest to the producers in this province and to you, Mr. Speaker, the only difference between Tories and Liberals on this issue is that Tories recommend that 8,600 miles are inefficient and should be abandoned; Liberals recommend that 1,400 miles should be abandoned and are inefficient.

**MR. KRAMER:** — Two wings of the same bird of prey!

**MR. GROSS:** — That's right.

I'll turn to the issue of the crowrate, Mr. Speaker. Probably the most devastating blow that could be dealt to the farmers would be the abandonment of the crowrate. The abandonment of the crowrate, Mr. Speaker, will mean several things to farmers but the most important thing it will mean to farmers is that the price to move their commodity grain will go from the presently 12.5 cents a bushel to over \$1 a bushel. I suggest to you those consequences will be devastating. Not deterred by that fact, our Tory friends opposite, still move on with the ridiculous scheme to kill the crowrate. They don't like it when we rub salt into their sore, when we tell them that that is what they are up to, when we tell the public that is what they are up to. They don't like us rubbing salt into that wound but are they trying very desperately as a last ditch political effort, to appear to be the champions of the transportation issue. Producers and farmers of this province know that they are not.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the Tories are meeting secretly behind closed doors, at every opportunity, to scuttle the crowrate. There is evidence of that. They have the Palliser Wheat Growers, with the support of Tories provincially and federally, and

Liberals provincially and federally, out to kill the crowrate. They have launched an attack second to none. Mr. Speaker, they didn't like it when we read into the record the other day in a previous debate, a statement that has been picked up by the press. When it comes to the crowrate abandonment, secret meetings are planned and are being held. They didn't like it when we talked about the press picking up the story that four secret meetings had been held to scuttle the crowrate. Strategies have been designed and directed to kill the crowrate. They didn't like it when we read into the record the article, freight rates must be changed and are being drafted — headlines in the Leader Post, February 14, 1979.

The press picked up the fact that a working group of railway officials and prairie farm leaders has drafted a formula for changing the controversial crowrate, and I quote, 'However, an official who requested to remain anonymous said the formula will be kept secret because of', and I underline, 'pending Alberta and federal general elections'. Mr. Speaker, that suggests to me that the Liberal government in Ottawa and the Tory government in Alberta are very much keyed to these secret meetings.

Now, we have just had the Alberta election and we know the results of that. The people of Alberta have returned another Tory government. I ask you and I ask members opposite, because we have returned another Tory government in Alberta, does that mean the crowrate is half dead? Does that mean that because the Alberta election turned out successfully in the eyes of the drafters of the abandonment of the crowrate — the people who have been co-ordinating the abandonment of the crowrate, the Palliser Wheat Growers — does that mean the crowrate is half dead? Does it mean that we have to wait now for the federal election that is upcoming very shortly, to find out if there is a federal government either Tory or Liberal, that the balance of the crowrate will go? Does it mean that six months down the road from now, when the federal election is held, and we find that we have either got a Liberal or a Tory government — in this case the drafters of the crowrate abandonment — that we are going to abandon the crowrate? That is the issue that is at stake. That is an issue, I suggest, the members opposite address themselves to when the next federal election is around.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — The provincial Tories want it.

**MR. GROSS:** — The provincial Tories, I think, are very much the supporters of the crowrate abandonment — I don't think, I know they are.

Mr. Speaker, members in this House will remember my last speech, when I clearly demonstrated over 50 examples of how the Tories are saying this government is on a wild spending spree — 50 examples, where they told us that we have to restrain, 50 examples where he told us we had to cut back. They'd bring us back to the good old days of the depression — the Bennett Buggy. And things would be much better in this country — cut back, don't spend. Members in this House will also remember that the same Tories were telling us to restrain and cut back and yet every member's speech across the way, while they're telling us to cut back, in the same breath are telling us they have shopping lists of their own. They would trot out shopping lists in this House, Mr. Speaker, that I suggest would total up to hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars. Now there is a little inconsistency there. On one hand is telling us to cut back; on the other hand they're telling us to spend more.

Mr. Speaker, if time would permit, I would have taken the opportunity at this time to update that shopping list — the Tory shopping list. As I suggested to you earlier, I have documented over 50 examples in the first week of the sitting of this House where Tories

have told us to spend less and then tell us to spend more. But I've looked over the record, Mr. Speaker, and I've found out that we are now into the second week of this House and that list has grown from 50 to more into the area of over a hundred. They haven't stopped, Mr. Speaker. They tell us that in terms of spending we're not doing enough, and in other areas we're doing too much. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that these people are not consistent and are demonstrating a very inconsistent approach in their arguments.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . that is the area of spending, but there's another area they have been inconsistent in — the antigovernment area. They have, as well, been inconsistent in that area. This House will no doubt forget, and I see he's absent right now, the member for Swift Current (Mr. Ham), who went on for a great length of time delivering probably the oldest speech ever delivered to this House — I suggest it came from the 16th century — telling us about this great plot of total government involvement into our daily lives. Members in this House and members on that side of the House will remember it. We heard the speech about every time we turn the light on, we have government interference, every time we eat a piece of toast, we've got government interference; every time we drive down a road, we've got government interference, and every time we stop at a stop light, we've got government interference.

And the conclusion he drew was we have too much government interference, and we should restrain ourselves from this tremendous overburdening gauze of government interference. He's saying that we should cut back; but I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if we had listened to the other half of his speech, he was telling us that we should get more involved in many areas, that we're not doing enough. Yes, Mr. Speaker, members opposite, while they tell us we're doing too much in terms of government interference, also tell us that we should get more involved and, to quote them, 'more involved in the areas from the cradle to the grave' — their speech.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest you can't have it both ways and expect to be considered consistent. How can they say they are effectively being a good opposition while criticizing us of doing too much, and then turn around and in the same breath tell us we're not doing enough. Also, how can they criticize us for spending too much money and in the same breath criticize us for not spending enough. They say they don't want to see any branch lines disappear in their ridings or in the province, and then publicly voice support for previous governments which recommended the abandonment of 8,600 miles of prairie branch line. They say, we support the crowrate, and then turn around and support farm organizations that have been co-ordinating and conducting secret meetings to ring the crow's neck. And then they tell us how they are in support of the crowrates.

Mr. Speaker, that is not credibility and that is not consistency. They go on and they tell us they don't want to have any more interference into the lives of our people. As I pointed out before, they are adopting measures that will provide for more government interference. They say we are not spending enough money on things like the Year of the Child, on roads, hospitals and schools and then in the same breath tell us to cut our expenditures, to hold the line, to not exceed 4, 5, 6 and 7 per cent. . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. GROSS:** — . . . by saying this province is on the verge of bankruptcy. Not very many people will believe that. Then they cannot substantiate it and prove it because

statistically this province has shown we have the second lowest per capita debt of any province in this country.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. GROSS:** — They say our deficit is too big and tell us about the great fiscal management that is required to run this province, tell us to look at other examples across Canada where there is better fiscal management, tell us to look at Ontario where there is a Conservative government. Well, what about the deficit in Ontario, Mr. Speaker? When you look you will find out that the model we are supposed to be watching and looking up to, the deficit in the province of Ontario, is larger than the entire budget of this province. And that's the model they want us to look at. Mr. Speaker, that is not consistent. They say on the one hand, Mr. Speaker, that our deficit is too big, that we are sinking the province into bankruptcy. Then they tell us when it comes to Crown corporations that our profits are too large, that the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan and Saskoil are making too much money. And on the other hand they say that our deficit in terms of our consolidated fund is too big as well.

They say we have the largest bureaucracy in Canada and our civil servants are lazy and useless and they can't substantiate it. The record shows that we have one of the lowest number of civil servants per capita of any province in Canada. We have a low number of civil servants per capita, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest to you we have the largest amount of programming of any province in all of Canada. We are delivering the greatest number of services with the fewest number of people.

They say we have filthy hospitals, and not being able to prove it, they expect the people to think they have credibility and they are consistent. They say we have torture camps in the North but aren't able to prove it. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it has been proven a lie.

Mr. Speaker, the list can go on and on about the inconsistencies of the Tory Party opposite. There are even recent examples of their brainstorming, the research capacity they have — ridiculous accusations about homosexuality! Their big brainstorm, their biggest piece of research so far in this House, Mr. Speaker — and I suggest to you it's probably their last biggest piece of research — is the Redberry strawberry shortcake fiasco, Mr. Speaker, one could go on and on and on and talk about the inconsistencies and the ridiculous wonders of members opposite and the poor research that has gone on, on their behalf, but I think we have made our point. The people of this province demand some decent opposition in this House. They want to see a good opposition and we too, on this side of the House, want to see a good opposition but the people of this province don't want to see unsubstantiated opposition. If you, Mr. Leader of the Opposition and your colleagues don't clean up your act very shortly, I'm afraid, Mr. Speaker, they will fall into the same ranks as the last opposition party on that side of the House fell into.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. GROSS:** — They will fall into the ranks of total extinction. And I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that when they fall into the ranks of total extinction, it's going to cost this province some more money because we are going to have to go to the Treasury and look for some more money so we can provide more room in our museums for this extinct species. The Liberals are in that category and we're now contemplating that move. I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, if we do not have a more effective and a better opposition in future days to come in this House, that will be the same shortcoming of

members opposite. Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I think it's easy to see that I will be supporting this great and dynamic budget. It's a great and dynamic budget for the people of this province. It's a budget that the people have waited for and after October 18 they said we want four more. Thank you, Mr. Speaker,

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. R.L. COLLVER (Leader of the Opposition):** — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to enter into this budget debate. Unfortunately, it's not such a pleasure to follow someone who is subject to and has that new disease that the NDP seem very prone to getting in this session of the legislature and that's called pedantilitis. And for those of you who don't know what pedantilitis is, that's inflammation of foot in mouth disease.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Speaker, that's a gross disease, that's for sure. Mr. Speaker, today I'd like to explain to this Assembly and to the people of the province of Saskatchewan what, in the Attorney General's words recently to the press corps, I would call arrogance and so did he — the arrogance of government in Canada, the arrogance of government in Saskatchewan. Today in our country, we are faced with a Prime Minister who is so afraid to call an election, who is so afraid of the people of Canada's reaction to their centralist policies, who is so afraid of the mismanagement that he has perpetrated on the Canadian economy and on the Canadian people for the last 10 years, he is so afraid that he continues week by week by week coming closer and closer and closer to the absolute outside limit of his previous mandate. No other government in Canadian history, whether it be federal or provincial, has ever waited past that four and a half year point of no return and ever won an election.

Mr. Speaker, the fact remains that the Prime Minister is frightened to go to the people. He is governing Canada on a day-to-day basis and misgoverning Canada on a day-to-day basis without the support of the people of Canada, without the support of the regions of Canada and without, I suspect, the support of a great many members of his own party. Imagine for a moment the chagrin of the three what you might call — advertising members of the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan — and I refer to Mr. Lang, Mr. Merchant and the other chap from the South, Goodale — the three advertising members of the Liberal federal caucus in Saskatchewan. Imagine the chagrin of the other 11 Liberals, who don't have pots of money rolling into their coffers to be able to advertise continuously since last February. Imagine the chagrin of those three members, who have had to dip into their own pockets and dip into the pockets of others in Canada, to continue this continuous advertising program day after day after day after day, since last February or March. Imagine their chagrin at the Prime Minister's fear of calling an election. Every single time they just get their people — I suspect that they are going to get 10 or 15 per cent of the vote in Saskatchewan — all wound up ready for an election the Prime Minister backs off and is afraid to call. He goes skiing or he gets into trouble down in Vancouver with reference to young students and starts calling people creeps. Then he says, good grief I can't call people creeps and win, so he backs off.

The fact remains that that kind of arrogance of a democratically elected government in our country, the kind of arrogance by which they refuse the real vote of the people and the real mandate of the people, is being noticed by the people in our country. Support is dwindling rapidly across Canada, as it already has in the province of Saskatchewan, for that kind of government.

Now, last October, in the province of Saskatchewan the people of Saskatchewan selected the NDP to be the governing party.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — We give them congratulations for operating the dirtiest, most vicious campaign in Saskatchewan history. We give them congratulations for fooling the people of Saskatchewan into believing that they were going to have responsible government. That's what the people wanted last October. What they wanted was responsible government, government that would be responsible to the wishes of the people — and they selected you to do it. Now, Mr. Speaker, have they got what they bought? Have they got what they selected? I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, the answer is a resounding no.

Let's just take a few examples of the kind of arrogance of the members opposite from last October 18. On October 18 they stated to the people of Saskatchewan that they were in favor of medicare. They stated to the people of Saskatchewan that they were so in favor of medicare that they wanted to lie about what the Progressive Conservatives said about medicare. They stated, Mr. Speaker, that they were so in favor that there'd be absolutely no way that medicare would be disturbed. That was last October. What do we see today? Patient after patient after patient in Saskatchewan having to pay every time they visit their doctor. Now that's less than six months away from an election and the members keep wanting to talk about what's happening in Ontario. I suggest to the members that if they're so concerned about Ontario and Alberta that they should come across and join the Progressive Conservative Party. If they want to follow Ontario all the time come and choose the Progressive Conservatives because that's what the people of Alberta do, and that's what the people of Ontario do. If you want to have a distinct Saskatchewan look, if you want to have a distinct Saskatchewan flavour to government and to the legislation, then stick to Saskatchewan issues as we do and talk about Saskatchewan policies in Saskatchewan as we do.

Mr. Speaker, the fact remains the people have not got what they voted for last October. They have not got responsible government. They have to pay for their doctor today when the NDP absolutely committed that they wouldn't tinker with medicare. The ministers of the Crown in every free democratic society have a responsibility to the legislature. They have a responsibility to the people of the province. They have a responsibility to operate their departments responsibly.

Let's take some examples since last October of ministerial irresponsibility. First, we see the spectre of the Minister of the Environment hiding behind his own officials saying that my officials didn't inform me about the PCB spills. When called on in the legislature to take the rap — and to state that the buck stops with the minister; the Premier says, my goodness gracious, it was a human error. It was an error in judgment. The Premier says we have to be compassionate towards our ministers. We wish the NDP government in Saskatchewan would be a little more compassionate to the people who require your responsibility rather than to your ministers. The Premier says we have to understand the fact that the minister didn't know and, therefore, no action will be taken.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we see the spectre of the Minister of Finance losing his script for TV prior to a budget being announced — this is totally against the traditions of the Legislative Assembly, totally against the traditions of a free and democratic society. But the minister says — gosh, it isn't my fault; gosh it is the fault of the guy that was responsible for Information Services; gee whiz — and the Premier says if you haven't



lost a briefcase before then you cast the first stone. Instead of saying that it is a minister's absolute responsibility to make certain that no budget leaks occur, the Premier says if you haven't lost a briefcase don't throw stones. He laughs, he thinks it is funny and he says, my minister is not responsible; some little guy whose job it is to prepare information, to prepare press releases for the Government of Saskatchewan, it's his fault.

Then what do we see then, Mr. Speaker? Yesterday in this Assembly we presented a letter from the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, which indicates that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman) called for hearings in the North with reference to the line that a particular Sask Power project was going to take. Professor Nikiforuk, the person in charge of the hearing, recommended that a certain route be followed and prior to (a week before) the minister's own suggestions to Sask Power, Sask Power goes right ahead and centre cuts the line (the transmission line) along the originally proposed route that Sask Power wanted.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That is false, absolutely false!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Speaker, we produced the letter, you read the letter from the federation. If you don't believe the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, if you don't believe the Chief of the Red Earth Band, and if you don't believe the Chief of the Shoal Lake Band, then you have no concern for our northern people.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Here's an example, Mr. Speaker. No wonder the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman) was kicked out of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan — no wonder, with that kind of an attitude.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Mr. Speaker, the point is the minister's excuse in this House was, first of all, that he didn't know anything about it, nothing at all. Have you ever heard of this? No. That's what he answered yesterday to this Assembly. Have you ever heard of it? No — don't know anything about it. Then, Mr. Speaker, we see the spectre of the same minister coming back to this Assembly with suggestions how his officials were not quite following it up. That's the suggestion I got out of it. The theme that I got out of it was the minister isn't quite sure what his officials are going to do but he is going to check with them. He hasn't been quite certain of what his officials have done but he is going to check with them. Where is the ministerial responsibility, Mr. Speaker? No place.

Mr. Speaker, where is the ministerial responsibility when the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan agrees in this Legislative Chamber to disclose his assets to show leadership to the people of the province of Saskatchewan and to his own members to show leadership when it comes to necessary legislation with reference to conflict of interest? He agrees in this Chamber to disclose if I disclose. I, subsequently, leave this Chamber and go out to the press corps in Saskatchewan and disclose immediately. Then the Premier refuses to disclose continuously. What is he trying to hide? What is the Premier of Saskatchewan attempting to hide from the people of the province and where, Mr. Speaker, is the responsibility that goes with the job of being the Premier of Saskatchewan?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, that's arrogance. That's arrogance of the first water when you disregard tradition, when you disregard the people, when you disregard your very own commitments to this legislature. That's arrogance. Knowing that this arrogance is going to be an issue and knowing that the people of the province of Saskatchewan are going to suggest that somehow the government is becoming too arrogant because they're ignoring tradition and ignoring what's right, the Attorney General comes on the air and says, we're going to be arrogant because there's no opposition. Can you imagine the Government of Saskatchewan. . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — The Attorney General says on CKCK (I watched the report myself) that we are concerned about our own arrogance. We are concerned, Mr. Speaker, about our own arrogance; we're concerned we might become haughty because there's a weak opposition. Mr. Speaker, of all the nonsense anyone ever tried to have perpetrated on the people that has got to be the single most nonsensical statement ever made in the history of Saskatchewan. If arrogance is there it's the government's arrogance. If arrogance is there change it. If arrogance is there get rid of it, and start to do what the people elected you to do and that's: (a) reflect their views and represent them, and (b) represent them in a responsible fashion, and (c) you backbench members of the NDP who've never controlled anything in this legislature, who automatically take the words of whoever's writing these speeches and stick them into the paper — each backbench MLA taking word for word what someone has written for them — for once stand up and be counted. For once, you backbench MLAs stand and be counted and insist that your own Treasury Board take the responsibility. For once, Mr. Speaker, could we see one NDP member speak honestly? Could we see one NDP member stand up sincerely and say his mind in the legislature and then back up those words with deeds? Could we once see the member for Saskatoon-Sutherland (Mr. Prebble) stand up in this legislature for what he has been saying for years to the people? For once couldn't you NDP backbenchers say to your Treasury Board officials. . . and I want to just correct one thing for the Leader Post. Several times we've used the phrase in here, Treasury Board. It's not the treasury branch. The treasury branch is a banking system in Alberta. The Treasury Board is the cabinet in the province of Saskatchewan . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, you think there's something else in the treasury branch. There's another treasury branch for Walter.

Mr. Speaker, for once let's see some action in the NDP members and let's see some sincerity. Let's see them stop, for example, trying to mislead the people of the province of Saskatchewan with their absolute gobbledygook about the Conservative Party. For example, in this legislative chamber — I invite anyone to talk about it — when have we heard the members of the NDP talk about the Liberal government in Ottawa in this session. Not once have we heard this from the members opposite. They spend all their time, Mr. Speaker, talking about the Progressive Conservatives in Saskatchewan and the Progressive Conservatives in Ottawa, knowing full well that in the last 45 years the Conservatives have never been government in Saskatchewan, and the Conservatives have only been government of Canada for five of those years — five out of 45. Mr. Speaker, the perpetrators of the nonsense in Canada, the perpetrators of the split in Canada, the perpetrators of the decline of the Canadian dollar, the perpetrators of the disunity in our country, are the Liberal guys. Why in the world is the NDP not talking about them? I'll tell you why, Mr. Speaker. It is because they think that their socialist friends who have previously supported the Liberals, as evidenced by Pierre Elliott

Trudeau, are now going to support them in Saskatchewan. They have another think coming. There is no way, Mr. Speaker, that Otto Lang's left wing, pinko group is going to support this left wing pinko group in a federal election.

Someone has just passed me the voting record and I would like to table this, Mr. Speaker, while I am speaking. Here, Mr. Speaker, is the voting record of the NDP and the Liberal parties in Ottawa, 1972 - 1974. I will be happy, Mr. Speaker, to table these documents for the edification of the members opposite so that the people of Saskatchewan might realize why the NDP have not attacked the Trudeau government in this session of the legislature. Not once have they attacked the Trudeau government. Why? We don't quite know, Mr. Speaker, whether this government has decided that they like the policies of Pierre Elliott Trudeau so much that they want their supporters to vote Liberal or whether they honestly believe that somehow the supporters of Otto Lang are going to support them. We haven't figured that out yet but we do know that they don't want to attack the real perpetrators of the problems in Canada — the Liberal Party in Ottawa. Mr. Speaker, they may be wrong about this as well, but I suspect that there is a possibility the NDP government in Saskatchewan believes that there might be a minority government in Ottawa. They know that they are going to want to support the Liberals in Ottawa, and so what they are doing, is keeping very quiet about Mr. Trudeau's policies (obviously, they support them) in case there is a minority government and it is necessary for the NDP to stand up and be counted. Will they stand up for the West? Did they stand up for the West in 1972 and 1974? No sir, they supported the Liberal Party in Ottawa, the perpetrators of PRAC (Prairie Rail Action Committee), the perpetrators of the hopper car fiasco, the perpetrators of the judge's affair, the perpetrators of the RCMP scandals, Skyshops is another one, the dredging scandal is another one. Mr. Speaker, the perpetrators are being supported by the NDP members.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's mention the real arrogance when it comes to budgeting for the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan in a press release issued on November 27, 1978, stated that the governments of Canada must move towards balanced budgets. That's what he said. That was for the edification of all the people of Canada, that the Premier of Saskatchewan was exhibiting restraint and talking about real policies of the government. All governments in Canada, the Premier said, move towards balancing budgets on current accounts. That's what he said. Now, the Premier in this legislative Chamber admitted on the record, that the investments in the potash company, the investments in SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) are 'long-term investments'. He committed himself here to that. Therefore, he can't use the revenues that have been taken from the oil industry and stuck into potash, and stuck into SMDC, those risky ventures — he can't use that as part of current account.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that last year's projected budget deficit was \$42 million. This year's projected budget deficit \$49 million. Is that moving towards balancing the budget? No, it is not. It is moving away from balancing the budget. Irresponsibility and arrogance mean that you can come on television and you can present press releases — from the same guy that offered to resign over the budget leak — you can present those and say what you like. When it comes down to doing business for the people of the province, when it comes down to presenting a budget, you say exactly the opposite. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is irresponsibility and arrogance of the worst possible kind.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — The other day in this legislative Chamber, one of our members brought forward the facts that a department official in the Department of Health, a Dr. Penman, was making rash and foolish statements with reference to any dispute that the doctors have with the province of Saskatchewan. In the middle of negotiations, this man issues these foolish statements! Even the Premier admitted that these statements were not responsible. Did the Minister of Health accept the responsibility for that official's statements? The answer is no. Did the Minister of Health say that he told that official he was no longer a member of the minister's staff? No. Did he deny the statements of Dr. Penman? No.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — He wrote them.

**MR. COLLVER:** — Was there any responsibility exhibited by the Minister of Health (Mr. Tchorzewski)? No. Did the Premier ask for any responsibility of any minister for Dr. Penman's admittedly foolish and foolhardy statements? No. The irresponsibility of the government opposite, the arrogance of the NDP and the arrogance of the Premier in trying to reflect the views of the people of Saskatchewan continue unabated.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the Government of Saskatchewan becomes arrogant, the wishes of the people are not met. When the Government of the province of Saskatchewan becomes arrogant, they say, we can do anything we want with a budget. We can give it out in advance if we want to. We can deficit finance. Even though the Premier of Saskatchewan calls for diminishing those deficits and moving towards a balanced budget, we can do that. We can even increase the borrowing capacity of the people of the province of Saskatchewan to \$2.7 billion — \$2,007 for every man,

woman and child in Saskatchewan. We can increase to that level from the level in 1971 of \$500 million. We can more than multiply the provincial debt five times, because we can do anything we want. We can ignore the wishes of people to balance the budget; we can ignore the wishes of people to come to grips with inflation; we can ignore the wishes of people in trying to ensure that government bureaucracy and red tape is not maximized, but minimized — we can ignore that because we can do anything we want.

It is unfortunate for the people of the province of Saskatchewan, unfortunate for the people in this area, unfortunate for those subjected to PCB spills, unfortunate for those subjected to watching other people rip off the people as a result of budget leak information, unfortunate for those poor souls who have to pay every time they see their doctor, unfortunate for those poor Indians in the North to whom the government is not prepared to listen, unfortunate for the people of Saskatchewan. The Premier of Saskatchewan is afraid to disclose his assets, afraid. He uses the cockamamie (?) kind of suggestion that it is because the Leader of the Opposition's wife won't disclose. I say to the Premier of Saskatchewan today, that my wife voluntarily has stated that she will disclose on any terms and conditions, providing that you disclose. There's a challenge for the Premier of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Not because of any coercion, Mr. Speaker, but because my wife also wants to know what the Premier of Saskatchewan is trying to hide. She wants to know that her ministers and the people responsible for her government in Saskatchewan are responsible and not in a position to conflict.

So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the irresponsibility of this government and the arrogance of this government is leading the province of Saskatchewan down the garden path of socialist irresponsibility to the point where, without the natural resources God gave us, we would be in serious financial difficulty.

Mr. Speaker, let's talk for a moment about the major investments by the Government of Saskatchewan of the people's money in those two areas in which they have the vast bulk of their money invested — just under \$700 million, invested in potash and in uranium. Now that is direct investment; that's the people's money, out of which they have seen not a dime yet — no interest payments, no dividend payments, nothing yet. But the future is rosy, says the Premier. That's why we don't need to exercise prudent investment techniques; that's why we don't need to balance our resources and balance this fund that is coming in from the windfall profits from oil. That's why we don't need to have some money in cash and short-term securities. All we have is \$10 million. The reason is that we think it is right to put it into potash and uranium. That's what they have done. They have taken every bit of the heritage fund they haven't spent on day-to-day activities and stuck in it into those two areas potash and uranium.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think everybody in this Assembly is aware of what happened to the uranium business in the '60s. Perhaps the members opposite — most definitely the Premier of Saskatchewan has a very short memory when it comes to that — will recall and recognize that with all of the predictions of a rosy future for the uranium business, the bottom fell out and uranium shares scuttled to the bottom. They didn't tittle to the bottom; they scuttled to the bottom! The members opposite will recall in recent memory, while the NDP was the government, the years of frustration in the potash business, the low prices in the potash business, the time the bottom fell out of the potash business. The shares scuttled to the bottom for the potash companies. The

point being that with all of the rosy outlook of the Premier of Saskatchewan, (and we sincerely hope it's true), there are risks. When you take all of your eggs and put them in one basket you take the chance that you are going to end up with scrambled eggs. The fact remains that any prudent, responsible manager insists that some portion of their investment portfolio is maintained on a current basis, is maintained in a reasonable fashion. Any prudent investment manager would insist on it, but not the Premier and not the Treasury Board.

Now you backbench MLAs have nothing to say about that; you are told at your caucus meetings by the Premier, by the group of five, what it's going to be: Here's the way it is fellows, this is our budget fellows, this is what it's going to be. You are not allowed any original thoughts; you are not allowed to talk to the people of the province or to represent your own people, who say to you we're sick to death of people talking out of one side of their mouth and acting a different way. Mr. Speaker, the group of five — I'm sorry to say that the Minister for Northern Saskatchewan slipped away from the group of five. There he was dealing with the North and they brought in the three-button minister to get to him.

Mr. Speaker, the fact remains, the Government of Saskatchewan has not exhibited the kind of responsibility that the people expected of them on October 18th and they are acting in an arrogant, haughty (in the words of the Attorney General) fashion and it is our intention to draw this to the attention of the people. Also, it is the intention of the opposition party in Saskatchewan to insist that the government straighten up and make certain that the people of the province are made aware of these irresponsible actions. And whether the press want to print that or whether they want to print the smaller items, let them go ahead and so be it because if they do we will go directly to the people and we will tell the people directly what has been happening . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, but they do says the minister responsible for higher education and I wish he had some. Mr. Speaker, he says they know but I say to the member for Saskatoon Buena Vista (Mr. Rolfes), the people care.

Let me ask the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan who yesterday in this Assembly was unable to tell us anything about what the balance in the heritage fund was. He had no idea why the province of Alberta can have a quarterly report of the heritage fund balances but we in Saskatchewan don't get to see it until a year after the last year end?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — Here's one from September 30, 1978 from the Government of Alberta, yet in the province of Saskatchewan we have yet to see one single balance from the heritage fund, one single balance. The heritage fund was created on April 1, 1978. You have to try and extrapolate the numbers from the budget information. That's unsatisfactory so you ask the Premier and he replies I don't know. So you ask the Minister of Finance. I don't know. What dates do you want? How about February? I don't know. Gee, it might take a long time. The point is, Mr. Speaker, that is an attempt by the government of the province of Saskatchewan and the Premier of the province of Saskatchewan to renege on their responsibilities. They're afraid to let people know that there's only \$10 million left in that fund. They're afraid to let people know they've got all their eggs in one basket and that would come out directly. They're afraid to let these people know what the current operations of the government are so they say, we can't possibly do that. Yet Alberta can and does and informs the people of the province of Alberta, for example, that at the conclusion of September 30, 1978, they had some \$2,127,000,000 in their heritage fund in liquid securities — \$2,127,000,000. They

can inform the people. Why can't the Minister of Finance? Oh, but wait a minute, the Minister of Finance can't do that. You're going to have to understand because he's subject to human error and he might lose it. He's subject to human frailty. He might go into his briefcase that he loses and then somebody might throw stones at him. Mr. Speaker, the fact is this government is irresponsible and arrogant and the people of Saskatchewan are beginning to realize it and they're starting to recognize that you are not living up to the mandate the people gave you in October. You are not living up to what the people told you you should do in October and the people are going to reject that. They're going to come on in an ever increasing fashion to inform you. I suggest to the members opposite and I predict that in the forthcoming federal election, the Progressive Conservative Party will win 12 seats out of 14.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — That's the kind of rejection of your irresponsible arrogance that the people are going say here.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — The heritage fund will be an issue.

**MR. COLLVER:** — The heritage fund will be a big issue and the mismanagement of the people's moneys will be a big issue. The failure for your ministers, Mr. Premier, and for you, yourself, to put a sign on your desk, the buck stops here, that will be an issue.

Mr. Speaker, there's going to be another issue in the province of Saskatchewan as well. That's the government's laughter when the Progressive Conservative Party raises issues that the government should take action on to prevent the continuing decline of morality in Saskatchewan.

There's another issue and the people are going to reject you and your kinds of policies for speaking out of both sides of your mouth and doing nothing about it, for taxing children's books and not taxing pornographic books. The people will reject you for those stands. The people will reject you for the Attorney General's remarks to the Gay Society. The people will reject you and I predict as well that any changes in your human rights legislation will not have a section that the gays will be happy with and I suggest to you today, it's because you're not standing up for what your party said you should. We don't think you should either. But your party said you should and I suggest to you if that kind of issue is not raised, you'd slip, it into the human rights legislation because that's what your party said. Time after time your party puts forward a resolution and a year or so later, in it comes in legislation. Nationalize the potash mines; in it comes in legislation. Out comes an NDP resolution and you can bet your bottom dollar that the government's going to slip it in. Unless the opposition party raises the issue and brings it to the attention of the people, you're going to slip it into the legislation. And I suggest to you that the people of Saskatchewan will reject you for that kind of stand and I suggest to you that they'll do it in the next federal election.

Mr. Speaker, there's been considerable comment by the Attorney General and the leader of the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan about the effectiveness of the Progressive Conservative opposition. But they're the only ones, Mr. Speaker, that are making those comments — not the people. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to go through a list of the so-called petty issues that have been brought to the attention of this House by the Progressive Conservative Party: the entire issue of morality in government; the environment; Souris Valley flood control; the PCB spill and ministerial irresponsibility; mercury contamination and the irresponsibility exhibited there; the irrigation system in

Saskatchewan; the weather bureau removed from the province of Saskatchewan; the Coronach dam project; natural gas leaks and natural gas policy in the province of Saskatchewan; the Premier of the province's refusal to stand up on Bill C-42 and tell the people of Canada that even under emergency legislation, he's not going to let the people in Ottawa slip one over on the people of western Canada. He doesn't bother standing on that bill. Alberta did; Ontario did. But he wants to be careful in case the NDP becomes the balance of power in Ottawa — which they'll never be. Around the budget leak, for the first time in Saskatchewan history, the Speaker felt the matter was urgent enough to interfere with the presentation of the budget. We raised the issue of health care in Saskatchewan — the fact that the NDP guaranteed no change in medicare and yet, less than six months later, patient after patient has to pay the deterrent fee. Now you can say anything you like about the fact that the doctors are charging it; we're not. But if your policies are such that you are bringing about the reason for the doctors making those charges, then you are responsible! That's responsibility!

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — We brought to the attention of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Bowerman) his allowing SPC to go ahead and do its own thing without even stepping in and making sure the people are heard through their own presentations, through his own hearing that the minister himself set up and through his own professor that he put in charge. This allows him to put it in a different place than the Indians felt was reasonable allowing the destruction in the environment to cater to the whims of the minister of Saskatchewan Power. Why, no one knows! Why, it might cost the people of the province a few more dollars in terms of the lines that go to hook up that transmission line. That is the only reason, not very many more, it is only a 12 mile skirt. It might cost a few more dollars for those lines, but instead Saskatchewan Power autocratically goes ahead and puts the line where it originally proposed anyway. And you want to know why the Indians in Saskatchewan, and why the Indian people in our country are disturbed at government! You want to know why they think government doesn't act for them. You want to know? That is why, because you never listen to them, on an issue that is as important as whether or not the environment is destroyed in their area. Mr. Speaker, that is what we've raised to the people in Saskatchewan and raised to this legislature.

Now, it is wonderful the kinds of tricks the government performs and the Treasury Board performs. Just marvellous! Yesterday, they held back on the auditor's report until the last possible minute, waiting to see if anything came out of question period. They didn't bother delivering it to our desks and when the Premier, who didn't want the fact that there is only \$10 million left in the heritage fund spelled out so that people could see it, they dumped the auditor's report on late, which they know, Mr. Speaker, is going to get the play in the press. Nice little trick that causes the press corps immediately to have to, of necessity, and I am not being critical of them, examine the auditor's report.

You want irresponsibility of ministers — this is just an aside — it might interest the people of Saskatchewan to know this. One of the things that the auditor says, page 24:

I am pleased to report that with the additional resources made available by the Treasury Board, the public accounts audits were completed on September 15, 1978.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, we can't get public accounts as members of the legislature until yesterday, the day before the budget is to be voted on. The Treasury Board can



have them from September 15, 1978. The people of Saskatchewan aren't entitled to see the public accounts until yesterday, the day before the budget is due to be voted on. We can't see what happened up until March 31, 1978, until March 15, 1979, even though it is presented to the government on September 15, 1978. Irresponsibility! Trying arrogance, trying to manipulate the press and manipulate the people against all semblance of responsibility. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the people are fed up with that kind of government. Unfortunately you were able in October to convince them on other issues, but they will recognize now let me assure you, your arrogance. They will recognize what kind of a government you are. They will recognize what you're doing.

Mr. Speaker, we have brought to the attention of the people of the province of Saskatchewan many, many irregularities in the land bank. We have brought to the attention of the people of Saskatchewan our stand on the Prairie Rail Action Committee. Mr. Speaker, there's another example of irresponsibility. We listened to the Minister of Transportation talk about Prairie Rail Action Committee one Friday. I thought that particular debate was the first time in this session, at any rate, that there was a possibility for both of us as a party to present a united front and a united stand, for both of us as a group, for this legislature, to say look we've been kicked around by Ottawa for long enough. Did anyone pick it up? No. Did anyone bother, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that we should vote and take a united stand? Oh no, except us, we did. Did anyone pick that up? No, what was picked up by some members of the press corps was the fact that the NDP and the Conservatives were playing politics in Saskatchewan. Now you tell me how that could be interpreted as playing politics. The minister, and I suggest the Minister of Transportation, was sincerely presenting his party's views on PRAC. The Progressive Conservative Party sincerely presented our views on PRAC. We suggested that we unite in common cause to prevent that decimation of the family farm in Saskatchewan from happening. You rejected it, and the press, not all but some members of the press, accused this legislature of playing politics.

Now you tell me whether or not appropriate responses are coming from the opposition. The fact is we've raised the issue of the hopper cars in Saskatchewan with reference to agriculture. The minister himself said he's in favor of one railroad getting 2,000 cars — he sure hasn't made any comments about the other railroad getting the same 2,000 cars — pity that he hasn't. He hasn't made any reference to that at all. He says they're in favor of western Canadians spending money for western Canadian hopper cars. I say, nonsense, that's the responsibility of the central government. It's not the wheat boards' responsibility to buy hopper cars in the province of Saskatchewan. We raised that issue. We raised the issue of the NDP's so-called guarantee plan which at the time of the election was a total plan but today is dependent upon the federal government. Slight change! I suggest a big change. I suggest you are renegeing on your responsibilities again to live up to what you say. We've raised the issue of the expenses of the senior citizens nursing home care; we've raised the issue of level IV care, that there's not enough beds in rural areas. We've raised the issue umpteen times on the settlement of the doctors dispute — no action, none whatsoever. We've raised the issue of the cancer clinic — no action whatsoever. The cancer clinic is still without a director to this day. We've raised the issue of the report of Dr. Markham on potash dust exposure. We've raised the issue of the people who were subjected to carbon monoxide fumes, and other fumes, in the Tommy Douglas Building. We've raised the issue of the SGEA (Saskatchewan Government Employees Association) workers and the large number of workers who are out of scope in Saskatchewan. Imagine it — over 2,000 out of scope employees from a so-called union government. No private organization would ever be allowed over 20 per cent of its employees out of scope in any kind of negotiations. Yet this government autocratically and arrogantly treats its own

employees as they would never have a private sector employer do. . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. COLLVER:** — . . . treats them so badly, and SGEA is reporting it right now. Irresponsibility and arrogance. We've raised the issue of the civil service being too top-heavy. As \$18,000 a year salary average in Saskatchewan for government employees and \$13,000 a year average for everybody else means, Mr. Speaker, that there are too many high-priced people in the government employ. There are too many chiefs and not enough Indians, and none of the chiefs will take any responsibility — none of them.

Mr. Speaker, we've raised the issue of the necessity for an expensive employee in the Government of Saskatchewan to run the universities commission at a time when the universities are going to have to cut out journalism and cut out other kinds of courses in Regina and Saskatoon, because they don't have enough money to meet their needs. We raised the issue to say, look, when are you going to show responsibility here? What do we need a full-time paid guy for when you're cutting back over here?

Mr. Speaker, the point is, we've raised all these issues but the press doesn't want to report the fact that we've raised them. That's their business, not ours. We will be reporting it to the people, the people who listen, who are interested enough to come to this Chamber, who are interested enough in the future of their province, who recognize the arrogance of the Saskatchewan government, and recognize the arrogance especially of the group of five, and especially the man at the top. The people recognize that. These matters will be brought to their attention more and more frequently over the coming weeks and months and I challenge the ministers who are going to be presenting their budgets to this Assembly. I say to each and every one of you, you're not going to get any flack from your automatic backbenchers but you are sure as heck going to get flack from us for your irresponsible behaviour.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Are the members prepared to concede that it's 12:30?

**HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General):** — Mr. Speaker, permit me to congratulate you on your election as Mr. Speaker again. I can't say anything special or more than has already been said by all members of the House about your job as Speaker, and I look forward to a continuing good relationship of four years certainly with you in the chair. I want to also congratulate all of the new members in this House who I think delivered by and large very good speeches, maiden speeches; obviously I'm biased because I have a strong feeling toward the mover and the seconder on the speech from the Throne, who I think performed particularly exceptionally well for two new members to the legislature.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, before I sit down (by rule of the legislature in one minute's time) that we have just finished hearing from the Leader of the Opposition yet again for about an hour — I think it was a little over an hour on the Speech from the Throne. And the only observation I would like to make, Mr. Speaker, is this. I fully expected in this session that what we would be hearing from the Leader of the Conservative Party would be a leadership survival speech from the very moment this House opened. But I'm wrong. Mr. Speaker, what we have heard today is a Progressive Conservative Party survival speech from the Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party.

I'm sitting down because I have 20 seconds to say if you look at what he has been saying this last hour of what we Conservatives did in opposition, what we raised, and how we brought this up and how we did all that — it's an attempt to respond to what he knows is existing in the country, an acknowledgment that there is no effective opposition in this legislature and that it is existing outside of this legislature in other parties. It is a Progressive Conservative Party survival speech. Mr. Speaker, I support this budget. I support the admirable work done by the Minister of Finance who I think has packaged one of the better budgets, if not the best budget, that I've seen certainly in my years in the provincial legislature.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. W.E. SMISHEK (Minister of Finance):** — The budget I presented last week was the eighth budget of this New Democratic government. It capped Saskatchewan's achievements of the 1970's and laid the groundwork for the new decade of progress in the 1980's. What was the response, Mr. Speaker, of the Progressive Conservative Opposition to this budget? Well, Mr. Speaker, the member for Thunder Creek treated the House to one of the most reactionary speeches this House has heard since his father's days. He misrepresented the heritage fund. He misinterpreted the provincial borrowing requirements and so did the Leader of the Conservative Party. He ignored the expanding plans and he made a number of preposterous proposals which would destroy the progressive social programs which the people of Saskatchewan supported so vigorously last October.

Mr. Speaker, the remarks of the Conservative members opposite throughout this debate barely deserve to be replied to, including the remarks of the Conservative Leader. Mr. Speaker, I have been embarrassed for them. No one expects brilliance, but total ineptitude is hard to endure.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, in the last couple of days, we have heard a lot of crowing about the Conservative election victory in Alberta from the members opposite. Well, let me say the NDP with one member in Alberta's House mounts a far more effective opposition to the government than all 17 PCs can do in this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, we were subjected to a pretty wild kind of a tirade for the last hour. Mr. Speaker, we also listened to this man who aspired to be a Premier back in October because I don't think he's going to aspire very much longer. He wanted to become the Premier of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, you notice that this man doesn't know the difference between Treasury Board and Treasury benches. Mr. Speaker, he doesn't even know the difference between a treasury branch and I invite him to take a look at the estimates and all the documentation. He doesn't even know the structure of government and he wants to be the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to take the time to restate the facts regarding the budget and in particular, I want to discuss the three areas which the member for Thunder Creek tried to distort and dealt with so ineffectively; the deficit, the heritage fund, and Crown corporation borrowing. Mr. Speaker, members opposite have tried to make an issue out of our planned \$49 million deficit for the consolidated fund for '79-'80. With

respect to this, I would like to make three points, Mr. Speaker:

1. It is the policy of this government to balance its operating revenues in expenditures over a number of years, not in each and every fiscal year;
2. In an overall sense, we're not having a deficit. The consolidated and heritage funds will yield a combined surplus of \$68 million. Our fiscal position remains strong, Mr. Speaker;
3. The hon. member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) was also attempting to leave the impression that the actual deficit for the consolidated fund is in the order of \$377 million — \$49 million as reported by me plus a \$328 million dividend from the heritage to the consolidated fund which he alleges that we have somehow stolen, Mr. Speaker. This is nonsense. As we all know, all the non-renewable resource revenues collected by this government are deposited in the heritage fund. For 1979-80 we estimate that these revenues from oil, potash, coal, uranium and other non-renewable resources will total over \$500 million. Through the transfer to the consolidated fund we are allocating part of our resource revenues for ongoing day-to-day expenditures. We are also using the dividend to stabilize inflow into the consolidated fund and prevent the erosion of essential programs when revenue growth falls off.

Mr. Speaker, we have always used a portion of our resource revenues for current government programs. Prior to 1971, during the Liberal era with which the member for Thunder Creek has some familiarity, 100 per cent of resource revenues, small though they were, were used to finance government programs. Since 1974 we have set aside a portion, but only a portion, of these revenues as our resource revenues have grown. In this budget we are transferring 64 per cent of resource revenues to finance current government programs, not the 82 per cent figure tossed out by the member for Thunder Creek. Mr. Speaker, if one looks at the figures, the transfer to the heritage fund is \$328 million; total heritage funds are estimated at \$515 million. Dividing 328 by 515 is 64 per cent, not 82 per cent. This is simple arithmetic, Mr. Speaker, which the opposition finance critic seems to be unable to perform or comprehend. This is a transfer that can be sustained in the long run, a transfer that represents responsible fiscal management. In Alberta, Mr. Speaker, the figure is fixed at 70 per cent of resource revenues. The resource revenues which are retained in the heritage fund are held therefore, as investment in assets, which will provide social and economic benefits to the people of Saskatchewan well into the future.

Mr. Speaker, we could have balanced the budget, we could have cut back on our ongoing programs, we could have forgotten about our cost-of-living protection package — for example, no senior citizens school tax rebate program, smaller revenue sharing funding for municipalities, or no property improvement grants to renters. We could have done this, but we didn't. We felt these were important programs and we proceeded on the promise of greater revenue growth in the future. Mr. Speaker, we also recognize that we can use the budget as a positive economic tool. Our job creation strategy which is pegged to the capital spending activities of government departments and Crown corporations will provide stimulus to key economic sectors in our economy. It responds to our labor force growth and will help keep Saskatchewan's unemployment rate one of the lowest in Canada. We could have chosen to ignore the role that we, as a government, can take to ensure that the Saskatchewan economy remains strong. The cost of this would have been higher unemployment and massive emigration of skilled labor and a dampening of our overall economic growth prospects for 1979.

Mr. Speaker, we would be following the Conservative way if we had done this. Last October they tried to sell us the better way. Remember that, Mr. Speaker? Well, the people of Saskatchewan rejected it then and they reject it now, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, last year we established the heritage fund, with three main purposes: (1) to permit investment of a portion of all non-renewable resource revenues in income producing assets; (2) to stabilize the revenue accruing to the consolidated fund, (3) to provide a greater degree of legislative control over non-renewable resources. Indeed, the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund has drawn praise, Mr. Speaker, from people right across Canada and outside of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I regret that the Leader of the Opposition has left. Yesterday he asked the Premier, how much is there in liquid reserves? Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the Leader of the Opposition, the liquid reserves are at \$76 million, not at \$10 million. Mr. Speaker, he asked about the financial report of the heritage fund. The legislation requires us to submit an annual report. The heritage fund was established last year. The fiscal year for the heritage fund is the same as for the government, April 1. There will be an annual report, but in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I am glad to table in this House, The Saskatchewan Heritage Fund, What It Means to You, a report and an initial introduction to the heritage fund. Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Conservatives read it and become a little more informed of what the purpose of the fund is and how it will function.

Mr. Speaker, the fact that this government has followed sound resource management policies has enabled us to increase resource revenues. The heritage fund is a direct result of our commitment to obtain a fair share of the resource wealth for the people of Saskatchewan, and to provide a legacy for future generations when our resources are depleted.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard the members opposite talk about the poor performance of the fund. We were subjected to some of it this morning. The Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Collver) and the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) have said that they would invest this money in a different way. Well, Mr. Speaker, we said from the start that we would invest a portion of the non-renewable resources in income-producing assets, long-term investments which will yield substantial revenue to the people of this province for years to come. Our investments in the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation and SMDC (Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation) will provide long-term benefits through dividends. Mr. Speaker, the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) doesn't like those investments. He wants us to put the money in the bank to draw interest. He, like so many of his colleagues opposite (including the Leader of the Opposition), wants to see this money used, not by Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan jobs and development, but by Bay Street, Mr. Speaker, by big corporations to earn profits elsewhere.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — They have, Mr. Speaker, a good example to follow in Conservative Alberta. In that province, the largest portion of the heritage savings trust fund is held in marketable securities; the money is simply invested in bonds and debentures which does not necessarily do a job for the people of Alberta. Mr. Speaker, we believe we

should invest our resource revenues in major developments here in Saskatchewan in income producing assets. . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — . . . that will help Saskatchewan direct its future development. Jobs today, Mr. Speaker, and an assured future income for the people to benefit, not absentee corporations, Mr. Speaker, but the people of Saskatchewan

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, if the opposition took the time to look closely at Alberta's funds, they would see that the Alberta legislature exercises control over, at most, one-fifth of the Alberta Heritage Fund. In practice, Mr. Speaker, this control is more like 4 per cent of the fund's assets. Compare that to Saskatchewan. Here the Legislative Assembly votes on all expenditures, loans and long-term investments of the heritage fund. There is no, Mr. Speaker, cloak of secrecy, only the poor eyesight of the members opposite.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, the member for Thunder Creek and the Leader of the Opposition dealt at length with the province's borrowing plans. Let me correct some of their errors. First, they have stated that the province will be borrowing some \$419 million this year. The budget speech states clearly that we will borrow only \$325 million — \$94 million will be financed to the heritage fund. Then you'll recall the Conservative financial critic talked about the interest the Saskatchewan Power Corporation (SPC) pays on its debt. SPC does indeed pay interest on its borrowings. This is the normal course of events and normal business practice because it is the best approach — one that is followed by every utility, public and private, across North America, Mr. Speaker.

The alternative is to burden the present generation to benefit the future. The money borrowed is spent on long-term capital investment in plants and equipment in order to provide service to Saskatchewan people. For example, SPC borrowed \$120 million in '78. SPC invested this money in gas production, in transmission facilities and electricity generating and distribution systems. In all of this investment, the benefits of which will be felt over the next 30 years or more, had we to meet these from current income, Mr. Speaker. Power and gas bills would have had to go up by 41 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Is this the Conservative proposal? Is this the Conservative way, have the SPC finance its capital requirements out of current revenue? Such a statement simply reveals, Mr. Speaker, the foolishness of the remarks of the member for Thunder Creek, unless the members opposite are even more inept businessmen than recent events seem to have shown. They know that under this government Saskatchewan's borrowing policies have been thoroughly responsible. We have borrowed what we needed to increase opportunities for the people of Saskatchewan and no more.

Mr. Speaker, the Conservative critic used the phrase of fiscal irresponsibility. This morning the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Collver) used the word irresponsible. Well, irresponsibility, Mr. Speaker, is something with which the Leader of the Opposition and the Conservative Party is certainly familiar. Examine their election promises. They said, you will recall during the election campaign, they would eliminate the Saskatchewan sales tax. Remember that promise that they made? That would cost the provincial

treasury \$239 million in revenue each year. They said that they would eliminate the gasoline tax — the cost \$84 million. They said they would replace the NDP resource policies with taxes similar to that in Alberta. That would cost a minimum of \$190 million in lost revenue. The cost of provincial income tax as a portion of the federal tax they said they would reduce to 45 per cent, the revenue loss there, Mr. Speaker, \$56 million. Just taking those items that's \$560 million in lost revenue.

Then you recall the promise they made to introduce a program for senior citizens which would provide the full minimum wage as benefits to senior citizens. That would have cost, Mr. Speaker, \$231 million. We haven't heard a whisper about that in this debate. Mr. Speaker, not a squeak! Are they ashamed of their promises which they made during the election campaign? We haven't heard a word about them! How would this lost revenue and this new spending be financed, Mr. Speaker? Now the member for Thunder Creek (Mr. Thatcher) says by running an efficient government. What nonsense! What irresponsibility! If he fired the entire Saskatchewan public service he would have saved barely \$230 million, barely enough to pay for their extra spending plans, barely enough to pay the promise they made to the senior citizens. What do they intend to do, eliminate the entire public service three and a half times over? It's a preposterous claim, Mr. Speaker! Unless they intend to find that kind of money by cutting grants to third parties, would they destroy the programs on which Saskatchewan social progress is based? Examine the numbers, Mr. Speaker: \$265 million for hospitals; \$85 million for medicare; \$221 million for schools; \$83 million for universities; \$77 million for revenue sharing. How deep would they cut, Mr. Speaker, in order to find the hundreds of millions of dollars they promised? Irresponsibility! Mr. Speaker, it is a word that fits the performance of the Conservative Party to a tee.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SMISHEK:** — Mr. Speaker, since the Conservative critic seems to have overlooked most of expenditure highlights of this budget, as has the Leader of the Opposition and many of their members on the other side, let me review them very briefly.

The cost of living protection package introduced last year has been continued and expanded. This includes lower income tax rates, mortgage assistance for home-owners, property improvement grants for renters, senior citizen's tax school tax rebate, increased family income plan benefits, higher allowances for senior citizens in nursing homes and more funds for student bursaries and a substantial package, Mr. Speaker, to help cope with the cost of living.

This budget also meets most of the important needs of the basic industry, agriculture, Mr. Speaker. This is a good budget.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division:

#### YEAS — 36

|          |           |         |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Blakeney | MacMurchy | Koskie  |
| Pepper   | Banda     | Lusney  |
| Dyck     | Whelan    | Prebble |
| Bowerman | Kaeding   | Long    |

March 16, 1979

Smishek  
Romanow  
Snyder  
Kramer  
Baker  
Skoberg  
Kowalchuk  
Matsalla

McArthur  
Johnson  
Allen  
Vickar  
Rolfes  
Tchorzewski  
Shillington  
Cody

Gross  
Nelson  
Thompson  
Engel  
Poniatowski  
Lingenfelter  
White  
Hammersmith

**NAYS — 13**

Collver  
Berntson  
Katzman  
Swan  
Taylor

Lane  
Birkbeck  
Ham  
Pickering

Andrew  
Duncan  
Garner  
Rousseau

**COMMITTEE OF FINANCE — AGRICULTURE — ITEM 1**

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** — Order, page 14, Agriculture, Item 1

Item 1 agreed.

**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**Geraldine Austring - page.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I have something to say on orders of the day. It is usually considered a very serious and important matter when someone crosses the floor and I want to take this opportunity to inform the members of the House that Geraldine Austring is going to be married today.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Later today she will become Mrs. Mabbott. I want her to know that she has the full sanction of the legislature of Saskatchewan at this time. Now, I am not sure whether she will consider that a liability or an asset but I'm sure I speak for all members when I say that we hope that it's an asset in her thoughts and all the best personal wishes of the members of the Assembly go with her today when she steps forward to become Mrs. Mabbott.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 1 p.m.