

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**March 18, 1980**

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

**WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**MR. A.S. MATSALLA (Canora):** — Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure to introduce to you and to the members of the House 51 Grade 8 students from the Canora Composite High School. They are seated in the west gallery. Accompanying them are their teachers, Ed German and Allen Armit, as well as Ron and Betty Cowley and Alex and Helen Dennis, who are members of the local Kiwanis Club. I want to indicate to the House that the sponsoring of students to visit the legislature is one of the projects of the local Kiwanis Club and I want to commend them for their concern and interest in our young people. As well, I want to express the appreciation to the club, to the teachers and the bus drivers for arranging the trip here. I do hope that our visitors will have an interesting and enlightening afternoon. I expect to meet with them later in the day.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. J.R. MESSER (Kelsey-Tisdale):** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, 37 Grades 7, 8, and 9 students from the Sylvania School in the southern portion of my constituency. I believe they are all seated in the Speaker's gallery. They are accompanied by two of their teachers, the principal Bill McGowan and Dennis Dahlsgo. They are also accompanied by their bus driver, Jack Jackson. It has been customary for this school to send to this Legislative Assembly, during the course of its sitting, a delegation of students to see the legislature in action — to see the democratic process working. I know that all members of this Legislative Assembly will want to join with me in wishing these students well in their visit to the city of Regina, and also in welcoming them to this Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley):** — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of my colleague, the member for Estevan, who is absent today attending the funeral of one of Saskatchewan's oldest residents, Mr. Joe Hill of North Portal who was 102 years old, I would like to welcome 14 members of the special ed. class from the Estevan High School and their teacher, Mr. Wenaus. I hope that you enjoy very much today our deliberations, the debate and that you have a good tour of the building. We'll be meeting you later for pictures and drinks. I hope you have a very safe trip home and that today is a very worthwhile educational experience for you. Welcome to the legislature.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. G. MR. MacMURCHY (Last Mountain-Touchwood):** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce you and to the members of the Legislative Assembly 18 Grade 12 students from the high school at Lestock. They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Barry Kaytor. The members and you, Mr. Speaker, will perhaps recall that Mr. Kaytor brings a class annually to the legislature. I'm sure it's your hope and all members hope that the visit today will be as educational as the visits

usually are.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. MR. G.R. BOWERMAN (Shellbrook):** — Mr. Speaker, I'm more than pleased today to recognize 14 students in the west gallery who are students from Grades 5 to 10 from the Wahpeton Indian Reserve, which is a Sioux reserve in the Shellbrook constituency. They have been here since yesterday. I'm most pleased to welcome them because we don't often get students from the Shellbrook constituency to the legislature, and I am pleased that they have decided to come. As I indicated, the Wahpeton Reserve is a Sioux reserve and the Sioux Indians, as we know from your history, had a very colorful history and yet a very sad history in terms of the allocations of rights and so on to them in Saskatchewan. But we're fortunate in the Shellbrook constituency to have these folks among us and we are glad this afternoon that the students from the school are in the Assembly. We hope that your visit here will be rewarding and that you will understand and perceive that perhaps some day the opportunity for you to be here as an elected representative from that constituency would be welcomed. Thank you very much.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

## QUESTIONS

### Interest Rates

**MR. W.C. THATCHER (Thunder Creek):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, in your budget and in subsequent press comments since then, you have made some rather stinging comments about the federal government regarding its policy on interest rates. You are quoted in the Saskatoon paper as being rather vitriolic in your comments on their allowing the interest rate to float. My question to the minister today is, Mr. Minister, are you suggesting, in light of your statements, that the Canadian interest rates should be pegged below that of the United States?

**HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Finance):** — Mr. Speaker, the member for Thunder Creek makes reference to comments I have made on the federal government's policy of floating interest rates. I have said on a number of occasions that I believe that to be an abdication by the federal government of a responsibility which they have to manage the economy of this country. I suspect that knowing and believing the interest rates will go up, as part of their policy they have chosen to leave it on a floating basis, therefore leaving them in a situation where they can indicate that they are not responsible for increased interest rates. It is our position, and has been our position, that we should not be following necessarily the trend of interest rate increases in the United States. It is not good for our economy. It will increase unemployment. It will stifle development and economic growth in Canada.

**MR. THATCHER:** — Since the minister has just indicated that he is suggesting our interest rates should be below the United States, would the minister then care to comment on the repercussions of such a policy when obviously capital would leave this country in a very dramatic fashion to seek a higher interest rate south of the border? Would you comment on the effect of the devaluation of our dollar which is an obvious repercussion? Would you comment on exactly how you would . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! The minister cannot comment. He may answer a question if the member asks a question. Now if the member wants to ask a question,

have him proceed.

**MR. THATCHER:** — Would the minister then tell us how his government would proceed with a subsequent devaluation of the dollar? How would you proceed to service the hundreds of millions of dollars in debt which your department already has in the United States? And what would be the effect on the provincial budget of having to pay this back with the devalued dollar if the interest rate is, in fact, pegged below that of the United States as the minister has just suggested?

**MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, the present policy that the federal government applies to interest rates in this country, with the argument that it needs to maintain the flow of foreign capital into Canada, will mean in the long run the development of exactly what the member opposite is talking about. It will mean an increased flow of interest payments out of Canada. It will mean an increased flow and an already large amount of dividend payments out of Canada and it will mean a further devaluation of our dollar. Now it is not enough simply for us in this country to decide upon and to take the kinds of policy measures necessary to have a lower interest rate. We must also take, at the national level, the action necessary to assure that we return back to Canadians the control of their economy.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. THATCHER:** — Supplementary question Mr. Speaker, and I must comment that the Minister of Finance does not stick handle nearly as well as the Premier does on this issue. Mr. Minister, since you have in your suggestions deviated rather sharply from the Premier in his comments of about one week ago when he indicated that this was not his feeling, since you have now sided with the federal Leader of the New Democratic Party, Mr. Broadbent, would the minister conceded that Mr. Broadbent's policy and your policy in order to work, would effectively mean sealing the border of the outflow of any capital leaving Canada itself? Would you concede that point?

**MR. TCHORZEWSKI:** — Mr. Speaker, I don't think I want to comment on Mr. Broadbent's comments. He can speak for himself perfectly well.

### **Tandem Axle Trucks**

**MR. R.H. PICKERING (Bengough-Milestone):** — Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the minister responsible for Saskatchewan Government Insurance (SGI). Mr. Minister, there is ever-increasing pressure from the farming community in light of the recent Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities (SARM) convention passing a resolution to seek increased load limits on tandem axle trucks. Does your department have any immediate intentions of allowing tandem axle trucks to be licensed with farm plates?

**HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Revenue, Supply and Services):** — Mr. Speaker, that question should be addressed to the highway traffic board.

**MR. PICKERING:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct that same question to the minister responsible for the highway traffic board.

**HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** — Well, the last time that question was asked it was asked of the Minister of Highways. The minister of the highway traffic board has an answer: we are not contemplating any immediate change

in the licensing of large trucks. It strikes me as strange, Mr. Speaker, that delegation after delegation is asking that more roads be taken into the highway system, for improvement of roads, reconstruction of grid roads. They say they don't have enough money for super grid; they're asking of more money and in the same breath they ask for ways and means of cutting back, and then for yet another subsidy to traffic.

**MR. PICKERING:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the minister not agree that due to the rail line abandonments and, of course, the closures of elevators in such areas, the farmers are forced to haul to alternate points at increased costs and time consumption. Don't you think that this is a matter of great concern to these farmers?

**MR. KRAMER:** — It is a great deal of concern to the farmers and it is a great deal of concern to us. And when the federal government starts to pick up their share of the costs of their decision to abandon rail lines, their decision to enforce greater and great costs on Saskatchewan taxpayers, we will be prepared to talk to them and look at the situation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I'll take a new question.

**MR. PICKERING:** — New question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, would you inform this Assembly exactly why you won't let these farm trucks be licensed as farm vehicles?

**MR. KRAMER:** — Simply, for the reasons I've already mentioned, Mr. Speaker. I think the question has been answered. There is no doubt in the world . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I said that the present revenues, increased costs, increased loads, certainly do not warrant further reduction in the cost and the revenues to the provincial treasury.

### **Financial Burden on Community Rinks**

**MR. D.G. TAYLOR (Indian Head-Wolseley):** — I have a question to the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation (SPC). I have here, Mr. Minister, copies of power bills from the community rinks in my constituency of Indian Head-Wolseley. For your information, the monthly charges are in the neighborhood of \$2,153. And I am sure these represent other communities throughout Saskatchewan. My question to you is this, would you agree that these costs, brought on by the rapid power increase of the government opposite, have put a heavy financial burden on these community rinks in Saskatchewan?

**HON. J.R. MESSER (Minister of Mineral Resources):** — Mr. Speaker, I do not deny that the natural gas and electric rates have gone up for such consumers as skating rinks and curling rinks. I do not believe that it has put such a burden on them they cannot meet those charges. By comparison to other areas of Canada they still enjoy rates that are cheaper than any other jurisdiction. The member should take the time to look at that. We have a peculiar transmission system in the province of Saskatchewan where we deliver power and gas to small communities, electricity to farms that under other circumstances and in other regions of Canada would simply not have that source of power. Not only do we provide that power and electricity, we do it at rates that are comparable and in most instances cheaper.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — A supplementary. My concern is with Indian Head-Wolseley and

Saskatchewan and not other areas of Canada. One of the things brought to my attention is that you have demand metres in these rinks and this is part of the problem as told to me by the local people out there. Would you consider taking demand metres out of the community rinks in this province?

**MR. MESSER:** — No, Mr. Speaker, and I think the member for Indian Head-Wolseley needs a little lesson as to why demand metres are installed in the first place. It is to put about an awareness of how you can use power more wisely rather than just using it recklessly. It is being applied in the commercial and private sectors. They are able to economize on the use of electricity and gas and I suggest that rinks can do it as well. In fact, in a good many communities in the province of Saskatchewan they have been able to get better mileage for dollars expended on electricity and power because of the awareness of the use and consumption of large volumes of power over short periods of time.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — A final supplementary. I am sure the community rinks are not using power recklessly and many have been forced to close down as of early March, depriving people in this province of their rural winter recreation. Will you do something to give these community facilities a preferred rate on your Saskatchewan power?

**MR. MESSER:** — Mr. Speaker, the member says the rinks are forced to close down. I would like to remind the member opposite that a good many of these communities wouldn't have a rink or wouldn't have artificial ice had it not been for the provincial funding to put them in, in the first place.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MESSER:** — By and large there is virtually not a community in Saskatchewan that hasn't received tens of thousands of dollars in order to put into place recreation facilities or to improve them. We have shown beyond a doubt this government is committed to the development of sport facilities and other facilities that are needed by small urban communities.

We are very much conscious that the costs of energy are going up; they are going up not only for Saskatchewan citizens but for other citizens as well. I remind the member for Indian Head-Wolseley, in the instance of natural gas, we rely on almost 70 per cent of our gas to come from the province of Alberta. They dictate by and large what our energy rates are going to be.

### **Budget Speech Printed in French**

**MR. D.M. HAM (Swift Current):** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Minister, I presume that you consider Regina a major centre in our country; therefore, can you tell us how many copies of the budget speech were printed in French? If so, how much did this bilingualism printing cost?

**HON. E.L. TCHORZEWSKI (Minister of Finance):** — Mr. Speaker, as far as I know no copies of the budget speech were printed in French.

**MR. HAM:** — A supplementary to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Since you and your minister apparently believe Regina is a major centre and since you stated in Hansard last Friday, quote:

I think the Government of Saskatchewan takes the view that Canada is a country of two languages and it may well be beneficial in order to preserve Canadian unity that we give Canadians a feeling that they can use either of the two official languages at major centres generally across Canada.

Mr. Premier, therefore, as a leading politician do you only pay lip-service to bilingualism or do you sincerely believe we are supporting the system?

**HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier):** — Mr. Speaker, I believe that it may be useful to make it possible for people whose mother tongue is French to obtain services in a major centre like Regina. I would hope that that would be the case in our post office and I would hope it would be the case in many government agencies in this city.

This does not carry with it the idea that all government documents should be printed in the French language, be they the statutes or the proceedings of this House or the budget speech delivered in this House by the Minister of Finance.

I think that there is a halfway house there whereby we can give to people, other Canadians, a feeling that this is part of their country and they can feel somewhat at home here without reproducing all of our documents in French.

**MR. HAM:** — A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, are you suggesting then that the budget of Saskatchewan is not a major document produced by your government? Is that true?

**MR. BLAKENEY:** — No, I'm sorry I didn't make myself clear. I acknowledge that the budget speech is a major document. I acknowledge that the statutes are major and important documents. I do not acknowledge that they must necessarily be reproduced in the French language. A citizen from Shawinigan Falls or Rivière du Loup, who comes to Saskatchewan on holiday, is not likely to want to read either the statutes or, I regret to say, the budget speech. In any case, if he did have an interest, I would hope we would be able to provide him with a copy, or excerpts from a copy in the French language. I hope we would have that much ability to respond to the concerns of a fellow Canadian, but I do not think that we should necessarily go to the expense of reproducing them all in the French language on spec.

### **Teachers' Contract**

**MR. H.J. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose):** — A question to the Minister of Education. Do you agree that the Government of Saskatchewan has shown their contempt for the locally elected representatives of the parents, the school trustees, by allowing your bureaucrats to settle the teacher contract without having trustees at the table?

**HON. D.F. McARTHUR (Minister of Education):** — No, Mr. Speaker, I do not agree. There are, in the course of any collective bargaining procedures and proceedings, always certain difficulties. It is regrettable, I agree, at the bargaining session last Wednesday that certain trustee members did not see fit to be present during all of the bargaining on that day. However, I do not think it would be fair at all to say that there was any contempt shown by the majority members of that committee. The majority members proceeded with bargaining on schedule as was originally planned according to the schedule of bargaining.

The trustee members, as I understand the situation, had a disagreement over a small

item within the collective bargaining position that was taken by the majority members, namely with respect to an item of severance pay. This item was contained within the general money and pay provisions that are considered to be normally part of our collective bargaining with teachers. I believe that the decision made by the majority members with respect to placing severance pay on the table is an item, when the agreement is concluded, that will indeed assist both school divisions and teachers in the difficult adjustments that are ahead at the present time.

**MR. SWAN:** — A supplementary to the minister. Do you not feel, Mr. Minister, that you have jeopardized the relationship between locally elected people and the government of this province by the action you have taken?

**MR. McARTHUR:** — No, Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that I have in any way jeopardized the relationship between local government bodies and the government. I think it is certainly true that in the course of the continuing relationship we have with school boards, that we are never always in total agreement on everything. There will always be matters on which there is some disagreement. I do not think that those kinds of disagreements, when they related to items such as the item at hand, the question of the severance allowance where a teacher's position is discontinued because of redundancy, need at all be considered to be an item that will do as the members suggests in terms of the relationship between locally elected trustees and the province indeed. Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the hon. member that the Saskatchewan education act provides the greatest degree of authority and decentralization of responsibilities of any education act in Canada. This was confirmed, Mr. Speaker, by an address made by the president of the Canadian School Trustees' Association at a meeting of trustees here not long ago.

**MR. SWAN:** — Final supplementary. Is it the policy of this government to take over the complete operation of the school system and use the school boards as mere pawns in the working relationship out there in the country?

**MR. McARTHUR:** — Mr. Speaker, I had thought that I had perhaps already answered that question for the hon. member. I am sure the hon. member is well aware of the degree of authority and autonomy that our education act does provide to school boards in this province. That in no way guarantees there will not be occasionally certain disagreements. I know that the school boards would want it that way and we would want to take independent positions periodically as well. But, in the matters of authority, autonomy and responsibility, I don't think there is any province in Canada, and certainly no Tory province in Canada that recognizes school boards to the degree we do.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Supplementary to the Minister of Education. Seeing that you feel the trustees should be at the table when the agreement is made, what action are you going to take as Minister of Education in this province, to make sure that all three parties are at the table when agreements are signed in the future?

**MR. McARTHUR:** — Mr. Speaker, I will do nothing to compel trustees to attend bargaining sessions. It will be their choice as to whether or not they wish to attend. Our legislation makes the provisions for collective bargaining. We will continue to operate on the basis of that legislation which, when a majority of the bargaining committee makes a decision, that will be the decision of the committee.

### **Tax on Grain Drying Equipment**

**MR. L.W. BIRKBECK (Moosomin):** — Mr. Speaker, I would direct a question to the minister responsible for revenue. For clarification on taxing policies of this government as it relates to agricultural products. I would refer the minister to a February 11 Leader-Post edition — Devine disputes NDP claims it has been good government. Devine attacked the Saskatchewan sales tax on a variety of items. In particular, he attacked this government on fencing supplies and as a footnote, it might be noted this government taxes barbed wire but not the staples to fasten the wire to the fence. Mr. Speaker, the question very simply with regard to grain dryers — is it this government's policy or is it not to tax grain drying equipment?

**HON. W.A. ROBBINS (Minister of Revenue, Supply and Services):** — My understanding, Mr. Speaker, is that grain dryers are not taxed if they are purchased by a farmer.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Only yesterday I received a call from a constituent, who was marketing an aeration grain dryer. He has checked it out with your department and they have told him that he must charge E&H tax. Obviously there seems to be some discrepancies. Can the minister clear up those discrepancies here in the House today?

**MR. ROBBINS:** — Mr. Speaker, he will pay tax on it if he is going to use it in a commercial sense and dry for other farmers. If he is going to use it solely in the operation of his own farm, he will pay no tax.

**MR. BIRKBECK:** — Further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If in fact an individual in my riding is marketing an aeration type dryer that is manufactured, as example in Southey, does that person have to charge E&H tax to the prospective consumers he is marketing those grain dryers to?

**MR. ROBBINS:** — It depends on what use the grain dryer is put to. It depends on whether it is purchased by a farmer solely for operation on his own farm or whether it's used in a commercial sense.

### **Definition of Farm**

**MR. E.A. BERNTSON (Leader of the Opposition):** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture. I have here a judgment that was passed down last fall on the case of Poundmaker Feeders versus the Minister of Revenue, Supply and Services. The case was a situation where the minister was trying to collect retroactive education and health tax on agricultural equipment used in a feedlot. They lost. The courts defined a farm for the minister. In the finance minister's budget speech the other day, he said that exemptions from sales tax will now relate to equipment used in primary farming activity and the definition of farm will be standardized. My question to the Minister of Agriculture, will you exercise whatever influence you might have in cabinet to seek and ensure the farmers of Saskatchewan that the definition of farm will not be changed in such a way as to satisfy the Minister of Revenue, Supply and Services to the detriment of the agricultural community of Saskatchewan?

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. G. MR. MacMURCHY (Minister of Agriculture):** — I think it should be known to the



members opposite that the plans of the government are to introduce legislation in this session to correct some of the problems relating to farmers and the E&H tax. There will be ample opportunity for the hon. member for Souris-Cannington to debate the policy of the government at that time because it'll be outlined in the legislation.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Will the Assembly agree to move down the agenda to special order and return later this day to complete the balance of the agenda?

## **ADJOURNED DEBATES**

### **BUDGET DEBATE**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski (Minister of Finance) that this Assembly do now resolve itself into the committee of finance and the proposed amendment thereto by Mr. Rousseau (Regina South).

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** — Mr. Speaker, before I adjourned the debate yesterday evening, I had made some remarks regarding some of the situations that we had just lived through in this House and prior to that in the federal election. I will briefly review those in case there were not completely understood by members opposite.

I wanted to congratulate our Minister of Finance on the tremendous budget speech he delivered for the decade of progress it's going to be for Saskatchewan. I said that I was sorry we had to witness the defection of Canadians, Saskatchewanians, to lead a movement to join the United States of America. This new Yankee party has probably not read books like *The Ugly American* and a few others. It seems to me that there's a moral bankruptcy in people who would suggest that this great dominion should be separated to join that country to the south of us. While we have many friends there, the fact of the matter is that they are ruled largely by the multinationals and the Mafia. I certainly don't want to have any part of joining that country and I'm sure that the great majority of western Canadians and all Canadians will agree with me.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KRAMER:** — There is some doubt in my mind at this point in time, when I see the almost-defence across the floor, the bantering and the hugging that even goes on between the two defectors and the members opposite, whether or not they are the advance guard for Lougheed and a new western Canadian party — the stalking horse as it were. It is common knowledge that there is a Dr. Phillips in Victoria who is phoning businessmen and Chamber of Commerce people to ask them to join a western Canadian party. It is not surprising that for a few dollars people who have no loyalty can be drafted to join a party that would take this prosperous western Canada, which the United States needs so badly into it without the usual shot being fired. The Conservative Party — well we had the so-called critic who is not in his seat today. I wonder if he has a used car to sell. He said we should be doing things the Progressive Conservative way. The Progressive Conservative way indeed, Mr. Speaker; you might as well take the biggest, the best, or the worst as you make your choice: Ontario. I said yesterday that the Progressive Conservatives in Ontario charge the people of Ontario — the needy — more in medicare tax nearly \$500 per family and it's still going up.

The total revenue to that great Tory province that uses the Progressive Conservative way is greater from them than it is from the resource companies that have been milking that province of years. Those governments come to us begging for our oil, begging for subsidies, and they refuse to tax the resource companies right in their own province, Mr. Speaker, and proceed to give to those who have, and take from those who have not. That's the Progressive Conservative way.

I can take an example closer to home. We can go right across the border. While they dropped the fuel tax in Alberta on gasoline, they still charge the needy — it's equality at least, it's Tory equality. They charge the poor \$184 for medicare tax and the rich are charged exactly the same. Mr. Speaker, while those generous Tories in Alberta allow the companies with fleets of 300 and 400 vehicles to drive tax free on the roads . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I certainly have and I lost the wheel of my car while I was there too, driving in Alberta. I certainly have. Mr. Speaker, I see I've hit a few nerves across the way.

You know the only value — I said it yesterday as well — of the Tory party in Canada and in Saskatchewan is to get elected once in awhile, and then behave so badly as to make the Liberal look good. Certainly we've had this in history. One of the advantages of having been around for awhile, as I have, Mr. Speaker, is that I can remember the days of R.B. Bennett. I can remember when Bennett was going to blast his way into the world markets. Mr. Bennett was elected; yes, he was elected and he was still doing what these people are today. They haven't changed. Mr. Speaker, trying to meet the challenge of the twentieth century with nineteenth century ideas. They haven't changed. Mr. Bennett was elected and after four years he even made Mackenzie King look good. Then we went on. People were so afraid of Tories that for years they kept inefficient Liberal governments in office — King, St. Laurent — and then along came a person who tried: the late John Diefenbaker. I am almost glad that he went to his reward because it would have broken his heart to see what happened in this House yesterday.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KRAMER:** — I'm almost glad that he didn't have to suffer that disgrace in his party that has occurred in this House, Mr. Speaker. But even John Diefenbaker, who tried to do some things for western Canada, the Bay Street crowd and their bosses wouldn't allow him to perform and after five years he made the Liberals look good. Then came the genius of all time — little Joe the wrangler from Alberta. Mr. Clark and his mukluk partner from newfie land — you know it only took them seven months to make Trudeau look half good. I said this yesterday and I just thought I would repeat it in case the people across the way didn't hear, because they were talking so much. These people are always saying giddy-up to their mouths before they have their brains hitched up. I don't want to overlook a few things which I think I ought to say about this tremendous highway budget we have and those things that are being done . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KRAMER:** — . . . and I want to say take a look at the record. We are looking at Canada. Building and maintaining a transportation system is not easy. It's a major challenge to any government and federal policy has an impact on that action.

Since I have been Minister of Highways I have made submissions to both the past Liberal government and the past short-lived (thank God) Tory government. They have

refused to share in policies which are going to be of benefit to Saskatchewan and western Canada. They have refused to participate in a transportation policy, in spite of the fact that ministers of all provincial governments right across Canada have asked unanimously for a transportation policy which will share in roads of a trans-Canadian nature. If there is any one thing that I can think of which would be good for Canada, it would be a policy which would widen and build better highways in unfortunate parts of Canada that would allow Canadians to move back and forth across this country. They refuse to do so.

In spite of the fact that we have contributed in crude oil and gasoline taxes alone more than \$1 billion the last few years to the federal government, except for bits and dribbles, they have steadfastly refused to participate in the policy.

The Premier has said this and I repeat, last years alone we contributed, as Saskatchewanians, \$575 million from our crude oil alone to subsidize eastern Canada. At the same time the past Tory government, the present Liberal government and the past Liberal government, refused to recognize the fact. Ontario, squealing for more money, refuses to tax the export of power. Both Quebec and Ontario still want the subsidy and still want us to hew wood and draw water for them.

In spite of that money we spent, what did we get? Termination of a federal community airport assistance program, financial constraints on expenditures under the federal urban transportation assistance program, rail line abandonment plans forgotten — they forget they are needed in western Canada to carry commodities, reluctance on the part of the federal government to recognize the importance of a cost-shared program for construction of highways which are national in scope and a lack of recognition of transportation as an instrument of regional development.

If Canadians are to pull together in a strong and healthy nation then surely priority must be given to a national transportation policy which will give Canadians safe and dependable highways as a means of communication. Even from a safety point of view let me tell you that 5,000 to 6,000 people died in Canada last year and will go that way again this year because of motor accidents. But the past Tory government set up, because of a couple of spectacular air accidents and rail catastrophes that only really lost a few people (I am not suggesting they should not) — an investigation. I am saying it is high time they set up an investigation, a commission, that is going to look into road transportation as well, because we cannot afford to lose Canadians in epidemic proportions because of traffic accidents, faulty cars and all that goes with it.

Mr. Speaker, I said last year in the legislature when I presented a budget array, project array — I will table this one. I believe most of you have it — that we would improve many things. All of the highlights of the budget are there and all the projects are in there.

I want to say as well, that because of good weather we were able to extend part of the work that was to be done this year and would normally be done this year; it was done last year when the good weather was on. We actually went beyond our last year's budget. I am not going to give you the details, but throughout the length and breadth of the province, projects were completed to benefit the people of Saskatchewan and get a great return on their tax dollars.

Last years, for instance, there were some measures that we had undertaken, some projects we have undertaken, that will provide co-operation between Alberta and Saskatchewan on construction projects.

Regarding Highway No. 13, we had the Hon. Henry Kroeger down in the fall of last year and we are going to complete a link continuing on from No. 13 to, I believe, No. 502 in Alberta. Both these links will be completed this year.

Likewise, the minister from Alberta and myself signed an agreement to jointly construct an airport and a new bridge on the meridian, north of Lloydminster and at Lloydminster.

Incidentally, the history of this bridge leaves a lot to be desired. For years, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. James W. Gardiner, the late James W. Gardiner, promised this before election and nothing was done. We had the Diefenbaker government. Nothing was done, in spite of the fact that some of the major users of this bridge north of Lloydminster will be the large and progressive Indian settlement, Indian reservation, in Saskatchewan and Alberta north of the North Saskatchewan River.

Of major importance, another project is the widening and improvement of the Yellow Head Highway. Again, no assistance whatever from the federal government has been given and none promised.

The late minister — he is still there, he is back . . . Mr. Mazankowski indicated an interest and he lived right in Vegreville. He said there was money available last year and he would provide it, but we never saw it and he would provide it, but we never saw it and so we are back to square one, asking for assistance on the Yellow Head.

One of the major thrusts of my department has been in the area of safety. The department has made exceptional progress in the area of traffic safety but there are still major challenges ahead. The accomplishments of 1979 are noteworthy. The newest computerized traffic information system in Canada is now operational. It is providing instant recall of information on more than 47,500 traffic accidents which occurred in Saskatchewan in 1979. There were 143 fatalities recorded on provincial highways in 1979, which is the lowest level recorded in the past seven years. The department's aggressive safety programs are paying dividends in the first five years of operation.

The injury accident rate has decreased by 26 per cent and the fatal accident rate by 2.1 per cent. In 1979, 12.5 per cent of all accidents took place on Saskatchewan highways as compared with 70.5 per cent in urban centres, 11 per cent on rural roads and 6 per cent at other locations. The number of accidents due to vehicles hitting roadside objects decreased by 28 per cent simply because seven or eight years ago we undertook a safety program to remove obstacles that were going to cause accidents or death.

The abrupt stop approaches — we have been trying and successfully trying to back slope many of them. There is still a lot to do but the program is paying off and paying off in the best dividend possible, Mr. Speaker, the saving of lives. These accomplishments, I believe, are even more commendable when you realize that our traffic increases by 4 per cent each year, so there is a greater opportunity for accidents to occur. Even in spite of more traffic, there are actually fewer accidents, and especially fatal accidents taking place.

Seat belts have reduced fatalities and injuries from traffic accidents. Before seat belt legislation was adopted, projections indicated that 11,700 people in our province would be injured or killed in traffic accidents in 1979. That projection was reduced 23

per cent with about 9,000 injured or killed. That's a difference, Mr. Speaker, of 2,700 and there's no doubt that seat belts are mainly responsible for that decrease.

We have a seat belt survivors' club which we started about three years ago. There are now 950 people who have written in voluntarily and are carrying certificates as seat belt survivors. There must be thousands more around that have not taken the trouble. There are 250 new ones this year and incidentally, we just enrolled two members from Edmonton, Alberta. In reading the paper last night I believe I read that the Hon. Flora MacDonald was in an accident — a bad accident. She was not seriously hurt but the statement said that her secretary said if it had not been for her seat belt she would have probably been injured or killed. I am going to send a seat belt survivors' certificate to the Hon. Flora MacDonald.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. KRAMER:** — There are many examples around. Four police officers in Moose Jaw were recently enrolled in the seat belt survivors' club. Two of them were involved in a fast movement — hit a lamp post. The car was totally demolished, they had their seat belts on and they survived with no injuries. Two others . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . well, there's still a little carry-over there. I could tell the member for Moose Jaw South of the old gangster days when those Americans used to come up and use Moose Jaw for a hideout in the rum-running days, in the days of Al Capone. Thank goodness we don't have that any more. But two other officers were involved in a high-speed chase. The car they were chasing side swiped them. They went end over end twice. They had their seat belts on, walked away from the accident and are now members of the seat belt survivors' club.

Possibly, you might have even noticed that well-known personalities, Bruce Phillips and Don McQueen, during the federal election on February 17 in Ontario, were in a serious accident. They gave a statement on CTV on the night of February 17. If it had not been for their seat belts they probably would not have been there.

Traffic safety is a major challenge facing society in this decade ahead and 5,000 to 6,000 people in Canada, dying each year is just too much for us to put up with. That epidemic loss is far, far more serious. I would like to see some of these people who are waxing emotional about supposed problems in uranium mining take a look at what is really happening — where people are dying and where the real problems are. It seems to me that these agitators and political opportunists say nothing when it comes to where the real action is in saving lives. We must not rest on past accomplishments.

For instance, in Saskatchewan, we must find ways and means of getting total acceptance of seat belt use by all people, even 75 per cent is not enough. Right now in the front seats, 75 per cent are using them; for rear seats, only 10 per cent comply with the law and only 6 per cent of children riding in automobiles are confined in a safety seat. That is why we are proceeding with mandatory child safety seats in Saskatchewan immediately. We might also find ways for more financial and technical guidance for traffic safety programs in urban areas. There was a 50 per cent increase last year in urban accidents. That is just not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I say we need more help. We need more acceptance. We really need those people across the way who are representatives of the public. They represent the constituencies. I say to them that they are contributing to deaths as long as they continue to say it's wrong to have compulsory legislation. There are people who would

be alive today if it had not been for the leadership of these people opposite in their own communities. I challenge their minds to get on stream and do what is right, rather than what is political.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the people in Canada, in Saskatchewan, have never faced a greater challenge. We need a firm national transportation policy. Increased traffic volumes, change of vehicle types, expanding industrialization, have created unprecedented demand on our transportation system. That is why this year over \$165 million is being provided by the Saskatchewan taxpayers and resources to provide the budget that I am in charge of in 1980.

This year the department will devote \$105 million for capital projects. Efforts will continue to upgrade secondary highways and to continue to work on major bridges and other projects in Saskatchewan. We'll complete the Gronlid bridge . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We'll complete the new bridge at Buffalo Narrows. We'll complete work and commence studies on actual construction on both the airport and Highway 17, the bridge on Highway 17 north of Lloydminster. We will nearly finish another north-south link on Highway 35 and provide another link north and south in Saskatchewan. Highway 13 west from Govenlock. I have mentioned already. We will complete the paving work on the angled grid road at Maple Creek and that will be taken into the highway system.

Here I want to give a bouquet to the recent minister, the Hon. Mr. Fraser, who was in charge of DREE (Department of Regional Economic Expansion) in the Conservative government. I had worked and pled with Otto Lang and others in Ottawa prior to this to do what they should do, and to accept their responsibilities to provide an access road to the Fort Walsh historic site. They agreed, reneged, went back. I want to say this, Mr. Speaker, it only took one visit in late June at which I discussed the problem with the Hon. Mr. Fraser. Within a few weeks we got the money and the agreement to do the capital work on that road from Maple Creek to Fort Walsh. I told the minister that he would receive my personal congratulations if he had the foresight to do this. I want to put it on the records of this House that he was able to see what the late and unlamented Otto Lang could not see, for the benefit of Canadians — not just Saskatchewanians, but Canadians and even Americans who wanted to visit it.

Continue grading and paving on No. 2 as well, from Rockglen to Assiniboia and on to Imperial; Highway 5, and then north of La Ronge and other valuable north-south arteries. Shoulder widening on the Yellowhead between Radisson (it's all finished between Saskatoon and Radisson) and Lloydminster. Many other projects as well you will read in the project array.

I want to say a word about the contracting, the heavy duty construction industry. They are doing a tremendous job for us. They are providing work, both paving and earth work for less per yard, in spite of inflation. A great deal of this budget will go into the coffers to pay the men, the contractors, the businessmen. Despite the tremendous increase in costs we are still going to be providing 115 highway projects this year. Approximately \$47.7 million will be provided out of that \$165 million for maintenance. Department staff deserve a tremendous amount of credit, Mr. Speaker, because year by year these people are finding ways and means to do a better job not only with less money but also with fewer people. In spite of the fact that we have expanded programs these people are still providing better service each year. I could go on. I wish I could but I just got a signal from the whip that I have gone beyond my allotted half-hour.

There are many other things that we could do, and I'll table the speech so you'll have the full benefit of it, Mr. Speaker. It's all the facts and all the figures. I don't think there's any doubt in anyone's mind that I will be supporting the budget. I want once again to congratulate the Minister of Finance for the tremendous job. I want to say how proud I am to be part of this government that keeps its promises and continually keeps coming forward with constructive and sensitive programs for the people of Saskatchewan. It is my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to support the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. G.M. McLEOD (Meadow Lake):** — Mr. Speaker, I want to begin my participation in this debate with a few words of appreciation to you, and to all members of the House on both sides for the encouragement you gave me during my lengthy disability and my absence from this House, and also for your warm welcome back here when we resumed sitting.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — I would also like to express my appreciation to the great number of people from all parts of my constituency of Meadow Lake who expressed their encouragement to me. I assure all residents of that constituency that I am now ready and able to get on again with the job of representing them properly in this House.

Before I proceed further I would like to say a few words of congratulations to our new leader, Mr. Grant Devine, on his election to the leadership of our Progressive Conservative Party.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — I have been personally impressed with Mr. Devine's ability for some time. As I work with him and observe his talents day to day, I can honestly relate to the people of Saskatchewan that they are led by a home-grown young man with exceptional intelligence, integrity and undisputed ability. I look forward to the day when he takes his seat in this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROMANOW:** — So do I. I don't think I'll ever see it.

**MR. McLEOD:** — You will see it Mr. Attorney General, let me assure you.

As of yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I have been appointed opposition critic for the Department of Highways and Transportation so I was listening with some interest to the minister who just preceded me. I thank our leader for that appointment since there is no department which has been more negligent in that portion of the province which I represent in this House.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — I was also interested in listening to some of the remarks by the Minister of Highways. Last Tuesday, March 11 to be exact, the Minister of Highways used the flag of our nation in a show of shoddy partisanship under the guise of patriotism. Such a blatant misuse of our flag, Mr. Speaker, is not only shameful but it is a cheap use of

one of the sacred symbols of this nation. I seriously wonder what the motives of the Minister of Highways were in draping our nation's flag over his desk. Is he that insecure about his record as a defender of this country?

It was interesting to listen to him trying to tie his socialist ideas to the late Rt. Hon. John G. Diefenbaker. That, Mr. Speaker, was a sad and unfortunate example of blatant, political posturing.

We in the Progressive Conservative Party do not have to drape flags over our desks because we believe in the traditions of the late Rt. Hon. John Diefenbaker who was one of the greatest defenders of one Canada and one nation. We don't have to prove our heritage because those of us in the PC party stand behind the concept of one Canada and one nation.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — Mr. Speaker, I would hope that all members of this Assembly would follow the heritage and love of Canada which was so eloquently espoused by John Diefenbaker. In all his years in Canada's parliament the former member for Prince Albert did not have to drape a flag over his desk. I say shame to the Minister of Highways, the so-called dean of this Assembly, for lowering the decorum of this House by using our flag, a flag men have died for; in an attempt to score a few partisan political points.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — While I am speaking about the Minister of Highways, let me relate a particular concern which I have. On several occasions we heard the hon. member for The Battlefords, the Minister of Highways, refer to himself as the dean of this House. That is a tragic misrepresentation of the term when one considers the meaning of the honour of being referred to by others as the dean, when we consider what it has meant in the House of Commons of Canada, for example, where the term has been used in reference to great parliamentarians such as the late John Diefenbaker or Stanley Knowles of the NDP. These were men who earned the respect of their peers from all political persuasions. Mr. Speaker, the self-proclaimed dean of our Chamber does not even command the respect of his own government colleagues in his vindictive, pork-barrelling brand of politics. It certainly has earned him no respect from this side.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — Mr. Speaker, for many years. . . (I hear one of the members say no highways up there for you — I will get to that in a minute) . . . the people of large areas of northwest Saskatchewan have been hearing the Minister of Highways tell us about the highway programs of this government. We have been all too patient in waiting for his promised development of top-grade grid highways in our area. Certainly we have seen the propaganda, the huge signs bragging about the highway improvement and the maps and statistics boasting about the miles of dust free roads. Mr. Speaker, the tar paper thin layers of asphalt apply to many of our rural highways. They may be dust free initially, but they certainly aren't free of big potholes.

Now what are we told by this budget? Capital expenditure by the Department of Highways and Transportation for rural surface transportation — that's the highway's budget the minister was just referring to — is to be reduced by \$6,659,000, almost a



\$7 million reduction in the construction of actual roads. the same department is estimating an increase of \$3,212,110 in program services, which no doubt includes the propaganda machine that erects those huge signs about what the department is doing for the people of Saskatchewan, and splashing the name of the Minister of Highways and Transportation all over posters and tourist brochures, a practice that was questioned last week by my colleague, the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

Reducing the expenditure on construction of rural highways by almost \$7 million, while at the same time increasing expenditures on the bureaucracy and propaganda programs of the department by almost \$3.25 million. Mr. Speaker, that kind of priority is unacceptable. I know the hon. member for Turtleford and the hon. member for Redberry, both members of the government opposite and both representing northwest Saskatchewan ridings, will agree with what I say if they are at all honest with themselves — and what is more important, if they are honest with their constituents. Gentlemen, stand up and be counted! Stand up and admit that the northwest's representative on the front benches of that government, the Minister of Highways and Transportation, the self-proclaimed dean of this House, has been moved to the back of the class in cabinet. The myth that we once heard in the northwest about this minister's clout in cabinet is obviously just that — a myth.

Mr. Speaker, let me give you a couple of examples of the kinds of vengeful, pork-barrelling, blatant practices of this Minister of Highways and Transportation that offend me so much as an elected member of this Chamber, and indeed, should offend every citizen of this province and every member of this House.

Last spring in committee of finance, during consideration of the estimates of the Department of Highways and Transportation, the Minister of Highways referred to a list he had of the work done in the various constituencies. Now, Mr. Speaker, the citizens of Saskatchewan need assurance that their Department of Highways is setting its priorities without political consideration, on the basis of the well-established highway districts that bear no relation whatsoever to the electoral boundaries of this province.

It has come to my attention, Mr. Speaker, that there is a story which is very widespread in the Meadow Lake area. The story allegedly attributes the following remarks to the Minister of Highways and his special assistance, who, I might add, is a former member of this Chamber from the riding that I now represent. The alleged remarks were in this vein, Mr. Speaker: you people here will get nothing from this government, and especially from the Department of Highways, until you learn how to vote. Now, that story is widespread. That is an insult to my constituents and a sad commentary on the attitude of that minister and his government toward the democratic process.

Several years ago I had the honour of serving on a town council in Meadow Lake and we invited the Minister of Highways and his officials to a meeting of council and Chamber of Commerce representatives, to show us plans for the highway development in our corner of the province. Well, Mr. Speaker, the actions of the minister that night did nothing to enhance the image of his government or of himself. He walked into that council chamber and, to the embarrassment of his own officials, promptly demonstrated his contempt for local government and for everyone in attendance by leaning back in his chair and clumping those big cowboy boots on the council table. That type of action clearly demonstrates what the dean of this House thinks of local elected governments and of local input into the needs of particular areas.

Mr. Speaker, let me on behalf of the people I represent here, make a request to the new

Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources that he use any influence he may have with the Minister of Highways — and that influence seems to be considerable in view of the surveys and the possible rerouting of Highway 43 in the Morse constituency, right by the farm belonging to the Minister of Tourism. Would the Minister of Tourism please explain the need for Highways 21, 26, 55, and 4? These are all major access routes to the most beautiful tourist areas now administered by the department — areas like the Bronson forest region north of Paradise Hill and the Loon Lake area, and the Meadow Lake Provincial Park.

Mr. Speaker, last summer the Minister of Tourism expressed concern about the number of Alberta people making use of the outstanding facilities his department is providing. Well, Mr. Minister, you convince your colleague to get his highways act together and I know more of our southern Saskatchewan citizens will discover the great Northwest.

Mr. Speaker, last year in this House I requested that the government opposite recognize the special transportation needs of the agricultural sector in northwest Saskatchewan and of all farmers throughout the province. I ask them again, why will this government not recognize that farmers who must haul their grain, their beef, and other products long distances need good, top-grade roads and that because of long hauls, they need larger trucks and they need the right to license those larger multi-axle trucks as farm trucks so they are not doubly penalized?

My colleague, the member for Bengough-Milestone, raised this in question period today. The answer from this government, from that Minister of Highways was no.

Let me move to another topic that concerns me greatly, Mr. Speaker. It has become self-evident that the Premier and his ministers have consistently undermined and eroded the role of the backbench NDP MLAs. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, they have virtually been relegated to the role of being trained seals and parrots to be used when necessary. I can appreciate the utter frustration of individual MLAs on the opposite side who are not in cabinet. I can somewhat sympathize with the hon. member for Turtleford who said, at a news conference called by the Mayor of Spiritwood last summer, to call for an investigation into a Saskatchewan housing fiasco in that town, and I quote the hon. member:

It's a waste of time for an MLA on the government side to contact the cabinet minister.

And out of that, Mr. Speaker, comes the question. Is that an isolated incident or are the backbench MLAs on the opposite side being ignored by their cabinet colleagues? From the nods of approval over there I gather, sir, that this is a syndrome that affects all of those on the opposite side. Their input, their ideas, their suggestions, their very reason for being in this Legislative Assembly are being ignored by the Premier and his ministers. It is very clear that backbench government MLAs have little or no influence on the policies and decisions of the current administration, that their role as MLAs has been reduced to being bench warmers for the select few. That concept, Mr. Speaker, threatens the whole idea of parliamentary representation. That whole attitude maligns this Legislative Assembly. The rights of the people, the constituents of each MLA, are cut off when ministers of the Crown ignore the input of other MLAs. That, sir, is a dangerous precedent.

Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, March 11, my colleague the hon. member for Kindersley, spoke in this Chamber about the need to reform our parliamentary system. I believe the present government could set an example by expanding the role of their handcuffed and muzzled backbenchers to give them significant input and thus make their role in this assembly more meaningful, not a frustrating experience as the member for Turtleford expressed it.

I would like to conclude my remarks in this debate by re-emphasizing a point I made earlier. We, in the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan, stand for the concept of one Canada and one nation. We know that this province and the other western provinces are going to feel the effects of pressure from central Canada not to allow the West to become economically dominant in this country. And we believe very strongly that the opportunity for western Canada to take a strong position within confederation is here now, if, and only if, the Government of Saskatchewan will join with Premier Lougheed of Alberta and the other western governments in a concerted and collective effort to ensure that our resources remain just that, our resources.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McLEOD:** — That the destiny of western Canada will remain strong because we will have full control of our own resources. That is the key to our future, Mr. Speaker. As we celebrate our 75th anniversary in confederation, Saskatchewan can ill afford a government that would squander away our future heritage. In the final analysis we can do better than that and a Progressive Conservative government would. Mr. Speaker, I will be opposing the motion and supporting the amendment.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SPEAKER:** — I am becoming concerned about the decorum of this Chamber. I was, during the latter part of the last member's comments and I wonder if the members can join with me in a spirit of co-operation and raise the level of the decorum in the Chamber so that we can all hear what the member is saying.

**MR. A.W. ENGEL (Assiniboia-Gravelbourg):** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying I was disappointed in the remarks for the member for Meadow Lake, and the shallow pledge he made that their party is supporting a one-Canada concept and then he turns around and qualifies it if we support the stance that Peter Lougheed is taking. I want to warn that member that recent elections have indicated that you better be very careful how you make these shallow allegations because Doug Anguish indicates that your seat isn't that safe. When I entered this House, Mr. Speaker, for the second time . . .

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — How about your seat?

**MR. ENGEL:** — I'm very pleased to say I'm proud of the oath that I took and that I would swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty. Mr. Speaker, that is a serious path and I am proud to stand behind a Canadian flag and a flag of Saskatchewan and I am not ashamed of my Minister of Highways who has seen fit to drape a flag of Canada over his desk.

The finance minister, Mr. Speaker, in his speech last Thursday afternoon said that this is the ninth budget which has been presented by the Blakeney government since taking office in 1971. I was here in this Assembly to support the very first budget of the New Democratic Party during the 17th legislature. I recall the bold moves that were made in

1972 and every year since to revive the Saskatchewan economy. Slowly and steadily a new economic course was charted for the province of Saskatchewan. The iron grip of the international pulp and paper companies, the iron grip of the oil companies and the mining industry was broken and the charting of a new economic destiny for our province was returned to the citizens of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the citizens of Saskatchewan have done a magnificent job as the profit figures for the potash corporation or the exploration record of the Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation, or the successful drilling record of Saskatchewan Oil demonstrate. Saskatchewan is in sound economic condition and a comparison with other provinces puts us out front of the rest. Saskatchewan cities have lower electrical rates than any city in Canada, with the exception maybe of Montreal. Montreal, it should be pointed out, gets much of its power from Churchill Falls in Newfoundland under a deal signed by the former Smallwood government. Montreal's gain is Newfoundland's loss. The electrical rates for the small communities and farms are difficult to compare because some provinces have mountainous terrain, or vast stretches of forest, but I think, Mr. Speaker, it is fair to compare the three prairie provinces and when you do you find Saskatchewan Power's electrical rates for small cities, towns, villages and farms are well under the rates charged by Calgary Power in Alberta or Manitoba Hydro, just to name two.

Natural gas rates are another area where Saskatchewan comes out ahead of all the Canadian provinces from British Columbia through to Quebec that use natural gas. Only Alberta which sits on top of 80 per cent of this country's supply has lower natural gas rates than ours. And if the last right wing government we had in Saskatchewan hadn't sold off the Hatton gas fields for a fraction of their real value we would have the lowest gas rates in the nation.

Telephone rates, Mr. Speaker, are another service Saskatchewan people get at a very reasonable price. Only Manitoba has lower rates than Saskatchewan, and that is a result of a very progressive policy of modernizations undertaken by the Schreyer government in the early '70s. In some Conservative provinces in eastern Canada telephone rates are double our Sask Tel rates.

Car insurance is another real bargain Saskatchewan citizens enjoy. It does not matter what age group or what type of automobile you choose, the insurance premiums set by Saskatchewan Government Insurance are well under those paid by residents of any other province.

For the young drivers, the saving is particularly valuable. In many cases a 20 to 25 year old man or woman buying car insurance in Saskatchewan saves over \$1,000 annually simply by living here instead of Calgary, or Toronto, or Halifax.

Our health care and social services provide a much more thorough level of care than in any other province. You only have to look at a recent year-long freeze of all hospital construction in Alberta, or the decision by the Davis government to eliminate 900 hospital beds across Ontario by the end of 1980, and cut another 1,100 hospital beds in Metropolitan Toronto alone, over the next three years.

From the four year old child who is enrolled in the dental plan to the senior citizen who gets a \$650 grant under the senior citizens' home repair program, Saskatchewan provides its citizens with the best, most comprehensive health and social service of any province or state in North America.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — And that is far from being out in the dark.

Mr. Speaker, those additional services and universal programs we have here in Saskatchewan are delivered in a very efficient way. The budget speech points out that the civil service of Saskatchewan has not increased in number in the last six years. In fact, Statistics Canada figures record that if you take the number of provincial government employees as a percentage of the total provincial population, you get a lower number in Saskatchewan than you do in five of the provinces with Conservative governments — that includes Alberta, Mr. Speaker. The Conservative government of Alberta has 2.5 per cent of the provincial population on the public payroll — 2.6 per cent, Mr. Speaker. What have we got here in Saskatchewan? Only 1.9 per cent of the population.

Right wing politicians can talk all they like about the massive size of government bureaucracy and civil servants and red tape, but they will be talking about some place other than Saskatchewan, because, as with so many other things, Saskatchewan has been leading the way in building a slim, trim and efficient civil service.

Another area that some provinces seem to find difficult to handle is public borrowing. Now, as you know, Mr. Speaker, all governments borrow money to finance certain projects or in some cases even to finance the day to day operation of government. Some provinces, however, let their borrowing get out of hand and build up a huge provincial debt worth hundreds and even thousands of dollars for every man, woman and child in the province.

I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to be able to say that the provincial per capita debt of Saskatchewan is the second lowest in Canada — second only to Prince Edward Island whose borrowing needs are not that great.

Saskatchewan's per capita debt is much lower than Alberta's, or Ontario's, or New Brunswick's, or Nova Scotia's. It is less than half as large as the public debt in Manitoba or in Newfoundland. All of those provinces have Conservative governments, Mr. Speaker, arranging their financial affairs.

Another area, Mr. Speaker, where our province has been putting the others in the shade is in the area of job creation. Over 90,000 new jobs have been created in this province since the New Democratic Party took over the reins of government in June of 1971. That has very important side effects, Mr. Speaker, because it means that Saskatchewan, month after month, records the lowest, or the next to the lowest unemployment figures in the nation. These low unemployment figures are maintained month after month, year after year, despite the fact that our provincial population has been growing in the last five or six years by about 10,000 people annually. Young people from Tory provinces have given up looking for jobs at home and have headed for Saskatchewan to find work.

Mr. Speaker, let me say a few words on the subject of our provincial population because it has become an issue of late. Recently the Leader of the Conservative Party, Mr. Devine, has been using as a topic for his speeches the them: Bring the kids home. It was difficult to turn on the radio or the television, or to pick up a newspaper for a while

without hearing Mr. Devine in a sombre tone talk about the terrible decline in our provincial population, about the horrible toll this was taking among our young people, and how a Conservative government would bring the kids home.

I would like to give Mr. Devine a brief history lesson using Statistics Canada census figures. Between 1900 and the great depression of the 1930s the population of Saskatchewan grew every year; by 1936 the population had reached 931,500 people. Then it went into a sharp decline as families moved out of the dust bowl. In the 1940s the decline continued as segments of the population left to go to war or to work in defence plants in the East. It was not until the postwar years under the CCF government of Tommy Douglas that people began to move back to Saskatchewan. That trend continued until 1968 when the provincial population had reached an all-time high of 961,000. Then the economic policies of the Thatcher government began to have their greatest impact on Saskatchewan. In 1969 and 1970 more people left Saskatchewan than during any two of the worst years of the great depression. It took until 1974 to reverse the flow of people out of the province, but since 1974 there has been a steady increase in population of almost 10,000 new arrivals annually — some years as high as 14,000. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to take note that the Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics estimates that sometime this spring the population of Saskatchewan will surpass the 961,000 mark setting an all-time record high.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ENGEL:** — Mr. Speaker, I think it's pretty clear that the New Democratic Government of Saskatchewan has been bringing the kids home. I'm not one who thinks we should aim to have a two million or three million population in our province. That would adversely affect our environment and our quality of life. I do, however, want to see enough people come to Saskatchewan to keep our rural communities viable and to help maintain the social fabric of our province. That is something that all of us believe in.

Before I leave the topic, I would like to provide Mr. Devine with one more bit of information. Between the years 1944 and 1964, the CCF years, the population of Saskatchewan increased by 106,000 people. In the Thatcher years from 1964 to 1971 the population fell by 15,800. In the NDP years from 1971 to the present day the population of Saskatchewan has increased by more than 35,000. In fact from 1974 until today the increase was 61,000 people. Again I say the Blakeney government has kept the kids at home and has brought them back. Perhaps Mr. Devine should spend less time trying to construct phony issues and a little more time in keeping his own MLAs at home because the only population decline I have heard of recently is the one taking place in the Conservative caucus.

Mr. Speaker, because I like to see the strong economic growth and sound financial management continued in the province of Saskatchewan, I will be voting against the amendment and supporting the budget.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**HON. D.F. McARTHUR (Minister of Education):** — Mr. Speaker, I would first wish to congratulate the Minister of Finance on the budget that he has presented to this Assembly. It is, first of all, a sensitive budget responsive to the economic and social needs of Saskatchewan people. It is also a responsible budget, Mr. Speaker, provide as it does a balance between revenues and expenditures while providing

for a reserve in the heritage fund. This reserve will be used to reinvest in resource development and they will extend ownership by our people in resource industries.

That, Mr. Speaker, is what this country needs today. All across this country, Mr. Speaker, we see Liberal and Tory governments, mostly Tory, but some Liberal, cutting social programs while at the same time letting government deficits increase because they will not demand of multinationals that they pay their full share. On top of this, Mr. Speaker, these same governments are letting more and more of our resources and industries fall into the hands of foreign owners, further weakening our national economy. Not so here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Our approach demands a fair return for our resources — Saskatchewan and Canadian ownership of resources and industry and responsible fiscal management.

The rewards for sound management are obvious. We are able, here in Saskatchewan, to provide our people with the finest, most comprehensive array of social programs existing in any industrial country of the world today. Mr. Speaker, I know that all members will agree with me that our province is entering an important stage in its history. This year we, as a people, are assessing our past achievements, examining where we are today and why, and looking forward to a future built upon the rich, shared experiences of the past. Any review of our history in assessment of where our province stands today can only result in a sense of profound optimism about the future of Saskatchewan. I say this knowing full well that these are difficult times, difficult times generally for economies, governments and peoples throughout the world, but I nevertheless say it with conviction.

We in Saskatchewan have a proud history of facing difficult times. We have a proud history of taking courageous steps to control our own destiny so that our people, our communities and our governments continue to build secure and rewarding lives for each other in a co-operative commonwealth, here in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, our social and economic prospects for the 1980s are testimony to the fact that we, as Saskatchewan people, have done an excellent job in laying a prosperous foundation for our future.

The NDP government of Premier Blakeney has provided courageous and determined leadership in laying that foundation. But, of course, with the blessings of a resource-rich province and a ground work of excellent social and economic legislation come responsibilities. We are duty-bound to use our rich human and financial resources to build in Saskatchewan a society which offers equal opportunity and guarantees human dignity to all citizens and it is our intention to do so. We will continue to devote the fruits of our progressive resource revenue policies to this job.

Mr. Speaker, others in this House and across the country suggest that we take too much from our resources and leave too little for multinational corporations. They would take more from individuals and families, the common everyday working people of our province, while leaving the rich returns from our non-renewable resources to a few private outside interests. We believe, on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan's resources belong to all the people of Saskatchewan and that the benefits should go to the people and not to a wealthy and powerful elite. And we intend to see that resource earnings are kept here in Saskatchewan to be used to invest in future developments owned by our people and to provide improved social programs and reduced taxes for our people. That is what this government is all about. Mr. Speaker, in 1978 the people of Saskatchewan strongly supported this direction for our

province. They believed in our program for economic and social progress — the foundations of which this government laid in the 1970s. They gave us a strong mandate to carry on this development for the benefit of the people into the 1980s.

As I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, we are now entering not just a new decade, but a new stage in our history with the full expectation of rapid and diversified economic development through the 1980s. This new stage promises to be one which presents us increasingly with the challenge of adapting to rapid technological and social change. If we plan appropriately and govern our affairs properly, this new decade can truly be a decade of economic and social progress unparalleled in our history. To bring this about we must learn not to just live alongside rapid change but to truly live with it, making people and their interests the masters of change. In order to do so we must have progressive social programs and adaptability and change in our social institutions in order to meet the challenges we will face in Saskatchewan in the 1980s and beyond.

I can think of no time in Saskatchewan's history when it could be more exciting to be Minister of Education and Minister of Continuing Education. The role of education in helping society control and manage change and development is central. Our education programs from preschool right through to adult training will have a profound effect on the kind of society we build for ourselves in this next stage of growth. As with all aspects of our social and economic life, planning will be important. We must anticipate and respond to the demands which will be placed on our education system by new economic and social conditions. In so doing we must be sure to adhere to basic principles which put children first.

What are some of these principles, Mr. Speaker? First we must assure that there is full and universal accessibility. No one can or should be denied a quality education because of personal circumstances, because of where they live or because of their social-economic background.

Second, Mr. Speaker, we must assure quality. Education has the power to create opportunity in a way that no other aspect of social experience does. Education must create these opportunities equally for all people, regardless of class, sex, race or socio-economic background.

Education must play a fundamental role in attacking poverty and discrimination. That, Mr. Speaker, is the most sacred of trusts. If education fails in this respect, then education fails in its most important social responsibility. Poor people, people living in rural and remote areas, native people, women, handicapped people, minority groups — all have the right to expect that education will meet this responsibility.

Third, Mr. Speaker, the system must be flexible and adaptable to change. Needs and circumstances differ greatly for different people and different communities and also change as circumstances change. We must constantly guard against placing institutions and their needs and aspirations ahead of the people they serve.

Fourth, Mr. Speaker, is the principle of public participation. Education is everyone's business. It is not the private preserve of anyone, whether it be government, trustees, teachers or whoever. Everyone has an interest and everyone who wants to must have an opportunity to be heard.

Fifth, Mr. Speaker, is the principle of planning. The world around us is changing rapidly, scientifically, technologically, economically and socially. In all these ways our



provincial society is undergoing rapid change. Education must not only react to such change but it must anticipate such change. That cannot be done without effective planning.

Sixth, Mr. Speaker, education must contribute to a deeper and richer understanding of the unique heritage and special nature of our country and province. If we, as a people, lose our sense of pride and self-worth because we do not understand what it is which makes us unique and special, then all of the immense possibilities which the future holds will never be realized. All of our energies will be spent on tearing ourselves down, other than on creating and building the bright new future that is clearly within our grasp.

During my tenure as Minister of Education and Continuing Education, I intend to be guided by these principles. It is my conviction that these principles, infused into each aspect of our education system, will provide us with a series of co-ordinated educational services in Saskatchewan which will help build a free and just society, a society committed to human rights and equal opportunity.

This budget, Mr. Speaker, contains many important provisions that will help translate these principles into reality.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment now to summarize for this Assembly the actions my two departments will be taking this year to promote these principles.

To counteract the barriers to accessibility and equality of opportunity which stem from the urban poverty and cultural alienation of our native people, the departments will embark on an ambitious and comprehensive set of programs. These will include a community schools program to improve relationships between parents and their schools, an off-campus native teacher training program, development of special and related curriculum and teaching materials, and a native job training and placement program.

Besides the urban barriers to overcome, Mr. Speaker, there are rural barriers, such as distance from educational services, sparsity of population and for adults' lifestyles which do not always allow time or mobility to enroll in traditional educational programs. To begin to overcome these obstacles to accessibility in our rural areas, Mr. Speaker, my departments will undertake, first, to develop a vocational outreach program designed to decentralize the delivery of vocational training programs and make them available to people all around the province; secondly, to present post-secondary courses in a modular format so people can study part time or on a flexible basis and thus not be forced to disrupt their work or home situations to take on full-time study; thirdly, to devote special funds to support small rural high schools to ensure a quality educational program even though enrolments may reach very low numbers in some of these schools.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the rich variety of minority cultures in Saskatchewan, my department will increase its program assistance in the areas of French language and multi-cultural education. It will also take steps to improve the education system's support of a more positive role for women in our society. My Department of Continuing Education will introduce a number of new training programs in the province. We will provide increased financial assistance to post-secondary students to ensure financial obstacles to higher learning are kept to an absolute minimum. We will increase our funding for special education services for the handicapped students of Saskatchewan,

continuing our leadership role in Canada in this very important educational field. We will increase our funding for school divisions, universities, community colleges and technical and vocational institutes, ensuring that, as we work to make these educational institutions more responsive to the needs of Saskatchewan people, we will continue to provide them with the funds needed to carry out their high-quality programs and services.

Mr. Speaker, my two departments plan other measures as well to make this first year of the 1980s one which continues the development of an educational system which truly serves the people in every sense of that word.

These are the highlights, Mr. Speaker. I would now like to turn to speak in more detail about some of the challenges ahead related to these things and some of the programs we have planned for this year to meet these challenges. Let me speak first of elementary and secondary education.

Let me reiterate something I have already said — namely, that as we chart new directions and approaches, we must have a high level of public participation in planning an education. Underlying all that we do in education in the 1980s, Mr. Speaker, must be these commitments: to discuss with the public the problems we face; to involve them in the development of the programs we intend to undertake; and to make sure they are part of the delivery of these programs wherever possible. This attitude in our part can help immensely to improve the design of our programs and to increase the likelihood of them being accepted and effective. Many of the programs I will describe later include special provisions to increase public involvement in educational planning and decision making.

I should like to inform this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, that I have recently taken steps to create a planning capacity in the Department of Education to assist in developing and making work the kind of participatory planning I consider so essential. The budget estimates for this year reveal a new division within the department to be responsible for policy, planning and the initiation of special projects. This division will, in consultation with teachers, trustees, parents and other interested parties, help to plan new educational strategies to respond to some of the difficult questions that will be facing us. As will be seen from the new programs I will talk about today, this new planning and consultation capacity in my department is already demonstrating its worth.

Mr. Speaker, the programs in elementary and secondary education which I will announce today address three aspects of today's situations: (1) the need for special measures to deal with special problems of our rural areas associated with declining enrolments and sparse population, (2) the need for special measures to deal with poverty and discrimination, (3) the need to anticipate and respond to change.

The economic and social development of Saskatchewan in the 1970s has inevitably included a continuation of the trend toward larger cities. Our government has developed many programs to enhance the fabric of rural life and which have been, in large part, very successful. However, stresses continue to be placed on smaller rural schools because of the sharp decline in family size since the mid-1960s and the consequent decline in student numbers within our school system. Therefore, I intend to introduce a significant change to our foundation grant payment system to school boards this year in order to help accommodate the trend to smaller schools in some rural areas. I will explain this in more detail in a moment.

In addition, we intend to proceed with a comprehensive program designed to assist Saskatchewan's urban poor, particularly native people, through improved education. In addition to native people we recognize that there are a number of other minority cultures in our society that demand and deserve positive government programming. The education system has a key role to play in this process. Our programs during 1980-1981 will have us taking an active part in the support of this province's many cultural minorities.

I would like now, Mr. Speaker, to outline in more detail the programs and activities of my Department of Education. First of all, native education programs. My department will begin a series of long-term programs costing a total of \$1.45 million this year to combat alienation and high drop-out rates on the part of native students in our urban schools. We must conclude that the current education program is not serving the native child when we note that statistics show native children are generally one to two years behind their non-native counterparts, with a drop-out rate of more than 90 per cent.

A fundamental change must take place in the relationship between the school system and the community, particularly in urban areas, if this cycle of alienation, underachievement and poverty is to be broken. It is my belief that the three main aspects of the schooling process — school environment, school curriculum, and community school relationships — must be restructured to deal with this situation.

Regarding school environment, we must change the hidden curriculum which subtly shapes children's sense of self and their social values and attitudes. This unspoken model now tells children that textbooks and certified teachers and the like, not community people or resources, constitute the things we learn from. Much of our school curriculum content is currently biased in favour of the non-native world. It too often either distorts or omits mention of the contributions, realities and position of the native community as well as of other minority groups. Insufficient contact between the school and community, particularly the native community, contributes to a situation of misunderstanding and lack of sensitivity. Without an understanding of a child's family and community life many teachers experience difficulty in the diagnosis of the student's learning situations. For students, the lack of continuity between their home and school worlds makes the transition between the two extremely difficult.

Learning new things should be based upon what is already known. Insufficient school and community contact often leads to a counter-productive separation of living and learning for native children. To help reduce this whole system of self-perpetuating alienation, I am pleased to announce the following new activities; first, the piloting of a community school program. I have undertaken consultations with the school boards in Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Regina and am pleased to announce support, in principle from these school divisions for a new community school program that will be piloted this year in our major urban centres. My department will provide a total of \$654,000 this year in additional funds to help operate community schools. These will be special schools with high native student enrolment which are designated by the participating urban school boards for participation in the community school program.

Each school selected to take part in the program will employ a community school co-ordinator and four para-professional native teaching associates, in addition to its regular teaching and administrative staff. The program will also provide for new approaches to be developed within the school through the use of local school curriculum grants supervised by school-parent committees. We will also experiment

on a pilot project basis with a school nutritional program. The community school program will provide the basis for increasing the knowledge and leadership potential of many local residents and the means for increased participation of the school in the affairs of the community.

Mr. Speaker, a major aspect of the solution to native student alienation must be an increase in the ability of parents to define the kind of education their children receive — its environment, personnel, curriculum and community relations. The community school co-ordinator will act as the catalyst between the school and the community to initiate this kind of involvement.

Two programs complementary to the community school program are the native teacher associates' program, and a school nutrition program. The native teaching associates' program, designed to increase the presence of community people within the classroom setting, will significantly alter the cultural environment of the classroom and through the teaching team method, will also alter the teaching model students experience. It should also bring an important source of knowledge about the local community into the classroom.

Due to the close relationships between poverty and undernourishment, and between undernourishment and learning problems, a school nutrition program will be tried on an experimental basis this year in a few selected schools. The program will encourage the community and the school to share in a solution to that shared problem of poor nutrition and lack of nutritional education and understanding on the part of many students.

Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to further consultations with the school boards and native organizations in our major cities over the next few months. If the discussions proceed well, which I am confident they will, we may see the implementation of the community school program in as many as 10 community schools in this province this fall — perhaps four in Saskatoon, four in Regina, and two in Prince Albert.

I want to turn now to the question of teacher training. My officials are in the process of planning, with native organizations and the two universities, the establishment of an off-campus native teacher training program. This program, to be known as SUNTEP (Saskatchewan Urban Native Teaching Education Program) has the major objective of ensuring that native people are adequately represented in urban teaching positions. It will be allocated funding this year of approximately \$312,000 from the Department of Education, and \$165,000 from the Department of Continuing Education.

I expect the program to begin this fall at off-campus centres in Saskatoon and Regina with about 30 students in total, and a similar number of students each succeeding year. The program may expand at some future time to a location in Prince Albert.

My officials and I have worked closely with the Association of Metis and Non-status Indians of Saskatchewan in developing this program, and with native people through the Gabriel Dumont Institute, which I will describe in more detail later and which will also play an important role in it.

At present, Mr. Speaker, there are few trained teachers of native ancestry, especially in urban areas, and natives face physical, financial and psychological barriers to enrolling in the traditional teacher training programs in our province. In addition to

academic instruction leading to a standard A teaching certificate, the SUNTEP centres will provide native students with counselling, classroom experience, and a wide range of resources. SUNTEP will enable native teacher-training graduates to combine their technical and professional expertise with an intimate knowledge of cultural and community values. It will also provide the basis for strengthening community school relations, and for developing an improved curriculum for native students all over Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the final new native education initiative I have to report for the Department of Education is establishment by September of a native education branch in the department. The purposes of this branch, to be allocated about \$480,000 this year, will be to co-ordinate the development of programs and teaching materials for native students. It will undertake the research, planning and policy development necessary for the implementation and administration of programs for native students throughout the province. One of the main tasks will be the development of curriculum and resource materials in native studies and languages. Native culture and history has been misrepresented in the school curriculum in the past largely because of lack of instructional resources developed by and for native people. As part of our overall program to assist native education we have to work seriously to correct this misrepresentation and to develop resources which will enhance the pride of native students in their own culture.

Mr. Speaker, these are the programs to be undertaken by my Department of Education this year in an effort to work with native people to counteract the cultural and social alienation and urban poverty which has been developing in our major cities. These programs, together with another program I will announce for the Department of Continuing Education and with the other government programs related to native people will, I am confident, stimulate the kind of social development we will need in Saskatchewan in the 1980s if we are to have a truly progressive co-operative society.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McARTHUR:** — Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier that we recognize and will attempt to strengthen our province's multicultural heritage. We will do this in a number of ways.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Co-operative society is your goal?

**MR. McARTHUR:** — Co-operation is our goal — co-operation in all respects.

In the area of French language education, Mr. Speaker, my Department of Education is establishing an official minority language office to work with Saskatchewan Francophones and schools in order to improve French language education in the province. The office will develop policies, curriculum, resource materials and professional support programs to assist French language education and particularly education taking place in the designated French language schools.

Mr. Speaker, this new service continues our commitment to improve the school system's support of this important aspect of Saskatchewan culture. We have already made headway in this area. In 1970-71 there were 628 students enrolled in designated French language programs. Today there are 2,364. Our education act recognizes this commitment and extends to all residents the right to have their children educated in either English or French. This new office will immensely strengthen such educational programs.

Mr. Speaker, this commitment extends to all Saskatchewan minority cultures. For this reason we will establish a new full-time position in the department for a multicultural consultant to work to promote the study of languages other than English and French and to improve multicultural programming in our schools. The department has had a multicultural consultant through a seconding arrangement but to ensure ongoing programming in this area it is time to make the position a permanent part of the department establishment.

Multicultural programming will be improved in the school curriculum generally so all students can become more aware of Saskatchewan's rich ethnic heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned in my earlier remarks that education has played a key role in the further development of women's active role in society. I am pleased to state my department will be taking positive steps in this direction in the coming year as well. We will be looking at further methods of eliminating the sex bias from school resource materials and of helping teachers become more aware of and sensitive to this problem. Mr. Speaker, as part of the process of planning and dialogue in this regard I am pleased to inform you the Department of Education and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation are planning a provincial conference on women and the education system to be held in Regina in late April. This will provide educators with an opportunity to discuss this important issue and it will be the impetus for further action in this area from all sectors of the education system.

This government firmly believes in developing and preserving a strong sense of awareness and pride among our people of their Saskatchewan and Canadian identity. As Canadians we recognize the special role which education has to play in ensuring our culture does not get swallowed up by the culture of our huge neighbour to the South. We must recognize and pass on to our children those things which make us Canadian, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McARTHUR:** — To make certain we fulfil that role as best we can, I have directed we undertake a systematic review of the Kindergarten to Grade 12 social studies curriculum in our schools. The new program when completed will significantly extend Canadian and Saskatchewan content and provide an opportunity to study relevant, current issues. It will also extend the understanding of our students of significant social themes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like now like to review for this House the highlights of the 1980-81 foundation grants to school boards.

The foundation grants formula, as it has been developed by this government, is a calculation based upon many factors in order to get the appropriate operating grants to each school division in the province. The formula is primarily geared to enable every school jurisdiction in Saskatchewan to provide a quality school program without requiring an unduly high local tax rate. It respects the local autonomy and responsibility of school boards by providing unconditional grants with no penalties for boards achieving economy and no penalties for boards offering a reduced level of programming and lower taxation rate, if that is their choice.

We also recognize that no formula contains every imaginable contingency so we have

provided special factors as part of the foundation grants formula to provide for hardships due to circumstances beyond school boards' controls. These special factors include a sparsity factor for geographical hardships, an enrolment decline factor and this year, a new factor — a small rural high school factor.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the grants formula provides that school boards, with the ability to pay more because of their higher local assessments, should pay their fair share of education costs. Conversely, the formula ensure that school divisions with a lack of locally raised funds, because of lack of assessment wealth in the area, do not have to suffer unduly and thus are still able to maintain a quality educational program.

It also provides, in cases where the local assessment base grows rapidly — as is the case in some of our major urban cities — that more provincial grants can be devoted to those boards with smaller assessment bases and smaller growth in such assessments.

The aspect of the grants formula is displayed in this year's estimates by a greater increase in funding to rural boards than to urban boards. Rural school divisions have, for the most part, been more severely affected by the decline in school enrolments.

Overall, the operating grants to be paid to school boards in 1980-81 will total \$236.6 million, which represents an increase of 9 per cent per student from last year. This year our government will pay 55.7 per cent of the cost of school operation in Saskatchewan. Compare that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to 45.8 per cent in 1971 when this government took office.

Looking into percentage increases, based on the type of school division, there will be a 10.5 per cent increase in the per pupil grant for rural divisions, a 7.49 per cent increase for town, village and small city divisions, and a 5.65 per cent increase for major urban divisions.

These differences in funding partially recognize the special attention we are giving to the needs of rural areas. They also result from the fact that the urban tax base is growing rapidly in our cities at present thus providing urban school boards with more locally raised money for education spending.

Our foundation grants system has worked very well. The previous Liberal government based its grants largely on the pupil-teacher ratio. Our foundation grants system provides the basic level of funding in relation to the number of students in the system. We have increased grants to school boards sufficiently during this period of declining enrolment to provide a much improved ratio of teachers to students, thus greatly enhancing the quality of our educational system. Indeed, had the old system of funding been maintained, as hon. members on the other side of the House have sometimes seemed to indicate that they would advocate, we would likely have more than 2,000 fewer teachers in Saskatchewan today compared to eight years ago. But, indeed, the facts today show that the number of teachers under our foundation grants system has remained constant and has grown slightly.

I am convinced, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that our foundation grants system does an excellent job of preserving a high quality educational program for Saskatchewan students.

A most pressing concern, in terms of educational funding, as we enter a new decade of change in our province, is the effect that declining enrolments could have on small

rural schools. School enrolments are declining in most jurisdictions in this province as the baby boom works its way past the higher grades. The total provincial enrolment dropped to 199,874 this year from 203,806 a year ago. But enrolments are declining much more rapidly in certain rural schools and this is giving rise to special concerns.

The conventional wisdom says that when a school population gets so low that it becomes economically or educationally untenable, we should close that school and bus those students to another school. This particular wisdom breaks down when we are dealing with rural areas with some small high schools so far from another high school that busing is out of the question. Mr. Speaker, this government will not let the quality of education in our rural high schools suffer. I am therefore pleased to announce a new school payment that will be introduced this year. We have committed \$1.5 million this year in special funding for school divisions facing special difficulties because of small schools. This, Mr. Speaker, is another Saskatchewan first, and it is an extension of our continuing commitment to support quality programs without creating inequitable local tax burdens.

Turning to the specific grants to school boards, Mr. Speaker. Enrolment drop and sparsity factors combined will be maintained at the current level of \$11.1 million providing for enrolment drop funding to urban boards at \$1.4 million and enrolment drop and sparsity factor funding for rural boards of \$9.7 million. The estimates provide \$35.6 million for continuing support for rural student transportation — an increase of 11 per cent over last year, and nearly \$0.5 million for urban transportation — and increase of 13.5 per cent. For special education services we are providing \$18.3 million — an increase of 18.8 per cent over 1979-80. The conditional high-cost grant for severely handicapped students has increased by 10 per cent to a rate of \$5.493 per student. Since we have increased the number of students receiving this funding by more than 400 students this year, our total spent in this area will increase by 38 per cent. Low-cost grants for mildly handicapped students, up nearly 9.2 per cent this year to a total of \$10.5 million, will continue to be provided unconditionally.

I am aware, Mr. Speaker, of a growing concern expressed by some school boards and public groups that all educational special funding should be made conditional upon the provision of specialized programs and services. My department will be giving serious study to this possibility during the year, and if it is determined that the conditional grant approach would be in the best interests of all handicapped students, it will be introduced in 1981 which is, by the way, the International Year of the Disabled person. The department will increase funding of second language programs to \$1.31 million this year from \$1.16 million last year, and will extend the second language grants program to include the teaching of English as a second language.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that during the last sitting of this session this Assembly passed two bills respecting superannuation and insurance benefits for teachers. Under The Teachers' Superannuation Act, a new annuity plan was created. The new fully funded plan consisting of matched contributions by teachers and the government, together with matching contributions to the existing teachers' superannuation plan and the continuing provision of cost of living adjustments for pensions now being paid, will result in a government expenditure of \$38.7 million in 1980-81. This is an increase of 56 per cent over 1979-80. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to indicate that the Department of Education will extend \$8.8 million in 1980-81 for capital construction by school boards. This figure represents a 20 per cent increase over last year's capital grants total and will allow the construction of 34 high priority school projects. Mr. Speaker, I should point out that though this capital grant figure amounts to just 30 per cent of the



total of the value of school construction and repairs to be undertaken in Saskatchewan this year, the provincial government does eventually assume about 90 per cent of the total costs, the further 60 per cent coming through the recognition of debt retirement expenditures by boards in future operational grants.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to elementary and secondary education in Saskatchewan this year I have outlined major new initiatives in combating the difficulties of the urban poor, especially native people, experienced in our schools. I have announced a new funding program aimed at preserving the quality of education in small rural high schools. I sincerely believe, Mr. Speaker, that these and other initiatives are important and that they will make our educational system serve the people well in Saskatchewan as we move into a new decade. In the area of continuing education I am pleased to be able to inform members of this Assembly that a number of major new initiatives will be undertaken this year. We will be pursuing a greater integration of educational services to achieve maximum cost-efficiency and also to reach out and be more flexible in responding to people's needs. And we will work toward the development of a co-ordinated yet diversified outreach or decentralized system for all types of education including vocational and job-related training.

Saskatchewan is growing and developing rapidly. Training needs likewise are growing and developing rapidly. If we are to meet the challenge of development and give all people a chance to share equally in the bounty of a prosperous Saskatchewan in the 1980s and beyond, we must concentrate on taking more educational services to people where they work and live, whatever their age and background. This will mean taking these services to some people who have not been as well served as they might to date: rural people distant from institutions of learning, working men and women who cannot take two years off their work, for instance, to move to Regina or Saskatoon or Moose Jaw to study, and native people whose economic and social circumstances have not encouraged them to become involved in the educational process.

If people are to control their own destinies they must have access to learning opportunities throughout their lives. The issue of accessibility must be central to our planning. In the field of adult education barriers associated with poverty, race, sex and rural living must be broken down. We have to consider access in its full sense. Also flexibility must be expanded to allow the system to truly serve people. This includes flexibility of programming, scheduling, design and criteria for participation.

Mr. Speaker, this fiscal year the Department of Continuing Education will pursue the development of two new approaches to training needs, first, a new system of outreach vocational training and education and second, a flexible new modular approach to many vocational training programs. In addition, the Department of Continuing Education will develop and implement a number of specific new training programs with an emphasis on utilizing these approaches. These will include a new native job training and employment program, a new day care worker training program, a new home care training program, a new emergency medical technician program, a new special care aide training program, development and expansion of existing office education programs and a new telecommunications technician program. As the Minister of Finance says, it is a tremendous budget.

The emphasis on outreach and decentralization in no way detracts from the need for continued improvement in our technical institutes and universities. Thus, we will be embarking on a \$5 million expansion program at STI (Saskatchewan Technical Institute) at Moose Jaw (much to the pleasure of the member for Moose Jaw North), a

\$17 million capital program at our universities and an increase in operating grants for our universities which is the highest of any announced increase in Canada to date.

Let me now turn, Mr. Speaker, to the new native job training and employment program. I've already described new programs in elementary and secondary education aimed at overcoming some of the cultural and economic barriers to education faced by urban poor and especially native children. But the social and economic plight of our urban poor and native people requires an integrated approach by all agencies and groups of people involved. This 1980-81 budget contains support for a comprehensive program of native job training and employment.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Where?

**MR. McARTHUR:** — In the estimates, if the hon. member will take time to study his estimates and see what is there he will find there are programs there. When estimates are considered in detail I will be pleased to explain where they are located. Mr. Speaker, the hon. members are not favourable to working on these kinds of programs, but we are committed to this kind of programming. It is difficult; it is hard; but it is important.

In implementing this determined program to overcome problems of native poverty, lack of training and unemployment, this government is going to use a sensible approach, involving the full participation of employers, native organizations, native people, unions and all interested parties. Far too many Saskatchewan native people face a severe crisis of poverty, unemployment and underemployment. The average province-wide rate of native unemployment is reported by some studies to approach 50 per cent, this in a province with an unemployment rate among the lowest in the country. We must address this problem.

In this regard three things are worth noting:

1. Absolute rates of unemployment are high and where employment exists, it is too often short term, unstable and low paying.
2. Clearly there are educational and racial barriers in terms of access to the job market.
3. There is not enough co-ordinated effort today, involving governments, employers, native people and unions which includes recruitment, placement, training and other supports required to develop an effective employment program.

Mr. Speaker, we are proposing to deal with this situation through a phased developmental approach with the following characteristics.

1. It will have a real effect on the development of working skills and job acquisition by native people.
2. It will involve the native community itself in both the planning and operating of the program.
3. It will ensure the full participation of those who currently offer the jobs in Saskatchewan's economy, with emphasis on both the public sector of Crown corporations, government departments and the private sector.

Through my Department of Continuing Education the province will implement the native training and job placement program in 1980-81, with the prime focus on Crown corporations and the private sector. We are proposing that the program include three components.

1. A native-operated recruitment or intake service, having store-front offices in the three cities of Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert;
2. Training services which will work closely with employers in identifying jobs, the skills needed to perform those jobs and the development of those specific skills;
3. A special commission which will serve a co-ordinating role over the program, including securing the participation of employers, unions, native groups and government officials.

Nothing with respect to this program is finally settled, Mr. Speaker. I want the Assembly to know that. We are committed to full and complete consultation with native people in developing these programs. As late as yesterday, Mr. Speaker . . .

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — When are you going to start?

**MR. McARTHUR:** — . . . if the hon. member for Regina South would care to listen, there have been numerous consultations with native organizations. As late as yesterday I met with the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan and we have agreed to co-operative procedures to further develop this program. Our objective in this program, Mr. Speaker, is nothing short of ensuring a well-trained and fully employed work force with the full co-operation and commitment of all involved. I will be the first to admit this is an ambitious goal and a difficult goal. But it is one we must strive for if we are going to follow through with our commitment to a society of real, equal opportunities for all of our citizens.

The role of education in training and social development is critical, Mr. Speaker, and the native job training and employment program will be an important new venture within this framework regardless of what the hon. members feel about this kind of programming.

Mr. Speaker, recently I had occasion to announce initial funding for the development of the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research. This institute, the structure of which is being developed by the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians with a \$51,000 start-up grant, will receive further operating support this year. It is a further link in the comprehensive set of programs through which we hope to help overcome many of the social problems currently facing the urban poor and native people.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to turn to our new vocational outreach training approach. I have been emphasizing the need for more accessibility and more equality of opportunity with respect to our education programs in general. In the area of vocational education and training in our province I intend immediately to develop new approaches to meet these needs. One result this year will be the study and development of a new vocational outreach program which will result in a whole new approach to take training to people. I am pleased to report our estimates allocate \$60,000 to carry out development and implementation work.

If we are to open up access and meet rapidly growing needs we must shape our educational services to the educational needs of those people who are less mobile than the traditional 18 to 24 year old group but who are likely to be called upon to train or retrain during the coming decade. Because of age, family responsibilities or many other factors, the target group tends to be less able to move to centralized institutional-based centres. With an outreach approach, Mr. Speaker, distance need no longer be a barrier to vocational training. This is an important new development, Mr. Speaker. If we can take education to the people in this critical field of vocational training with the specialized teaching resources and sometimes specialized equipment, then I can see no reason why we cannot generalize the outreach principle to most areas of education in Saskatchewan.

Hand in hand with the outreach program will go a stepped up emphasis on the modular approach to vocational training. These two trends are complementary. Where the outreach program takes the educational services to the communities and the people, the modular approach goes further and presents the vocational training in smaller working packages. This can provide working adults with the training they might need right in their communities without requiring them to enroll in full-time programming which may run for weeks or months in an urban centre.

To respond to the dramatically growing needs for day care services in the province caused by society's changing pattern of work, home and family, my department will develop and implement a new day care worker training program. This program will help us to develop well-qualified staff members to operate the growing number of day care centres in this province. This should result in a superior quality of service and a greater stability of day care staff. To achieve the same, we will put into place a new two-year program. The program will be developed in close consultation with an advisory committee including representatives of day care centres, the Department of Social Services day care division, former instructors of the current 40-hour training program and a variety of child development specialists.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, in response to needs identified by the Department of Social Services, my department will establish a visiting homemaker training program this year. Similarly, in answer to requests from special-care homes and level IV care facilities in the province, we will be establishing a new, special-care aide training program.

Another new training program which has been introduced to meet a foreseen need in the community is the recently announced emergency medical technician program at the Wascana Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences. We will fill a current gap in the provision of office education programs in Saskatoon by establishing a new one-year secretarial and typist program at Kelsey Institute.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, in response to the provincial telecommunications industry's real need for sufficiently trained technicians, my department will introduce a telecommunications technicians' program with the capacity of 30 students at Wascana Institute this September.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also extremely pleased to inform this Assembly that I will allocate a substantial increase to financial assistance for post-secondary students this year. This means that we are targeting to spend \$7.1 million for student assistance. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will well understand that the people of Saskatchewan understand what this government is all about when they hear these kinds of programs and the kinds

of things we are doing within a well-managed, well-balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, we are targeting to spend \$7.1 million for student assistance this year. Only \$4.2 million of this will be for Saskatchewan student bursaries not requiring repayment under the federal-provincial student aide program. This compares to about \$3 million this fiscal year. Though the consolidated fund contribution to the ongoing student assistance fund will be down a bit this year from last, the fund has healthy reserves and thus will be able to finance increased assistance by adding substantial accumulated interest earned to the allocation from the consolidated fund. The increase from current student assistance levels will be made possible by changing some of the allowances for assistance and by encouraging more participation. But even while we increase our support to the student assistance program, I am aware that there are shortcomings in the federal-provincial system governing student assistance. In this regard, I am pleased to report success in initiating a review of the Canada Student Loan Plan by a task force set up jointly by the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, and the federal Secretary of State. This task force will look into problems encountered by students such as student debt load and limitations on access to student assistance as well as other topics.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to grant many proficiency awards, language bursaries, teacher education bursaries, as well as scholarship and fellowships. I am also pleased to inform the Assembly of a new \$1,000 award, the Edward Schreyer Multicultural Scholarship which will be awarded . . .

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McARTHUR:** — . . . to each of two full-time graduate students at either university studying history, arts, archaeology, or anthropology of a Saskatchewan ethnic group.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to outline the specific allocations provided for in this year's provincial budget for the various institutional components of Saskatchewan's continuing education system. I am pleased to indicate, Mr. Speaker, our allocation to the community college sector for 1980-81 will be \$5.5 million. This represent a 7 per cent increase over the current year.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1980-81 year, our allocation for the three technical institutes for operations will be \$25.5 million. This represents an increase of approximately 10 per cent. Mr. Speaker, the three provincially funded federated colleges will receive an increase of 8.5 per cent in operating grants in the government's 1980-81 fiscal year. St. Thomas Moore College, located on the campus of the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, will receive \$1.1 million. Campion College, on the campus of the University of Regina, will receive \$782,000. Luther College, also on the campus of the University of Regina, will receive \$396,000 — 8.5 per cent up, the highest increase of any college of this sort, anywhere in Canada.

I would like to turn now to the universities, the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina. The hon. members know the Saskatchewan Universities Commission was established to rationalize planning and co-ordinate development of the university sector while protecting the autonomy of our universities. The commission is the liaison between the government and each university, and at the same time maintains a proper distance between them. Part of the commission's job is to make specific allocations to the University of Regina and the University of Saskatchewan out of the total operating grant and the total capital construction grant

provided by our government. But that should not be too difficult a task this year, Mr. Speaker, since both of our universities deserve and will get from this government, a strong vote of support.

For the next fiscal years, our estimates will provide the two universities with an operating grant of \$90 million. On the basis of the government's fiscal year, that represents an increase of 8.5 per cent which translates into an 8.9 per cent increase for the university fiscal year. That is the highest announced rate of increase to date for any province in Canada. The hon. member for Regina South should compare this increase to Ontario's announced increase, after years of squeezing of an operating grant for the next year of 7.2 per cent for universities.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — What kind of government is that?

**MR. McARTHUR:** — A Tory government. That indicates the kinds of commitments of Tory governments to university education compared to this government's commitment. And there is more, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to report to the hon. members, and I hope the hon. members opposite will listen and compare this to their Tory counterparts, the 1980-81 capital construction grant to our universities will total \$17 million, the highest by far of any capital grant ever granted to universities in Saskatchewan. Of this year's construction grant, \$7 million is for continued construction of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon, an indication of our continuing commitment to the agricultural industry and the farmers of this province. This expansion will allow for an annual intake of 70 students per year, up from the present capacity of 50 students, and it will provide for much needed classroom and clinical space.

Another \$6 million is to be committed to the continued construction of the engineering building at the University of Saskatchewan. Needless to say, this project will greatly enhance the teaching and research facilities of the university, adding much things as a soundproof chamber for applied and fundamental research and a high-voltage testing laboratory.

Mr. Speaker, the total of \$13 million allocated to these two major projects will be appropriated from the heritage fund. Another \$3.5 million has been allocated from the consolidated fund for capital construction at our universities. A major portion of this will be spent on renovations. Following the Canada-wide trend, enrolments at our two universities are projected to decline by about 2 per cent over the next university year. But our continued solid funding of these two institutions demonstrates our belief that our universities are an important investment in our future. With that I conclude my outline to this Assembly of plans for the 1980s and initiatives during this fiscal year. Mr. Speaker, I wish to end my address this afternoon by saying I believe we have a tremendously good system of education here in Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. McARTHUR:** — Indeed, Mr. Speaker, I firmly believe it is the best in Canada . . . there are at least two hon. members opposite who want to listen to what I'm going to say here . . . and that, Mr. Speaker, is a tribute to the leadership and the hard work of teachers, educators, trustees and government over many years in this province. All of those people have made a strong and effective contribution to building what is clearly the best education system that exists anywhere in Canada. I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, without intending to criticize anyone that I believe many improvements are

still possible. That is the way it should be, Mr. Speaker. Our work will never be completed until each and every citizen of Saskatchewan has available a full range of high quality educational opportunities suited to his or her particular needs. That of course is Utopian, but we must never cease to strive for that kind of Utopian goal. Only with that kind of target will we continue to strive to reach the highest standards of excellence. Education is too important and we cannot afford to strive for less.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

## **MOTION**

### **By-law of Professional Societies**

**HON. R.J. ROMANOW (Attorney General):** — Mr. Speaker, before the orders of the day, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Regina Centre, by leave of the Assembly

That the by-laws of the professional societies and amendments thereto tabled after March 6, 1979 as addenda to the sessional paper number 3, 1979, and the by-laws tabled the sessional paper number 7, 1979-80 plus addenda tabled to date be referred to the special committee on regulations.

Motion agreed.

### **Budget debate continues**

**MR. H.J. SWAN (Rosetown-Elrose):** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased this afternoon to have the opportunity of entering into this budget debate. I've listened to a lot of statements made in the last year and some today. I wait and watch in vain for the action that's to follow the statements but it just doesn't seem to come through. There are promises but very little more than that.

It becomes very evident to me that the arrogance of this government is starting to be felt out in the country and the people out in the country are concerned. They're starting to register that concern and they're registering it all over. They're listening to what you're saying but they don't believe it anymore and I can certainly understand why.

A good example of the things that I'm concerned about is the \$2.5 billion investment that you're proposing in the potash expansion. Yes, it sounds great. But when this government goes out and promises a \$2.5 billion expansion in the potash industry without ever bringing that to the legislature, then I think the function of this legislature is being by-passed. Watch, come this summer after the session is closed . . . the big blow is made that we're going to spend \$2.5 billion. In the wintertime, six, eight months later, it comes to the legislature to form another Crown corporation to deal with this issue.

I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, that that's the way government should operate. Government should bring its proposals before the legislature for approval before it makes its announcement.

And, Mr. Attorney General, I have a comment for you. You know, you called this legislature into session and on Monday we came in prepared to go to work. What does your government do? They only have enough business to last for an hour and a half and

the Attorney General adjourns the session. I just don't quite believe that the people of the province appreciate that . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That could be but if you had enough business we'd have been here all day . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order! I wonder if we can just allow the member for Rosetown-Elrose to make his remarks and perhaps if we have something to add, we can add it afterwards at an appropriate time.

**MR. SWAN:** — I'd like to raise another point . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I guess he didn't hear Mr. Speaker ask for order, did he? I'd just like to raise another point to substantiate my claim that this government has no respect for the legislature.

Last summer, shortly after the legislature adjourned, this government entered into an agreement to purchase 1,000 hopper cars at a cost of some \$55 million. Now we see, coming before the legislature, the bill that will form this into another Crown corporation. You know, it's an after the fact issue. We don't object to purchasing hopper cars but we object to the method that you used to purchase hopper cars. I believe that someday you're going to have to start to deal here in the House instead of behind our backs.

I believe that any government that is operating in good faith, would have brought that issue before this legislature and had it debated before it was proceeded with. No, we haven't seen very many major expenditures in the agricultural field for quite awhile. This is the major expenditure for agriculture in the last number of years. And then to have the Minister of Agriculture do it behind the backs of the public and out of the legislature is something we can't forgive him. The agriculture industry still generates the most revenue of any industry in this province. I believe it deserves more care and more attention from this government than it has been receiving.

I was completely amazed when I read the Minister of Agriculture's statement that Saskatchewan should turn to a straight grain industry in the agricultural field. I believe that the Minister of Agriculture, perhaps in his own operation as a farmer, proved he didn't know how to raise livestock and he didn't know how to farm so he went into politics. If he had stayed with farming he'd likely be broke. I can tell you that this province has some of the best land for grazing of any province in Canada. The livestock industry could be a good and a viable industry if this government had a little foresight. When we take a Minister of Agriculture who has very little vision and we see him crawling into his shell and pulling his shell in after him, then indeed we do have an industry that's on shaky ground.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SWAN:** — We talked about having a pasture allocation that would meet the needs of Saskatchewan people. They were telling you just yesterday and some of you didn't agree, that there are pastures in this province not being fully utilized and it's fact. Those pastures are not being utilized because of the agricultural policies you have implemented in this province. You gave FarmStart loans to young people, encouraging them to get into the livestock business, then you take your pasture allocation and you tie it to a person having \$15,000 assessment or less. Those are the only people you are allowing to put cattle into your pastures. As the land assessment increased you forgot to adjust your policy. It immediately affected many of the same young people you gave FarmStart loans to and they have had to go out of the livestock business. Let me tell you, when we look at the FarmStart program this year, we see about \$2.5 million being



spent to cover the FarmStart loans that have gone bad. Yes, \$2.5 million are being spent to cover the FarmStart loans of the farmers who have gone broke and had to get out of the business — indeed a very poor record for this government.

I have listened, as well, with interest as the Premier of this province went around the country extolling the virtues of the NDP government of Ed Broadbent. He spoke of all the great things that Broadbent could do for people. Most of us haven't seen any of them. When we come back to this province and we hear the statements that NDP government is good government and Saskatchewan is a wealthy province, and then we see time after time the costs of operation of our province are turned back to the taxpayers of our province, it starts to make me wonder, are we indeed a wealthy province, or is it again just a statement that is not going to be followed through with dollars?

I'd like to outline for you some of the things that don't look quite as rosy in this province as the Premier has been trying to paint them. Let me give you some examples of just how rosy it is when we touch the area of education — and the minister has just given a glowing speech on education. The Rosetown school system in 1979 got a decrease in its grants of \$46,000. They had to increase their mill rate by 9 mills. It doesn't sound like a very profitable thing to me. The Eston-Elrose School Division, also in my district, had a \$61,000 drop in their grant, and again, a huge mill increase to cover the cost of educational operation. The Outlook School Division has fared a little better and they did get a grant increase, but again, not enough to cover costs and they had to increase by 5 mills. This just doesn't sound like a province that's wealthy; it sounds like a province that's on the downhill slope.

And if I were to go on and go around to each of the municipalities in my constituency, and I haven't touched them all, but I have a good sampling . . . Every municipality I contacted increased the mill rates from 5 mills to 9 mills in the last year — more and more taxes reverting back to the local taxpayer. When I talk to the people operating the small hospitals in our district, every one of them without fail has had to increase the mill rate in order to operate their hospitals. You talk about a good record. It doesn't sound good from this side of the House.

This year the provincial debt is going to be very close to \$3 billion. Most of that money is being borrowed on the money markets in New York and is repayable in American dollars, plus interest, and the interest will also have to be calculated in American dollars. I believe as long as we're going in that direction, we're not going to be a wealthy province. We're going to be a province slipping backward. Today the province of Saskatchewan is paying excess of \$270 million on interest alone before it even begins to start to repay the debt of the province.

I believe this government has spent beyond its ability for a number of years and is continuing to do so. If they proceed with the \$2.5 billion expansion in potash, that you are speaking of, it is not going to be a profitable area for many, many years. It's going to take literally longer than your lifetime or mine before we're going to see that real profit coming back out of the potash corporation. I don't believe a province can operate any differently than any other business. A province has to pay its way. We're not paying our way but rather we're going to leave a heritage of debt for the young people who come to take our place. I believe that as we live in this province, we should pay our own way and we should leave the province in good financial position for the generation to come.

When we look at the utility rate, it was mentioned yesterday that in your budget a year

ago you promised us utilities would not increase beyond 7.5 per cent, again, a promise that was broken. Instead of 7.5 per cent you increased it by a full 15.5 per cent, more than double what you had promised to the people of this province. This doesn't sound like a government that's in good financial shape. If they were in good financial position they would not increase in this form.

I enjoyed the comments being made about the government insurance rates this afternoon by your member. He was telling us about how good the rates were. If you look at the rates as he is looking at them, through rosy glasses, yes, perhaps they look fairly good. But you did not include, when you were saying that we had a good rate, the 5 cents on every gallon of gasoline that goes in to pay the cost of government insurance. You didn't include the \$4 million that comes straight from the treasury across to government insurance. These items soon change the picture and instead of being one of the more beneficial provinces we find that our rate is indeed more than it is in other provinces. I think it is time that you start to include all of the costs and not just a portion when you're giving these rates.

When you spoke of telephone rates in our province and how good they were, and you compared in your 'NDP government is good government' booklet with the city of Edmonton, you didn't compare to the province of Alberta but you compared only to the city of Edmonton. Now the people in Edmonton without paying any long distance calls have access to something in excess of half-a-million people. In the province of Saskatchewan you don't get very many blocks away from home before you start to pay long distance calls. If you had compared to the whole province of Alberta, including the city of Edmonton, the province of Alberta has a beneficial rate compared to this province. They are in a much better position. You know, I think you should start to take a look around you. You get in your little offices and you forget to look outside and realize that people outside are doing better than we're doing in this province. I enjoy, very much, travelling in Alberta and getting into the company of a number of other Conservative people who have a bit of foresight. It's a nice change from being around and associating with some of the people on the opposite side.

Today this province has an income tax rate of 53 per cent, that is a very high rate indeed. The province of Alberta is at 38.5 per cent; British Columbia is at 43 per cent; Manitoba is 1 per cent above us at 54 per cent; Ontario is at 44 per cent. Now, I start to look at these rates and I think it is time that you start taking a look at what is happening in our province. One of my close neighbours moved to Alberta just before Christmas, found employment in Alberta . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, it was a young girl who didn't have anything to buy for your information. She moved to Alberta; she had her income tax prepared in the province of Saskatchewan and the man told her she should use Alberta rates because she is now a resident of Alberta. She experienced a net saving of a little over \$500 on her income tax. Kind of nice for young people, \$500 can mean quite a bit to them. This is just one of the other reasons why young people leave Saskatchewan. There are many other things I could explain to you but I don't know if you would understand.

I would just like to mention the sales tax. That 5 per cent sales tax which is being charged in this province goes a long way towards paying the costs of many of the things you are introducing, that you count so great in this province. Alberta doesn't charge that 5 per cent rate and yet it provides good opportunities for its residents and I believe it is time that this government started looking at some of these items and providing better opportunities in our province to encourage people to stay here.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to touch on a few other areas. I would like to speak briefly on the active campaign that Premier Blakeney went out on, and encouraged people to vote for Mr. Broadbent.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SWAN:** — I think people knew when they were voting that they were indeed voting for a majority Liberal government by voting for Broadbent. I think that when the Premier supported Mr. Broadbent, he must have supported his programs — he should start to back up some of those programs. He's in power here in this province and I think he should provide some relief for the high interest rates that are being charged in this province for small business and for farm people . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, I supported Joe Clark and I supported him proudly. He did a good job while he was there. Oh, don't worry about it, it will be costing a lot more than that by next time around.

I'd like to refer to a few items out of this year's budget. I listened with interest as the Minister of Finance delivered his budget address. I watched as the government members thumped their desks and cheered different announcements being made by the Minister of Finance. I wonder if many of you understood what he was saying. You know, this budget shows a total increase of approximately 8 per cent. When you take an 8 per cent increase on a year when inflation has exceeded 9 per cent by quite a bit, then really you haven't come up with any increase for most programs in the province. It doesn't keep pace with inflation. It doesn't provide very much in any area that people are going to be able to say, yes, we've gained. It's really a hold-the-line budget, a budget that has provided very few new opportunities for Saskatchewan citizens.

You know when we look at education this afternoon, the minister is talking about a 20 per cent increase in the capital portion of the education budget — sounds great, 20 per cent. What he didn't tell you was that the budget for the capital expenditures of education dropped from \$11 million to down around \$7.3 million, and then this time you have just brought them back 20 per cent. This is still about \$3 million below what it was three years ago. So it's no great increase; it's a cutback. I think there are areas where you spend too much but there are many areas where you spend too little. It's your priorities that are not straight.

I looked as well as the Minister of Finance gave his great address on the budget, and he referred to the senior citizens' school tax rebate. I was out around the province through the summer and through the fall and through the election campaign and I talked to a lot of senior citizens. Those senior citizens tell me they feel completely deceived by your government. At the time of the election you promised you were going to return to them the education portion of their property tax but you didn't tell them you were going to take away their property improvement grant first and just return to them the difference. Most of those senior citizens received a mere \$50 increase and they feel betrayed. You can ask them. They feel completely betrayed.

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. It being 5 o'clock I will leave the chair until 7 o'clock this evening.

The Assembly recessed until 7 p.m.