

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

November 28, 1980

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: — I would like to take this opportunity to introduce a very important group of guests who are in the Speaker's gallery today. It is my intention to put their names on the record so that we shall have a permanent record of their attendance at this reunion of members of the Legislative Assembly on the 75th anniversary of our province.

I believe the ones who are here today are: Mr. Bryan Bjarnason, Mr. Lionel Coderre, Mr. Charles Cuming, Mr. Dan Daniels, Mr. Fred Dewhurst, former speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Walter Erb, Mr. Franklin Foley, Dr. Austin Forsyth, Mr. Robert Heggie, Mr. Clarence Estey, Mr. Eldon Johnson, Mr. Alec Kuziak, Mr. Don MacLennan, Mr. Henry Mang, Mr. Frank Meakes, Mr. J. R. Messer, Mr. Dick Michayluk, Mr. Fred Neibrandt, Mr. Roy Nelson, Mr. A.R. Oliver, Mr. Robert Perkins, Mr. Gordon Romuld, Mr. Percy Schmeiser, Mr. Allan Stevens, Mr. Olaf Turnbull, Mr. Robert Walker, Mr. E.I. Wood, former speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and Mr. Robert Wooff.

I'm sure all members will join with me in welcoming these members back to the Legislative Assembly at this time, and may wish to join me in a few words of welcome to them.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I know that I, and members with me on this side of the House, would wish to join with you in extending our warmest welcome to the former members of the Legislative Assembly. We had a pleasant evening last evening hearing from three of them debating in a style which I think would do this Assembly credit. It certainly would enliven the proceedings. We at that time had an opportunity to express our thanks to them for the service they have given to the province of Saskatchewan, and I renew that thanks this morning, and suggest that all of us who are here in this Assembly are indebted to those who were previous members of this Assembly. I hope the next generation will speak as kindly of us here today as we are able to speak of those who were previously members of this Assembly.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the opposition, we would like to join with you and the Premier in welcoming to the Assembly the former members. I, along with the Premier and I'm sure all members, thoroughly enjoyed last night the speeches by the three former members. They added a great deal to the evening. I know it was the talk of the evening just how skilled they were, and I'm sure all members present learned quite a bit last night.

I have a suggestion. It was the first time and I commend the government for this reunion. Perhaps I could make a suggestion — and I know it came up last night as well — that the Canadian Parliamentary Association consider looking at this on a five-year basis or even a ten-year basis. Many of them made comments to me about how good it was to meet old friends and foes and to have a little gentlemanly political debate last

night along with a little imbibing. The memories came back vividly as the night went on, and that was the remark — they would all like to do it again. I am sure in the future we will feel the same way, and I would hope that the government and Mr. Speaker's office will consider their suggestion. On behalf of the opposition, I welcome all former members.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Constitutional Revision — Government Position

MR. LANE: — I direct my question to the Premier. I am sure much to the chagrin of the government opposite the public is becoming more and more interested in the constitution. I am wondering, in light of the proposed attendance by the Premier or the government before the parliamentary constitutional committee, if the government finally (after several years) would be prepared to table before this Assembly the detailed constitutional proposals and position of the Government of Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we could with great ease table the submissions we have made to numbers of constitutional conferences. They are known to most informed citizens in the province and we would be happy to attempt to inform the members opposite. We will be offering to members opposite copies of the material which we used in September (much of it in printed form) and we will be presenting a brief to the parliamentary committee; we are expected to present it next week. We would be happy to make available copies of the brief to members of the Assembly.

MR. LANE: — Would the Premier be prepared to make copies of the brief available to members of the Assembly well in advance of his appearance before the parliamentary committee so that the legislature may review the brief?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, it's unlikely that we will have it prepared well in advance since it's likely the material will only be presented early next week, and the hearing will likely be late next week. So it's unlikely to be a long interval. However, the material which we present to the parliamentary committee will have remarkably little new material in it. Our position has been set out with some measure of clarity. I believe, in statements that I made in Regina, statements that I made in Toronto, a lengthy speech that I made in Halifax to a legal group on the point. If members opposite would like copies of the detailed statement which I issued in Regina following the publication of the federal resolution, or copies of the statement which I made following the premiers' conference in Toronto, or a copy of the remarks I made in Halifax, we would be happy to make them available.

MR. LANE: — Supplementary to the Premier. Are you suggesting that you've had a full summer of constitutional debate and the activities of your Deputy Premier on the constitution, and before your appearance before the parliament committee you're still not ready with a detailed brief, that you don't have one prepared to give to the people of Saskatchewan? I think that's proof positive you've been sitting on the fence. You haven't had a position. The people of Saskatchewan have forced you to move on three by-elections. You're still not ready and I suggest that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order!

MR. LANE: — Mr. Premier, you have let the people of Saskatchewan down by not being prepared with the constitution.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we are engaged, as I perceive it, in negotiations to improve the resolution put before the House of Commons and the Senate by the Government of Canada. We have stated our position with clarity and I invite all hon. members to read the statements which I have referred to, to see whether or not they cannot perceive the position and perceive that it is clearly stated. However, the federal government is changing its position modestly, almost daily, and it is simply folly to lay out one's position, if you are in a negotiating position, three months in advance of the time when you go to the table. The time to make your position known is the time when you are making a public presentation. To make it two or three weeks in advance, if in fact you're negotiating and not declaiming, is simply bad negotiating tactics.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — Question to the Premier. Can you explain how the Government of Saskatchewan has had prepared for some months an advertising campaign on the constitution, I believe to set out Saskatchewan's position, but you're not prepared to go before the constitutional committee because you say that it's not wise to set out your position, that it's bad negotiating tactics? You have the TV ads for the propaganda but you don't have a responsible position to go before the committee. I say to you that that is the height of irresponsibility and our whole constitutional . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I want to remind the members early in the session that the idea of the question is to seek information, not to give information. If the member persists in giving information when he's asking a question, I'm in the difficult position of deciding how much speech the minister should make in response to the speech that the question has elicited. So I just warn the members at the beginning of the session.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is correct in saying that we have prepared some advertising material. It will not come as a surprise to him to say that some of it was prepared in the alternative: some of it in the event of one federal position and some of it in the event of others. There is no alternative to doing that when dealing with a federal government which makes its positions known only at the last minute — and they may be 180-degree turns. It behooves us, as I think all honourable members will agree, to attempt to be ready for most eventualities. We hope we are with respect to an advertising campaign. We cannot, however, be assured of that, since the federal position may radically change, as it did between September and October. Accordingly we are, I believe, preparing prudently for most eventualities, but are not able to state what we are responding to yet since we are not perfectly sure what the federal position is.

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question to the Attorney General. Mr. Speaker. Mr. Attorney General, in the light of the Premier's answers this morning, it was noted that you have no constitutional position at this time, at least not a clearly defined one. It was noted from time to time that you virtually abandoned your portfolio of Attorney General this summer to parade on the national stage negotiating for the province on this constitutional matter. Since the province has no clearly defined position that it is prepared to put forward, is it a fair question to ask the Attorney General this morning, since obviously you weren't helping the province get a position, were you once again negotiating to join the Liberal Party this summer?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I would like to attempt to answer that for the benefit of the hon. member for Thunder Creek. The member for Saskatoon Riversdale, it will be known to most members of the Assembly, has two portfolios, that of Attorney General and that of Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. He was spending the summer, I have to concede, largely in his role as Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs. . . (inaudible interjection) . . . As many others have spoken at Liberal meetings, I think. . .

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the members for Saskatoon Riversdale, the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, not only served this province but served this country with distinction this summer and I, for my part, am very proud of what he did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — May I attempt to state as briefly as I can the position of the Government of Saskatchewan ? First, we object to the unilateral action of the federal government . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, anyone who can read (and that may not include members opposite) knows that is the position of the Government of Saskatchewan.

The second point is that we believe, notwithstanding the fact we are objecting strongly to the unilateral position taken by the Government of Canada, that this does not preclude us from attempting to make some changes in the resolution which is before the House of Commons and the Senate, because we have to deal with the eventuality that, notwithstanding our objection to unilateral action, the resolution may become the constitution of Canada. We are accordingly: (a) objecting to unilateral action, (b) attempting to change the resolution in the event it may become the constitution of Canada over our objection.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — Supplementary to the Premier. You have just made an admission that in fact your constitutional position is a reactive process to the federal position. Do you not feel, after 10 years in government and 10 years of negotiating with the federal government, that you have a responsibility to take an initiative and lay out a constitutional proposal instead of waiting for the federal government to give its constitutional position and that your failure to do so has really been a neglect of your duty as a government to supply a constitutional position?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I do not agree with the hon. member. Our position with respect to the individual aspects of the constitution has been made known at a goodly number of federal-provincial conferences. Our policies have been put out in policy documents which were circulated at the time of the federal-provincial conference in September. They, I believe, to the satisfaction of most people, state with some clarity the views of the Government of Saskatchewan on what the constitution should be. I doubt whether another statement to that effect, regurgitating the material we put before the October — November conference of 1978, the February conference of 1979 or the September conference of 1980, will add very much to the public material.

Gas Distribution System for Rural Saskatchewan

MR. ANDREW: — A question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, the most recent national energy program, among other things, has proposed a shift from the use of conventional oil to natural gas. In Atlantic Canada alone, the federal initiative calls for

the expenditure of some \$ 500 million over the next three years. My question is this: given the rather serious economic squeeze of our farmers and many of the people of rural Saskatchewan, will the government now seriously consider a gas distribution system for rural Saskatchewan — a distribution system for the farmers of Saskatchewan so they can address their serious financial squeeze?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I regret to say that it is unlikely the provision of natural gas to farmers would in any way relieve their financial squeeze. It may well provide an alternative to the fuel oil or propane which they may now be using. Unless it is heavily subsidized, it is the highest degree unlikely that it would be cheaper than oil or propane. While it may be an appropriate policy with respect to providing an alternative source of fuel to fuel oil or propane, I doubt whether it can be argued effectively on economic grounds.

MR. ANDREW: — Supplementary, Mr. Premier. The oil industry in Saskatchewan is somewhat hard-pressed by the national energy program and explorations are being cut back. As you know the exploration for natural gas in this province has not been at a very high level in the last three or four years. Would you not agree that by uncapping some of the wells, by trying to promote more use of natural gas (whether in rural Saskatchewan or on the farms), we could in fact spur some exploration for natural gas in this province to offset the hard-pressed industry at this point in time?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I share the view of hon. member that it would be useful to give an opportunity for gas producers to market more of their product than has been the case in the last couple of years or at least the last several years. It is unlikely, I think, that farm consumption would materially add to the gross amount of natural gas consumed in the province, at least in any short period of time, because the number of customers that could be added (even though they may be fairly substantive customers individually) wouldn't be all that many. We are more likely to find assistance in that regard as our contracts with Trans-Canada pipelines Ltd. terminate and we are able to replace Alberta gas with Saskatchewan gas.

The strategy of the government, for good or ill, has been that we attempted to keep some of our gas in the ground over the last few years and buy Alberta gas at a lower prices, and that we would use our gas when it became much more valuable. As far as price is concerned that strategy has worked. We are still, however, consuming substantive amounts of Alberta gas. I would think about 60 per cent of the gas consumed in Saskatchewan would be Alberta gas. Some of those contracts will be expiring in a relatively short period of time. We would provide an opportunity for greater production from known fields in Saskatchewan, primarily those in the Milk River formation, and in all likelihood would spur some additional exploration for natural gas. All of this, I think, holds out promise of a lively natural gas sector over the next five or six years.

Introduction of Ward System in School Board Elections

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Speaker, a question for the Minister of Education. Yesterday in the throne speech it was evident that this government intends to introduce the ward system of electing school officials in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. Mr. Minister, will you indicate to me and to this House why your government would want to introduce this system when it is violently opposed by the educational authorities, the elected representatives in those two cities?

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, the reason for introducing the ward system, as indicated in the throne speech, arises from problems which were identified in the last school board elections held in the cities in Saskatchewan. The hon. member will be aware that a study was commissioned and a report presented to me. Professor de Vlieger, who undertook the study, received submissions from many, many groups, organizations and individuals. I will indicate to the hon. member that while it is true a number of school trustees objected to the possible implementation of the ward system, there were many, many community organizations, individuals and other interested parties who very strongly supported the ward system as a way of electing school board members in our urban centres. Accordingly, following the report and the following discussions, the decision has been made to implement that system because it is believed it will bring about an improved relationship between the elector and the school board member, and improved participation in school board elections.

MR. TAYLOR: — Supplementary. Will you not admit, Mr. Minister, that the biased (as we said it would be) de Vlieger report was not an investigation but instead a rubber stamp for a pre-designed policy of your government, which did not take into consideration submissions from the urban board which it affects or from a majority of the people who present submissions.

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — I am sure if the hon. member would take the time to read that report he would find that the submissions made by individuals, organizations and school boards were taken into account. The report was very thorough. The report indicates that there are pros and cons, as one would expect with any change of that sort. But I would again indicate to the hon. member that while it is true that some of the school boards and trustees indicated that they do not feel they want to make that change, there are many, many individuals and community organizations who support the change. Professor de Vlieger, I think in an objective way, undertook an investigation into the case they made and concluded that the ward system will indeed function effectively, as I say to the hon. member it is functioning effectively for municipal elections in these two cities.

MR. TAYLOR: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Minister, will you admit that that report is really designed for the politicizing of boards of education, with little regard given to the end- product services offered to children of the schools of Saskatoon and Regina, and will you, because of the reaction and opposition to this report, give these boards a true, unbiased investigation? Failing that, will you at least meet with these board, you the minister, to hear their grievances concerning the implementation of the ward system?

HON. MR. McARTHUR: — Mr. Speaker, the ward system, I think, has been proven in many cases to bring about improved educational services because of the identification that develops between the elector, the parents, and the representative who sits on the school board. I point out to the hon. member that he is very familiar with the fact that in the rural areas we utilize, in effect, the ward or divisional system. I don't know whether the hon. member is saying that in the rural areas we have a lesser relationship between the electors, and the parents and the board members or not, but I say that in the rural areas the system has worked very well. I think it can work just as effectively in the city areas.

Of course I will meet with school board members. I have done that, and I will continue to do so. But, as the throne speech indicates, it is our intention to proceed.

Zenith Space Phone TV Receiver

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister in charge of Sask Tel. In light of the fact that your government passed Bill 13 last session to take over total control of the telecommunications in Saskatchewan, I have the evidence here that you will not allow the new Zenith space phone TV receiver to be connected in Saskatchewan. Are you now saying to the people of Saskatchewan that they will not be allowed this new, modern technology that has been placed on the market today?

HON. MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know exactly the piece of equipment this individual is talking about, but I can assure the hon. members that there is simply no way that we are disallowing any gadgets to be connected to Sask Tel's equipment any more than they were prior to the time Bill 13 was presented to you.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary. Here's a Telex I received the other day: "In response your request as to the reasons you could not purchase a Zenith space phone television receiver in Saskatchewan, please be advised that we are unable to market our space phone television receivers. We are able to market them in all provinces of Canada except Saskatchewan." This came from one of your people, Mr. Minister — a Mr. McGregor. Now, you just said that you weren't going to stop anything coming on stream that wasn't on stream before. I'm saying to you, are you telling the people of Saskatchewan that you, as Sask Tel, are going to get into the business of selling television sets in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think we are going to get into the business of selling televisions because we have a lot more important things to do. We have service to provide to the public of this province and we'll continue doing just that. If the hon. member would like to pass the letter he has over to me, I'd certainly like to have a look at it.

MR. GARNER: — Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I will table a copy of this for the minister. But Mr. Minister, my concern is that if this is marketed everywhere else in Canada and your department knows about it, why is Sask Tel not allowing this piece of new technology to be marketed in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. CODY: — Mr. Speaker, if the piece of equipment which the hon. member is talking about comes within the purview of the regulations which we have set down, it will be able to be used. If it is not, it cannot be used and the regulations today are no different than they were in 1928. I think the hon. member knows that, because I sent him the regulations of 1928 and I sent him the ones that we have today. There is no difference today than there was then. So if the member has something that Sask Tel is not selling today that he would like to have us sell, we can certainly do that for you. But I can assure you that we are not stopping anyone in this province from hooking anything to our communication system that we did prior to Bill 13.

Wheat Pool Stand on Crowrate

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Agriculture, the senior minister that lost the draw for seatmates apparently. My question, Mr. Minister: at the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool's annual meeting last week you carried out a rather aggressive attack on the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool for its resolution in support of the western agricultural conference position on crow. In light of its subsequent support of

that resolution, would the minister now consider his position and support the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and the western agricultural conference position on crow?

MR. MacMURCHY: — Mr. Speaker, I'm getting lots of advice from both sides of the House on answering this question. I don't welcome the advice from the member for Thunder Creek nor do I welcome the advice from the member for Biggar; they're equal.

What I talked about at the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool's annual meeting was the proposals being considered by the federal government. One proposal was for a crow benefit plan. Another proposal came from the western agricultural conference. It was a compromise to a large extent on the Hall commission report but in fact would involve producers paying a portion of crow under an inflationary scheme. I was very critical of both of those plans.

I was very critical of them because I think the problems of grain handling and transportation go well beyond the rate. We have to consider solving the grain handling and transportation problems and call on the federal government to act on that basis. This is an area in which we would consider supporting them.

I note, Mr. Speaker, at the annual meeting, the wheat pool passed three resolutions: (1) calling for the retention of the crowrate. (2) calling for the public ownership of the railways. (3) calling for a position on the WAC (western agricultural conference) policy. I have not had an opportunity to talk with any of the wheat pool delegates or directors with respect to those three resolutions that were passed and I am not clear what position the wheat pool has in light of those three resolutions.

Introduction of Guests

HON. MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, sir, and the members of the legislature, Mr. Ross Graham who is seated in the west gallery with our chief of protocol, Dr. Michael Jackson. Mr. Graham is the consul and trade commissioner of New Zealand based in Vancouver. He is visiting our province and we welcome him to Saskatchewan and the legislature.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — While we are on the subject of introductions, I notice that two more of our former MLAs have appeared — Mr. Arthur Thibault and Mr. Hans Broten. I'm sure the comments of welcome voiced earlier to former MLAs apply to these two members as well.

On the Orders of the Day

SECOND READINGS

HON. MR. BLAKENEY moved second reading of Bill No. 1 — **An Act respecting Certain Elections in the Constituencies of The Battlefords, Estevan and Kelsey-Tisdale.**

He said . . . Mr. Speaker, this bill is a bill which is in the same form as bills which have been introduced previously following by-elections, where the period between polling day and the return of writ by the returning officer to the chief electoral officer has not fully expired and the House is sitting.

The bill has the effect of seating the three members who appear to have been elected on the basis of the results on polling day. It contains the usual provisions which preserve all rights under The Election Act and The Controverted Elections Act and provides that all proceedings under either The Election Act or the Controverted Elections Act indicate that any one or all of the members referred to have not been elected, then this bill is deemed to have been repealed and the persons named cease to be members of the Legislative Assembly. That is the same form which was used to seat Mr. Steuart following the election in 1971 as the member for Prince Albert-Duck Lake (I believe it then was) and also the members for Saskatoon-Sutherland and Prince Albert-Duck Lake following the by-elections in 1976. The form is the same form.

I will refrain from making a little speech on the results of the by-elections. I suspect that that topic may enter discussions some time during the session. In the interest of time I will therefore accordingly move, Mr. Speaker, that the said bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 1 — An Act respecting Certain Elections in the Constituencies of the Battlefords, Estevan, and Kelsey-Tisdale.

Sections 1 to 6 inclusive agreed.

Title agreed.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

ROYAL ASSENT

At 10:49 a.m. His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne and gave royal assent to the bill presented to him.

His Honour then retired from the Chamber at 10:50 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Presentation of Newly Elected MLAs

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present Mr. John Otho Chapman, the member for the constituency of Estevan, who has taken the oath, signed the roll, and claims the right to take his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: — Let the hon. member take his seat. Congratulations!

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Neal Hebert Hardy, Esq., the member for the constituency of Kelsey-Tisdale, who has taken the oath, signed the roll, and now claims the right to take his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: — Let the hon. member take his seat. Congratulations!

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present Mr. David Manly Miner, the member for the constituency of The Battlefords, who has taken the oath, signed the roll and claimed the right to take his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: — Let the hon. member take his seat. Congratulations.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

ADDRESS IN REPLY

MR. NELSON moved, seconded by Mr. Engel:

That a humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of the province as follows:

TO HIS HONOUR THE HONOURABLE CAMERON IRVIN McINTOSH

Lieutenant-Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank Premier Blakeney for the honour accorded me in moving the reply to the Speech from the Throne. It is an honour that I share with the people of the constituency of Yorkton. I know that the people of my constituency are pleased that their representative should be chosen for this role in our democratic process.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — The theme for the legislative opening night in this year of Celebrate Saskatchewan festivities was to honour all past members of the Legislative Assembly. I too am pleased to see so many of them here — so many of them that were here — and add my welcome to all of them. Many hard battles, Mr. Speaker, were fought by those members here in the Chamber and on the hustings. But I am sure all members here will agree that the use that those members made of our freedoms of speech and action were instrumental in preserving and strengthening those freedoms and the democratic institutions that Saskatchewan people enjoy today.

We, the present members and the people of Saskatchewan, owe those past members a great debt of gratitude. I would also like to take a few moments to mention the three members of the Legislative Assembly who recently left our ranks.

We on this side will miss the good-humoured barbs of Bob Larter, the former member for Estevan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — His opposition has never filled with rancour, nor did he deal with personalities. His was always a positive approach to his own and his party's philosophy of government. We know that he will be remembered for his hard work on behalf of his constituents.

Jack Messer will also be sorely missed. We on this side relied greatly on his judgment. His skill as an administrator and as a representative for his constituents is unsurpassed. It was only when I talked to some of his constituents during the by-election campaign that I realized the strength of the bonds that Mr. Messer has built with his constituents.

And, as for the former dean of the House, Eiling Kramer, Saskatchewan is certainly the poorer because he decided to retire from public life. Even those who were the subject of Eiling's wit had the highest respect for him as a minister, as a representative for his constituency and as a man.

We wish all three of our former colleagues the very best in their future success.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — As for the new members, I welcome you to the Chamber. May your days here be long in hours and filled with strenuous effort, clean and hard-fought debate on behalf of those you represent.

With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to give a brief lecture to the new members on the government side of the House. I'll probably never get another chance.

You will find yourselves, gentlemen, part of a hard-working team and it goes without saying that we debate hotly in the Chamber and in caucus to represent the views of our constituents. We're solid supporters and front-line workers for a vision of a Saskatchewan future that we see as growing ever brighter.

And in only one respect do we work to make Premier Blakeney's job just as miserable as possible and in that we greatly succeed. We each try our best to strut our stuff in such a way that the Premier just has one devil of a time to decide whom he has to leave out when it comes to cabinet choices. So, welcome to the club. We who are in the government backbenchers will congratulate you and work with you 100 per cent if you are chosen for the cabinet. But you'd better be damn good to get there because we want to get there too.

May I also give a bit of advice to the alleged Leader of the Progressive Conservatives — regressive Conservatives — wherever he is. With the Estevan results he had better perform. He had better be almost perfect. Progressive Conservatives are quick to sharpen their political knives for their leaders.

AN HON. MEMBER: — I have one sharpened for you, Randy!

MR. NELSON: — It won't work. By now he should be hearing the rub of political steel against the carborundum stone.

Just to make his day, I would like to read one little quote from *The Globe and Mail* of Friday, August 22, 1980. The member for Thunder Creek, who said that part of his

recreation is doing a little wheeling and dealing, is reported to have said the following regarding his leader?

My personal assessment is that I liked him better six months ago . . . I think his political judgment is suspect. I think at this point he is more concerned about finding a safe seat to win than he is about winning a general election.

It appears, Mr. Speaker, that he should have looked just a little bit harder. It's odd that Mr. Larter had to give up his seat. After all, the NDP has held that seat several times. I would say that Mr. Larter was the only one who was willing to sacrifice for his leader. The rest are . . . well . . . With followers like Mr. Devine has, who would want to be their leader? They all do. Every last one of them is waiting to dump his divine leader and be the great star himself.

Turning to the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that it is a speech of which the people of Saskatchewan can be justly proud. It is a plan for action which shows that Saskatchewan has come of age. Our economic security is solidly established and we are moving on to make social, cultural and recreational advances which will keep Saskatchewan the most progressive province in Canada.

This throne speech is another step in the development of this New Democratic Party's plan for a greater Saskatchewan to be shared by all Saskatchewan citizens.

Mr. Speaker, there are many benefits flowing to the people of Saskatchewan from the social and economic progress we are enjoying. A good example is the benefits we have had in the recreational field in my area of the province. These include:

1. A new recreation hall at Good Spirit Lake Provincial Park.
2. A new series of all-weather tourist log housing units built at Greenwater Lake Provincial Park.
3. A new ten-unit tourist lodge at Duck Mountain Provincial Park is coming on stream.
4. Cross-country ski trails and snowmobile trails in or near provincial regional parks have been provided throughout the province.
5. Senior citizen centres have been funded and many, many other social and cultural projects have been encouraged and assisted.

Mr. Speaker, I am most pleased that we in Saskatchewan are commencing an even stronger push in this new direction as indicated in this throne speech.

Now Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the phony issues that the Progressive Conservatives have raised over the last few years — phony issues that were again raised in the by-election campaigns. The Tory red herrings I refer to are freedom of the individual and the resource giveaways.

In discussing these Conservative attempts to mislead the people of Saskatchewan, I hope to give members opposite a little lesson in government. Now it's not that I expect them to follow my advice (they haven't seen fit to do so anywhere else in Canada), but I would like them to recognize why the people of Saskatchewan continually re-elect New

Democratic Party governments to this province and always will. I would like the members opposite to understand fully what has happened when the New Democratic party is re-elected in Manitoba and British Columbia. You see, Mr. Speaker, when they are out of office a few people get the mistaken impression that Progressive Conservatives have something to offer. Out of office they sound like the most promising of political parties. Promises. Promises. Promises. But when it is time for action the Progressive Conservatives remind one of the wife who was supposed to be getting dressed to go out for a party. She turned to her husband, who was impatiently waiting, and said, "I'll be ready in a minute, dear. Go out and rotate the tires on the car or something." If you hold your breath waiting for an elected Tory government to keep its promises, you will turn a deep, deep Tory blue — and cold, dead cold. If you look over their election platform and if you decide they will do the opposite of what they say, you will hit it on 80 to 90 per cent of the time.

Mr. Speaker, do you remember Joe Clark's promise to reduce taxes in the May election of 1979? He promised reductions in taxes which would have reduced federal income by \$2 billion or more. Clark promised to reduce taxes by \$2 billion when he knew the country faced a \$15 billion deficit. But when he was elected, what did he say? Whoops," he said. "Whoops, I can't lower taxes. I have to increase them by \$3.5 billion. But it's the other guy's fault though." According to the PCs it's always the other guy's fault that they can't keep their promises.

Clark sat in a parliament for years. He saw a Liberal mess and he didn't know he would have to increase taxes? I doubt that even Joe Clark could be that blind. But he had no more hesitation when it came to making promises that the Devine Conservatives did in the by-elections.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the promises which interested me the most were those made by the Progressive Conservatives before they came to power in Manitoba. "Help free enterprise," they cried. "Cut down on unemployment," they said. "Get the province of Manitoba going again," they shouted. But it was their performance on those promises that was and is the despair of all Manitobans. It was their performance on those election promises that contributed so greatly to the re-election of Saskatchewan New Democratic Party members in seats which bordered Manitoba, seats such as my own.

I would like to read you parts of an article from the August 10, 1979 *Toronto Star*. The article was entitled Tory Manitoba in Economic Slump. Here are just a few examples from that article which show how Manitoba Tories performed on their promises to improve the lot of Manitobans.

There has been a 24 per cent increase in personal home care fees.

They raised the deductible for the pharmacare program from \$50 to \$75. The pharmacare program of course was put in to help poor people, but you increased the deductible to \$75.

They imposed a \$35 utilization fee on legal aid. Legal aid is for poor people who haven't any money, but they have to pay extra money.

They cut off all self-help, educational and community action programs for Manitoba's native people.

They cut back on the funding for day care centres — cut back in times of inflation.

They stopped building public housing units. But then I guess that wouldn't matter, because according to the same article 10,943 people left the province in 1978 — 10,943 people fewer than there were the year before.

During the 1978 election campaign I constantly ran into Manitoban exiles living in Yorkton who said, "Those PCs have cut back on everything; they promise us the world and they cut back on everything."

Mr. Speaker, let me quote further from the article to which I referred:

One Conservative member of the legislature, lamenting the party's poor performance, said, "The government now has the image that it would drive over its own grandmother."

From the same article a Progressive Conservative card-carrying Brandon businessman is reported to have said the following:

Absolutely nothing is happening for the economy of this province. The hard-core feeling of people I talk to, people who voted Conservative, is that we have made a mistake; no one will trust them again.

Mr. Speaker, that is what I would call getting the province of Manitoba going ahead in reverse gear at high speed, PC style.

Saskatchewan people are looking at the unemployment and the PC stagnation in Ontario and they are saying we'd sooner have the progressive planning shown in the Saskatchewan throne speech, Mr. Speaker.

In the by-elections of last Wednesday, the people returned two NDP members to one PC. There is a message for the Tories in that. The people have said, "We don't like the reverse progress the PCs are bringing to other provinces."

Allow me to say one thing to encourage the PC members opposite, Mr. Speaker. In 1978, Bob Larter won Estevan with a vote of 4,376. In the by-election the PC Party leader — the one who is to be the great star, the great drawing card for the Tories — received 2,858 votes. That is 1,518 fewer than an ordinary member in 1978. As I said before, watch for political PC knives, Mr. Devine. They'll be honed sharp and used at the appropriate time.

We have no difficulty on this side of the House plotting our course through our throne speeches. How the Tories of Manitoba or Ontario would chart that tale of woe in their throne speeches must present a problem and is certainly a mystery to me. This tale of woe from Manitoba and Ontario should have some message for Progressive Conservatives in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the moral that I wish to draw for the PCs opposite is this: if you promise, deliver on those promises. Don't promise what you can't deliver. It gives politicians a bad name. It makes us all the butt of some rather cruel jokes, and we really don't deserve that.

Now I challenge anyone to examine our New Democratic Party platforms — New Deal for People in 1971, New Deal '75 in 1975, New Decade of Progress of 1978 — and

detail what promises we failed to deliver. It is a challenge no one has yet accepted.

No, Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservatives know, and the people of Saskatchewan know, that when we in the New Democratic Party make promises, we perform. Instead of attacking us on our performance or offering constructive criticism, Tories talk in vague terms about freedom of the individual or the give away of resources.

Let's examine those two topics for the next few minutes. You see, Mr. Speaker, to me those two topics are very closely interwoven.

Tories talk of freedom of the individual. They say, and they imply, that the New Democratic Party takes that freedom away. But they are always careful never to say how we take that freedom away, nor do they say what freedoms are taken. They certainly can't mean freedom of speech. They were pretty free with their speeches and promises in the by-election. I, like many others, felt pretty free and easy with the way they twisted the truth in those by-elections.

Once I met a lady on a door step in Yorkton who said to me, "You fellows take away our freedom." So I asked, "Do we prevent you from travelling anywhere you want to go? Do we prevent you from going to the church of your choice?" She said no. "If you lived in Chile, what do you suppose would happen to you if you criticized a government official?" No answer. So I asked her, "Exactly what freedoms have you lost since the CCF - NDP came to power in Saskatchewan in 1944?" She smiled and said, "None, I guess."

More than 500 senior citizens' clubs across the province received operating and facility construction grants. They tell me of freedom to lead fuller lives that these clubs and facilities give them. They tell me they have the freedom to operate these clubs as they see fit. But to the Tories, I guess that's an attack on individual freedom. Besides that, Mr. Speaker, the province's senior citizens have gained real freedom through senior citizens school tax rebates, tax exemptions, home care, the hearing aid plan and many other programs which free them from deprivation, loneliness and other problems which often beset elderly people.

But I guess the PC leader and his followers, if you can call them that, object to these programs — programs that are being copied all over Canada, Mr. Speaker. He says he objects because the NDP takes freedom away.

Mr. Speaker, there is one freedom we do take away. We take the freedom to exploit our senior citizens or we do our best to do so and we're proud of it.

Municipalities are given generous grants to keep their property taxes down. For example, the city of Yorkton received over \$ 1 million last year from revenue sharing and the community capital fund. Approximately one-third of the entire operating budget is paid from the provincial treasury as compared to \$25,000 in 1971, the year of the so-called free enterprise government in Saskatchewan. The only restriction on the freedom of the use of that money is that it must be used to operate the city. I guess to the Tories that's an attack on individual freedom because the people in Yorkton get that money whether they want it or not.

Celebrate Saskatchewan provides a good example of Saskatchewan people enjoying the kind of freedom the PCs object to, Mr. Speaker. The provincial budget for Celebration Saskatchewan was \$7 million. A central committee consisting of citizens from all over

Saskatchewan was established. Co-ordinators were set up throughout the province. From there, the Saskatchewan government stayed discreetly in the background. The government played a supporting role only. The communities were free to do as they wished.

What a success it was! I say to the PC members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that that's how a government should be. Give the people the freedom to do the things themselves and they'll show the world a great act.

The ministers in charge of Celebrate Saskatchewan showed Canada and the world what leadership and government is all about. Those ministers, the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski and the member for Regina Centre, Mr. Ned Shillington, said, "We have faith in the people of Saskatchewan. Let them come up with the ideas, the projects and the plans." The results were spectacular. Hundreds of valuable local histories were compiled. Thousands of other unique and interesting projects were undertaken throughout the province by the people of the province. Many communities saw their populations grow by 10 and even 20 times for their celebrations.

The community that perhaps outdid all the others is located in the constituency of the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, the minister in charge of Celebrate Saskatchewan. Burr, a community with approximately 14 people, had 1,700 people at their homecoming. Every fast-food outlet in Humboldt was pressed into service to feed the multitudes.

But the Estevan parachutist, who as somebody here this morning mentioned forgot to open his parachute, doesn't like activities that are just set in motion by the government and then turned over to the people of Saskatchewan. He says such things are an infringement on individual freedom.

No doubt he would have followed the Alberta plan for celebrating their 75th birthday. Saskatchewan spent \$7 million. That's quite a bit for a birthday party. But Alberta spent \$75 million, over 10 times the Celebrate Saskatchewan budget, just for a birthday party. They tried to throw money at the people and buy a celebration instead of creating a climate where people did it themselves.

Mr. Speaker, the Alberta approach didn't work. It flopped. Their celebrations were plagued by one fiasco after another, usually caused by bickering over too much money and too little imagination.

I say the difference in the government's involvement in the two provincial birthday parties is typical of the fundamental differences between the Tory approach and our approach to working with people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — The Tories in Alberta said in effect, "We're the big daddy. We'll provide you, the little people, with a lavish party." And it failed. We in Saskatchewan said, "We have faith in you, the people of our province. We know you can do it." And you did.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Mr. Speaker, the way Celebrate Saskatchewan activities were carried out is now mostly a fascinating and fantastic part of the history of our province. But that divine Estevan dive bomber says that the NDP approach to government interferes with

individual freedom. Celebrate Saskatchewan puts the lie to such statements. Probably what the Estevan skydiver meant, Mr. Speaker, is that a government which takes steps to provide a better life for everyone in the province is infringing on people's freedoms. He means that a government which gives people a stake in their economy and the development of their province is infringing on people's freedoms. Mr. Speaker, the PC leader must object to the freedom to hold a job, because 85,000 jobs have been created in Saskatchewan since 1972 and all because the Blakeney government managed the economy so well that our province has had continued growth in the midst of a North American recession (if not a world recession). And this throne speech indicates that we have plans to attempt to deal with the stagflation forced upon us by other areas governed by those of the same political stripe as the Tories opposite.

We in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, brought medicare into the province over the kicking and screaming bodies of Liberals and Conservatives. Both of those parties then raised the same cry. "Medicare will deprive people of their freedom," they shouted. "Medicare will deprive people of their freedom." Now they try to claim it's their program.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will not be fooled by those loose-lipped politicians who shout about a loss of freedom every time your government brings in some new and imaginative program which helps the citizens of our province . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — . . . to enjoy the benefits from the resources with which we have been blessed.

Let's look at what they do in those so-called free enterprise jurisdictions, just to see what else might be intended by taking away individual freedom.

Mr. Speaker, in 1964, under the CCF government, the Saskatchewan Power Corporation held the leases for the Hatton gas field near Medicine Hat. But the so-called free enterprise government of Ross Thatcher sold those leases for how much, Mr. Speaker? For \$444,520. Mr. Speaker, the natural gas in the Hatton field is now valued at over \$40 million. That was a gift of over \$39 million to their so-called free enterprise friends. I guess that's what the Devine Conservatives mean when they say that we interfere with individual freedom. Tories are deprived of the freedom to make and to receive such huge gifts.

The same free enterprisers moved to set up a pulp mill at Dore Lake in northern Saskatchewan, The deal would have had Saskatchewan taxpayers paying almost all the costs of the pulp mill, but receiving none of the equity or almost none of the equity. As near as we can make out, the deal would have costs the Saskatchewan taxpayers \$16 million. That was the free enterprise government of the Thatcher Liberals.

Today we hear the Thatcher Conservatives crying, "The Blakeney government wants to give away half of Saskatchewan resource money to the federal government." What nonsense!

The Blakeney government brought in Bill 42 to ensure that the Saskatchewan taxpayer would benefit from the rapid oil price increase in 1973 instead of giving that extra money to the multinational oil companies.

Your Saskatchewan government went to court in the Cigol case to try to protect that tax money, and we lost. We then passed Bill 47 to ensure that the \$500 million collected under Bill 42 would be retained for the people of Saskatchewan. But the Conservatives and Liberals stood shoulder to shoulder in this legislature defending the right of the oil companies to have that \$500 million.

The potash companies refused to pay their provincial taxes in 1974 and 1975. Once again Conservatives and Liberals stood shoulder to shoulder in defence of their corporate friends. The Progressive Conservatives, for example, took out a full page ad like this one in the December 30, 1975 edition of *Leader-Post*. It has a beautiful picture of the member for Nipawin in the corner. It says:

What's next? Who's next? Farmers, druggists, teachers, nurses? What can be done?

I often wondered how teachers and nurses were going to be bought up; that's a good question. And then it goes on in bold print to say:

Progressive Conservative members of the legislature have clearly stated their opposition to the government's proposed takeover of the potash industry.

You better believe they did. The PCs opposed the development of potash corporations in Saskatchewan. By opposing it they opposed the \$116 million profit made by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan going to the people of Saskatchewan. That \$116 million was made this year. The Tories wanted that \$116 million and all the profits before and all the profits of the future to go to their foreign corporate resource friends and that is what I would call a giveaway; that is what anyone on this side would call a giveaway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. NELSON: — Mr. Speaker, I really believe that is the freedom of the individual that the Tories are deprived of — to give and to receive such huge gifts. They went on in this ad to say:

There are nine reasons why we oppose this legislation. These are in addition to the serious damage that already has been done to the investment and business climate in our province by the threat of this legislation. These are also in addition to the serious harm that will be done to our future development if the legislation is not withdrawn quickly.

How wrong can you be? Saskatchewan's unemployment rate has been consistently the lowest or second lowest in Canada and retail sales are constantly growing. Not only did they want us to give that \$116 million, and all the profits that could come in the future to the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, to their corporate friends, they asked the people of Saskatchewan to send money to the Tory party to help them finance the giveaway. I would like to read again:

What can you do? We need your support now. We need it to pay for this ad.

Isn't that nice, Mr. Speaker? They not only want you to give away your resources, they want you to help finance that giveaway.

The Liberals in 1975 ran on a platform that said as follows:

Once re-elected, a Liberal government will re-establish the climate of political stability that would encourage the resource industries to return to Saskatchewan and help develop the wealth of this province. This would include the repeal of Bill No. 42, an act which taxes the oil companies so highly that they no longer find it feasible to continue exploration in Saskatchewan.

Well, well. If we had repealed Bill 42, as the then Lane Liberals demanded, there would have been a loss to the province of Saskatchewan of around \$800 million that the Lane Liberals wanted to go into the hands of their corporate friends.

A little later the same Lane-Collver Conservatives had a cry. They said, “Why don’t you tax the oil companies like they do in Alberta?” And all the PC members loudly thumped their desks in approval for their leader, the member for Nipawin.

Well, that Alberta tax system is a bit better than the Lane Liberal plan. The Conservative gift to the oil companies would have amounted to \$650 million of a giveaway since 1974.

I could go on with example after example, but it is enough to say that the resource revenues claimed by that last so-called free-enterprise government in 1971 were \$32.5 million, In 1979, the people of Saskatchewan received \$569 million, Mr. Speaker. The PCs say it’s just fine to give hundreds of millions of dollar to foreign-owned multinational resource companies.

I guess that’s really what they mean when they say we take away the freedom of the individual. We take away the freedom of the PC members opposite to make massive giveaways of Saskatchewan resource dollars to multinational oil companies, and we’re proud of it.

It is not difficult to see through the Tory logic on the resource revenues even though it is a somewhat twisted logic. They want to give away one-half of our resource revenues to the foreign resource companies, and none to the legally elected federal government — none to the people of Canada. Free to the foreign-owned resource companies — nothing for Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the throne speech makes reference to this government’s position on the Canadian constitution. Ours is a reasoned and carefully planned approach that represents our quiet determination to build a strong Saskatchewan in a united Canada through the constitutional debate. The calm, reasoned, Blakeney-Romanow approach has been to stand up strongly for the protection of our resources, to demand an improved amending formula for the constitution, to demand a fair equalization payment clause.

Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House, and most people I have talked to throughout this province, have virtually burst with pride to hear the praise that has been directed at Canada’s premier statesman, Allan Blakeney. Progressive Conservative members opposite would do well to follow his lead — be statesmen, not mere political hacks grasping at straws in an attempt to find themselves a different position under the sun.

You see, the alternative is to take a strident Bennett-Lougheed stand, shout no, beat your breast and roar at those eastern so-and-sos. But look at the results of the Lougheed alternative. In Edmonton last week there was a separatist rally. I say that the Lougheed-Bennett approach feeds the separatists because it is overdoing the thing.

Mr. Speaker, as a boy on the farm, I learned that you speak softly and firmly to your horses. However, Lougheed, like the foolish driver, has stampeded his horses. At least he is having great difficulty in controlling them.

Mr. Speaker, who is promoting all of this separatist talk in Canada anyway? As was said so many times last night, a land that's the finest in the world. Well, in Quebec, it was a lot of little people — the people out of the big money. They financed and ran the separatist campaign. Although I sympathize with their desire to win themselves a better life, I certainly did not and do not find it acceptable to break up our country.

Let's look at Alberta, on the other hand. In Alberta, it's the moneyed people who are starting and financing this campaign for a new country — Canada West, or West Federal, or whatever you would call it. These are the moneyed people who want Toronto and Montreal to be replaced by Calgary and Edmonton as the financial centres of their New Jerusalem. They feel that they could be the big fish in this new little pond if only they could get us to go along with them, if only they could get it going.

However, before we jump on their bandwagon, we need to ask ourselves one important question. Maybe others here will have other questions to ask as well. That question is this: what makes us think we would get a better deal from the oil sheiks of Alberta than we would from the money barons in Toronto?

Remember, these nouveau riche tycoons of Calgary and Edmonton are the ones who coined the phrase, "Let the eastern bastards freeze in the dark." Now that was a comical little phrase until you began to realize that they were serious. We have quarrels with our eastern Canadian brethren — particularly Ontario — and I say that that's natural. But, Mr. Speaker, I get the impression that those oil sheiks of Alberta would have left my relatives and yours in eastern Canada to do just what they said — freeze in the dark. What they are saying is just like the spoiled little rich boy with his bat and ball. "If we don't win everything, we'll take our bat and ball and go home." Don't forget also, Mr. Speaker, that if those oil sheiks could have their way, we, the people of Saskatchewan and Manitoba would suddenly become those new eastern bastards. The oil sheiks of Alberta would then want to set their province up as the New Ontario in their New Jerusalem. We'd be trying to arrange a whole new constitution with a group that wants it all that way, and I for one don't want to be told to freeze in the dark. Nor do I want to be told any one of a dozen other things that those nouveau riche of Edmonton and Calgary might want to coin.

Along with the people of Quebec who were given their choice when the separation vote came, I want to say to the nouveau riche oil sheiks, "No thanks, non merci, nein danke, nye dyacouyou, no thanks."

But we say, Mr. Speaker, yes to Canada — a united Canada. And I'll tell you why, for my part. Our forefathers worked to build this land. In the main those people were the true heroes, as Alex Kuziak the former member of Canora said last night. They fought to overcome fantastic difficulties. They came from different lands all over the world. Naturally there were problems among the different groups, but they fought the elements, they overcame the elements, and they overcame the differences in their

origin to build this country and this province into the greatest place in the world to live.

Sure, there were failures, too, in pioneer times. One of my uncles came to Saskatchewan at the urging of my father and took up a homestead nearby. In his first winter in my dad's shack my uncle woke up one night after one of our 40-below nights and yelled, "Louie, my nose is frozen, my nose is frozen." Early the next spring he packed his bag and went back to Minnesota laughing at those who remained in this frozen land. Sure, there were those in those times too who didn't know how to fight, and suffered unbearably in this land. But for the most part the scoffers and those who couldn't take it left the land to those who could and did carry on the fight and we see the results today.

Mr. Speaker, this generation too has its scoffers and its quitters. It has those who don't know how to fight the present problems. But we have our fighters who will continue to fight for our place in Canada and the world, and like our forefathers who overcame all odds to build this land, we'll overcome most difficulties to build onto the fantastic birthright that we have been given.

Mr. Speaker, as a school teacher of many years, I can tell you that we will be passing this province and this land to our children who will do every bit as well as we did, if not better. Too many people among us tend to knock the youth today, but in this year of Celebrate Saskatchewan I can say that we on this side are confident of the future of this country, of this province, and of the people who inhabit it — because they will be our children.

As I said before, Mr. Speaker, this throne speech represents another step in our government's plan for a prosperous and strong province of Saskatchewan in a strong and united Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I move that a humble address be presented to His Honour.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would first like to compliment the member for Yorkton, my colleague and good friend Randy Nelson, for the able manner in which he moved the address in reply. This is just one more in a long list of examples of his hard work in this Assembly on behalf of the people of his home city of Yorkton and all the people of Saskatchewan.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Premier for asking me to second the address in reply. It is an honour for me and for the people of the Assiniboia-Gravelbourg constituency which I acknowledge and sincerely appreciate.

Mr. Speaker, as we begin this third session of the nineteenth legislature of this province, I want to say a few words about some of our colleagues who served with us here in past sessions, but who will be absent from this one.

Eiling Kramer represented The Battlefords riding for 28 continuous years. He served as a private member on the government side, as a prominent and effective critic when his party was in opposition, and as a forceful and hard working minister of the Crown. He was dean of the House and the role of kindly yet partisan elder statesman suited him well.

This style which he portrayed so aptly will be missed not only here, but by his many friends throughout Saskatchewan, particularly among some of the Southerners, the cattlemen down in my country.

Eiling Kramer ran in eight provincial election campaigns beginning in 1952 and he won every one of them — an indication of how his constituents felt about him. And if I might be so bold as to express the feelings of the members, I believe we will all miss the man from The Battlefords but be far better for having known a man of the calibre of Eiling Kramer.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Speaker, John Messer has also retired from this legislature, choosing private life after 13 years at the centre of the political stage in Saskatchewan.

There will not be many of us who, at the end of our political careers, will be able to point back to as large a number of accomplishments as Jack Messer had during his career in the House: the new and successful programs of the Department of Agriculture in the early '70s, the smooth and at the same time highly successful operation of the Saskatchewan Mining Corporation, the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation, SaskOil and Sask Power, solving the complex problems associated with oil policy and preserving provincial jurisdiction over resources. Jack Messer was prominent in them all.

Wherever Jack Messer goes in the future and whatever he decides to do, he can be confident in the knowledge that he has done great work for the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Estevan also retired since the House last met. I understand that ill health and specifically back pain had to do with Mr. Larter's resignation. I knew Bob Larter and although we laboured hard on opposite sides of the political fence, I considered him a friend and I wish him well in his private life.

Now I would like to say just a few words, Mr. Speaker, about those who have just been elected. The constituency that drew most of the attention, proved to be exciting to the very end and produced a really big winner, Jack Chapman, was Estevan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Jack is a sincere, outgoing, energetic guy who demonstrated to all of us that there is not such a thing as a safe seat. Congratulations to you Jack and to all of the faithful workers who helped make your victory possible.

David Miner will continue to bring a strong voice to this place from The Battlefords. The troops in The Battlefords won a good clean fight.

To Lars Bracken I would like to say, I know how you feel. You gave our party your best effort and we thank you.

We would like to offer congratulations to Mr. Hardy.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the throne speech mention the Celebrate

Saskatchewan program which helped local communities promote and co-ordinate activities marking Saskatchewan's 75th anniversary as a province of Canada. The small and efficient staff of Celebrate Saskatchewan can take pride in its efforts during the 1980s. The more than 3,000 separate events across the province were very effective. The attendance and participation of local people and particularly the hard work of thousands of volunteers are what really made our 75th anniversary a success.

Mr. Speaker, I believe it does us all good, from time to time to take the opportunity to express our happiness (one might even say our exultation) that we have been part of this great nation of Canada since 1905.

At a time when the former leader of the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan is advocating union with the United States and the new Leader of the Progressive Conservatives is following Joe Clark and Peter Louheed in advancing the cause of western alienation for short-term gain, I say those of us who think Canada is worth defending have every right to demonstrate it. That is why I am so proud of my native province of Saskatchewan this year. Close to 900 cities, towns, villages and hamlets held special events to celebrate our anniversary as a province in the Dominion.

I am doubly proud, Mr. Speaker, because I am a member of the Blakeney government which has encourage and supported these expressions of Canadian unity.

Mr. Speaker, the summer of 1980 was a difficult time for western Canadian politicians to be reaffirming their national patriotism. It might have been much easier for our Premier and our Attorney General to tangle with the national government on every single issue that came along, to look for any political advantage to be gained from a clash with the Government of Canada and to disregard the damage on the national unity. That is the crazed weasel approach of the Conservative Party. But I don't think that would have been in the best interests of our nation and I am glad it has been rejected by our government.

Instead, our Premier has been contributing in a constructive way to the discussions and negotiations surrounding the new constitution. The Premier and the Attorney General have on the one hand been protecting the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan on issues like jurisdiction over resources, a fair amending formula in the constitution, and the preservation of our ethnic and cultural diversity. But at the same time they have steadfastly refused to do anything which might damage our Canadian unity. It is a model that the likes of Dick Collver, Grant Devine, Joe Clark and Peter Lougheed would do well to follow . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — . . . if they were not so preoccupied with pandering to those narrow Alberta-based sentiments and, yes, even to the western separatists, for shortsighted political gains.

Mr. Speaker, this New Democratic Party government will negotiate hard for the best deal possible for Saskatchewan within confederation. We will at the same time make constructive proposals for change where the federal position seems, from our vantage point, to need change.

As was indicated in the throne speech, the unilateral action of the Trudeau government and the right and total opposition of the Conservative Party are not what is required if

Canadians are to acquire the consensus they are seeking.

I have been very proud of the sensible, moderating influence both the Attorney General and the Premier have been thus far in the negotiations. It makes me proud on two counts: one that I live in Saskatchewan and two, that I am a fellow New Democrat.

At last night's homecoming for former MLAs, Mr. Kuziak, Mr. Pederson and Senator Steuart echoed that Jules Leger said (on a review of his life last Sunday night) — "With God's help we will succeed in keeping Canada united.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to see that agriculture takes its traditional prominent place in the throne speech of our government. It is my opinion that agriculture (and when I say agriculture I refer specifically to the family farm) has always been the most important part of our economy here in Saskatchewan. Agricultural products are worth over \$2.5 billion annually to the Saskatchewan economy. That's equal to the combined value of goods produced by Saskatchewan's mining and manufacturing industries.

Over 80,000 people are employed directly in agriculture in Saskatchewan. For each farmer who is actively pursuing his livelihood on the land, it is estimate that three additional jobs are generated in other areas of the economy such as retail trade, banking, manufacturing, processing, utilities and the service industries. That means that, out of Saskatchewan's total labor force of over 430,000 people, close to a quarter of a million working people depend on agriculture either directly or indirectly for their pay cheques. All across our province there are elevator agents, railway people, farm supply workers, packinghouse workers, flour mill employees, truck drivers, mechanics, salesmen, bankers, secretaries, teachers, lawyers and so on, who are very glad that our farm families are so productive and generate the tremendous economic activity which provides all these many jobs.

The New Democratic Party regards the family farm as an absolutely vital part of the social fabric of Saskatchewan. As a means of preserving the family farm, the Blakeney government set up the land bank program. Under the program farmers, who of their own free will wished to sell their land, could sell to the land bank for cash, and anyone wishing to lease the land was completely free to apply to do so. A reasonable rent was charged at the beginning (a simple 5 per cent of the market value per year), and anyone who wished to make farming his full-time occupation was eligible and completely free to apply.

Now recently, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party has been critical of the land bank. They say, in one of their recent television ads during this last campaign, that Saskatchewan has led the nation in the loss of farms since land bank began. In fact, during the by-election campaign in Estevan, Mr. Devine referred to the decline in the number of farms in Saskatchewan as though out province were the only place on the face of the earth that was experiencing the trend towards larger farms. I want to tell the

Leader of the Conservative Party that he should take a look at the facts and stop trying to mislead the people of Saskatchewan.

I took some trouble to do some research in the area and found that one of the best sources of information was Statistics Canada, which publishes a province-by-province breakdown of farm numbers. In April of this year Statistics Canada published a paper listing the number of farms in Canada as a whole and in the various provinces of Canada for the year '79. There was also a comparison with the figures for the year '76. This is what the Statistics Canada report had to say.

In 1976 there were 337,700 farms in Canada. By 1979 the number had fallen to 329,300, a loss of 8,400 (if you can't subtract), and a percentage change of 2.5. In Saskatchewan during the same three-year period the number of farms was reduced from 71,000 to 69,600, a decline of 2 per cent.

In our neighbouring province of Alberta there were 61,100 farms in the Statistics Canada survey of '76. Three years later in 1979, 1,100 of these farms in Conservative Alberta were gone. And that, Mr. Devine, is recorded in Statistics Canada figures as a drop of 2 per cent — exactly the same as Saskatchewan.

Now, let's look at Manitoba where there has been a Conservative government for most of the time between '76 and '79. Manitoba had 32,100 farms in '76. In the following three years they lost 2,800 of them. And in Tory Ontario, 3,000 farms disappeared in the same period of time. No land bank. In Manitoba, after three years, they lost 2,800 farms; 3,000 farms were lost in Tory Ontario. The decline in farm numbers amounted to 3 per cent in Ontario and in Sterling Lyon's Manitoba to 9 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, if you look at all the Conservative provinces listed in the Statistics Canada study, and that includes Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, you will see that in the years between '76 and '79, those Tory provinces on average suffered a decline in farm numbers at over twice the rate we did here in Saskatchewan.

So, I ask you, Mr. Speaker, if the Tories are so concerned about the number of farms that Canada loses each year, why haven't they done something about it where they are in power? Why in Ontario, which has only a few thousand more farms than our province, did they lose twice as many farms as we did between 1976 and 1979? Why has Manitoba lost farms and farm families at a rate four times greater than the rate in Saskatchewan? And why has Alberta, the brightest jewel in the Tory crown, seen over 1,000 farms disappear in recent years?

The fact is that if the farmers of Saskatchewan want a government that only talks about doing something to stop the decline in farm numbers and does nothing they might as well join the Tories. If, on the other hand, they actually want something done about it, the farmers had better say with the Blakeney team.

Instead of trying to mislead people with inaccurate numbers the Conservatives should go and ask the thousands of willing sellers, who freely offered their land to the land bank and were able to retire with immediate cash and not see their land gobbled up by a corporation or a foreign speculator, about the success of the land bank. Or, better yet, ask the thousands of young people who were able to obtain land under a system that did not force them to compete with wealthy landowners who were already well established. As these young farmers what they think of the land bank.

Mr. Speaker, I think those few remaining critics of the land bank have to ask themselves why, if the program is so unpopular, are there, on the average, 14 applications for every piece of land that the land bank has? In fact, in my constituency it's more like 40 applications. Why, in light of the fact that no land has ever been solicited and all purchases are made at fair market value, has the land bank been receiving thousands more offers from farmers who wish to sell their land to the commission than it can possibly accept. Mr. Speaker, the record of the land bank is there for everyone to see. Far from causing the number of farms in Saskatchewan to decline, it has helped us maintain agricultural land in family farm sized units.

Another program I must mention is FarmStart. This program began in 1973. FarmStart offers loans and outright grants to small and medium sized farm families to diversify their operations. The loan rates are subsidized and repayment is spread over a longer period of time than most banks are willing to offer.

Over \$160 million in loans and \$18 million in grants have been approved to 4,200 farm families. Because of FarmStart, 2,000 new beef operations now exist in Saskatchewan, over 500 new dairy operations are in place, which amounts to 60 per cent of the Saskatchewan dairy industry, 500 new hog producers are in business with financial help from FarmStart, as are 65 poultry and 70 new honey operations. In the first six months of this year, over 700 new applications have been approved which will mean more young farm families on the land than might otherwise have been there.

Mr. Speaker, FarmStart has loaned money to 4,200 farmers and land bank has 2,800 lessees — more if you were to include those farmers who have already purchased their land. If you add these figures you get 7,000 new farmers, thanks to land bank and FarmStart.

As for Tory talk of declining farm numbers, in the last half of the '70s in Saskatchewan, the trend toward declining farm numbers has been slowed dramatically. From 1966 to 1971 the number of Saskatchewan farms dropped by 2 per cent per year. From 1971 to 1976, the period when we could have had a much more serious drop, the number fell by only 1.6 per cent. From 1976 to 1980, the rate of decline has fallen to only a little more than 0.5 per cent per year.

We think the land bank and FarmStart have been major factors in levelling that trend and getting young farm families started in successful and productive farm operations.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend this to be an exhaustive discussion of all the aspects of agriculture, but I feel compelled to touch on the topic of transportation and grain handling. Our government has worked hard and committed a sizeable amount of money to the fight to preserve the prairie rail line network. Our Agriculture minister, Gordon MacMurchy, and the excellent staff of the transportation agency have been providing very valuable ongoing assistance to the local rail retention committees which are fighting to save their branch lines. The research assistance and technical data provided to the local retention committees have allowed them to appear before the Canadian Transport Commission hearings with every possible argument for retention of the line assembled, and well-documented. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I can say, from the CTC hearings I have attended, the local farmers, businessmen, and R.M. councillors on the average rail retention committee, regularly make the corporate lawyers and high ranking officials of the railways look sick. And I say, good for them!

Mr. Speaker, I should also praise the efforts of members of the agriculture committee of the New Democratic Party caucus. Many MLAs on this side of the House have made submissions to the transport commission in recent years, often travelling many miles outside of their own riding to do so.

Another area where the stand taken by the New Democratic Party has been of considerable support to farmers is the issue of freight rates.

Mr. Speaker, I was very surprised to hear the new Conservative Leader Grant Devine announce in the first week of June that he will support the railways in their effort to have the freight rates on grain dramatically increased.

Mr. Speaker, it was bad for the Conservative leader because he is up there instead of over there. It is bad for the Saskatchewan grain farmers.

Mr. Devine, in his statement to the media on June 5, seemed to be greatly concerned about the profit margins of the poor old CPR and CNR. To listen to him you would think the CN and CP were nearly bankrupt. The Conservative leader has apparently not bothered to read the railway companies own annual reports. The CNR showed a profit in 1979 of \$208 million — up 53 per cent from 1978 profits of \$136 million. Canadian Pacific's annual report for 1979 reveals a profit of \$511 million last year — up 46 per cent over 1978 profits of \$349 million. I see a recent story in the papers which reported Canadian Pacific Ltd. profits for the first six months of 1980 as \$292.2 million.

I can only say, Mr. Speaker, that it is a bit ironic to see the railway companies crying about not being allowed to gouge prairie farmers for more millions of dollar by doing away with the statutory rates on grain.

For a company such as Canadian Pacific Ltd. which received many millions of dollars from the taxpayers of Canada and millions of acres of prime western farmland in it's first years of operation, to come to us now complaining about having to move grain at less than the compensatory rate and subsidize the operation of parts of the prairie branch line network is bad, Mr. Speaker.

From the original land grant and money paid to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company by the federal government in the 1880s, Canadian Pacific has built a huge business empire which includes transport trucks, steamships, a chain of hotels, an oil and gas company, one of Canada's largest mining companies, and a long list of other concerns which, as I said, turned a profit in 1979 of \$511 million.

The Conservative Party of Saskatchewan has chosen to line up with the CPR in its efforts to plunder yet more millions of dollars — this time directly out of the pockets of prairie farmers who must ship their grain to market.

We have to ask, why? Why has the Conservative Party taken the side of the railway companies against the best interests of the farmer. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think it has to do with the old adage, "He who pays the piper calls the tune."

Canadian Pacific Ltd. is one of the largest contributors to the PC Canada fund — the war chest of the Conservative Party. At times that amount is up to \$50,000 a year. So if the odd Tory MLA or MP misses a rail line abandonment hearing, or happens to neglect his duty in speaking out against freight charges on grain . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I wonder how come I'm getting to Mr. Collver on this. But don't be

puzzled, Mr. Speaker. They are just earning their keep.

Mr. Speaker, I have taken considerable time now on the subject of agriculture and the family farm, but it is an important subject to me in the constituency of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg.

I simply want to conclude by saying that our agricultural community is strong here in Saskatchewan. I, as a member from a rural area, thank the Blakeney government for its ongoing efforts to keep it that way.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — The people of rural Saskatchewan know they have a friend in this government.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to see the throne speech commitment by the Blakeney government to a continuation of the extensive upgrading which has been going on in our provincial highway system. A good highway system is very important in Saskatchewan. With a total provincial population of less than a million people, spread over more than 250,000 square miles, rapid and safe all-weather roads are a vital necessity. If someone on a farm or in a smaller centre has to go to the hospital in an emergency, the highway system is every bit as important as a properly equipped hospital. The 34 per cent increase in the highway budget over the last three years is an indication of the commitment of the New Democratic Party government to properly maintain our highways, and I would remind members that ours is one of the most extensive highways systems in North America. Our province has approximately 4,000 more miles of paved highway than Manitoba, and 3,000 more miles than Alberta. In fact, if you include all the community access roads in our province, many of them built under Operation Open Roads, Saskatchewan has a total of more than 12,500 miles of paved roads — the envy of all the rest of Canada. But parts of this road system should be classified as interprovincial. All of us have on occasion travelled in the U.S. Some of the highways down there are exceptionally well built. These controlled access roads they have down in the United States contribute much to safe driving. You can travel in a vast state like Montana or in a small one like Idaho and the same quality exists. This standard is not maintained through a vast interstate bureaucracy, but rather by a single agency, that of the U.S. federal government. They maintain this quality standard from one system to another by paying for it.

AN HON. MEMBER: — That's nonsense.

MR. ENGEL: — They sure do. Saskatchewan, through the export tax on heavy oil, paid to the federal treasury four to five times more than was spent on our own highway construction in 1980. If you add the hidden tax that the feds collect on the fuel we consume, that gives me reason to maintain that Ottawa has a responsibility to cost-share the construction and maintenance of our interprovincial routes — the Yellowhead, the parks road, the No. 1 and the No. 13 through southern Saskatchewan.

I would like to compliment Mr. Kramer for the progress that has been made on No. 13 Highway.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — Mr. Kramer joined us on a cavalcade that travelled from Manitoba to

Alberta. He was there, present with the Minister of Highways from Alberta, and signed an agreement. The agreement was signed. The connecting link has been built.

The Highway 13 Association held a meeting at Assiniboia last weekend. I would like to compliment those who are serving as the association's directors for the work they are doing in promoting this southern route. They are not advocating a highway that will wish traffic through Saskatchewan as quickly as possible. The No. 1 does that. What is being advanced is a road that draws attention to the unique features of the south country, a safe highway for the tourist and trucker alike, a road that help people understand what Saskatchewan is all about — like someone on the cavalcade said, "a red-jacket trail."

Mr. Speaker, where highways are concerned the New Democratic Party government is looking after all the rural people.

I have one more topic which I want to go into in some detail, Mr. Speaker, and that is on energy and economy. I turn my attention now to matters which are very close to the hearts and the pocketbooks of all the people of Saskatchewan and to all Canadians — the economy and energy.

Over the past year Canadian have had a unique opportunity to witness two federal administrations — Tory and Liberal — attempt to come to grips with the pressing matters of our economy and energy problems. In the past year we have seen both a Tory and a Liberal budget.

Budgets are significant and important documents. They illustrate the true social values underlining a political party's thinking and philosophy.

Budgets are important documents because they are supposed to lay down the specific plans of a government for the economic growth of this country and the well-being of Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, if adversity is the true test of people's strength, Canadians over the past years have shown themselves to be invincible. Both the Tory and the Liberal budgets were very disappointing. The challenge was there for both administrations to take action on the problems facing our economy as we entered the decade of the '80s; neither accepted the challenge.

What have the Tories and the Liberals proposed to do about creating jobs? In December of '79 the federal Tories forecasted the unemployment rate (those are your friends across) would be 8.3 per cent for 1980, and would stay there for the next two years. A few weeks ago Mr. MacEachern announced that the unemployment rate will be increased next year and will stay at about 8 per cent over the next five years. What is the difference. I ask? Both these announcements were deplorable admissions for any government to make. It really points out that neither a Tory nor a Liberal federal administration has concern for the unemployed.

Moreover, what was the reaction of the Tories and the Liberals to the unemployment problem? Their reactions were the same — shift more of the cost of unemployment onto other workers and employers by raising unemployment insurance premiums. This is a regressive policy which hurts the working man. Unemployment insurance premiums will increase by 33 per cent as of this January, thanks to the Conservatives and the

Liberals. The cost to Saskatchewan employees in 1981 will be about \$15 million, while the cost to the employer will be about \$20 million.

Both administrations proposed nothing more than disincentives to hire labor at a time when unemployment is already too high. Recent federal measures, Tory and Liberal, make it abundantly clear to me that the federal government has abandoned any commitment to maintain full employment. And I reiterate, while Mr. MacEachern can be criticized for a very harsh approach he is doing nothing more than following the policies of increasing taxes established by Crosbie's Conservative budget last December.

It doesn't make any sense to be raising taxes when unemployment insurance premiums will raise taxes by over \$1 billion next year. Instead of raising taxes, both administrations should have been cutting taxes to help bolster our economy.

One of the major reasons for continued high levels of unemployment is the federal government's policy of maintaining high interest rates. We know, Mr. Speaker, that in 1978-79 the old Trudeau government sat idly by while interest rates increased five times in twelve months. On February 13, 1979, in the House of Commons the then opposition leader, Joe Clark, said?

There is nothing less sensible than the Liberal government's determination to increase interest rates to record levels.

Get that, Mr. Speaker. Joe Clark says, "There is nothing less sensible than the Liberals."

Well, Mr. Clark became prime minister. Mr. Crosbie inherited the meat all. And what did they do? Clark's Conservative government raised the interest rates (over the already high rates of Trudeau). They raised them four times in the first four months in office to record Canadian levels. It is obvious there is nothing less sensible than the Liberals. Mr. Crosbie, you know, used to be a Liberal. Did you know that?

The only thing less sensible than a Liberal (and I don't see either one of them in here) is a Liberal in Conservative clothes. Now, Mr. Speaker, everyone knows what happened to Mr. Crosbie. His mukluks wore out and he and Mr. Clark's government were tossed out.

The Liberals were back in and things stayed exactly the same. The new Liberal administration is the same as the old one. Mr. MacEachern isn't fooling anybody by sloughing the problem off to the Bank of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I can remember Tommy Douglas describing the Grits and the Tories as the tweedledum and tweedledee parties. Tommy Douglas was pretty much correct in his analysis, but I think today he would agree with a new description. They are not tweedledee and tweedledum. They are tweedledum and tweedledumber — and dumber and dumber. The more often they switch places, the dumber they get.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ENGEL: — High interest rates discourage firms from expanding and investing. Growth and investment are critical to the creation of more jobs and higher productivity. Without new jobs, we will not meet our current unemployment problem, let alone the problem facing us in the '80s.

It is not surprising that energy dominated both budgets. The policy imperatives that are called by our current energy situation tests the real mettle of a government. I, one among many, don't doubt for one minute that the hon. members opposite were always ready to support and did support Mr. Clark's energy package. Long may we remember the defeat of the federal Tory budget. Go to the opposite side of the House, Mr. Clark. Do not pass Go. Do not collect an 18 cent a gallon increase in gasoline tax.

What would Mr. Clark's energy proposals . . . (inaudible) . . . Yeah, just wait. I'm getting to that. What would Mr. Clark's energy proposals, supported by the hon. members opposite, and I see supported by the former Liberal too, have meant to the people of Saskatchewan? We will recall, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Clark's budget proposed three basic policies:

1. Extension of the excise tax on transportation;
2. Export and energy self-sufficiency tax;
3. An energy bank.

Even with Mr. Clark in office, pricing appears to have depended upon Mr. Lougheed, a good friend of my hon. colleagues opposite. Tories appear to be their own worst political enemies. I understand individuals of Mr. Collver's persuasion are now taking up the cause in the PC caucus.

What would the proposed, and thankfully, defeated 18 cent per gallon increase on gasoline and the extension of the excise tax on diesel fuel have meant to Saskatchewan residents? Would that measure have had any effect on consumption? No, and few people besides the Tories thought so. People who could not have given up their automobile would have been forced to pay the tax without any regard for their ability to do so. The 15 cents per gallon tax on diesel fuel would have particularly hurt Saskatchewan farmers. In Saskatchewan there is no alternative to heavy use of diesel fuel, and undoubtedly the tax would have been passed on to consumers in the form of higher food prices.

The Tories would have continued to levy a heavy export tax on oil. They also proposed a new domestic energy tax to recapture some of the \$90 billion of revenue expected to accrue from oil and gas from now until 1983.

Because export of oil is pretty well limited to heavy oil, this export tax has specific reference to Saskatchewan. Half of Canada's oil exports now come from this province. The federal proceeds from this amount are \$550 million a year (which, incidentally, is more than Saskatchewan receives), and is used to subsidize the price of imported oil in eastern Canada. Shouldn't the cost of this subsidy be borne by all Canadians equally and not drawn so heavily from the resources of this province? "No," said the Tories.

The Crosbie budget also proposed a new energy tax designed to yield approximately half of the oil and gas price increases exceeding \$2 a barrel and 30 cents a thousand cubic feet of gas. And how was this revenue to be used? It was a so-called self-sufficiency tax. Despite that title and despite all Tory promises about making Canada self-sufficient in energy, the Crosbie proposals called for a mere 10 per cent of this tax to go to the Canada energy bank. By 1983 that portion would have risen to 25 per cent for a total of about \$1.7 billion over four years.

This seems like a lot of money, but over those same four years the total revenue from oil and gas would equal approximately \$90 billion of which \$40 billion would go to the producing provinces (primarily Alberta), \$7 billion would go to the federal government, \$33 billion would go to the multinational oil companies. Any political party that was serious about making Canada self-sufficient and retaining ownership of its resources in this country would have provided a lot more than \$1.75 billion to the energy bank, and a lot less than \$33 billion to the multinationals.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, there was Petro-Canada. Petro-Canada was and will remain a highly successful Canadian corporation in the field of energy. But more importantly, it is a publicly owned corporation and as such would give the public and the government a window on the industry. It generates a large cash flow which, at no cost to the taxpayer, can be directed toward finding new energy sources.

What were the Tories proposing to do with Petro-Canada? The threat was to privatize Petro-Canada. That made no sense to millions of Canadians. To abandon it would have been to discard the powerful tool of economic management in that vital energy sector where Canadian actors have been few.

Does anyone recall, or care to recall, the desperate arguments the Tories mustered to defend their budget, and then to explain their defeat in the House of Commons? Maybe one of the members opposite remembers! To paraphrase Mr. Crosbie, "This was a tough budget and it was defeated because Canadians are soft; Canadians are unwilling to sacrifice; Canadians aren't tough enough."

Mr. Speaker, Canadians aren't soft. They are capable of making tough decisions. Above all, they are willing to make sacrifices. But when a government asks people to make sacrifices, two important conditions must be met. The first is fairness. Canadians are willing to make sacrifices if they feel them necessary and can see that everyone (not just those without influence and without power) has to make them.

The second condition is purpose. There is no reason to make sacrifices if they don't get you anywhere. If sacrifices are part of a plan that the public understands and that will get the economy going, Canadians will make them.

The Tories never set down a plan. The Tories never provided leadership. The problem with Conservative promises is that they make them without understanding them. Conservatives make promises without doing their homework. They make them without realizing that if you do not have a sound, consistent, well-thought-out economic plan, based on the realities of the economy, you just can't deliver. The tragedy, Mr. Speaker, is that Canadians continue to suffer the consequences. Things have not changed that much since the return to power of the Liberals. Liberals or Tories it's the same old story.

Mr. Speaker, there were a number of other announcements made in the throne speech which I wholeheartedly support.

The raising of the minimum wage in stages to \$4 per hour by July 1981 will keep our province out in front of the labor standards area.

Saskatchewan consumers, who are already as well protected by legislation as residents of any province in Canada, will welcome the stepped-up activities in the field of consumer affairs.

The announced intention of the provincial government to increase the effort to attract tourists to Saskatchewan and make our provincial parks into year-round facilities will be welcome all across the province.

I welcome, and I know conservation and environmental groups will as well, the greater emphasis the Blakeney government has put on renewable and alternative energy use as well as energy conservation. The construction of a new plant in Mossbank by Saskatchewan Minerals to manufacture solar batteries is just one example why our province is fast becoming a recognized leader in the area. Great success, such as the recent energy show in Saskatoon, can only add to the reputation.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the announcements in the economic area. The expansion of three of the potash mines and also the new mine at Bredenbury to be built by the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan are just another chapter in one of the greatest success stories in the history of Saskatchewan. The potash corporation and its huge increases in sales and profits year after year seems typical of Saskatchewan's economy in general. And the Saskatchewan economy is healthy indeed. The staged and planned growth of our resource sector, the planning of capital projects and public works to take into account the need for job creation, and long-range budgeting to take into consideration the full economic cycle, were all moves made by this New Democratic Party government to allow us to control events rather than have events controlling us. This government did those things, Mr. Speaker, and Saskatchewan is now an island of economic security and growth with a future as bright as any province in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased with the economic and social progress our province has achieved in recent years. The medical, social and educational needs of our citizens are admirably provided for. We live in warm homes. Our civil liberties are well-protected and certainly we have set up all kinds of agencies to meet the needs of the less fortunate. Our society has come a long way indeed since the first sod busters took up homestead lands on the western plains. Yet, in the years ahead, we must come to grips with some of the most difficult problems our society has yet faced.

Mr. Speaker, we are seeing year by year a small but seemingly relentless increase in the incidence of such things as divorce and family break-up. More young people are becoming alienated from society. The numbers of battered babies and battered wives that our family crisis centres and hospitals see are increasing. Alcoholism and drug abuse continue to ruin lives. Younger and younger girls are becoming unwed mothers. Racial friction afflicts our urban centres. Even such relatively minor things as school vandalism are, I think, symptoms of a society in need of help.

And the help will be difficult to administer because we here in the legislature are used to passing laws and designing regulations, an approach that will not solve the kinds of problems that I have listed, Mr. Speaker. In some cases it will be up to us to recognize that other organizations and other institutions in government are better able to provide the answers and we should keep our hands off.

A new law is not likely to reduce the number of battered babies or the incidents of teenage pregnancy but the ongoing work of a Christian minister or a rabbi or a priest could be exactly what is required. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the excellent work of the churches is far too often ignored today and they are but one of the aspects of our society at work in the cause of a better, more efficient and more decent place for all of us to live. We have a long way to go before we arrive at the kind of society we all want to see for our children and our grandchildren and we must enlist the support of all groups

that are willing to help.

Saskatchewan has pioneered in the application of unique and extremely successful solutions to difficult problems for many years. I don't think we should stop now, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think we will. It gives me a great deal of pleasure to support the Speech from the Throne. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, it's hard to get up and give a rousing speech after being lulled to sleep by the two we've just heard and the throne speech yesterday. I think someone described it very adequately when he was asked to comment on the throne speech to one of the media types. He said, "How do you yawn on the radio?" I think that described it very well.

First, Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome the new members to the legislature, particularly ours, who is going to be around for some considerable time. I am glad that the member for The Battlefords is also here to listen to what . . . Well I guess he's not either. But I'm sure that he will be here to enlighten the Minister of Agriculture as it relates to his drought program, his FarmStart program, his land bank program and a few other programs that we just heard a very vigorous defence of (that was something less than accurate, I might add). But sincerely, member for Estevan, I welcome you. My only advice is not to buy a house in Regina. It would be a poor investment in the short term. It's unlikely you'll be back.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BERNTSON: — Just a couple of comments on the throne speech, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to take a lot of time today because we are going to get the substantive part of it (and that won't take a lot of time either) on Monday. As a matter of fact, I was going to say that I was going to review the remarks of the members who just sat down to see if there was anything substantive in what they said but I think it's probably an exercise in futility because there was nothing except a vigorous defence of land bank and FarmStart.

And I want to put this on the record, Mr. Speaker. It's a copy of a letter I received from a Ken Parker from Cobble Hill in British Columbia. The letter is addressed to the then minister of agriculture, Hon. Edgar Kaeding:

Dear Sir: I would like to take this opportunity to advise you of certain events which have happened to my family and myself in the last six months. (This was dated January, 1979.)

First, I will give you a little background on my personal history. From June 1973 until October 1978 I was the working farm manager of a large dairy farm in B.C. I had full responsibility for the operation of this farm as the owner was out of the country for long periods of time. Previous to this job I had worked as a dairy farm herdsman. My father-in-law owns a dairy so my wife has farmed all her life. When I felt I was ready to farm on my own, I started to inquire to provincial governments asking about programs which they

offered. I was pleased to receive a reply from you dated February 11, 1976. I was greatly encouraged about my future prospects after studying your programs. I was also pleased about the prospect of moving to Saskatchewan as that is where I was born and my parents and grandparents still live. I now had a goal to work for and I managed my affairs accordingly.

In June 1977, I flew to Saskatchewan with the intent of meeting government officials and looking at the dairy industry in the province. I was very well received. I met the dairy commissioner, Mr. David Ewart, who has always been of great assistance to me. I learned from him that the government's policy was to encourage the development of more dairy farms. Mr. Ewart introduced me to the director of FarmStart program who explained to me how the program worked. After discussing my situation it was felt that I would probably qualify for a loan and a grant. At this time, I also met with representatives of the land bank. They also explained their program to me. Mr. Ewart, through his field personnel, then showed me several dairy farms throughout the province. When I left Saskatchewan I felt I had been very well informed and greatly encouraged.

When I was back on the coast, to further my acquisition of assets, I made a deal with my employer in which I would receive a share of the heifer calves. This would allow me to build up my own purebred dairy herd.

In August of 1978 I saw an ad in the *Western Producer* of a land bank dairy for lease. I phoned to the representative, Mr. Ed Knash of Canora. He was not in but he returned my call the following day. When I told him my background he suggested I come to Saskatchewan as soon as possible to view the operation. I flew out for a week and Mr. Knash showed me the farm. The buildings were in good shape. I was assured with a little work the farm could be made quite productive for forage crops. Mr. Knash then took me to another quarter which went with the farm.

I found when I returned to the coast . . .

I skipped some there. Rather than skip it I want it to go on the record, so I'll go back. You'll get the point very quickly.

Mr. Knash then took me to another quarter which went with the farm. This piece had been well-farmed and looked in good shape. On the basis of this quarter I felt that in time the farm could be self-sufficient in forage production. It also meant that for the first few years this quarter would supply all its forage. In my mind this made the operation feasible. On this assumption, I then applied to lease the operation. I was led to believe that I was the highest qualified applicant. Also, at this time I applied for a FarmStart loan.

I found, when I had returned to the coast, that my employer was not prepared to let me go at this time. To try and stop me he imposed some very rigid conditions on me. After weighing all the pros and cons, we decided it would be better for us to wait a little while longer before we made the move.

I phoned Mr. Knash and asked him to withdraw my application. Mr. Knash then talked me out of this. He felt that we could make the farm work. He also

stated that they wanted to have the operation running before winter. I took this man at his word and resigned my position, accepting the unfavourable conditions.

A short time later I find out my application has been disqualified as I was not a resident of Saskatchewan. Needless to say, I found this very unnerving and I immediately tried to reconcile with my employer. I managed to retain my job but at a much lower rate. When I phoned Mr. Knash he said that this was just a technicality which could be easily overcome. He said that the land bank would readvertise with no deadline for applications. By now my boss was planning a trip out of the country so I told Mr. Knash I could not leave the coast until November 15. He said this was acceptable. As I have school-age children, I was concerned about moving them to too many different schools. Mr. Knash suggested that we could move to my father's for a short time to establish residency, then rent the farmhouse so that the children could go to school in Preeceville. This was very important to us. At this time, we were also told that the lease would be settled promptly so as to get the farm into production. I now went ahead with preparations for moving in November. I also started inquiring about cows.

Throughout October I made periodic phone calls to check on the situations. I was assured that as long as I was in Saskatchewan by November 15 everything was fine. On October 31, I found out that the deadline for applications was November 10, 1978. I felt that I had been double-crossed as I had not been informed of this fact by Mr. Knash. I phoned Mr. Ewart in Regina and explained the situation to him. He then set up a phone conversation for me with Mr. Wesson. I phoned Mr. Wesson and told him what was happening. He told me that I had an excellent chance of getting the lease as nobody in Saskatchewan had my experience. Mr. Wesson was quite emphatic about this. However, he also reminded me that it was an open competition. He told me that somebody would contact me the next day and tell me what to do.

The next day Mr. Knash phoned and suggested my wife and family move to Saskatchewan and take up residency. He then said that my wife could file a joint application and this would satisfy the land bank's residency clause. At this time he informed us that somebody was living in the farmhouse as a caretaker. However, he said that this party was on short notice to move out. It later turns out that this was one of the lease applicants. He also told me that he would like me to apply for an additional 320 acres, of which 265 were cleared. he said that 95 acres were summerfallow and the balance was seeded down. As I couldn't see a grain crop seeded on October 31, I mistakenly took this to mean it was seeded to a forage crop.

My wife moved to Saskatchewan on November 5, 1978 and enrolled our children in school in Yorkton. I followed with all our belongings on November 15. When I arrived I contacted Mr. Knash. At this time, his attitude towards me seemed very cool. He said they had decided they were not going to do anything about the farm until the spring. However, he said we would be called for an interview with a person who was knowledgeable about dairying.

At this interview I found out that the good quarter I had seen did not belong to this farm. In fact, the one that did was of little or no productive value. I also

found out that the additional 320 acres were stubble. To me this changed the whole financial outlook. I was also told that the unit would never likely be self-productive in forage. In fact, it was stated that I would have to probably buy all my hay. I was also told that even if I got the lease I could not move to the farm until March or April of 1978.

This put me in a very bad position, as feelings were strained at my parents. Whenever I asked when the lease would be awarded, I got a different answer and excuse. Using all the government facilities available, I tried to find work. Everywhere I got the same answer. No work until spring. For three weeks I looked for work every day. By now my savings were rapidly going. I felt that if this farm was so non-productive, I could possibly get myself into a losing proposition. I learned of a job on the coast at this time. I then contacted Mr. Knash and asked him what was being done. He said it was being looked at. We were supposed to know the outcome by December 11. By this time, Mr. Knash had lost all his credibility with me. I learned that there was something else involved from other sources, but Mr. Knash would not admit this to me. The next time I called he said we would not know until towards the end of December.

My feeling were and still are, that the property had been misrepresented to me and that I had not been told the whole situation.

Under these conditions of stress, I moved back to the coast. Soon after, I received letters from the land bank saying I was an unsuccessful applicant. It appears that once I was out of the way, it was easy to award the lease. At this time, I also received a letter from FarmStart saying that they had approved my application for funds. Apparently what was bothering land bank did not affect FarmStart.

This move has cost me many things: my job as a farm manager, possibly my opportunity to ever own a dairy farm, most of my life savings and financial security, my son a year in school.

This whole situation would have been avoided if the parties involved would have had the honesty and integrity to tell me the whole story when the original mistake of accepting a non-resident application was made; a simple phone call and an honest apology would have been all that was required. All I would have lost was plane fare to Saskatchewan. Now I have to start my life all over again with the opportunity for success greatly reduced.

That, sir, is the program for which the speaker who just sat down offered such a vigorous defence.

AN HON. MEMBER: — What is the name of the person?

MR. BERNTSON: — I will give it to you. His names is Ken Parker of Cobble Hill, British Columbia. This is the first of a series which will be read into the record during the course of this session.

I will just leave it at that for today, Mr. Speaker. As I said earlier, I will try to find something of substance in the remarks of the two previous speakers during the throne speech. I, therefore, beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:43 p.m.