

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

December 8, 1980

## EVENING SESSION

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY (CONTINUED)

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Mr. Speaker, I find it truly amazing to watch the great lengths the NDP House Leader and his caucus go to, to protect the Premier from the negative public, and to give him a knight-in-shining-armor image to the voting public. The Premier is proudly displayed during election campaigns, “Vote for Allan Blakeney and the NDP,” the banner reads. When the NDP propaganda machine begins a sales pitch to the voting public of Saskatchewan, it attempts to convince them of all the great things that nine years of Blakeney government has brought to this province. But let a scandal occur in one of the Blakeney government departments, such as DNS, and see what happens. Let the public discover that all the media broadcasts in Saskatchewan are being taped. Let it be discovered that the Blakeney government won’t allow television cameras in committee meetings, thereby not allowing the public the chance to see their elected members in action.

Let blatant examples of political patronage by the Blakeney government be unearthed. Let any of those instances occur, Mr. Chairman, and what happens? The Blakeney of the “Vote Allan Blakeney and the NDP” banner disappears. If something good appears to derive from a situation, Allan Blakeney appears magically from the woodwork. But, Mr. Speaker, if it is something bad, the Premier becomes a shadow. Then the shadow’s shadow takes over. For those who do not recognize the description, I am referring, of course, to the Attorney General, the man who must ensure that the Premier’s armor retains its polish. The Premier and the Attorney General would like the people of this province to believe that the Premier should only have to claim responsibility for the good things that are done by this government, that the bad can be attributed to others.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is not the way things work in the real world. The person who leads a government must, in a gentlemanly manner, accept responsibility for all actions of his government, the good with the bad. A premier must accept the responsibility for the weakest link. He must be ready to answer questions and accept criticism for the actions of those people who work for him. It is time, therefore, Mr. Speaker, for the Premier to begin to answer some of the questions which he has been avoiding for too long.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased tonight that the Minister of the Environment is here. I am not going to talk too long on the environment, but we will have to discuss it a little bit.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment is one minister of this government who absolutely amazes me. I don’t know that makes him tick — really I don’t care.

I am going to refer, Mr. Speaker, to two subjects tonight (I’m not going to spend much time doing so), and these are PCBs at Federal Pioneer and drinking water in the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw and the intervening towns. Now if anyone on that side, Mr. Speaker, will heckle me even one bit about drinking water and PCBs, they should be ashamed of themselves.

We started out here in 1976 with the PCB spill, which could have been removed to New York for \$25,000 — a spill that would have fit in the back of my farm truck. And now it will cost \$5 million to remove that PCB spill from Federal Pioneer — \$5 million. It would have taken 1,800 dump truck loads to remove the PCB spill — 1,800 truck loads. This was in July, Mr. Minister, of 1979. by July of 1981 it will probably have tripled.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of the Environment doesn't seem to want to take this seriously, but I take it seriously. This is serious. The minister could decide himself what he should have decided four years ago: "Let's move them out of here." Instead he decided to put a little pavement over the spill. It was the previous minister who made that sad mistake, but you haven't done anything to correct it, Mr. Minister. The Premier bounced one minister right out of the cabinet over it. Boy, I'm telling you, what you had better do is do something or you are going to get bounced too. But from what I hear, things are not going so good and you won't be running in the next election anyway. I don't blame you. I wouldn't run again either. What am I hearing?

Why would you be bothered, Mr. Minister, to consult the National Research Council of Canada? When they recommended that something be done immediately (this was in July 1979), you let it go another one and one-half years, and all you are going to do is put up some little retaining wall to try to hold it from going a little farther into aquifer system — the PCBs, when they are soaking and soaking closer to it every day.

You cannot, Mr. Minister, guarantee to this House and to the city of Regina that the PCBs are not in that drinking water at this very moment, because there have been no augers to test that ground since July 1979. It was not there then, but you guarantee that it is not there now. Guarantee it. Because in the summer of 1979, we had PCBs in the drinking water. We wouldn't even have known, not from you. We had to hear it from the press. They had to find it. Then you had to come up with a little story about a flaky tap. Oh, let's not get into that. All I am doing is that I want it on the record, Mr. Speaker, that I am condemning the Minister of the Environment and his department for not doing something immediately, for not taking immediate action to remove the PCB soil from this city, move it right out of here. Why could you not have dug it up years ago and moved it out of here?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Herman is going to resign.

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — After the next election, there will be a lot more than him resigning. Mr. Speaker, the minister announced . . . Well, we will go back a little farther. One year ago, I asked the Minister of Urban Affairs in the House what they were going to do about the quality of the drinking water in Regina. He said, "We can't interfere. We've never been asked by the city to do anything about drinking water in this city." Now, I want to know what the government says now because they have interfered. They have put themselves right into the Regina drinking water situation because the minister announced just some time ago that they are setting up a committee to study the quality of the drinking water in Regina, and by 1983 or 1984 this committee will come back with some conclusions as to what to do, and we hope that by 1990 to have something done to improve the quality of the drinking water in Regina, Moose Jaw, sir Force base, and intervening towns by way of a pipeline from Diefenbaker Lake or else.

If you think the people of Regina are going to sit here in this city and wait another 10 years for somebody to do something about the drinking water, you are badly mistaken. Because I think there will be a panic if we get another year like last year. And whose fault is it? Every person who is sitting in this government is responsible for the quality of the

drinking water in the province. Mr. Speaker, here's to the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, there just isn't any way that you can talk to these people, this government. They do not take it seriously. Anyone who would say that he is going to wait until 1990 to do something about the drinking water, apparently does not see it as a serious situation.

I want it on the record that I, the critic for environment, see it as a very serious situation. I will be doing everything I can to work with the city of Regina and try to work with that government over there to get something done. But to me, it has been almost an impossibility.

Well, now I have a problem. I have written down here, Crown corporations. Where do I start? I see the minister responsible for SGI is in his seat. Now we'll start exactly where I wanted to start. I didn't think he was there but he is.

Mr. Speaker, last winter I put an article in the local papers: "Anyone having a problem with SGI, please send me their requests or their problems in writing." What was happening is that I was getting so many phone calls, so many stops on the street, "Can you take care of my SGI problem? I'm just not getting it settled. Nothing seems to be happening. This is a year old; this is two years old; this is three years old." So I wanted it in writing. I put this little ad in the local papers: "Anyone having a problem with SGI, please send me the information in writing." So what did the minister do? He put a letter to the editor in the local papers condemning me for setting myself up as an adjuster. Well, I'll tell you, the people of Arm River had a message for him — their MLA does have a right to act on their behalf.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That's not a right; it's his duty.

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Yes, as the member for Regina South said, it is my duty. And I'll draw your attention, Mr. Minister . . . You're sitting there smiling, but when I get through with some SGI problems you won't be smiling.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — You might be really good on figures and telephone numbers but see if you can get the SGI out of the mess they're in. They're in such a mess. I can't believe it when they have a man who is the cabinet minister responsible, an honorable man like you, letting that Crown corporation go amuck. It is absolutely a disgrace. And it should be the best run organization in the province because you have a monopoly on it. When we talk about the automobile policies, there is no other competition. If I had the only elevator in the province, if I had the only drugstore in the province, if I had the only business there is, I would have to make a success if I were the only one. You have no competition. You do not give the people any other choice. You give them no other choice.

Mr. Minister, I want to bring this matter to your attention, if you'll take it seriously enough. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the minister responsible, for in Crown corporations last winter, I tabled all the letters that I had at that time, all the requests, and he turned them all over . . . There were too many for him to look at and he turned them over to a Mr. Larry Devine. And I have to say thank you, Mr. Minister, because Mr. Devine has done a tremendous job in trying to solve these SGI problems. But, Mr. Minister, he seems to be having trouble getting to the bottom of the list because my requests keep coming and he doesn't have them all completed yet. And he is not going

to get to the bottom of the list unless SGI starts changing its policies. You're going to have to take a look, Mr. Minister, at your adjusters. You're going to have to take a look at a lot of inside problems in your department. How could you lose almost \$40 million?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Almost? He did.

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Well, around \$40 million. Where did you lose it? And what about the \$26 million that's not accountable in 1979 books? Twenty—six million dollars not accountable — where is that? If you're not hiding something, Mr. Minister then table every bit of evidence in SGI so that the public can see it and we as opposition can see it. Let us see it.

Mr. Speaker, when we were talking about adjusters and you said I was setting myself up as an adjuster, I want to tell you, Mr. Minister, that after what happened at Arm River in this last month you had better put me on a payroll as an adjuster. Because when the time comes that I have to phone Saskatoon and complain from a body shop that you . . . Right from their place of business. I won't bring the name up here, but I phoned to one of your adjusters in Saskatoon and told him, "This isn't right; that isn't right; but I don't really know." It's just poor adjusting because we had the car adjusted here this morning, drove it to Regina in the afternoon, and they allowed three hours in the town of Davidson at the body shop; they allowed eleven hours down here. So what's going on, Mr. Minister? Are you trying to squeeze these people right out of business? You know what I'm talking about because you and the Premier have had all the letters, but you've done nothing about it. Mr. Minister, you've stopped a few times yourself in the town of Davidson but all you did was foul things up. You would be far smarter and make the NDP a lot of votes if you just by passed Arm River on the way to Saskatoon.

Why did your adjusters go into Davidson and tell your own men right in town, "We have to do something to shut this Muirhead up. We have to do something to shut him up." You don't have to do anything to shut me up. You don't have to do one thing. You don't have to do anything to shut the member for Arm River up. All you have to do is start taking your responsibilities seriously.

I have to bring this one to your attention. Why, when I was talking to an adjuster on the telephone and brought these three claims to his attention, a car, a fire, and a truck, all on the same day — and we had a little argument about it, did he say back to me on the telephone, "Don't you realize the people you're dealing with are not reliable people, that they're dishonest?" The adjuster said they were dishonest and not to believe one word they said. So, what I said to this gentleman was, "This man is going to take exception to this because he's listening on the extension phone." And I'll tell you he did take exception to it. So what happened? We ended our conversation, Mr. Minister, and one hour later he phoned up and said, "Go ahead and fix the three vehicles. If the MLA has had a look at those vehicles and he's satisfied that that was a fire, not mechanical fire, go ahead and fix them." What kind of business is this? Why should the MLA have anything to do with adjusting? So I think you'd better put me on your payroll because I'm your adjuster in Davidson.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — Shame, shame!

**MR. MUIRHEAD:** — Talk about shame! I've never seen such a political posturing in my life. If I had my way, if I was running SGI, I'd fire absolutely every adjuster in this province. I would do as other insurance companies do, get private adjusters in. Then you have something.

I want to bring one more SGI problem personally to you, Mr. Minister. It's in connection with a gentleman who had a 1973 freightliner smashed up. The damage was \$40,000. The purchase price of this vehicle was \$16,000. The box and hoist was \$6,700; stretch frame and paint the vehicle — \$2,300; rebuild engine — \$6,100; fixing the rear end of the truck — \$2,900; tires — \$1,300. This truck was worth \$36,000 to this gentleman. The SGI adjuster said the cost to fix the truck was \$40,000. SGI offered the insured \$25,000 and SGI retained the salvage. "I refused this offer," says the gentleman here. The truck is insured under SGI commercial Auto Pak policy such and such a number, item no. 5. He tells me he wants SGI to either fix this truck, or he would accept a cash settlement of \$35,000. When I phoned your adjuster, Mr. Ron Skakum, he told me that SGI offered \$22,000 but when the gentleman complained they offered him \$25,000 and said that was the best they could do. I argued the situation and the adjuster said maybe SGI could go higher. What kind of a business are you running? There should be a set price for a wrecked vehicle; why all the inconsistency? The gentleman from SGI said, "Well, we only pay so much money for a 1973 freightliner. We can buy them any place across the country for \$25,000." I told him to go ahead and buy one and the insured would settle for one, but it must have a new motor, box and hoist and have the same value as the truck that was smashed up.

Mr. Minister, your adjusters are looking at this wrongly. Perhaps they can put a price on a car or a half ton or other small truck and it might balance out. But, when you start looking at this type of tractor, a farm tractor made into a truck, that they call a tractor . . .

I told this gentleman, Mr. Skakum, that I have a tractor insured under SGI. The purchase price was \$45,000 and it has depreciated to about \$10,000 or \$12,000 in four years. Still SGI accepted my insurance for \$50,000 on that tractor, and a tractor just like mine was sold at an auction sale for \$58,000. That is what you must look at, Mr. Minister. It isn't just the price. When you get into freightliners, you can find lots of 1973 models worth only \$10,000 but you can find some worth \$40,000. Some of them have 50,000 miles on them and others have 700,000 or 800,000 miles on them.

I ask you to personally look into this, Mr. Minister, because this case is going to end in arbitration in the courtroom. This man doesn't want to have that happen but he can't afford to take a \$25,000 payment for his truck when he just finished spending \$36,000 on it.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words about the constitution. The Saskatchewan government and constitutional reform is a modern—day version of Nero fiddling while Rome burned. It has now been about three months since the Prime Minister of Canada introduced his resolution concerning Canadian constitution in the House of Commons. When the resolution was first introduced, the Premier of Saskatchewan hedged on taking a position. Three months later, he still has not told neither the federal government nor the people of Saskatchewan what position his administration will take on this vital issue. He tells us that he is holding out on giving support to Mr. Trudeau until he has assurance that the provinces will have full control over resources.

Well, Mr. Speaker, two interesting events have occurred in these three months which tell the tale about our Prime Minister and the Premier of the province. First, after much noise from the NDP, the Prime Minister added a relative vague section to the constitutional resolution referring to provincial control over resources. Then, within a

few weeks, the Trudeau government introduced its budget which effectively removed a large amount of provincial control over energy resources. What the Prime Minister has done, in effect, is give to the provinces with one hand and immediately take away with the other. What will the Trudeau government take away from Saskatchewan next, while the Premier is fiddling?

We have recently heard the federal Minister of Agriculture making aggressive statements about our potash profits. Is this a hint that the Trudeau government is planning to federalize our potash resources next? now that they have taken away control of our energy industry, will the Premier fiddle while the feds whittle away at another of our provincial resources? When will it all stop, Mr. Speaker? I fear not until the Premier starts to aggressively resist the federalization, the Trudeauization, of our provincial economy. Until the Premier gets off the fence and begins to take a position that will protect our resources and the rights of the people in Saskatchewan, the story of Blakeney fiddling while Saskatchewan burns will continue to painfully plague our history.

Of course the Premier is incredibly concerned, like Mr. Trudeau, with how the history books will paint him. Mr. Speaker, if he continues at the present rate, the books will likely read something like his: Blakeney, Allan — He gave it all away.

Mr. Speaker, I just have one more comment on the Crown corporations for now, and that is that we have many under-the-table deals going on in Sedco that really bother me. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't have to be careful because what I am saying is fact.

I brought this to the minister in Crown corporations last year; I was promised an answer in 48 hours. This is a long 48 hours because I have heard nothing from you yet. We asked you why Sedco lent out almost \$1 million to the Dundurn feedlot (and I'll bring in no names of owners) in 1973 without anywhere near a 30 per cent down payment. I brought it to your attention that day, Mr. Minister, in Crown corporations, and you said that they had the property for security. I told you that property was worth about \$30,000 at that time. Maybe today it would be \$60,000; it was only a few acres of sand by the army camp. So you turned around and asked your advisers, Mr. Minister. You talked to them for awhile and came back to me and said, "Oh, we had the steers for collateral."

Mr. Speaker, how ridiculous can we be? There is no money lending institution in North American that would make a 25—year loan on steers. No way! Ten years maybe on purebred cattle, maybe five years on grade cattle. But, Mr. Speaker, I tell the minister that there is no way that you lent this money in good faith by doing as you have. What happened? They moved the steers out in the middle of the night to the Hudson Bay feedlot. We have asked you about this in Crown corporations, but we have had no answers, and this is what is wrong with you as a government. We can't get answers?

I sat in Crown corporations last year for hours and hours, and I might as well have sat out in the hall and asked the questions for all the good it did. The government agrees that we might as well all sit out in the hall because they give us no information. I want it on record that the government said that. The only information that you will give us, as opposition, is what you want us to know. And all the stuff you're hiding in DNS (what the man sitting beside you hides) you don't want us to know. There is no way we are ever going to find out unless we do what they did on the floor of this House with the Rawluk, Allore, Fines case. We may have to call the RCMP in here to get information out of you fellows! Don't laugh at me because before the next election, it is going to happen.

Mr. Speaker, I can see the same faces that were in the DNS scandal last spring — the same sad faces. I see the hon. men — and one of them is the Minister of Agriculture — sit over there in the back chairs when we're talking about DNS. He just was so red and so sad looking. I can't be a part of this. Finally, he went out. And the hon. member for Weyburn — we scarcely ever saw him sit in here when we discussed DNS. Try to get these men to run in the next election! I don't think they are going to run for you. The Minister of Agriculture is too honorable a man to ever run under the Blakeney government again.

Mr. Speaker, I am just going to sum up a few words. The Legislative Assembly in Saskatchewan is based on the principle that on the one hand we have a democratically elected government to provide leadership, policies, and effective administration, and on the other hand we have the opposition MLAs to hold the government accountable for these policies and actions. That is what we're here for (and the press had better understand what we're here for). We're here to scrutinize the king's money . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well the old law way back says king and that's what we're here for.

Here in Saskatchewan the power of the Premier, the cabinet and the Crown corporation has grown at a most incredible rate. Their power has been at the expense of the legislature and out of the public domain. This growth is dangerous and gives the cabinet too much power.

Mr. Speaker, take a look at the volumes of regulations and orders in council that for all intents and purposes are outside the scope of this legislature. Crown corporations controlled by the cabinet are not really accountable to the taxpayers. The legislature should be able to scrutinize the Crown corporations, but this government, which deals in secrecy, will not allow that.

This government is a government of secrets and coverups. They make a Watergate look like a tea party. If for one moment we think that the Nixon Watergate with 225 million was serious, take a look at the Watergate with only one million people in this province. Boy, I'll tell you, the government only releases those parts of the massive store of information they want to. They keep the real truth hidden away in secret files.

Mr. Speaker, let me cite some examples of the way the government keeps away information from the elected representatives of the people. In the last session, various members of the official opposition placed serious information seeking questions on the order paper. The Attorney General treated them in a casual manner. And now the government continually puts off answering the legitimate questions. I pose the question, what are they hiding? What are they covering up? I challenge the government to case aside any suspicion and immediately answer all the motions for returns, prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that this government has nothing to hide.

Let me cite another example of how this government deals in secrecy and in a paranoid mentality. Time and time again the research staff of the official opposition, in making general inquiries of various government departments, is constantly being told by public servants to check with their supervisors, who in turn tell them to call another official, who in turn says to write a letter to the minister. This is a bureaucratic shuffle and even the most simple public information is being withheld.

But recently an even more shocking practice has gone into effect. Some ministers and

their executive assistants have sent letters and memoranda with instructions: "Public servants to give no information whatsoever to the opposition research staff." This is outrageous and I am shocked that a so-called moral government would do that.

At every turn the government insists on withholding information. Time and time again the opposition has asked for an inquiry into an important matter. The government has refused. Time and time again we have asked questions in committees but the government has not provided the answer. I am sure this government would start answering questions if the RCMP were to investigate some of the more questionable practices of the government. Yes, maybe what is needed is a police investigation to get to the bottom of all these coverups.

I remember how the government of Tommy Douglas handled the C.M. Fines case and remember that government was defeated in 1964. Let that serve as a lesson to this government. Coverup and secrecy will defeat this government, I predict that.

We in the official opposition have called for freedom of information legislation. Access to government is essential to our fundamental rights and freedoms. I challenge the government to introduce freedom of information legislation. The government is hindering the work of the official opposition by limiting the information. Mr. Speaker, the people will no longer tolerate coverups and secrets and their day of judgment is coming soon.

In closing, I just want to say that I am a Canadian. I want to say to the people of my constituency of Arm River that I will be fighting with every ounce of blood I've got in me to hold Canada together.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Thank you, sir. My rising to speak in reply to the throne speech is a last-minute decision which I made at 5 o'clock this afternoon, after having received a telephone call and having a long discussion with a member of the Department of Social Services. That is what has prompted me to say these few words here tonight. However, before I do, I guess it is incumbent on me to congratulate the new members elected to the legislature. I know they have been congratulated over and over again, but I would at this time like to add my sincere congratulations and best wishes to the three new members who have joined this legislature and I wish them well in the years to come.

**HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Mr. Speaker, the throne speech which we heard a little over a week ago, in my opinion, was void of the concerns that this government should have for the people and the individuals in the province of Saskatchewan. The speech did not attack the one major concern which the people of this province have today. It is a subject, Mr. Speaker, that I wish to broach tonight, and to bring to the attention of the members opposite and to the people of this province. That subject is inflation.

Inflation has reached the level of (you might say) crisis, in the world today. You may wonder why I am talking about inflation on one hand, and a discussion I had with a

member of social services on the other, and I will attempt, Mr. Speaker, to tie them together.

We talk about inflation as being a crisis in the world today, and it is. Certainly I would be the first to admit that it is not the fault of the provincial government or the members opposite that we are faced with inflation. It's a world—wide situation. It's a situation which has been created by governments all over the world. But this government is part and parcel of world governments, so they do have a responsibility to attack it and to attempt to resolve it — to attempt to give the people of Saskatchewan a break in the conditions of inflation which exist.

However, we look at the record, the performance of this government, Mr. Speaker, and they've done exactly the opposite. When I say they've done exactly the opposite, they've increased their budget spending, thereby creating more of a load on the backs of the taxpayers. We have offered suggestions to the government in the past two years and in fact longer (I've been a member here for two years), for example, a public utilities price review board which would control costs of utilities. We have offered suggestions such as the housing initiative program, to no avail. We have offered suggestions like the income tax amendment act which I introduced in this legislature last year, to no avail. We have asked the Minister of Revenue, Supplies and Services, to leave the sales tax on gasoline at the old rate of 19 cents, to no avail. It is 20 per cent and that 20 per cent has already raised the cost of that tax to 26 cents or 27 cents. There has never been announcement of this because it is a slippery tax. It does in every month, it is added on every month, Mr. Speaker, and the people of the province have that much more to pay continuously.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You go to Manitoba.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Oh yes, the minister say that they have it in Manitoba and they have it here. If you had been listening, Mr. Minister, I have asked your government to do something about inflation. It's all very well to pass on the buck and to blame others, but I have asked your government to attempt to face the problem of inflation head on and to attack this problem that we are faced with. You are very insensitive to the needs of the individual.

This brings me to a discussion I had with the director of social services today. Unfortunately the Minister of Social Services is not in the House tonight.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — I'll take notes for him.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — I appreciate that the Minister of Health has offered to take the information. This involves a case.

The reason I am waiting is because you offered to take the information so I will wait until you have finished having your little private chats, and then I'll carry on.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — I'm way ahead of you, already.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Thank you. Do you have the name?

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — You wouldn't give it, anyway.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Yes I will, in private.

Mr. Speaker, I won't mention the name of the individual I am going to be speaking about. I will refer to her as Jane Smith. If the minister wishes, I will inform him of the true name of the individual later.

Your own director, during a telephone conversation today said, "Paul, this is not an isolated case. There are thousands of Jane Smith in this province; there are thousand like her." I want to bring to your attention the plight . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Mr. Minister, if you will listen, I wish to bring to your attention the plight of some of these individuals you are insensitive to.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — If you weren't such a hypocrite I'd listen to you.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — This is not hypocrisy, this is fact. I think it is incumbent on you to listen and to take the information down as I am passing it on to you.

Mr. Speaker, this individual is a widow, 25 years of age and has two children.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — She earns about \$830 a month.

**MR. ROUSSEAU:** — Eight hundred and eighty—five dollars to be exact. Mr. Speaker, this individual, Jane Smith, has worked and worked steadily from 1973 (I have her curriculum vitae in my hand) to the present, has a reasonable education and is indebted because of the debts left by her late husband who was killed in 1976. She needed help. She first approached social services and was refused help; she then approached the mediation board and these were the suggestion offered to her as an alternative to her problem.

The first alternative was to go into personal bankruptcy . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You agree that is a good idea? Okay. And you realize of course, Mr. Minister, what that does to her future, don't you? You realize? I hope you do.

The second alternative was that she could supplement her income with an extra job . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, that's true; however, with two small children at home, one about a year and a half, and the other about four years of age . . . So we don't have to worry; she can leave the kids alone to go out and work at night. She is already, by the way, doing a second job to supplement her income.

Thirdly, quit your job and go on social assistance. That was another alternative offered by the government. Fourthly, there is OPD (orderly payment of debts) which is what she has asked for. However, when it comes down to the nitty gritty, this is impossible to do in her case. The young lady, the Jane Smith to whom I am referring, has a net income of \$885 a month. I said net, not gross. She receives a pension of \$129 from her late husband's accident. She has a family allowance cheque of \$43. The total is \$1,057. She is indebted to the amount of \$12,233. The payments which she is making are: rent — \$210; day care — \$100; phone — \$25; gasoline — \$40; parking — \$30; groceries — \$200; power — \$17; drugs — \$20; for a total of \$632. The payments she is making against her debts are \$417, which amount to the same amount of money she is receiving. Please note, there is nothing there for clothes, incidentals, or necessities of life which an individual needs.

These are the answers which she gets from the government when she asks for

assistance. This is not the ordinary welfare situation. This is not a situation where the individual is lazy, is not interested in working. It is not a matter of squandering her funds, spending her money, etc. It is a situation where the individual is trying. She has worked since 1973, has never missed a day's work. The government says, "Quit your job and go on social assistance."

Mr. Minister, the government is quite prepared to spend \$8 million to advertise a family of Crown corporations in this province. The government is prepared to spend \$2.5 billion to reinvest into potash. They will spend an extra \$555 to install gold—plated windows in an office building downtown. They will spend millions of dollars buying up television stations, but they will not offer assistance to a person who needs it.

Mr. Speaker, the last part of this story I want to indicate to you is that this individual isn't working for the big, bad, free enterprise world. This individual works for the Government of Saskatchewan and has for many years. The government can afford to pay deputy ministers \$59,000 a year . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well why ask me? You know what my income is; you have it here . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, perhaps I should share mine. Is that what you are suggesting, Mr. Minister? The millions of dollars which you are talking about and the waste . . . We heard about a \$26 million loss — not loss, but loss of funds. We hear from the auditor of \$120 million misappropriated. Those are peanuts? We have needy people in this province, as I have just indicated to you, and according to the words of your own director, there are thousands like this Jane Smith in the province of Saskatchewan. There are thousands of cases like her and that's just a matter of . . . It's incidental, isn't it? I would sincerely hope the minister is interested enough in this case to ask me later for the individual's name . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'd actually give you the name right here, but you know it would be at the risk of that individual losing his job because that's exactly what you're suggesting you're doing now with your director . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, no. I said Jane Smith. I'm talking about the director you're going to talk to tomorrow.

That's one case and I'm just going to read into the record one other case of a letter which was handed to me about two or three weeks ago. I was going to wait and hold this until the spring, however, I now have the opportunity. I'm not going to take too much more time. My House Leader is looking at me and I think I perhaps should be moving on. The letter was addressed to Mr. Devine.

Dear Mr. Devine:

I received your brochure titled: A Cure for the Saskatchewan condition . . .

I know many of you have seen it, but this is what I'm talking about.

. . . and I have read and reread its contents. I find your information very precise and informative. In all honesty I must say I have in the past voted for the NDP both provincially and federally, but lately I've had the feeling of being betrayed by the party that once stated that it was for the people. I no longer refer to Mr. Blakeney as honorable, as I believe this title should be continually earned and not merely be stated in reference to a mere man who lately has shown to be anything but for the people. My respect should not be expected, but should be deserved.

Your brochure mentioned better service at cheaper rates and I would like more information of this particular subject as my main concern at the

present is the bureaucracy of the Crown corporations and proposals on what the different alternative parties would do for the people against these warlords of the monopoly world known as business. I'm angry, disillusioned and very frustrated at these conglomerates, and as far as I am concerned Mr. Blakeney combined with these companies is a deadly combination.

Recently my family and I had the unfortunate luck as to try and deal with such a corporation and these are the facts pertaining to my views of Sask Tel in particular.

I am sorry to see that the Minister of Sask Tel is absent tonight.

With the present economic situation taking its toll upon us in this so naively referred to "have" province we were forced to sell our home as we could no longer afford the upkeep in mortgage payments, forced to sell it at less than the price we initially paid for it, leaving us with a loan payment that had been taken for the repairs to the home, the balance still substantial. We also were behind in our telephone account. We had begged the Sask Tel regime to consider taking at least half of the outstanding account and we were refused any payment other than in full. We had to have it disconnected because of their impatience and greediness. Approximately one month later we paid Sask Tel in full and requested that that the phone be reconnected as there was no longer any outstanding amount owing on this bill. They refused us quite arrogantly and said we could not have it reconnected until we found someone in the province who had a phone who would be willing to co—sign for us as we longer could be considered responsible people. I stress the fact that we did in fact offer them half while the phone was still in working order and afterwards had met their previous requirements that the bill be paid in full. But, sadly, this was not enough. It appears that they also want our self—respect and docility.

That is what Mr. Blakeney and his pet project Sask Tel has to offer in his "have" province. I have been subjected to self—doubt as being a responsible person. I have been filled with shame on a number of occasions. For example, when enrolling my little girl in kindergarten this year I had to conjure up some excuse for not being able to be contacted if any injury or mishap should befall my little girl, for not being able to allow any other little girl to spend the night over as I would be unable to contact her parents in case of an accident or just plain loneliness.

I have been subject to vulnerability and insecurity as we are now unable to make any type of immediate contact with family at work or play. I have no safety, no medical contacts in any form of an emergency. For example, in the event of a heart attack in the middle of the night I would have to let myself or any member of my family suffer until I could manage to wake up next door neighbors, providing of course that they would acknowledge my presence and then hopefully be granted the right or privilege to borrow their phone.

If someone were to attempt to force his way into the house or perhaps if he succeeded, I would have to either leave my children alone with such a person while I tried to summon help or else I would I have to try to defend myself and my family by myself with whatever means available.

I have no pride. I'm not expected to, as Sask Tel demands that I beg or plead with someone to co—sign for us after I am forced to tell that person that someone thinks I am so irresponsible and so unfit to be granted the privilege of usage of a necessity.

The telephone and power services can no longer be considered a luxury but the main sources of survival in our environment and violent society, along with agriculture.

I have no job as I lost it due to not being able to walk the five block to contact my employer nor medical examination due to my illness. My husband was unable to use a company phone — policy. And that week we were unfortunate to not even have a dime to use the pay phone in my husband's building.

Ironic isn't it, especially in this so—called “have” province?

I have no faith left in the NDP nor Allan Blakeney and I have never had that much trust in Crown corporations as they tend to dominate the population as the Gestapo over the Jews. What can your party offer?

Mr. Speaker, I bring those two cases to light in the hope that the government will listen and be sensitive to the needs of the individuals of the province.

As I said earlier, inflation is not an isolated problem in Saskatchewan. It is a worldwide problem. But there is something every government can do in the world today. This government has bragged in the past of being pioneers in the health care field. I will agree but your credibility and your respect in that field have come way down. You could show the same kind of leadership today in the fight against inflation which is a main and a major concern of the people of the world — not only of Saskatchewan. But it is no longer a concern. You see I get the rhetoric from the Minister of Health — the same nonsense — the benevolent government which has done everything for the people. What you have done for the people of this province is to create an untenable situation where they can no longer afford the necessities of life.

Mr. Speaker, in the spring we will have a budge brought down by this government. I have a feeling that I'm not going to like what I see and hear in that budget. As I stand here today I predict that the problems of inflation will not be attacked by this government. It will have no concern at all for the individuals of Saskatchewan or their needs for the necessities of life. Summing up, let me say that I honestly and sincerely hope that the government opposite will have some concern, will show some semblance of humanity to the people of this province instead of continuously taking from them and not giving anything back. We have the resources, Mr. Speaker; we have the opportunities in this province to be the first in the world if necessary to turn inflation around. But all we get from this government is an attempt to add fuel to the that fire.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this time. I hope the government will act and will recognize the real needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it is indeed with pleasure that I join in the throne speech debate. I would like to start by congratulating the three new

members, as I see everyone does. I must say that I think all three of them gave commendable speeches. I hope you enjoy your time here. As I say this, I hope the fellows on the other side won't be here too long but while you're here have a good time and enter into the debate. I must say that I am very pleased at the questions the member for Kelsey—Tisdale has been asking. He has been fitting right in and I think he is going to be a very good member.

Also of interest to me, Mr. Speaker, and one of the things I've found most amazing in this session is that some of the boys in the back row are kind of strutting their stuff and puffing their feathers a bit in the hope that the Premier will notice them for some of these cabinet positions. In fact, I even see a few of them sneaking down in the night session to try out the front desks. So I wish you luck. I don't know what his choice is going to be. It's bound to be a very difficult one, looking at the lack of talent there. But I guess the Premier will be able to make that.

I want to say to the new members, though, with all sincerity that this is certainly a very important time for you to have been elected into the legislature of this province and, shall I say, for any elected official in the Dominion of Canada. I think you all know the strains that are affecting our country. All of us realize that those frustrations are out there in the society. They're out there in our constituency, feelings of alienation, but I believe mainly feelings of frustration. I don't blame the people in the province for having those feelings of frustration. For the ones who talk of separatism and movement out of Canada, I think their methods are wrong, but I do have sympathy with the feelings they are expressing. And I do think that one reason we are feeling this in Saskatchewan and throughout the West is the actions of the Prime Minister of Canada, Mr. Trudeau. If I remember correctly, first he said that it really wasn't serious, this separatist threat. And next he said that it was a bunch of hysteria, and now he calls it political blackmail.

I would think that Mr. Trudeau is doing very little to solve the problems we face here in western Canada. I would suggest that the first step in solving the constitutional problems, which are going to affect your lives and mine and the lives of everyone in this province, would be for the Prime Minister of this country to step aside. I don't think that will happen, but I think it would be a great move and we might get on with the deal of getting a constitution worked out. I believe that a lot of that feeling out there in the constituencies of this province is more anti-Trudeauism than it is anti-Canadianism, at least for the people I am talking to.

Then I wonder what your man over there, Mr. Allan Blakeney, is doing to calm or soothe these feelings. He knows as well as I do that separatism isn't a viable alternative for this country. We just have to look at it when it comes down to the wire and you know as well as I do that when people are asked what will happen to their pension plans, what will happen to the DVA, what will happen to the PFRA, what about the banking interest, what about investments in eastern Canada? You know, as well as I do, that the separatist movement will get nowhere in this country.

I want to know what the Premier is doing to ease and to try to work out these problems,. He says he's made his stand. He says everybody in Saskatchewan knows it except one of our members over here. Well, I tell you, I was out in the country last weekend and I asked many people, "What's the Premier's stand?" They're the same as the rest of us. They don't know. I challenge some of you over there — you don't know where your Premier stands on this thing.

Furthermore, on the idea of separatism, do you think the East would ever let us go? No

way. You and I know the East would never let us separate, that we would be into armed confrontation. I think it is incumbent upon all the members in this Chamber — the newly elected ones, the veterans, the cabinet ministers — to take that message out to the people. We must work out a strong position for Canada and for western Canada in this united Canada.

That's what I stand for and I notice that your Premier says the same thing. At least that is what he did say. According to the November 24 *Leader—Post*, speaking in Estevan to Mr. Chapman's rally, he said: "I stand for a strong Saskatchewan in a strong and united Canada." Well, let's see what he has done about that. What has he done to support that position? That is the question. It's one thing to say it; it's another thing to back it up with some action. What has he done?

Has he stood shoulder—to—shoulder with Premiers Bennett, Lyon and Lougheed? No way, not at all. Has he taken a strong stand in negotiations down at the conference there, like Brian Peckford did? I believe that man was the star of the conference. No, he certainly did not. Has he appeared before the parliamentary committee? No. He says in the same paper and I quote: "Next week (the date was November 24) I'll appear before a parliamentary constitutional review committee with proposals for changes in the constitutional package." Well, he didn't go then; I hear he isn't going now; the next talk is that he want to go some time in January. What is his reason for procrastinating and for not getting down there? I believe that he does not have a game plan and that really he is reacting to whatever Trudeau says.

You know, I look over at Gordon there and he put me in mind of a little song. Somebody was talking about fiddling. Maybe Gordon and Henry and Wes would remember this, because it was years ago when I was a boy. I remember an old neighbor played the violin and the name of that song was: There Ain't No Sense Sittin on the Fence All by Yourself in the Moonlight. I think maybe that's something that the Premier should listen to, and maybe you older members of the caucus there can remind him of that song.

I have said a number of things that the Premier has not done at the constitutional conferences, but there's one thing that he has done, I have to admit. There's one that I have to answer yes to, and that question is: has he been dubbed the weak link in western Canada? Undoubtedly the answer is yes. How can you be proud of a leader that's called the weak link? There's a good one for you to think of. Yes, the Neville Chamberlain; yes, that's right.

He's the Premier of a province with the greatest resources in this country. Remember that. I believe it and I think you boys over there do too. But what is his stand? Be called the weak link. I say that's shocking. Do you realize, fellows, that if Premier Blakeney had stood up foursquare with the other western premiers to defend the resources of western Canada, that Pierre Elliott Trudeau may not have taken the confrontation tactics that he has? But when he sees the weak chink in the armor, most certainly he is going to act in the manner he has done.

I'd like to quote further from the Premier and see what the problems are that are keeping him for making a decision. I'd like you to listen to these two questions, because I find it amazing. He was speaking down there in Estevan. It goes as follows, and I quote:

In dealing with the constitution, Blakeney said the provincial governments have to decide if they object in principle to the type of unilateral action Trudeau has taken in bringing the constitutional resolution before the House

or whether the provinces object to the content of the proposed package.

So there's the question. Do you object to the unilateral action or do you object to what's in the package? The Premier goes on to say, and they quote:

It is a difficult question for the government to deal with. Do the provinces attempt to change the contents of the resolution or simply do nothing but simply object to the process in which Trudeau is going about repatriation of the constitution.

Well, I tell you, if that's a difficult question then I don't know what an easy one is because I think the answer to both of those is an astounding no. We don't agree with the unilateral action and we don't agree with the contents of the constitutional package. If that's a hard one, I'd like to see what an easy one is like.

You know, when I look at the stance that the Premier has taken, I say it is no wonder the cabinet opposite is beginning to fall apart. I've been in this House since 1978 and I have seen seven members leave. I think the most noticeable was the minister of energy, Mr. Messer. Answer this: why would the minister of energy resign from the cabinet the day before the budget? That is the question. You can say that Mr. Messer wanted challenge and Mr. Messer wanted that, but I tell you and I tell the people of Saskatchewan that there was a rift between Jack Messer, who was willing to stand up for this province, and the Premier, who want to sit on that fence in the moonlight. That simply is the essence of the resignation.

I remember also the Minister of Highways, Mr. Kramer. I remember a leading member of our party telling me that we are going to have a big party for Eiling because he's been in for 28 years. Now I think Eiling likes parties and all of a sudden poor old Eiling is gone — no party. Was it because Mr. Kramer did not agree with the ideas of the Premier also?

What about Mr. Shillington there? Was he nudged out? I don't know. That's a question we have to decide. Or is Mr. Shillington also one of these strong . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** — Order, order. I know the member for Indian Head—Wolseley always to be parliamentary. There is a rule about referring to members by their constituency or their position.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — Was the member for Regina Centre nudged out or did he also believe as these other two men, that it was time to stand up and take a firm stance for Saskatchewan?

I listened all summer to the Attorney General, who played a prominent role in the constitutional talks. I tell you at times it looked like the Attorney General and the Premier were in two different political parties. What I point out to you fellows over there is, who's next and which is the next one to leave the cabinet? I believe, the same as the member for Arm River, the government — it happens to any government and I think it's your time now — is becoming complacent. There's a big rift in the cabinet over the position on energy and we are going to see other cabinet ministers leave the government.

So you fellows in the back bench, I say keep puffing your feathers because there's going to be other vacancies that you're going to fill.

I think I could sum it up by saying that the Premier's position is not popular. It's not popular in his own party. It's not popular in his cabinet and it's not popular in his caucus or with the people of Saskatchewan.

To illustrate this, I would like to quote an article from the *Rosetown Eagle* of December 3. The headline says, Rosetown to Join Alberta or B.C. This is a motion that was put forward by an elected council member in Rosetown. I would like to quote a bit from the paper to give the background and then the motion with your permission, Mr. Speaker. It says:

The councillor chose Alberta and British Columbia because, as he say, they are the only governments which appear ready to defend their citizens and their resources using all options open to them. Stating that we in western Canada are facing a crisis of proportions which we have never before encountered. Councillor Skelton sums up his resolution this way.

Here's the resolution which has been put before one of the larger towns in western Saskatchewan, that hopes to join either Alberta or British Columbia. It reads:

Therefore be it resolved that the town of Rosetown petition the legislatures of Alberta and British Columbia in the hope that either province would agree to accept us as part of its province, in order that the residents of the town of Rosetown might then have effective representation in the battle which is upon us, and in the hope that we would not then be left in the cold should Alberta and British Columbia determine that they and the people of their provinces are not prepared to continue as part of the central Canadian dictatorship.

I think it is very shocking to see elected members in a town in Saskatchewan putting forth a resolution of that nature, asking to join Alberta or B.C. because they don't have faith in the government of their own province.

I would like now to turn to a few comments I wish to put forth in the field of education. I see the minister is in the House. I appreciate that I think one of the most dangerous things we are facing in Saskatchewan today in the field of education is that too many decisions, too many of the policies and ideas (parents are expressing this to me) are directed from the top down. I say with all sincerity to you, Mr. Minister that is what I pick up from people who write letters to me. I am sure you have received many of the same letters. The people feel decisions are made at the top and there is very little they can do about it. This can best—be expressed by the ward system, which is at present being contested by many of the boards (both public and separate) in this city. This is an example of what is happening in education. The elected officials and many of the people who are concerned are not being listened to. The decisions are being made; then these decision, whatever the consequences, are being implemented.

We have mentioned in question period that a good number of the boards made submissions to the de Vlieger report, opposed the implementation of the ward system. I think when you look at implementing something, you say, "Well, what is the reason for it?" I think we will get down to the reason for it. Why would one go for the ward system? The only think I have been able to detect from discussion and reading and so on is that there was a large number at the last turnout and somebody said that the ones at the top in alphabetical order got in and the other ones did not. Now that can be rectified if that is the case. Surely we want to see a large number of people running for our elected

boards. I think one problem is the apathy which exists in many areas. Then, when we have a large number of people vying for public office, we think this is wrong. The ones at the top get elected and the ones at the bottom get left out. Surely, a very simple solution to that could be a random selection. There is no written rule that they have to appear in alphabetical order, none whatsoever.

**AN HON. MEMBER:** — That's a weak argument.

**MR. TAYLOR:** — That's one argument. Just pay attention and you will hear more.

I think you have to ask what the ward system does that the system we have now does not do? That is the question. If it can improve the education system, we would not be opposing it. I have to be shown that it will improve it. I say it will not.

The main purpose of introducing any type of system should be to have a more equal opportunity of education for all consumers within that jurisdiction. I am glad you fellows understand that. Tell me, how does the ward system address that? How does it make that better than it presently is? The ward system is designed to put the emphasis on representation and not on the delivery of the services or the equal opportunities. I've heard members on the other side say it works in rural Saskatchewan. I have taught in school units in rural Saskatchewan and I can tell you, there are weaknesses in the ward system or the unit system out there. However, that is what we have. But let us look at the city.

First of all in looking at a city, there isn't equal representation of students within the wards. You know as well as I do that populations in the city soon change. After five or ten years it is suburbia where all the kids are, and the core centres don't have them. Now, if you have a fellow representing that core where there are very few schools, and another fellow representing suburbia where they are dying for school, the fellow in the core is going to want to get something for his jurisdiction too, because he is wanting to be re-elected. This is what is going to happen, Mr. Minister and members opposite, you are not going to have global representation of all areas of the city if you go with the ward system. I think this is a very important consideration that you should be looking at.

When you look at special needs programs — and I see in your throne speech that it says (and I'm quoting from memory here) opportunity to every individual for an education regardless of ability to pay, or something of that nature — when you look at programs of that nature. I think they would be better served under the system of election that we have today rather than the ward system where you get some petty jealousy sneaking in.

Another thing, if the ward system is so great my friends, why isn't it introduced in the other cities of Canada? The only other ward system is in Winnipeg and you know that. What did Vancouver do? And in Winnipeg, Mr. Minister, and that is the difference between you and the Conservative government, it is optional. Here you want to make it compulsory and not listen to the elected member; that's the difference.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. TAYLOR:** — I ask you, if it's so great, why don't Toronto, Vancouver, or some of these other cities have it?

I would like to quote from one of the submissions just to sum up what other educators think about the ward system. This quote is from the Regina Board of Education, a rather

large board, I think the largest board of education in the Province of Saskatchewan. It says:

It is the opinion of this board that the introduction of the ward electoral system in Regina will have a negative effect upon the provision of equal educational opportunities for all pupils. Education is not simply a matter of school buildings. Education is the provision of programs suited to the needs of all pupils. Education must reflect the priorities of the community and must equip students for their future while maintaining high standards of excellence. The prime reason for having an elected school board is to ensure that local citizens have the opportunity to determine the type of education offered to all pupils. The elected members of the board represent all electors. They are ready and willing to listen to any individual or group wishing to present particular views on the subject.

So therefore I wonder, as do many others in this province, what is the real motive behind the introduction of the ward system? Most certainly it is not the offering of equal opportunities, which is the prime goal of the Regina Board of Education and which should be the goal of any board of education in this province.

I pointed out that another problem of this decision—making and control from the top down is that many parents feel they want to have a strong voice in the education of their students, a voice that is not being heard. I quote from the throne speech and it says this:

. . . making it more flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the communities it serves.

Mr. Minister and government members opposite, I think those are good objectives. I just want you to live up to them and to do what you say you might. I would also like to quote from a letter from a concerned parent to show some of the frustration that is out there regarding the input of parents and the control over the curriculum their children are being taught. I will just read a couple of portions from this letter. It says:

The co—op curriculum was introduced with no parental involvement as was the family life and the new science curriculum, etc. These are our children.

Since when do governments which advocate equal rights, religious freedom, freedom of the press have the right to take over your duties? The school curriculum is a mess. Parents would not approve of it, if they only bothered to look in their children's books. Parents must be informed if we are to have trust and faith in our education system. I strongly stress that this become a political issue as many parents are awakening to find that they don't like what they see and read. Parental influence and ideas should be listened to by our educators. Parents of every walk of life should be on the provincial curriculum board. The statement made by one trustee is: "We trust that Regina and the educators know what they are doing." If we have an educator who is communistic, atheistic, is he doing justice for those who are Christians? I say no and our children's rights are violated. Let's take a stand now before we find that our main resource, our children, are government property.

Now, I point out that that is a letter from a concerned parent — a parent who feels, as do many, a frustration at the lack of input which they can have into the education of their

students.

Now, another thing in education (and I think the minister hinted at something like this in the budget last year and I've been waiting with bated breath for the implementation of it) is that we need decentralization of some of the educational offerings. And I speak again especially of vocational schools. I have a concern, as I think many members in this Chamber have, about the education of our native students. And most certainly your idea of module offerings, I think, is a good one. I would suggest that if we could have rural vocational schools situated every 60 or 100 miles around the province so that these people could come and take a module and then return to their occupation, through this we would get the adult upgrading and it would be a great service to our rural people. I am thinking in this case, I must admit, of my own constituency in which I have five native reserves and a large number of rural people and I think this type of thing would go a long way in providing the educational opportunity that these people need and deserve and would be a really positive step by the government opposite toward the revitalization of rural Saskatchewan.

Any one of the towns which would be selected for such a vocational school would certainly benefit from the economic spinoff from the families which would come into that area.

Another thing that I think we have to do (and this fits into this need for expanded vocational and technical training in our province) is to change the assistance for the students. You know that many of our students today are forced to go out of the province to get their secondary education — their technical education. A great many of them have to go to Alberta, and Alberta does have the model that I've just been explaining; they have many of these courses offered in towns like Hanna, in Olds, and in Vermilion, Lethbridge, Cardston, and so on.

So what is happening today with many people in Saskatchewan is that students, to get the type of technical training or vocational training they want, have to go to Alberta and then they can't get a student loan because if they happen to be from a farm back ground their father's assets are too high (his cash flow may be very low as you know in the last year or so but he has high assets — anybody with a bit of farm land has fairly high assets). Now surely we don't expect these people to have to borrow against their farms but they can't qualify for the student assistance and the students are having to go out of the province to get the training they want. Surely that adds to the situation of our kids being in Alberta.

Just on Friday night I met with a woman at an opening of a Lion's Club — a charter night. I had never met this woman before I sat down beside her and we got talking and she said, "I have seven children." And I said, "That's fine; what are they all doing and where are they?" And this is what she told me. She said, "Five of them are in Alberta." I'll quote exactly what the lady said. "We hated to see them go but that's where the opportunities are." And those are the words which that lady told me just on the weekend. That's what's happening and that's where we need to address this problem of secondary education and assistance for it.

Now I'd like to turn to a concern about our culture in this province. I notice that the government, which is great at creating Crown corporations, is now thinking of creating a Crown corporation for culture. I wonder what necessitates that. Where does that come from? I just sat here this afternoon and listened to the member for Melville rant and rave about the multicultural heritage of this province, which I certainly agree we have. He was telling how strong it was and how proud he was of it, as am I. In this year of

Celebrate Saskatchewan, surely to goodness you fellows must have learned something. The pride is there; the people are proud of what we are in Saskatchewan. We're proud of our multicultural diversity. We've existed for 75 years right along beside the United States and we have our own culture. You go to any of the celebrations — we were all at them — and the people are proud of what they are and proud of their cultural heritage. So when I hear talk of a Crown corporation for culture, I again say, what is the need for that and, more important, what is the motive for it? I think that's what we have to be looking at. What is the motive for a Crown corporation for culture?

I contend that it's to further the plans of the Premier to bring in what I would call his creeping socialist indoctrination. That's why we're having a Crown corporation for culture. And what has he done? He's consolidated three of the cultural areas under one minister. One minister has education, continuing education and now culture and youth, and probably the new Crown corporation. Now I admire that fellow as a gentleman. We're friends, but to me he is a doctrinaire socialist. This is part of the creeping socialism that's coming through this province.

Let's look back. Let's just trace the steps and see what has happened. The government opposite went into farm ownership with the land bank. They've gone into communications; you heard about it all last session as we spent time on Bill 13. The government opposite is into the communications field now to control that. They want to control the land, control the communication, and now the newest horizon is to control the culture. Evidence of this is to look at the great emphasis on the co—op curriculum in the school, the idea of placing union reps on curriculum committees, and now this Crown corporation for culture. I know in the report Mr. Vichert says he's safeguarding the culture. I say no. I think it's more an attempt to try to control and direct the culture of this province.

I would like to now turn for a minute to agriculture to talk about some of the things I think are necessary improvements in agriculture. I won't press too long on these because some of my colleagues have discussed these at some length. I'd like to lend my support to what they have been saying. There is certainly the need for a rural distribution system for natural gas. I think it has been mentioned that in the '50s the power was brought into this province. I'll give credit where it's due. We know who brought the power in. But now we are in the era of the '80s. I hear so many members in this Chamber stand up to speak about the new technologies of the '80s and the great possibilities for the '80s. I say let's make rural natural gas one of these things.

Surely this year, this spring, taught us one thing in this province if it taught us anything. We have the soil, we have the sunshine. But we don't always have the water resources necessary to produce what we're capable of producing. Therefore, let's start irrigating. I understand in 1961 there were many deep wells dug in southeastern Saskatchewan and that there is a large aquifer under that part of this province. Let's get on with the new technology of the '80s, start using this water, start using the water from our rivers to irrigate, so that we can be the main producer in the western world for the scarce commodity of food. We have food and energy. These are our great resources. Let's use our energy to bring about irrigation so that we can produce more food and therefore advance the position of this province.

I would also like to put in a plug for the support for small buildings. I think that in the future not every person in this province will be able to hold large arms. The cost of land is very prohibitive. But there can be livings made on small holdings, holdings of approximately 40 acres or a quarter section where a person with poultry or hogs or

bees, or whatever labor—intensive occupation he may want to take place, could make a good living and enjoy the benefits of a rural life in the province. When I was campaigning in Kelsey—Tisdale (I liked being up there, it was a very successful place to be campaigning). I noticed that a large number of the fellows in that area have to have off—the—farm income. Now, many of you fellows were up there campaigning too. You didn't do much good, but you were there. Anyway you must have run into the same thing. These fellows work in the bush in the winter or work at the sawmills. They are doing that in hope of having a farm which is economically viable. But at this time they can't do that. Now many of our programs are designed to penalize the off—farm income. I don't think these fellows were eligible for drought assistance if they had an off-farm income. I think we have to be looking at that, Mr. Minister of Agriculture, and taking this into consideration because this is certainly a reality within Saskatchewan. It is a necessity for some of these fellow to get started and maintain a farm with their goal of it being a viable farm somewhere down the trail. I am not saying we should allow people to have tax havens, to pretend they are farmers and have tax havens. but certainly these young people who are trying to get farming and have to subsidize that farm income with off—farm income should not be penalized for it.

Also, on the matter of farming, I think we should be taking a serious look at our foreign ownership bill which we passed last year. I think we are all in agreement that as far as offshore people, we are in support of the position, and probably the same with our American friends. But I wonder, at a time when the strains in Canada —— the strains of separation and alienation — are running so strong, if we are doing a great deal to try to keep Canada together by passing legislation that prohibits an Albertan or a Manitoban from owning anything in excess of 10 acres in this province? I just wonder if we are taking the right step there, and if we are really interested in keeping this country of Canada together? Should we not be looking at rescinding that type of legislation?

In the field of health, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to just point out a few things which I feel we should be addressing. The member for Maple Creek, I thought, gave a very good address on the problems of health care in this field. I hope the minister takes them under consideration. Therefore, I am not going to belabor this topic, but there are just a few things which I would like to have the opportunity to point out.

We have looked at the road ambulance program. I know that it is presently under the Department of Municipal Affairs. If we are going to rationalize our hospital system and if we are going to use the hospitals in support of each other, I think ambulance has to be part of that whole parcel. If you are going to move people from one hospital to the other, it should all be in the same bailiwick. The ambulance services should be under the Department of Health.

Also, we have a great need for more level 4 treatment throughout this province. You have had suggestions from our caucus of looking at what the other provinces are doing on a board—and—room charge with the other services being picked up by the medical care commission. I think this is rather a noble suggestion. It is something which certainly could be looked at.

One thing which has been brought to my attention is that there is quite a demand upon some of the nurses. I know some who were training last years during the strike. They came and were quite concerned. Some of my ex—students who were wanting to see if we could get some action for the government to try to get the strike—resolves so that they would get their certification. They have their certification (they did get it) but now some of these young girls are working right here in the hospitals in Regina. They have

been on the job for about three or four months, and they're required on night shift in some cases to look after at least 30 patients by themselves. That isn't top-notch care. That's quite a demand on a girl who has just been out of training for about three months. I think another thing we should be looking at is to make sure we're not running these with skeleton staffs and that chronically ill people get the care they should.

One other thing is a local concern. We've been pressing on this side of the House for physiotherapist treatment and services in rural Saskatchewan. I think it's certainly time we had these. In my own area we did have a physiotherapist who visited the towns on the main line — Indian Head, Wolseley and Broadview. My understanding is that this person has been doing that service for the past three or four months and has been well received. The people were very happy with the services. She was going to the geriatric centre, doing a good job. I understand now that they've cut back, the funding has been cut back, the person has quit and we are without those services at this time.

Those are some of the things I think we could be looking at in the field of health. I notice with interest that next year is the year of the handicapped. I certainly hope that the Minister of Health, the Minister of Social Services and the Minister of Education take this theme and try to provide the best possible services for people who are deprived or handicapped in our society.

Those are a few of the things that I think we could be looking at in the field of health. We could go on all night and describe the shortcomings and areas which the government opposite could certainly improve.

I would like to just mention in closing a few things from my own constituency that I would like to see addressed by the government. Whoever the new minister of highways should be (I am not saying who it is going to be, but I have my ideas). I would say to him that what the member this evening (one of our members who spoke) said about Highway No. 1 in the Webb area is most certainly true of Highway No. 1 in the area I represent. I would urge this young future cabinet minister to look at that sincerely as a priority for highway building in this province.

I also have another: Highway No. 48 that has been carrying a lot of the traffic to Kenosee Lake — the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources should know of this — has a very heavy flow on the weekends. It is only half finished; it's finished as far as the town of Montmartre and there certainly is a need for it to be continued down to Highway No. 9. It's in poor shape there.

I have mentioned irrigation. The north part of my constituency has the Qu'Appelle River. I'm getting a lot of requests from people to try to get irrigation in the valley. It would seem very logical with the river running right through there, and the land suitable for irrigation and for specialized crops and hay crops, that this could become a priority.

The Minister of Education, I see, has stepped out, but as you know from the news we had a bad fire on the weekend in the Grenfell Elementary School. I would like to urge you to give consideration to assistance for that town, where needed, so that they can continue on in the best way possible until the school is renovated. I don't think that will be possible until probably the end of the year. Any way that you can give assistance in the way of books and supplies would certainly be appreciated by that town.

I think those are most of the things I wanted to dwell on, Mr. Speaker. I enjoyed this

opportunity to put my ideas forth in this throne speech debate. I think it is obvious to everyone in this Chamber, because of the failure of the government to address the constitutional problems, the shortcomings and imposition of educational changes from the top down, and the needed new policies in agriculture, that I cannot support the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SKOBERG:** — Mr. Speaker, it gives me some pleasure to bring a few remarks to this particular throne speech. I think those who are suggesting that there is nothing in that throne speech fail to read the underlying current throughout the entire speech.

First of all, naturally I would like, as others have done, to congratulate the new MLAs from Estevan, The Battlefords, and Kelsey—Tisdale. I would also like to congratulate the mover and seconder of the throne speech.

I'm sure all of us in this House will miss the three members who have retired. I'm certain that it is unfortunate for the Conservatives opposite that their member for Estevan sacrificed himself, but it was to our benefit that that happened. There is no question that if they thought the good citizens of Estevan were going to support an unknown coming in and running in that constituency, they found they were badly mistaken.

At this particular time I think it is true that we should congratulate the member for Estevan once again, in learning today officially, on the recount, that he has been elected as the member for Estevan. I'm sure that anyone who listened to him the other day will recognize that he knows how to say PSBs and PCBs in the proper language (for the benefit of the hon. member for Arm River).

We listened to the member who spoke just a short while ago and he suggested that Rosetown itself was requesting to leave Saskatchewan and possibly move its jurisdiction to another province. We could really look at that in the context of two Conservative members representing Rosetown. There is Rosetown—Elrose represented by the member who is herewith us, and then there's a federal Conservative from Battleford—Kindersley who represents Rosetown. So if I was going to be really unkind, I would suggest: why wouldn't the people of Rosetown want to leave and possibly look for other pastures where they can find out what is being offered to them and for them in this province of ours?

I'm sure also that the member for Rosetown, or the member who spoke before him suggesting that Rosetown want to leave, didn't ask the young people of Rosetown, those young drivers in Rosetown who aren't that far from the Alberta border, how much it would cost them if they lived in Alberta for the insurance.

I have a relative in Alberta. He is a young fellow who had two mishaps on a country road — one in his truck and one in his car. For that young fellow now to get insurance, it would cost him \$2,400. That same insurance in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, would cost him an extra \$50 on a package policy. I have those figures because that in—law of mine from Alberta would be only too pleased to be able to buy Saskatchewan insurance in order to be able to drive his car. Unfortunately he had to pout his car up on the blocks for a few years to bring his insurance rates down. Otherwise there wasn't a hope of his being able to drive that car.

I'm also certain that if the people ask some of the senior citizens in Rosetown whether or

not they would like to go to some other province, their answer would be interesting. And I'm certain, Mr. Speaker, there would be no question in making that determination. That is, they want to remain in Saskatchewan, remain in Canada, being citizens of our country and our province.

Another rather comical statement was made a little while ago by the MLA for Wilkie. He stood and suggested that we on this side of the House are taking credit for the success of Celebrate Saskatchewan. No one on this side has stood up to take the credit away from the communities and the people of those communities.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SKOBERG:** — One thing that did happen was early in the year, the government, the department, the minister had two large meetings and brought together all those people from the communities who were on the Celebrate Saskatchewan committees in that particular area. They discussed and compared what could be done. Ask anyone in Alberta whether or not that was done, no criticism of the Celebrate Alberta celebration of their 75th anniversary intended. Ask those people up there whether or not they had the opportunity of joining together and comparing what could be and should be done in a Celebrate Saskatchewan or a Celebrate Alberta way. There's no question at all that in Saskatchewan the communities and the people got together without tremendous financial assistance. They put on a Celebrate Saskatchewan which all of us in this House and everyone in Saskatchewan can be mighty proud of.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

**MR. SKOBERG:** — The other area that was brought to our attention a short while ago was from the hon. member for Arm River. Consistently he talks about drinking water in Regina and Moose Jaw. I just wish the hon. member for Arm River would leave the drinking water in Moose Jaw alone. The people, the engineers, the administration over there and the Buffalo Pound Lake filtration plant are completely satisfied with the type of water that we have in that particular city. I won't speak for Regina; that's their problem and that can be their issue if in fact there is a problem. I'm certain the hon. member for Arm River is still suffering under the feeling that when the water comes through Moose Jaw River, it ends up in Buffalo Pound Lake. I've told him and told him that the water doesn't end up in Buffalo Pound Lake. It ends up down below Buffalo Pound Lake in the Qu'Appelle chain. Surely, if he looks at a map, he'll find out that the water doesn't hit Buffalo Pound Lake. So please, Mr. Hon. Member for Arm River, take a look at the map. I'm sure that you will find out that's the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, it's rather ironic, when we talk about policy and determination and how policy is formulated, to think back just a short few weeks ago when the PCs had their convention here in Regina. When our resolutions come before a convention, they're debated in panel and then they're debated in the plenary. There's ample opportunity for people to take exceptions. But the Progressive Conservatives have a little different method. They have a resolution that comes in very confidentially. Then they have a debate on it but they seal the results of the debate in case someone may take issue with what the final determination is going to be. I would suggest that probably in that particular convention there must have been someone, somewhere who suggested to those opposite that the best way to get elected is to condemn every public servant in Saskatchewan because, since this House opened, there hasn't been a question period, in fact, there's hardly been a question asked from those opposite, unless it has been a condemnation and character assassination of our civil servants. They know it and we

know it. Possibly that's the way they believe they can get elected. Possibly they believe that's what the people of Saskatchewan like to see.

I, too, had the opportunity of doing a little campaigning in a by-election. And there's one pamphlet in particular that I couldn't help but pick up and look at on one of the door steps. In fact, one of the kind ladies in Battleford came to the door. She said, "You know, I received a pamphlet today, and it's so discouraging that I just don't know what to think about it." I read what's in there. It has a couple of colors on it and I'm not sure what they represent. But they read what's in there and she said, "Isn't there any policy or platform to that party?" I read the points — each and every one of them. If there isn't a goodly number of falsehoods in that particular pamphlet, I'll miss my guess. For that party over there to go about the province trying to belittle responsible people, and trying to misrepresent the policy of the government, misrepresent individuals who belong and work for the government, then I suggest that it's a far cry from a democratic society and they themselves would like to see a unitarian state and have nothing more to do with so-called democracy.

Another point I would like to raise, Mr. Speaker, and something of which I am very proud — what the citizens of Moose Jaw, the administration, the police department, the EMO (emergency measures organization), and those people who are involved in emergency situations were able to cope with there just one week ago.

I would like to suggest that I was on my feet a couple of times in the question period to ask what was being done by the various departments of government. But then I sat down again, because really when I looked opposite and saw what was there.

When you have a fire of the magnitude of that in Moose Jaw — and the press have already used that, questioned your leader as to why you people didn't stand and ask what was being done — I'm actually ashamed of the so-called opposition.

Then I listened to the radio one fine day, and there was an interview on with your leader who said that everything was being done that was possible in Moose Jaw — which was true — and that it was probably an act of God that started the fire.

Now, anyone who would suggest that an act of God could start a fire of the magnitude of the one in Moose Jaw really must have been out for lunch or up in the back gallery or up there somewhere. At the same time he said that the Woody Lake fire was worthy of consideration in this House. And that wasn't an act of God. I suppose the lightning came from somewhere else. I just don't understand that. However, I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I am more than pleased that the people of Moose Jaw were able to cope with the disaster. What was an act of God was that the wind was in the right direction. If the wind had been in the other direction the whole of the downtown main street area, and a goodly portion of the residential area, would have had to be evacuated. There is no question about it.

I might also say that the ministers had their people immediately on the scene. The appraiser from SGI were asked to not go on the property until this past Wednesday. If there is any criticism about no immediate action from SGI, you tell me — from Wednesday to Friday — whether or not they could have settled any claims in that length of time. I might also say that the Minister of Industry and Commerce had his people on the scene within two days after the situation.

The Sedco people, the DREE people, and the other individuals who were involved with

that particular department were there to a general meeting on Friday and offered all the assistance possible in so far as moving and assisting those small owners.

There is no question in my mind that one of the most serious situations affecting Moose Jaw right now is that the small businessman — the people who owned those tractors that were pulling the trailers and which cost in the vicinity of \$43,000, invariably don't have them paid for and they are going to need some assistance. That assistance probably was there again today and will be tomorrow and whenever that need may arise.

The same fact remains that my good friend, the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources, was there that morning also and helped with the barricades. I didn't know that until just now.

On the morning of Tuesday, the Minister of Urban Affairs, the Minister of Labor, and myself, along with the administration of Moose Jaw, were able to tour the area that was burned out on Tuesday morning. But where were the questions from the opposite end? Was anybody concerned, or have you taken a survey and realized it's utterly impossible to do anything with Moose Jaw, so you're not interested in Moose Jaw? It makes me wonder just a little bit.

Congratulations naturally go out to the STI (Saskatchewan Technical Institute) which did a tremendous job in providing facilities for those people from St. Anthony's Home and to the bus drivers who delegated all their strength and equipment to move the people out of St. Anthony's because of the smoke, not the fire. Those people were moved very quickly, more quickly than in Mississauga. I think it's a real congratulatory type of situation for all concerned when you realize what really went on.

I might also say, when I listen to some of those opposite talk about the SGI, I bet you since 1975 I haven't had five complaints about the administration in Moose Jaw from SGI. And then I listen to somebody over there produce 29 letters; I'll bet you out of the 29 there wouldn't be one or two that I really had a complaint once they found out what the regulations were all about.

I might also say that the Minister of Health, the Minister of Labor, the member for Moose Jaw South and I met with the board of directors of the Providence Hospital. That was quick action because they wanted a meeting.

I might also say the Minister of the Environment, when it was brought to his attention that we had one of the largest mercury content deposits in the province of Saskatchewan, immediately moved in with his people. He did not, as we hear from members opposite, sit and do nothing. He immediately took action, and with that action there will be something done with that mercury contamination.

I might also say that the Minister of Industry and Commerce has helped in the development of the industrial park. They have helped with the fire damage I have referred to. The Minister or Urban Affairs is now most actively engaged in the downtown revitalization project, most actively engaged with the entire city council on any issue that they want to bring up.

And of course I can't forget my good friend, the Minister of Tourism and Renewable Resources, with regard to the development of the wild animal park. The same thing with the Minister of Urban Affairs for assisting and providing moneys for Moose Jaw in the

development and planning stage of the Wakamow development. If the people opposite had their way, they would do their best to make sure that we in Moose Jaw would not benefit from the Wakamow development. They haven't mentioned it by word yet, but the fact remains that they are using other examples to try to downgrade the Wakamow River development which the city of Moose Jaw badly needs and will accomplish in a very short period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure all of us appreciate the fact that there are some serious situations facing the country we live in at this time. But I can also say that if anyone in this House and anyone opposite in particular, is suggesting for one moment that the Premier of this province hasn't the most complete backing of the people of this province, then I'd like to know where they are. They know and I know that you do have to compromise in a situation. Anybody who has had any negotiations whatsoever will recognize that, and by recognizing it, will make this country a better place in which to live. We do not need the confrontation that those opposite would like to see.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say it will be a pleasure for me to support the motion.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division:

**YEAS — 35**

Blakeney	Pepper	Allen
Smishek	Bowerman	Tchorzewski
Robbins	Baker	Skoberg
McArthur	Gross	Rolfes
MacMurchy	Mostoway	Banda
Vickar	Hammersmith	Kowalchuk
Thompson	MacAuley	Engel
Feschuk	Byers	Cowley
Matsalla	Shillington	Lusney
Poniatowski	Prebble	Johnson
Nelson	Long	White
Solomon	Chapman	

**NAYS — 13**

Berntson	Birkbeck	Duncan
Taylor	Rousseau	Swan
Hardy	Pickering	Muirhead
Katzman	Garner	Andrew
McLeod		

The Assembly adjourned at 9:09 p.m.