

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
March 13, 1981

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SOLOMON: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you, to the members of this Assembly some visitors from my constituency. We have about 15 students in your gallery, the Speaker's gallery, from the Regina Court Activity Centre accompanied by three chaperones who are very good personal friends of mine — Lorie Sundin, Vi Snell, and Verna Isted. I hope that you enjoy your visit to the Assembly this morning and at the legislature. I will be joining with you in answering some questions, having some refreshments and getting some pictures taken after the question period. I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to this Assembly.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

CBC Program re SGI Computer System

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A question to the minister responsible for SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance). Mr. Minister, in light of yesterday's revelations during question period about SGI's lack of safeguards, and also in light of last night's CBC program (which I might add you probably did not see, and it's now after 10 o'clock in the morning), what instructions have you given to your officials at SGI to correct the problems which exist with the computer system and system of issuing plates and insurance?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, SGI obviously has a fraud investigation unit. It continuously is at work attempting to correct problems which may arise from time to time.

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Supplementary, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Obviously, in light of your answer, I take it that nothing so far has been done. Would the minister be interested in having the kind of information which I have in my hand? I might add this information was submitted to me this morning from a young computer student, who outlined the ways in which you could correct your problem very simply. I have it here. In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the minister wants, I will even read it to you. But would you be interested in having this information which obviously your members or your officials do not have, and are incompetent to handle, and perhaps maybe institute or implement these suggestions which are made by a young student in the computer industry, so that perhaps we can solve the problems which you have?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, obviously we are interested in any information the member may pass on to us.

SGI Controls and the Department of National Revenue

MR. LANE: — A series of matters were raised again last night on the television documentary. One area is: because of the poor controls of SGI, in fact people are using SGI motor vehicle registration forms for a fraud on the federal government department of taxation, Department of National Revenue. That being, they are taking the form, filling it out, putting the ident number on it, and then keeping it in their desk or wherever, and declaring that they have in fact a non-existent car. They are depreciating that against income tax. Now, what correspondence or dealing have you had with the Minister of National Revenue to correct the obvious mishandling or the obvious lack of controls of SGI, and what problems have they brought to your attention?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — That's an assumption on the part of the member, Mr. Speaker.

MR. LANE: — I'm prepared to make other assumptions, the first one being that you aren't doing a doggone thing about this very serious problem. And secondly, I raised yesterday two other areas where your department, your agency, is not complying with the laws of the province of Saskatchewan, and that's The Vehicles Act. And after requiring licensing of the records and requiring reports from the auto wreckers of the province of Saskatchewan, a requirement set out in The Vehicles Act, I'm asking you, how, when the transition was made from the highway traffic board to Saskatchewan Government Insurance, would something as obvious as this, which can only lead to automobile parts frauds and scams as well, be missed by your assistants?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, highway traffic board . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. LANE: — My questions is to the minister as well. Would the minister give the assurance to this House that those 13 officials fired last summer were not fired or released because of their dealings with this fraud or the fact that they had responsibility for setting up the control system?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, that as an internal reorganization.

MR. LANE: — My new question to the minister: would your internal reorganization be prepared finally, after having a study for 7 years, to re-examine in complete and absolute detail its computer systems so that the events of recent days will not happen again? And will your internal reorganization be prepared to start taking action so that auto parts scams do not happen and frauds do not happen? And will your internal reorganization finally be prepared to take some action to give the consumers of Saskatchewan some protection and the taxpayers of Saskatchewan some protection from frauds which are being allowed by SGI?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member assumes that the report was not acted on. Most of that report was acted on. Some parts of it were not. I'd like to point out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I may, a quote from the member who just took his seat. When asking a question and responding in relation to the minister then responsible for SGI, on March 17, 1977, the member for Lumsden, or Qu'Appelle or whatever place he does represent, said, and I quote directly:

Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the minister responsible for the implementation of the new driver licence policy. The new policy, I am informed, takes away the right to make application for new vehicle registration by mail, and it is placing some hardship on car dealers in at least

Regina and I understand Saskatoon. They were, in effect, shut down over the weekend, because the applicant or the new car purchaser would have to make personal application on the Monday. Would you reconsider your policy and allow new car applications by mail to do away with the hardship that has been caused to date?

I would like to ask the member how you inspect the vehicle if you're going to register by mail?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — Let me ask the minister a question. Is the minister today not understanding the difference between legitimate car dealers making applications and with control of the manufacturer's number, that you cannot make the distinction between that and fraud, with criminals coming in, taking your forms, making phony, false applications? You don't know the difference between legitimate automobile dealers and crooks and criminals? Is that what you're saying?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish the member would calm down. I wouldn't want him to suffer a stroke or get apoplexy or just melt into a blob of quivering self-righteousness. The fact of the matter is, as I said, and quoted from his own remarks, that parts of the report were not instituted because they were not acceptable in terms of the public. He knows that. He knows you can't inspect a vehicle if you're going to register it by mail. Those are his words, quoted from *Hansard*, March 17, 1977.

SGI Damage Estimates

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, question to the minister in charge of SGI. He's great at talking about assumptions. I'd like to get some factual things. I have here a correspondence and pictures and whatever may be needed.

The situation is that a young unlicensed driver of a motorbike hit a CP truck. He was charged by SGI \$1,761.21 damages. The parents of that person thought this was a bit exorbitant, the RCM Police felt the same way and advised them to contest it. They went to a lawyer; the lawyer entered into communication with SGI and the final result was that the people had to pay \$1,000. Is that the way SGI handles claims — the people of Saskatchewan must consult legal help to get this exorbitant costs reduced to something that is more correct?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suppose anyone can dig up examples that appear to have some injustices in them at some time or other.

I wish the members opposite would face some facts. First of all, the operation of a stolen car racket is something that is there. You have to face that, it's in society. Theft is a law enforcement . . .

AN. HON. MEMBER: — You don't have to cater to it.

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — And we don't, obviously. Theft is a law enforcement question, not an insurance question. Obviously we're interested in preventing any fraud that we can but some of it is going to occur. No province in Canada has found an answer to this. We are working actively with other provinces in an attempt to find answers to it.

If we instituted a system in terms of registration that was so severe that we prevented all fraud from happening, first of all it would be very costly and, secondly, no one would accept it. It would make it so difficult for the innocent people who go to register that they would simply rebel against it.

Merits of New SGI Program

MR. ROUSSEAU: — Question to the Minister of SGI. In light of the glib answers you just gave to the member for Qu'Appelle, would you explain to this Assembly what part of your new program in place today is superior to the system that we had prior to 1977 when you brought in the five-year program and you had to go down to SGI to get your plates? Now what part of that program in place today is superior to the one which was working very well before?

HON. MR. ROBBINS: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the institution of staggered renewals was an attempt to bring better service to the public . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, in your mind it's nonsense. I can't change your mind.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — When the minister is trying to answer the question I think we should allow him to answer, and conversely, when a member is trying to ask a question, I think the person should be able to ask it.

Competence of Minister in Charge of SGI

MR. THATCHER: — Since the minister of SGI is not answering any further questions, my question is to the Premier. I preface my question with the comment that it's ironic the crooks should decide to use a building named after one C. M. Fines as their base of operations. Mr. Premier, in light of the fact that in the past few months the mess that SGI has been in, in terms of a deficit of some \$28 million, and in light of the mess that has been created in SGI with this question of fraud and by the minister's pathetic, weak answers to date, which have clearly indicated he has taken no corrective measures, may I ask the Premier today, in view of the fact that this minister is obviously worn out and tired and that one of our most important Crown corporations is in a mess, will you kindly consider being merciful to Saskatchewan drivers and replace this tired, worn-out minister and send him home?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I think all of us recognize the hon. member's question as a speech, and I could be equally combative in my reply. I will simply content myself with saying that I have every confidence in my colleague, the member for Saskatoon Nutana, the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office. And I have a great deal of confidence in the future of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office, which I would like to see preserved in this province — unlike members opposite.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Dismissal of Elton Marshall

MRS. DUNCAN: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Social Services. On Tuesday you took notice of a question concerning the dismissal of one Elton Marshall from your department. Could you inform this Assembly today

whether or not you are going to make available to Mr. Marshall his personal file in order that he may work a defence for an appeal?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to give a reply to that question, which was raised in the House on Tuesday by the member for Souris-Cannington. I have waited three days to give the reply. The member hasn't been in the House. I would like now to give the reply . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

It does give me an opportunity because the member for Souris-Cannington, as I mentioned, hasn't been in the House since he asked the question on Tuesday.

The hon. member spoke of one of my former employees and allowed the House to believe a sorry tale of employee mismanagement and cover-up in order to damage the credibility of the home care program in Saskatchewan. It is a sad tactic, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the hon. member opposite to attempt to distort a straight-forward management decision, and allow the Saskatchewan public to believe that the efforts of thousands of people in Saskatchewan, working for a good home care program, could be wasted.

It is true that my deputy minister did terminate the appointment of one Elton Marshall, who was the departmental manager of the home care program. However, the facts are quite different than those suggested by the hon. member for Souris-Cannington. On February 16 my deputy minister discussed the reason for the recommendation to terminate Mr. Marshall with him and with his lawyer. The rebuttal, along with additional information, was considered before a final decision was taken and transmitted to this employee on February 24. The decision was given in writing and the reasons were stated therein. Although the member for Souris-Cannington stated that Mr. Marshall was fired on February 12, effective immediately and with no notice, if the hon. member in fact has the personal file of this employee he should be able to read that one employee was terminated on February 24 and not February 12. He was given one month's notice with pay, but was asked not to report for work. Furthermore, Mr. Marshall has had an additional 30 days . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Order. I think the people who are chanting at me from the side here have a valid point. The question should be brief and the answer should be brief. I'd ask the minister to be as brief as possible in answering the question.

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, there were three or four questions which the member asked on Tuesday, which I would like to reply to and I will continue.

This takes the appeal period to April 23 and that's 30 days after February 12, as indicated by the member for Souris-Cannington. The hon. member stated on Tuesday as well that the employee was denied access to his office. The facts are quite different. The employee had been offered repeated access to his office to obtain his personal files. He refused to avail himself of the opportunity, and my department is not prepared to allow Mr. Marshall to remove government property into his private possession. We have made it clear, however, that the government documents needed to prepare an appeal by Mr. Marshall will be made available through the normal process. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am not prepared . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — I wonder if you could answer the question as briefly as possible, please. We've been going on for five minutes on this answer.

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — The hon. member for Souris-Cannington asked how the employee could be . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Order! The hon. member for Maple Creek, supplementary question.

MRS. DUNCAN: — You still haven't answered the basic question. One of you is not telling the truth. Are you going to make Mr. Marshall's personal files available to him? He has been to your office to get them and they are gone. Now, are you or are you not going to make those files available to him?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the member for Maple Creek would listen, I informed her not more than 30 seconds ago that the files have been available to Mr. Elton Marshall, will be and are.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Could you inform this Assembly, then, why the files were not there when Mr. Marshall went to get them?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — If the member for Maple Creek would listen, I said that the files have been available all the time, are available now and the person can pick up his file whenever he likes. There was, at no time, any indication given to Mr. Marshall that his personal files were not available.

Filling of Elton Marshall's Position

MRS. DUNCAN: — It would appear that you are calling Mr. Marshall's integrity into question, here. A new question to the minister. Could you inform this Assembly whether or not Mr. Marshall's position was filled before he was fired and by whom?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the process by which we hire people in our department is a managerial decision. I have a great deal of confidence in my deputy minister, and he will continue to place people in the department as needed.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Was Mr. Marshall's position filled before his term of employment was terminated? Yes or no? And by whom? And I might ask, from where?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — No, the position of Mr. Elton Marshall was not filled before Mr. Elton Marshall was dismissed.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Is it now filled? And could you explain to this Assembly why Mr. Petz on February 27 informed field staff that Mr. Marshall's replacement was in place?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — I'm not aware of the fact, as mentioned by the member for Maple Creek, that Mr. Petz did inform the field staff of anything about Elton Marshall. I don't have that information with me. I don't know whether it's true or not. When Mr. Petz met with the staff, I'm not sure what occurred or transpired. I don't have access to that information at this time.

MRS. DUNCAN: — Could you tell us who filled the job and when?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — The member asks whether or not the position has been filled. Mr. Steve Petz is now the executive director of the continuing care program

which directs the home care program.

Home Care Service re Elton Marshall's Record

MRS. DUNCAN: — New question to the minister. It would appear, Mr. Minister, that we have another situation here where a person has been doing an adequate if not a good job only to see his term of employment terminated. Mr. Marshall's annual rating was very good. You, yourself, said the other day that the home care program has boards set up in 39 home care districts out of 45, and that 13 of them are now in the process of delivering services. Was it not Mr. Marshall's job to set up these home care boards throughout the province and to see that the program is delivered?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Marshall has been the director of home care for some two years and he has the right to appeal the process by which he was dismissed on February 24 through the public service commission appeal board. I am sure that Mr. Marshall will avail himself of that process.

MR. LANE: — A question to the minister. You've made transfers of personnel within the civil service from your department. Why wasn't Mr. Marshall given that opportunity to be transferred to another post if you were dissatisfied? Why was he hung out to dry and fired while other people were given the opportunity to take other jobs within the civil service?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member for Qu'Appelle asks why Mr. Elton Marshall was dismissed. I'm sure the reasons for that decision aren't to be made public. It is not the policy of my department or the policy of the government to give personal reasons for dismissal. The appeal process is available through the public service commission and, as I mentioned, I am sure Mr. Marshall will avail himself of that process.

MR. LANE: — Supplementary. Why the big veil of secrecy on Mr. Marshall's firing, when at the same time you are publicly announcing transfers? You have given some people the option of taking other jobs if you are dissatisfied or less than satisfied with their work. But on this one you're trying to hide something because you won't come public with your reasons. I ask you again, why was he fired and not given a chance of another civil service position?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have no intention of giving the member the reason for the dismissal of Elton Marshall. I think it is a personal matter. If he wishes to disclose why he was dismissed, he has the opportunity to do that. He also has the opportunity to go through the appeal process and I'm sure he will.

MR. TAYLOR: — A question to the Minister of Social Services. We understand that Mr. Marshall has been fired and a number of other people have been transferred. Will you explain to this House what is wrong in your home care program, that you are having to transfer a number of people out of that program and fire one of them? What is wrong in that program?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I have mentioned at least five times, I will not give reasons why Mr. Elton Marshall was dismissed. It's a personal matter. In the ongoing process of developing a department, I'm sure that every new deputy minister will bring in new people. And if the members opposite are saying that process shouldn't go on, I'm sure the public in Saskatchewan will be interested to know

how they would run a department if they were the government.

We have a good number of people coming into the department and I think that many of them will be very disappointed to hear that on Tuesday the member for Souris-Cannington said the home care program was dominated by hacks. The home care program, as everyone in this Assembly will probably know, is dominated by local people, on a volunteer basis, who make up the boards and deliver the service in rural Saskatchewan and in the cities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — I think the members opposite will also know that what they are really attempting to do in this whole process is to discredit the people of Saskatchewan who are trying to set up a new and exciting program, namely the home care program.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. THATCHER: — A question to the Minister of Social Services. Mr. Minister, in your comments a few seconds ago, you indicated that your department and the program in question can expect more shake-ups and more dismissals. Are the employees who are to be shaken up, or dismissed or whatever, to be given a reason for their dismissal or their shake-up (as you used that terminology)? May I ask the minister, what exactly is your reason for refusing to give reasons for the firing? In the case of Mr. Marshall, are you prepared to say, in this Assembly, that Mr. Marshall was incompetent? If he weren't incompetent, why did you fire him?

HON. MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll say it one final time. I do not intend to give out why Mr. Marshall was dismissed because it's a personal matter. Mr. Marshall was informed why he was dismissed and can give reasons to the public if he wants. On the other hand, the member for Thunder Creek asks why we are going to fire more people. There is no intention of firing any more people and I never indicated that. I think the real reason that the members opposite are so upset with the home care program is the fact that the money we are putting into home care, the \$13 million, is money that comes from resources and they are very upset with that . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Order! I wonder if members would mind suspending routine proceedings and going directly to special order?

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATE

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (BUDGET DEBATE)

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Tchorzewski: "That this Assembly do now resolve itself into the committee of finance" and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Rousseau.

MR. JOHNSON: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I adjourned debate last evening and said I would speak today, I would like to first of all say that it is a pleasure for me to participate in this year's budget debate.

Today Saskatchewan's economy is thriving and it stands in sharp contrast to the federal mismanagement of the national economy. Despite a worsening recession that has brought national growth to a halt, Saskatchewan experiences real economic growth this year. The federal government has failed to deal with the high unemployment, the high inflation, the high interest rates and the huge deficit that now eats up 20 per cent of federal revenue in service charges. Saskatchewan's budget, by contrast, is balanced. It provides tax relief for both individuals and small businesses. It also provides more money for health and social programming.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today I will examine some of the measures in our budget and some of the economic indicators in the province, and point out some of the contrasts between the Saskatchewan and B.C. economies. I will pay particular attention to our agricultural programs and the manner in which they help sustain our small rural communities. But first, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to comment briefly on the B.C. budget, which was brought down in the B.C. legislature Tuesday, March 9.

B.C. sales tax was increased by 50 per cent and Saskatchewan now has the lowest sales tax in the country. School taxes in lower B.C. will be more than doubled. Papers released with the B.C. budget predict that unemployment will increase from 6.8 per cent, which is higher than that in the province of Saskatchewan, to 8.5 per cent by 1983. Like Saskatchewan, B.C. has a balanced budget but unlike Saskatchewan, B.C. has found it necessary to introduce a host of new taxes. Unlike Saskatchewan, B.C. still taxes the sick through a program of health premiums. The tax increases for B.C. citizens in total amount to \$625 million this year. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the B.C. government, made up of used car dealers, knew that the budget would weigh heavily on the backs of B.C. residents and they made some tax adjustments to ease the load for the residents. Bicycles are now exempt from sales tax in British Columbia.

Saskatchewan's budget, by contrast, increases funding for health, education and social services. The health budget has been increased by 15 per cent to \$604 million. The education budget has been increased by 12 per cent per student to \$331 million. Not included in that is \$171 million to be spent on continuing education. The social services budget has been increased in Saskatchewan by 14 per cent to over \$270 million.

Particular attention in the Saskatchewan budget is given to maintaining a strong agricultural base for the province. Overall, Saskatchewan's spending on agriculture will increase 32 per cent this year. Included in the budget is \$4 million for the first year of a five-year program in crop research and development. Other incentives include \$500,000 for research on alternate liquid fuels, and a 100 per cent increase in the provincial contribution for the operating of a feed test laboratory at the University of Saskatchewan. Construction of a \$7.1 million ethanol plant is also slated to begin this year. These projects, Mr. Deputy Speaker, clearly show that the government is committed to further agricultural research and development which, after all, is the key to continued success in agriculture.

As well as an increased emphasis on research, there are also many programs that immediately benefit rural Saskatchewan and are indicative of our commitment to agriculture. The budget includes \$5.1 million allocated for the introduction of a voluntary beef stabilization plan. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this program will provide a stabilizing force in the beef industry similar to that provided to the hog producers by SHARP (Saskatchewan Hog Assured Returns Program). Obviously it would be more effective to have a national stabilization program, but that is just another example of

how the federal government has failed prairie producers.

This budget also increases by 40 per cent to \$35 million the money available to the land bank for capital advances to purchase land. The FarmStart budget includes \$33 million for loans.

Other initiatives of note include a new farm housing program, Operation Open Roads, and increased grants for veterinary services. Rural Saskatchewan will benefit from the \$38 million set aside in the rural revenue-sharing pool. Included in this pool are the provisions for main farm access and supergrid roads.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, agriculture is the lifeblood of our small urban centres. The expansion of existing agricultural programs will further strengthen rural Saskatchewan. Our investment in agriculture is really an investment in preserving a way of life, whether those investments are of a long-term nature such as research or whether they are of direct benefit to producers today. Both types of expenditures are necessary and both help rural Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are, however, some areas of concern for the Saskatchewan farmers. Our farmers are still waiting for the promised payment due them from the Soviet grain embargo. This embargo was conceived by the Conservatives, delivered by the Liberals, and to date is still paid for by the farmers. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am one of the farmers and I am waiting for my cheque.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the federal government put in a herd maintenance program. The cattle producers are still struggling to figure out exactly what the program is and in my area, although there are some very severe difficulties in locating feed hay for the herds, we have been excluded from payment; in all of Saskatchewan there are about 10,000 appeals to the program. The system of basing payment on crop yield and rainfall by township was clearly a very poor decision by the federal government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like now to say a few words about the provision of power and telephones to rural Saskatchewan. Members opposite have made a lot of noise about the utility rates and supposed benefits that they could receive from having a utilities review commission. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Alberta has such a body — the public utilities board. That board has failed miserably to hold down power rates. From 1973 to 1979, the board has allowed Edmonton Power, a public utility, rate increases of 83 per cent in the same time frame. Calgary Power, a private utility, was given rate increases of 95 per cent. Take a close look at what the rate increases are in the smaller communities, increases that would affect areas such as Meadow Lake or Turtleford. Look at what the utilities board has allowed the power corporations in Alberta to do in places such as St. Albert and Grande Prairie. Alberta Power was granted rate increases of 120 per cent over that same period of time — 95 per cent in the bigger cities such as Calgary, 120 per cent in the smaller centres such as Grande Prairie.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I find that the members opposite who are prepared to support the concept of a public utilities review commission would be increasing the costs for utilities in rural Saskatchewan. In fact, Edmonton's public utility board has guaranteed utilities a return of 15 per cent per year. In contrast to that, Sask Power's return has been less than 5 per cent.

I would like to continue with a number of other items, but I have promised to keep my remarks within a short time frame. I would like to indicate that I will be supporting the

motion on the budget, and not supporting the amendment. I'm proud to be able to say that this budget is a good one for Saskatchewan at this time. Thank you.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak on this year's budget on behalf of the people of the Pelly constituency. I am sure that everyone in my constituency is pleased with the second balanced budget in a row by the Minister of Finance, and I would like to congratulate the minister on his fine presentation of a very fine document.

Of particular interest to the people of Pelly is the 30.5 per cent increase in the budget for the Department of Agriculture. The concern of the Blakeney government for rural Saskatchewan contrasts sharply with the policies of our next-door neighbour, Alberta. Members opposite should know what Alberta farmers think about their Conservative government's agriculture policies. Howard Falkenberg, the president of Unifarm, Alberta's umbrella farm organization says, "While the government gives lip-service to the importance of Alberta agriculture, its actions prove otherwise." He said, "It's obvious the provincial government's main area of concern is energy," and that the Alberta Tory cabinet, "Doesn't know how to plug agriculture into the system."

I believe the Tory cabinet should come to Saskatchewan where our minister could teach them the value of agriculture. The difference between the two provinces is especially obvious to hog farmers. In Alberta there has been a hog war between farmers and packing houses for the past year. Here in Saskatchewan, our SHARP (Saskatchewan Hog Assured Returns Program) has been extended for another five years because of the farmers' demands. The program, which provides a guaranteed price for hogs, has paid out more than \$3.6 million to date. It is a big step toward orderly marketing.

The introduction of a beef stabilization program in this year's budget is another step in achieving orderly marketing and a stable farm economy. It is one I know my constituents will appreciate and it is especially pleasing to me. I say that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I discussed the need for studying a beef stabilization program of some kind during the budget debate last year. I congratulate the Minister of Agriculture and the department on their initiative in creating a plan. I think it is unfortunate however, that the federal government has refused to co-operate with the national beef stabilization plan. From a Saskatchewan farmer's point of view, the refusal indicates that the federal Liberal government does not share the strong commitment to agriculture that the NDP has shown since this party's beginning. And I might mention that the members opposite seem to support the federal position.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to see that \$5 million is allocated from the provincial government budget for its share of the premiums for the beef stabilization program for 1981. This will provide coverage for about 200,000 slaughter cattle in the first year. The program will be administered by a beef stabilization board which will also provide marketing services for the slaughter cattle covered by the plan. Co-ordinated marketing services will mean reduced trucking costs for producers, savings from handling the animals fewer times, and cheaper group rates for insurance of the animals during shipping.

Another agriculture program introduced in this year's budget which will help Saskatchewan farmers is an 80 per cent increase in veterinary services grants, and I

think this will be welcome. Another program is a \$7.1 million pilot ethanol plant. Personally, I question whether ethanol will ever be a competitive source of energy. However, a pilot ethanol plant will provide us with information and knowledge in handling the stillage and the economics of using grain as a source of energy.

Having stated my concerns, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest to the minister that Pelly constituency, having a good amount of wood, straw and grain and a good number of beef and dairy producers in the area, would be an excellent location for a pilot ethanol plant.

We will also go into a liquid fuel testing program, and a \$25 million research program over the next years to deal with soil salinity, moisture conservation, crop rotations, and weed control.

I am pleased to see in this budget that the initiatives for the Department of Rural Affairs complement so well the Department of Agriculture's commitment to farmers. A strong rural economy requires money for roads and capital projects as well as agriculture programs aimed directly at farmers. I am pleased to see the \$27 million, or 2.1 per cent of the heritage fund, has been made available to the Saskatchewan Municipal Financing Corporation to guarantee loans for municipalities. That program, along with a 50 per cent increase in funding for the community capital fund will give rural municipalities the ability to continue building a strong rural community.

I also welcome the increase in municipal water assistance board grants by 50 per cent to \$3 million and a 10.2 per cent increase in the revenue-sharing pool for rural municipalities. The new revenue-sharing pool has reached \$38 million. I would like to point out to the members opposite how successful this escalator clause, built into our revenue-sharing program, has been.

A new feature has been introduced this year to allow rural municipalities more flexibility in road construction. Funds can now be pooled within the revenue-sharing program for main farm access roads and primary grid roads. In addition to a more flexible funding agreement for municipalities, I am pleased to see a 17 per cent increase in spending for highway maintenance in 1981-82. This increase, combined with a 12 per cent increase in capital spending, will mean a total of \$162.7 million for the Department of Highways in this budget year. Highway funding in the constituency of Pelly has increased by almost 10 times under the Blakeney government. In 1970 and '71, not quite \$256,000 was spent on highways. In 1979-80, that figure has reached almost \$2.2 million. As part of the continuing effort of the Blakeney government to provide safe roads throughout Saskatchewan, I am pleased to note the planned grading and construction of Highway 8 from St. Phillips to Pelly.

Mr. Speaker, small businesses are also of key important to a rural economy. Small businesses, as a group, provide a major source of employment. When we have a strong, stable farm economy and adequate revenues for municipal governments and our small businesses are prospering, our province is doing well.

I know that owners and operators of small businesses across the province will welcome the 2 per cent reduction in provincial income tax. I know they will welcome the 1 per cent reduction of the corporate income tax rate for small businesses. As the Minister of Finance pointed out, this tax cut will provide 55 per cent of Saskatchewan businesses with \$3.6 million in benefits in 1981, and will reduce provincial taxes by 9 per cent.

Small businesses are faced with inflation, high interest rates, and increased federal taxes. I'm sure the people of Pelly, and across Saskatchewan welcome the fair taxation policies of the Blakeney government. This tax cut is remarkable in the face of rising costs which the province faces as much as the individual. It is another tribute to the public ownership of resources.

Another area of interest to the people of Pelly is the new park developments taking place. As all members are probably aware, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I come from a particularly beautiful part of the province. The people of Pelly constituency are proud of their area and proud of Duck Mountain Provincial Park which is located there.

We look forward to the year-round use of Duck Mountain Provincial Park, which is well-suited to ice fishing, downhill and cross-country skiing, and snowmobiling. The completion, last year, of a new park facility and more recently, the construction of two five-unit condominiums will provide year-round accommodation at the park at a cost of \$462,000. This will help to ensure that full advantage can be taken of the park's resources. I think I can speak for the people of Pelly when I say that we appreciate what has been done, and look forward to future improvements.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — I would also like to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that despite the poor weather for skiing this year, Duck Mountain Provincial Park has one of the best ski facilities in the province. I think the people of that area have done an admirable job in creating and running a very nice facility.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the people of Pelly constituency will welcome the new additions to the nursing homes in Kamsack and Norquay — the one in Kamsack which is under construction, and the one in Norquay which is currently being tendered. The increase of 30 per cent in funds allocated for subsidies for special-care homes will also be welcome news to the people of Pelly constituency.

The recent establishment of a home care board is welcome, and it will be proceeding with plans to provide a much-needed service to the people of my constituency.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, It is now one of Saskatchewan's traditions that we maintain the most effective and comprehensive health care system in North America. I am proud of the number of new health programs announced in this budget. I know the people of Pelly constituency are also proud of the many programs which we have in this budget.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — I will not speak at length on these programs, but I would like to re-emphasize the 15 per cent increase in the Department of Health's budget, boosting it over \$600 million. Even with our present rate of inflation, that is a substantial increase. That Saskatchewan Hospital Service Plan will receive a 16 per cent increase over 1980, bringing provincial government support for the operation of hospitals to \$351 million. I would like to suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the Minister of Health and the Minister of Social Services maybe should, in the future, consider implementing a program which would somehow assist financially some of the people who require glasses and dentures.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have discussed several parts of the budget that I know will interest and please constituents in Pelly. I am confident that any part of this budget can be presented and will display the long-standing principles of the CCF and New Democratic Party governments in Saskatchewan. It is a budget that ensures the province's resources are used to benefit the people of the province. It furthers long-time goals of the CCF-NDP to stabilize and develop agriculture, to provide the services needed for a strong rural Saskatchewan, to provide Saskatchewan citizens with the best possible health care, it provides new ways for us to work together co-operatively and to solve the challenges our province faces.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with pride that I will be supporting this year's budget and I think it is quite evident that I will be voting in favour of the motion and against the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is with a great deal of pride and a certain bit of reservation that I enter into this budget debate today. We have seen once again the Government of Saskatchewan trying to pull the wool over the eyes of the people of Saskatchewan. I think it has been fairly evident over the last two or three months that another Crown corporation in the province of Saskatchewan has entered utter shambles. In the last 14 months, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there has been a 48 per cent increase in SGI (Saskatchewan Government Insurance) rates — 48 per cent. Why the increase? We hear the minister of SGI telling us about the great economic boom that is taking place in Saskatchewan. If a boom is taking place it doesn't usually cost taxpayers more money.

I have received over 600 letters from people who are dissatisfied with how the NDP government is administering SGI in the province of Saskatchewan. One of the biggest complaints that was brought forward . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . We hear the J. R. Ewing of Dallas talking, but I will have some comments on the Minister of Telephones" department later on.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in January, 1980, a \$5 increase on drivers' licences; in February, 1981, another \$5; increase in deductible since 1980, \$150. But the biggest concern that the people of Saskatchewan had regarding SGI was: nothing at all from the government for the accident-free driver in Saskatchewan, whether that man or woman had driven 5 years, 10 years, or 40 years. They all have to pay the same. I would just like to read one or two little letters out of that mass of letters I received.

AN. HON. MEMBER: — What for?

MR. GARNER: — What for? I don't have a condominium in Dallas, Mr. Speaker; I just live on a little operation.

Dear Mr. Garner: After reading your letter in the *Times Herald*, I decided to write my first letter to an MLA. I am a 30-year old school teacher who has a perfect driving record except for a dented fender 10 years ago. Yet I have heard that my insurance will go up 45 per cent and I also must pay the first \$350 if I have an accident. Apparently the reason for my paying 45 per cent, while the rest of the public gets scalped at only 28 per cent, is that I drive a Camaro. SGI has decided my car has a suicidal tendency, as well as a killer instinct. Well, I just took a look at it and it looks quite peaceful to me, just

sitting there in the driveway. It has been a good little car, safer than a Toyota and much less expensive than a Cadillac.

We could talk a little bit more about Cadillacs, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Easier on gas, too. So I want to know why SGI is penalizing us. Why don't they go after the traffic violators, drunken drivers, speeders, or any others, and especially dangerous drivers? Why me? What did I ever do? Oh yes, I remember. I voted NDP, and I'm sorry for it now.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

AN. HON. MEMBER: — Are you going to table that?

MR. GARNER: — Oh, yes, and I hear the hon. members call tabling it so they can go out on a witch hunt to try to renew the membership. That isn't the way the Progressive Conservative Party of Saskatchewan works. Some things are kept confidential. All things are kept confidential with the Progressive Conservatives in Saskatchewan

One more little letter, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

Just a line to let you know that I am a senior citizen and am very concerned about an SGI increase. It certainly is a slap in the face when you live on pensions. I never had an accident for 50 years, so I'm paying for all of this advertising, plus the fancy new building in Regina. Hope that you are able to convince this government that this will be a hardship for a lot of people. From a government which puts humanity first? I wonder.

Well, I'm not going to read any more letters, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There's no point, because it's quite evident that the government opposite doesn't want to listen to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in B.C., drivers who cause accidents have to pay more. I want to read you just a little clipping from a news release.

Regardless of age, young or old, drivers who cause accidents under the program will be charged on a driver-accident premium. (If they have three accidents, they will pay three driver-accident premiums.) A bad driver, at 17 or 70, will have to pay more. But good drivers will benefit and will not be paying more and will be getting a reduction.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's the direction this present Government of Saskatchewan should be taking. That's the attitude it should have for the people of Saskatchewan. But what has happened? We have not only a bureaucracy that has run amuck in northern Saskatchewan; now we have SGI and it looks like social services is coming in the back door.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to turn now to the utilities in Saskatchewan. We won't call them the utility ministers. How do they expect the people of Saskatchewan to buy a profit picture like this? I will give you Sask Tel for one example. In the last two years, it has a profit in excess of \$50 million and retained earnings of \$134 million. Now many

times has the minister in charge of Sask Tel stood up in this Chamber and said, "No, we can't freeze the rates because we'd have to cut the service." We're not asking him, on this side of the House, to cut service. What we are saying is to stop trying to turn profit on the backs of the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Last year, 1980, there was a \$24.8 million profit by Sask Tel. Mr. Deputy Speaker, \$12.4 million was put into Crown investment. Was that to provide service? No, it wasn't to provide service. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no way the people of Saskatchewan are going to believe that when the telephone rates rise, the phone is going to ring more loudly. They won't buy that in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to turn to Sask Power, another one of the Crown corporations which I believe, and all members on this side of the House believe, are good Crown corporations. There's nothing wrong with them. The people out in the field, the field staff, are doing an excellent job. The problem is with the technocrats, the big shots sitting in Regina. They're the ones who are causing the corporations to run amuck. An example, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the \$40 million profit in 1979 for Sask Power. I don't know what it is for 1980 because we have not had the annual report tabled. But once again, commercial rates in the province have gone up 12.5 per cent. Now, when that businessman goes into his store, he has to pass that tax on to the consumer. And yet they say this is a boom time. No, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is not boom time. And it's the same thing at Sask Tel. When the power rates go up, the lights don't get brighter in Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, another little comment that is in an editorial of the *Leader Post* today, and the heading is "Customers Robbed."

It seems as though the Saskatchewan Power Corporation is determined to rob their customers, despite steps taken by consumers to conserve power and gas. Are we being ripped off for millions in this field, too?

That is from Mr. and Mrs. E. Shepherd of Regina.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan know that the Allan Blakeney government is out of control. And I'll tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we hear comments about a provincial election. I say to each member in this House, and especially the members opposite, if you boys want to go ahead and call a provincial election, the people of Saskatchewan cannot be fooled any more. You can go back and use the big Saskatchewan lie. We believe in medicare — good program. Don't try to try those terms again.

Oh, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have the minister of aerosol and I'm trying to stay on the highroad. The Minister of Labour sits in his seat and the only thing that he is capable of doing in this Chamber is pulling out an aerosol can and spraying it around the room. Is that the man who is taking care of labour in Saskatchewan? The minister should be ashamed. Every time we come to an opening of this session, what do we meet out those doors? I would like to know why the Minister of Labour keeps using that spray can. Does he have bugs around him or something? What is the matter, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — I didn't see any spray can. I don't know what you're talking about.

MR. GARNER: — I'm not going into the gutter of politics. I'll let the members of the NDP do that. I'm going to stay on the highroad.

I would like to turn now to the farm cost reduction program that was cut this year. Granted, it was not a great big program. It was only \$300. I, personally, wrote the Minister of Revenue, Supply and Services asking for this program to be re-implemented and brought up to a realistic level, because the costs are going up to about 600 per cent to the farmers in rural Saskatchewan. What is the answer? A lot of figures, promises, but no, I think they're finally willing to admit that it is nothing more than an election gimmick to try to get votes.

I would like to turn very quickly to agriculture now. This government has announced a farm housing program. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is for 100 houses for all of rural Saskatchewan. We talk about a Mickey Mouse approach. This is a band-aid approach. Also in the criteria, people living on land bank leases can also apply for this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am concerned. We saw land bank come in and it took all of the land and is buying the land from the farmers of Saskatchewan and creating a terrific rise in the price of land in Saskatchewan. Now, they're going to put houses there. That young man couldn't afford to buy the farm five years ago. Now they're going to put a house on it. Step one, buy the land, step two, the house and God knows what step three is going to be. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it seems that the NDP has the cliché, whether it be with SGI or anything else. Without a doubt the socialist philosophy is that everyone pays equally, whether he is a good driver or a bad driver.

Once again we are asking for air service in the province of Saskatchewan. Norcanair has cut flights. The federal government has spent \$300 million on a new air terminal in North Battleford and in the last by-election, the candidate from there promised we would have air service. Well, it's like everything else this NDP government in Saskatchewan promises. It's a promise which just blows away in the wind. I am very confident that the people in Saskatchewan will not be hoodwinked by the mess in SGI, by the mess in DNS, and by the way the Department of Social Services seems to be getting out of control.

In concluding I would like to say that the Minister of Finance can talk about balancing the budget, but after a \$60 million overrun for 1980, I say to him quite simply — talk about balancing a budget, but how about balancing the books for the people of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have many more things I could mention regarding this. As far as nursing homes go, in my own constituency some conditions are severe. We will be dealing with these programs more when we get into estimates. So without a doubt, I would be very irresponsible if I voted for the motion on behalf of the people of Wilkie constituency. I will be supporting the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a pleasure for me, as one of the MLAs from Moose Jaw, to add my comments on a budget deserving support from all members of

this House. It is also a pleasure and honour to represent along with my colleague, the Hon. Gordon Snyder, a city which has vitality and drive. It's a city which has proven over the years that it can accept setbacks and disappointments, but it continues to meet the challenges in providing a healthy economic climate where people like to live and raise their families.

We have just heard from the hon. member for Wilkie. We listened to what he calls some speech on integrity. He refers to the fact that he has received 600 letters. I think it is only natural that we, on this side of the House, would like to see him table those letters, especially after his province-wide campaign of writing letters to the editors, in which he explained untruths and half-truths but did not put the facts before the people.

The minister has fully explained to this House and to the people of Saskatchewan why there have to be rate increases but those opposite, as is their usual performance, are not interested in the truth and in letting the public of Saskatchewan know what is going on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SKOBERG: — The other point that is most interesting is that all of a sudden many of those opposite are now suggesting that they are the only defenders of the civil service of this province. The record will indicate quite clearly that those opposite have done nothing but belittle the civil servants of this province. They have done nothing but defame them in the eyes of the public of Saskatchewan and if that is what they call support for the civil servants, then I fail to understand what it really is about. I would suggest that unless the integrity of some of those opposite improves, we will need more spraying in this Chamber and it will have to be done more often.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our province, under the able leadership of Premier Blakeney, for almost 10 years has undergone rapid economic development and stability. Saskatchewan has played, and is playing, a leading role in western Canada and in the entire nation.

One has only to read the March 11 edition of the *Leader Post* which refers to recent projections issued by the Royal Bank of Canada. This bank predicts Saskatchewan economic growth rate will surpass that of Alberta, making Saskatchewan the highest provincial growth-rate province through the decade.

It is acknowledged by the Royal Bank that agriculture will continue to be the province's most important industry. That is why, Mr. Speaker, this government continues to provide programs for agriculture that will create a healthy economic climate. The Conservatives opposite consistently use comparisons with our sister province to the west as the oasis of free enterprise and cheap utilities. They fail to mention Alberta helped oil producers set high prices on crude, as indicated by combines investigations director of Ottawa. He further stated:

Alberta got full royalties while the oil industry short-changed Saskatchewan.

The major multinationals, Mr. Speaker, particularly Imperial and Gulf, controlled indirectly all branches of the Alberta pipeline. It is most interesting to note that the Premier of Alberta, who has defended the multinationals, has refused all comments on this combines investigation report. And then the member for Qu'Appelle and president of the Saskatchewan Conservatives has the gall to ask about, and compare, oil and gas

prices in Saskatchewan with that of Alberta.

There is no question that the Conservatives in this province would do as the Joe Clark Tories attempted to do, and sell out SaskOil, which is making such a mark in the industry. They would sell out Saskatchewan potash, once again to the multinationals. They would sell out SGI. They would decimate our medicare and hospitalization plan, all in the interest of laissez-faire and free enterprise.

It is also interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that with the utilities board in Alberta, power rates in Edmonton increased three times in one year — the last year representing 27 per cent — even though the Tories opposite, here in Saskatchewan, screamed for a utilities board in this province like the one in Alberta. In Alberta power rates were raised 12 per cent on April 1 of this year, with another 35 per cent in the next two years. In other words, Mr. Speaker, rate increases in Alberta are never investigated by the utilities board before they are made.

As an example, a 1,200-square-foot home in Edmonton had a gas bill of \$52 in February, and an electric bill of \$25, or \$77 for the month of February. On a farm shortly east of Edmonton the gas bill alone was \$72. I ask those opposite, and I ask the listening audience, to compare our rates with anywhere else in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see \$2,25 million being provided in this budget for a start on an over \$6-million expansion for the Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw. It is significant in this year of the handicapped, some \$92,000 of that will be included for the handicapped and the access to STI. I might say the Minister of Continuing Education and this government are to be congratulated in moving forward in the technical and vocational fields in this province. At the same time, I urge the minister and the government to establish a crash program at all technical, vocational, and university institutions in the training of our young men and women in those skills so necessary to our rapidly expanding economy.

We in Canada, and particularly in western Canada, are greatly in need of a crash educational program to fill our increasing specialized workforce in the fields of senior process design engineers, electrical instrumentation engineers, and many more technical vocations so much in demand.

Most recently, Mr. Speaker, I was in conversation with two consulting engineers that were recruiting for design engineers. Ads were placed in all major Canadian papers without success. Ads were placed in the London and Manchester, England, papers and within a short period of time over 100 applications were received. After completing interviews, offers were made to seven highly qualified engineers with five of them now being in the West, the other ones to follow.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there must be an immediate start on a cost-shared crash program between the provinces and the federal government because at present it takes up to three or four years to get an engineering degree. As the president of independent business has said, "We are critically short of a whole range of skills in this country and it is probably the major factor holding back our national development." Mr. Deputy Speaker, the shortage of skilled workers is casting a dark shadow across Canada's and Saskatchewan's future. We must move now and I urge the minister to move quickly in this critical field.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, turning to some local issues. I would urge the minister in charge of

the Saskatchewan Transportation Company to move quickly in arriving at a working agreement with VIA Rail to effect a multi modal terminal in Regina. This project has to be considered of paramount importance as the other proposed multi modal stations at Melville and Moose Jaw hinge on the Regina decision. It is interesting to note that the Regina station, along with Moose Jaw and Melville, has a lot of historical background. With the establishment of joint usage by rail and bus, these well-constructed, historical buildings can be well utilized and retained.

It should be noted, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the non-renewable source of fuel becoming of concern and with the new light, rapid, comfortable equipment starting to come off the assembly line this year, rail passenger traffic, coupled with the bus, is here to stay. In terms of energy efficiency, the train, based on seat-miles per gallon of fuel consumed, is twice as efficient as the bus, seven times as efficient as the automobile and fourteen times that of the airplane. Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I urge the minister in charge of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company to move quickly and favourably in establishing multi modal bus and train terminals at Regina, Moose Jaw and Melville, as a start.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Moose Jaw, as other areas of Saskatchewan, has not been left out of this current budget, nor has it been left out in the past. I have already mentioned the STI \$6-million proposed expansion over the years. I mentioned the fact that there will be an increase in revenue sharing which will go a long way in offsetting a mill rate increase. A new transit subsidy will be greatly appreciated by all communities. The Conservahome project in Moose Jaw will be open for public viewing and cost in the vicinity of \$82,000.

The completion of the second senior citizens' highrise this past year and the commencement of the third senior citizens accommodation on the old Victoria School site, will provide needed accommodation for our seniors. Ten single-family dwelling units now under construction and a land assembly project totalling \$675,000 are provided for in this budget.

Community capital fund projects totalling over \$1.5 million have been included for the Moose Jaw area. Projects such as street lighting, engineering vehicles, diesel buses, land acquisition, parks equipment, police vehicles, additions to service centre buildings and many others, are included in the capital fund projects.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, of great interest is the development of the Moose Jaw River valley. Completely within the boundaries of the city, this Wakamow Valley Authority legislation will be introduced shortly. I hope those opposite will quickly vote approval of this project.

The continued development of the Moose Jaw Wild Animal Park is making this provincial zoo a tremendous asset, not only to the city, but to the province as a whole.

The over \$2 million renovation program for the Valley View Centre will bring about much needed improvements, and Moose Jaw has benefited from the various programs available to all of Saskatchewan. Their elected municipal council and school boards, with the assistance of an able administration, are to be congratulated on making use of programs wisely and efficiently.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendment moved by the Conservative opposition once again indicates their complete lack of understanding and appreciation of the social and

economic future of our province and its people. This government and this budget has assisted Saskatchewan residents in fighting the ravages of inflation. This government is continuing to assist the impoverished. In this year of the handicapped, special emphasis is being placed on the programs in providing recognition of our handicapped, which they deserve.

This government has continued to move towards energy self-sufficiency and takes a seat to no other province. This government has, and is continuing to provide, a social and economic base for a healthy and prosperous private and public sector. This government is continuing to provide programs for the agricultural community, in order that we have a healthy and vigorous agricultural industry with special emphasis on the family farm and assistance to smaller communities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is why it is an honor for me to lend my support to the motion proposed by the Minister of Finance and vote against the insensitive amendment proposed by the Conservative critic for Regina South.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am indeed proud and pleased, and I claim it as a privilege, to speak in support of this excellent budget. I regret that I was officially out of the House the day on which my colleague, the Minister of Finance, delivered the budget. I am proud to know, from experience and from association, the level of commitment of all of my colleagues with regard to this very excellent budget — particularly the Minister of Finance and the too-often unmentioned and dedicated staff in the Department of Finance. I have always deemed it a great personal honor and a privilege to share in our province's progress under the able and the very competent leadership of our Premier, Allan Blakeney, and our caucus colleagues.

It would be extremely hard to imagine where Saskatchewan and Canada would be today without the sterling leadership given to this province and our nation by such people as M. J. Coldwell, Woodrow Lloyd, Tommy Douglas and Allan Blakeney. Without these leaders and the philosophic objectives which came from such groups as United Farmers of Canada, the CCF, the prairie pools and the co-operatives of an earlier day, I think it is fair to say that we would not have many of the social and economic reforms and the developments that we have today — many of which are now taken for granted and many of which all Canadians share. One of the great qualities of the leadership of our government is the development of a team approach. And while I hold high our leader and our Minister of Finance, I say with equal strength and with equal importance that without the support of our cabinet and caucus colleagues, our leader and our Minister of Finance would indeed have had a more difficult time in developing this budget to meet the needs of all Saskatchewan people.

I suggest that those who sit opposite should take a lesson from our approach and our support for our leadership. Over there you see those who at one time had a leader, who has now moved to their left and gone to the Unionest Party, one leader is functionless and sits in the wings of this House, and one party president who wants the leadership but must first convince his colleagues that he really is a Conservative and not a Liberal. The other supposed leader assumes the role of leadership, but only for the purpose of House rules.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can also look at what my colleague from education described in this House yesterday as the seven lean, mean years from 1964 to 1971 — a

government with one, and perhaps two, who decided the fate of the Liberals in Saskatchewan for, indeed, a long time to come. They were leaders in their own right, no doubt, and in their own way but had no team spirit, no co-operative development approach and no participation by their caucus members.

You can judge from the participation of all government members in this debate, that this is not only in fact a good budget but it is seen to be a good budget. It is a budget in which there has been participation by all, and it is a budget which instils pride among our colleagues and will, therefore, be supported and well-received by the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, one cannot help but mention again and again the Saskatchewan fact. That Saskatchewan fact is that out of the dust bowl of the '30s, debt-ridden as we were, penniless and void of any new thought or ideas in the old line party system, the Tommy Douglas team was given the mandate to govern. And govern, in fact, they did. The history of those two decades is clear. Although the Woodrow Lloyd team was short-lived, North American history will not allow us to forget their sacrifice for medicare. From 1971 until now, the Blakeney team has forged the path for Saskatchewan that places us in the forefront of economic and social growth unparalleled in our land and in our time.

In a decade of double-digit inflation, unparalleled unemployment in Canada, in many of the regions, energy resource crises around the world, unparalleled interest rates, and enormous deficit budgeting by most, if not all, governments in North America, we here in Saskatchewan, the Blakeney team, have plotted our course steadily and purposely in resources, in social programs, in northern development, in health, in education, in culture and recreation.

Having done all these, our Minister of Finance can deliver a budget to our citizens which in 1981 adds greatly to the benefits of all and lifts the burdens from those least able to pay. He has done so by increasing our per capita funding, meeting the inflation, reducing the taxes, and balancing our budget.

This is the result of a team approach to economic planning, planning which began in our party long, long ago. It is the kind of planning which has delivered to Saskatchewan under democratic social philosophical governments since 1944: an electrical power grid which was said couldn't be done; the first universal hospitalization program that was said would break the bank; universal auto insurance was truly said at least, at that time, to be a communist plot; a municipal main farm access and grid road system that is unequalled by any of our sister provinces today. And we could go on and describe many, many more, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

My colleague, the Minister of Finance, was good enough to send around some details on the 1981-82 British Columbia budget. When I read it, it reminded me of the Black Friday budget of 1968, (the year after I came into this House) delivered by the Liberal minister of finance, the then Hon. Davey Stuart. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think it is fair to say that that budget was the beginning of the end of the Thatcher government, if I remember correctly, it raised numerous taxes and it produced something like \$36 million of new revenues.

Given the inflation, the different level of economy of British Columbia, and the value of

the dollar in 1981, I suppose that British Columbia's new 1981-82 tax increases of \$625 million is comparable to Steuart's Black Friday budget of 1968. Regardless, Canada's second or third most wealthy province, laying on its people \$625 million of new taxes, makes my pride and confidence in our minister even more assuring.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — Let me list some of what the British Columbia citizens will face in their budget for 1981-82. It has already been mentioned by my colleagues, but it bears repeating. Sales tax is increasing from 4 to 6 per cent, \$387.7 million; sales tax on cars, an increase of \$7.6 million; tax on hotel rooms, increase of \$4.8 million; tax on fuel by commercial users, an increase of \$6.8 million; a new ad valorem gas tax; a taxation of the family farm fuel, \$147.3 million; personal income tax surtax, an increase of \$15.4 million; an increase in large corporate tax rate (that's something the boys across the way would resist) of \$30.3 million; increase in liquor markup, \$28 million; increase in tobacco tax, \$27 million. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that sounds to me like the beginning of the end for the British Columbia Bennett regime and a return to the economic planning with Barrett's New Democrats.

I was interested in an editorial in the *Regina Leader Post*. Again, it was referred to by my colleague who spoke just before me, but the headline of that editorial says 'Saskatchewan Leading the Pack.'

The pattern in recent years has been for Alberta to lead other provinces in economic growth, but recent projections issued by the Royal Bank of Canada predict Saskatchewan's economic growth rate will surpass that of our western neighbour, making this the province with the highest growth rate through the decade. The Royal Bank is forecasting Saskatchewan's annual growth rate in current dollars to average 14.1 per cent, pushing it past Alberta's 13.8 per cent, past British Columbia at 13.2 per cent and ahead of the longer term inflation projections of 8 per cent and anticipated long-term interest rates of 10 and 11 per cent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my unequivocal support is with our leader, Premier Allan Blakeney, our finance minister, the Hon. Ed Tchorzewski, and our team of colleagues, both cabinet and caucus, who have given the forethought and the support required to make this budget a reality.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — I turn to a few remarks about our most important industry — agriculture. Agriculture, of course, is our largest single source of economic activity and that is the key to our economic health. Exports of agricultural products will lead the growth of our economy gain in 1981. Between 1970 and 1979 farm cash receipts quadrupled. This government has recognized agriculture over the years, and has protected our farming community from fluctuations in weather and in world markets. I am most pleased to see the recognition given again by the large 32.4 per cent increase in the agricultural budget. This reflects the great importance that we attached to this most important sector of our economy.

Mineral development has now become second only to agriculture in importance to our economy here in Saskatchewan. Shipment values have risen from \$390 million in

1970 to \$1.795 billion in 1979. Rising world energy demand and prices are expected to create very strong growth in this sector throughout the 1980s. In this province we intend that these resources, which belong to the people, will be developed for their benefit and for the pursuit of the good life in Saskatchewan which we all enjoy.

The potash industry is experiencing records sales. To take advantage of growing world markets, PCS (Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan), which owns 40 per cent of Saskatchewan's productive capacity has embarked on a 10 year, \$2.500 billion expansion plan that will triple its capacity to 11.4 million tonnes of potash a year. Large production increases will be felt in 1982 as a result of expansion in the private potash mining sector as well as the public mines. A significant share of revenues from this production will benefit our people instead of going to the foreign coffers as has happened in the past.

The uranium industry is another great source of optimism, with sales expected to rise dramatically by 1990 to \$1 billion a year. The \$500 million Key Lake open-pit mine and mill, with 50 per cent public ownership, will now be proceeding. It will be one of the three largest uranium mines and mills in the world producing 12 million pounds of uranium oxide a year with estimated reserves of 155 million pounds. I am especially pleased that this budget contains provisions for new and expanded training programs enabling our citizens, particularly those in the North, to take advantage of new employment opportunities being created through uranium development.

Coal is another promising industry in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because of rising world demand, research and gasification, and other technologies, expansion of our lignite mine in southern Saskatchewan will play a central part in meeting our future electrical energy requirements.

A forest industry will be increasingly important in the years ahead. The gross value of production has risen from \$45 million in 1970 to \$200 million in 1979. PAPCO (Prince Albert Pulp Company) is leading expansion of the industry with a \$40 million modernization program. Our purchase of the PAPCO shares and the resale of those shares will enable us to set up a new and fair royalty structure and stop the rip-off contracts that were negotiated in the past.

We have seen a steady growth in the manufacturing sector of our economy, from shipments worth \$545 million in 1970 to \$1.890 billion in 1979. We look forward to strong growth in 1981. Ipsco (Interprovincial Steel and Pipe Corporation), which is our single largest manufacturing industry, increased its shipments by 23 per cent in 1979 and is presently in the process of expanding its capacity from 490,000 tonnes to 680,000 tonnes of steel per year. This industry, with the growing agricultural manufacturing industry in virtually all corners of our province, is a good omen for the future of Saskatchewan manufacturing.

One cannot help but be impressed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the tremendous gains in our service sector, in such areas as real estate and insurance, wholesale and retail trade, health care, education, transportation, communication, and public administration, as well as others. It is the largest sector and it accounts for 58 per cent of our employment in this province. In 1979, most of our 15,000 new jobs were created in this sector. In 1981, we expect 12,000 new jobs in this service sector alone.

I was further pleased to see our renewed commitment in this budget in the social programs area. In regard to health, this budget has provisions for many new programs,

including a chronic-care facility in Saskatoon, the start-up of a new multiyear cancer research program, new pilot projects emphasizing preventive health care, strengthening existing programs with major increases in funding and hospital grants, MCIC (medical care insurance commission) funding and the drug plan. A 34 per cent increase in the dental plan will also be extended to include 15-year-olds. There will be an 18 per cent increase in community clinic funding and a 30 per cent increase in the cancer foundation. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that not only speaks but demonstrates our continued commitment to the best health care program in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BOWERMAN: — My colleagues yesterday mentioned education. It bears some repeating today. We have budgeted for a range of new programs for the deaf, the blind and the otherwise handicapped. We have increased school grants by 12 per cent per student. University construction will be up 14 per cent. There is a 10 per cent increase for community colleges, 19.5 per cent increase in the student aid fund, and a 19 per cent increase in capital grants for schools. We have budgeted for over a 100 per cent increase in day care funding and have enriched our family income plan.

I am especially pleased to note a 30 per cent increase in subsidy funding for special-care homes, which will reduce the cost of care for most of the residents, and the inclusion of \$1 million for home care in the 1981-82 budget. I find it disquieting and unpleasant to hear the fuss being raised by the opposition in the question period this morning with respect to the home care program.

In summary, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government is endeavouring to pass on a fair share of the benefits from our strengthening economic activity to those who need it most. I have only touched on a very small number of the many programs which reflect this policy. It does demonstrate this government's continuing conscience, which has been the hallmark of our party and our governments by tradition as well as by philosophy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the main reasons for the continued strength and stability of Saskatchewan's economy in the midst of tough times in many other provinces is the investment development and job creation provided by our Crown corporations. These have helped to smooth out boom-and-bust cycles because they assure certain and adequate levels of economic activity annually. At the same time our Crown corporations do a very excellent job of supplying utilities, developing our resources, and providing important services.

For example, not only do we have some of the best telephone and power services in the country, but we have these at some of the lowest rates in the country. I heard the member opposite, in this same debate, trying to suggest that somehow our corporations, both in power and telephones, had rates that the public would not accept.

I have comparison figures here for telephone rates in five cities across the country, as of August, 1980: in Vancouver residential monthly rates, \$9.25; in Calgary, \$6.60; in Winnipeg, \$6.15; in Toronto, \$10.50; and in Regina, \$6.55. Winnipeg is the only one with lower rates of those major cities. Business monthly rates: Vancouver, \$27.75; Calgary, \$17.15; Regina, \$15.75; Winnipeg, \$15.95; and Toronto \$36.80. I wonder which city rates the members opposite would like to have us apply, other than Saskatchewan rates, to their particular industries and their particular telephone

accounts.

I also have some figures on power rates for five smaller cities for the same month for cost per year for 7,200 kilowatts usage: Prince George, \$295; Grand Prairie, Alberta, \$340; Prince Albert, \$278; Brandon, Manitoba, \$289; and Charlottetown, P.E.I., \$530. These figures show that our Crown corporations are doing an excellent job, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I am confident they will continue to do so in the future . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Yes, and they continue to talk about a utility board.

May I turn, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to my Department of the Environment. This government has been actively engaged in developing our resources for the benefit of all of our citizens. It is for this reason that we have taken such care in past budgets, and again in this budget, to ensure that development would not occur at the expense of the health of our citizens and the safety of our environment.

This has been reflected in a wide range of health-related programs. I am again pleased to see not only an increase in the budget for the continuation of essential programs in the Saskatchewan environment department, but also additional funds for new programs which will be of great benefit in many areas of concern. This budget provides funds for the establishment of a new mines waste research secretariat. The main emphasis will involve primarily research into uranium tailings. It will also include research into all mine wastes.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could go on and develop more, with respect to the particular budget items related to the Department of the Environment, relating to the mines pollution control branch, some ideas with respect to the new drainage control act, hazardous substances (that is the spill legislation which will be come in and the activities necessary to administer that particular part of our program) and water supply, in order that we might be able to develop a program for future water supply in the provinces.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in closing, I have left remarks unsaid with respect to my new responsibilities in the Provincial Library and with respect to land entitlements for treaty Indians in Saskatchewan. While we are moving slower than we would like to move in the area of land entitlements, nevertheless we are moving. And that is much more than can be said for other jurisdictions in Canada.

I had here, I thought, some statistics which might be interesting to place on the record with respect to the number of acres of land which we have transferred and I think it would be useful for the House . . . No, I don't seem to have them with me. On the day the budget was brought down, I attended a meeting with ministers from across Canada with respect to this matter of land entitlements. I find that Saskatchewan is leading Canada again with respect to its responsibility regarding treaty Indian land rights. Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's no question about the fact that I will be supporting the motion and opposing the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. VICKAR: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased and very proud to have the opportunity to speak in this budget debate. I first would like to offer my sincere congratulations to the Minister of Finance for the progressive balanced budget he brought down last week. It is a budget which reflects the strong economic conditions in the province by returning the benefits of that growth to the people through improved services and tax reductions. It is a budget which continues to guide our province's

development along the road to economic stability and security by managing our resource revenues in a responsible fashion. It is a budget which builds on the Saskatchewan traditions of co-operation, sharing and community spirit to improve the quality of life for all people of our province, old and young, rural and urban. And I am pleased and honoured to be a part of that team which will implement the programs in this budget. We are leading Saskatchewan surely and strongly through a decade of growth and development.

The people of the Melfort constituency whom I represent, along with all the people of Saskatchewan, will benefit from these tax cuts, the improved services and new initiatives that this budget introduced. This budget will have a broad impact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I would like to mention just a few programs which will be especially beneficial to the Saskatchewan people.

Melfort and area is primarily an agricultural region and the substantial increases in agricultural expenditures will benefit many farmers. The spinoffs from a strong agricultural economy can be felt throughout all economic sectors, and I am especially pleased to see the introduction of the new crop research and development program. The northeast region is already well-known for the progressive approach of its farmers. They grow a wide range of crops and they enjoy the most up-to-date methods. I am sure that they will be pleased to hear of this major initiative to determine how we can further improve the productive capacity of our agricultural land.

The establishment of an ethanol plant in the province and the new liquid fuel test program are equally important steps. Farmers are dependent on petroleum products for their livelihood and are terribly vulnerable to the current instability and the rapidly increasing costs of energy. The development of technology and alternative liquid fuels is extremely important to the future stability of agriculture. If that fuel can be produced from crop residues, the new technology will also provide an important new market for agricultural production. All of this offers exciting prospects for the agricultural community in Melfort and throughout the province.

In addition, Saskatchewan farmers will benefit from the beef stabilization program and the increased funding for veterinary services. Young farmers will get essential assistance from FarmStart and the land bank program. Melfort and area will, of course, benefit from many programs which are being introduced and expanded to improve the quality of life for all people in the province.

The increased funding to schools, the improved support for day care, the new programs for the disabled, the expansion of the dental plan, and the increased funding to the Saskatchewan Cancer Foundation are just a few of these programs. The list of the new and expanded programs to strengthen community life in this province is impressive, and these initiatives will benefit all citizens. For a few of the less fortunate among us, for those who are seriously ill, disabled, or economically disadvantaged, specific programs will have a significant role in making their future brighter and more beautiful.

Also as a result of this budget, Melfort and area will benefit from the new projects in the area of health. The Melfort Union Hospital will receive a substantial grant over a period of years for the reconstruction of two new hospital wings. In the end, the provincial government will provide approximately \$2.6 million of the total cost of this project. The government's new initiatives in the area of mental health will provide for a community psychiatric program in the Melfort-Tisdale area. Two professionals, a social worker and

a psychiatrist, will work with a visiting psychiatrist and a nurse from Prince Albert to provide a full complement of psychiatric services in the region. A new, community-based alcoholism program will also be established in Melfort. An educational and out-patient centre will be established, and both an alcohol counsellor and a field worker to service the needs of the region will be there.

I am also especially pleased with the decrease in the provincial portion of the personal income tax. When this decrease is combined with provisions for increased services, it is evident that all people in Saskatchewan will benefit. The progressive structure of the tax ensures that the greater benefit goes to those who need it most, the people in the low and middle-income brackets.

This budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is another step in this government's plan for the long-term economic and social development of Saskatchewan. It builds on and expands the positive policies and programs that have been introduced and developed in each budget since 1972.

As the MLA for the Melfort constituency, I am pleased with this budget, which the Minister of Finance brought down last week. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can also address this budget debate in my role as the Minister of Industry and Commerce and the minister responsible for Sedco (Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation). There are many provisions in the budget which will benefit the business community in this province.

The first provision that comes to mind is the reduction in the corporate income tax for small businesses, from 11 per cent to 10 per cent of taxable income. Small businesses are the biggest employers in Saskatchewan's economy. In our small centres, our towns and our villages, viable small businesses are absolutely essential to the well-being of the community. This tax reduction will help those small businesses substantially. In 1981, the tax burden on the small business sector will be reduced by \$3.6 million. That, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is an important tax reduction, and it will contribute to the well-being of small businesses and the communities which they serve.

The government is supporting Saskatchewan's entrepreneurs in other ways. Two industry and commerce programs which were highlighted in the budget speech — the Aid to Trade program, and the small interest abatement program — are just two of the eight assistance programs which industry and commerce offers to Saskatchewan entrepreneurs. They are good indicators of the supportive role this government takes toward small business in Saskatchewan.

The Aid to Trade program helped to fund 231 marketing projects in the 1980-81 fiscal year. These are projects which develop out-of-province and international markets for Saskatchewan manufactured goods. Industry and commerce provided approximately \$157,000 to Saskatchewan businesses under this program, and participating business reported that \$7 million in domestic and export sales resulted from the projects undertaken. That is a \$7 million injection into the all-important manufacturing sector of our economy. This Aid to Trade program will receive a 37 per cent increase in funding under the 1981-82 budget as a positive step toward further development of the all-important markets for Saskatchewan made products. I think this is an excellent illustration of the valuable assistance provided by the Saskatchewan Department of Industry and Commerce to provide business assistance in this province.

The small business interest abatement program is designed to help small business people deal with the current high interest rates. As we all know, small businesses are among the hardest hit by the federal government's high interest rate policy. This provincial program provides a rebate of some of the interest small business people pay when they borrow money to establish, expand or purchase equipment for a small business. The program will continue to be available in the new year and will continue to help small businesses cope with the cost of borrowing money for capital investment.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Department of Industry and Commerce is not the only provincial agency which is designed to assist business in Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation provides a broad range of financial services to business and industry in this province. Sedco plays an important role in fostering Saskatchewan's economic growth. In 1980 Sedco approved a total of 88 loans and guarantees. This represents an infusion of funds into the Saskatchewan economy totalling \$30.6 million. These loans will create approximately 400 direct new jobs in Saskatchewan.

I am also proud to report, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Sedco has been able to maintain stability and sanity in its interest rate policy, despite the insanely high and fluctuating rates on the national and international markets. Throughout 1980, Sedco's rates remained several points below other lenders. At year end Sedco's rate was settled in at 14.75 per cent. Thus, a provincial Crown corporation is available to provide Saskatchewan businesses and industry with needed financial services at comparatively reasonable rates.

Sedco is contributing to the province's economic growth in other ways as well. Sedco makes a major contribution to the development of industrial infrastructure throughout the province. For example, in 1980 Sedco invested \$20 million in industrial and research parks. As a result of Sedco's activities, serviced industrial land is being made available in many locations.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, other areas of the budget also demonstrate the commitment of this government to the development and diversification of the provincial economy. Infrastructure, such as industrial land and transportation facilities, is essential to the development of a diversified industrial base. This budget announced substantial investment in resource research facilities in Saskatchewan, and in major highway construction projects to service resource development in the North. The government is to be commended for providing this essential infrastructure. It will lead to the steady and orderly development of our economy in the years ahead.

There is another issue facing Saskatchewan in the decade of the '80s, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that issue is the disadvantaged position of Saskatchewan's native people. It is essential that the people of native origin in Saskatchewan share in our growing economic prosperity. One way to ensure this is through their participation directly, as active and equal partners, in the economic development we are experiencing. I am pleased, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this budget brought down last week includes provisions for the creation of an economic development foundation for Northerners and for native people of all Saskatchewan. This foundation will be a vehicle through which native people can participate in our province's growth. The Department of Industry and Commerce will be involved in the development and concept of this during the month ahead. It is an important new initiative and I commend the Minister of Finance for including it in his budget.

It is true, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that leadership in finding solutions to problems of native employment must come from the government. I am proud to see we are responding to that need with the native economic development foundation and with policies which the Minister of Urban Affairs outlined earlier. However, this is a problem which the government cannot solve on its own. Small businesses in this province are our largest employer and it is obvious that if native people are to find employment, a great many of those jobs will have to be found in the private sector in small businesses. I have raised this issue with the business community in the past and I will continue to do so. The support and co-operation and participation of the business sector will be vital in finding the ways to overcome the disadvantages faced by our native citizens. We have many progressive and clear-sighted businessmen in the province and we are sensitive to the seriousness and urgency of this problem. I am confident that this is another area where the government and private sector can work together in the Saskatchewan tradition for social and economic benefits to every Saskatchewan citizen.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see my time is running out. There is no doubt with those few remarks that I will indeed support the motion and oppose the amendment.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

HON. MR. CODY: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I appreciate the hon. member for Qu'Appelle allowing me this opportunity.

I take pleasure today in introducing a group of students from one of my favourite towns in the constituency, that being Alvena. They are about 25 to 29 or 30 in number and are here with their school teachers, Wally Bazowski and Ernie Kalynka. Mr. Kalynka's wife is also here. They are also here with other chaperones, friends of mine, the Dziadyks and they have a bus driver with them as well.

They were going to be here this morning but they had an unfortunate situation where their bus broke down at Bethune so they were a little bit late. However, I have taken the opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be with them this morning for pictures and a drink and some questions. I can assure you that the students are in good hands with their teachers because they asked a lot of very intelligent questions. I hope that you enjoy the balance of the day here and the balance of your tour and have a very safe journey back to your great town of Alvena.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, may I just briefly join with the Minister of Telephones in extending my greetings to the people from Alvena. It happens to be one of my favourite communities as well in that it is the community where I was born, and so I have a special kind of feeling for that community. I would like to say welcome to the students, the teachers and parents and also hope that they do have indeed a very enjoyable time here this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MRS. DUNCAN: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would also like to join with the members opposite in welcoming the students from Alvena. It is also the place where I was born and I have very fond memories of the town of Alvena. I welcome you here and I hope you

enjoy yourselves.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MOTION FOR COMMITTEE OF FINANCE (Continued)

MR. LANE: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was a little surprised at the speech of the last member, the Minister of Industry and Commerce. After hearing the speech last night of the member for Saskatoon Mayfair, Mr. Dyck, complaining about the free-enterprise system and how he would like to do away with it (obviously speaking the true feelings of the government opposite), the hon. member talks a little bit about industrial development. I'm surprised that he ends up supporting the budget opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm sure that somebody else must have written the speech for him because in his heart he knows that if there has been a failure of the government opposite, it has been that very lack of industrial development in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we had some comments yesterday about the split in the government opposite. I've never been sure how deep that split goes but I will tell you, from this side of the House, it's strange to watch the flip-flops and the convoluted logic of members opposite. For example, the Conservative opposition has been talking for some years about putting level 3 nursing home care under medicare where it should be. It has been fought and opposed by the members opposite, by the members of the treasury and by the present Minister of Health. Yet finally in the debate the other day, the present Deputy Speaker said he supports the Conservatives. He wants to see level 3 nursing home care under medicare where it should be because it is a health problem. Finally, we are seeing a split. He obviously hasn't had much success in getting his point across, but we are going to keep fighting and I'm glad to hear that the Deputy Speaker is now joining with us in this very important battle.

We had the situation last night of the member for Canora. The member for Canora can't figure out which way to go. He's all in favour of the government doing away with the beer ads. But he's all in favour of the 60 per cent government-owned Teletheatre showing porn movies on television. He can't make up his mind. If the government does it, maybe it's all right . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, no. Now he says he doesn't. I hope, as the member for Thunder Creek said last night, that the hon. member for Canora will take his beliefs to cabinet and tell the government (and he says he is going to do it) to get out of the blue movie business and the porn movies which they are showing on government cable, to quit worrying about the beer ads and the cigarette ads in the magazines and to do something constructive — something that you have under your control and your jurisdiction. It's a rather strange situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when those members opposite are talking about morality in government and have such things as government-sponsored porn movies on government-owned Teletheatre.

We have the situation on the constitution. I'm sure I join with the vast majority of Canadians in trying to figure out what is the stand of the government opposite on the constitution. Certainly, the NDP wants to support Pierre Elliott Trudeau. It has been trying everything to support Pierre Elliott Trudeau. It is a little bit of a phony war going on opposite. I would just like to read into the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the support for Pierre Elliott Trudeau which the colleagues opposite have shown over the years, how they have proudly supported him and are solely responsible for keeping him in government, to the shame and detriment of western Canadians.

I think people will be very interested to know that from 1972 to 1974, the NDP of this country supported Pierre Elliott Trudeau on his budgets, on every vote of confidence, on every major bill which came down. They propped him up in office and David Lewis was telling everybody how proud he was to support Pierre Elliott Trudeau, how happy he was to keep the government in. People didn't want an election, he said. You bet they wanted an election. They wanted Trudeau out. But the NDP kept Pierre Elliott Trudeau in from 1972 to 1974 and gave him his majority in 1974. In 1979 they got another opportunity to help out their friend Pierre. What did they do? On the first opportunity to vote against a PC government, they hopped into bed with their friend Pierre, threw out the Conservatives, and re-elected Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

What happens on the constitution? As soon as Trudeau's package is announced, his buddy Ed Broadbent said, 'Well, we won't have any trouble supporting that package. We love Pierre; we'd like to see him stay.' And in fact they said, 'Allan Blakeney won't have any trouble supporting Pierre Elliott Trudeau's package.' And they were right, if it hadn't been for the people of Saskatchewan he'd have been publicly endorsing it and supporting it.

History shows that since the election of Pierre Elliott Trudeau (the true facts are coming out) the NDPers have been Liberals in drag and that's all they have been. Ed Broadbent is coming out of the closet and embarrassing the NDP. I know they are feeling the pain in western Canada, and I know they are feeling the pinch. They are trying to take every crass political move to try to get out from under the burden. But make no mistake, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan know to their regret that it was the NDP which kept Trudeau in. It's the NDP that is his prop today, and it's the NDP that is the Liberal wing in western Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I was smart. I got out of bed with the Liberals. You guys hopped right in with them. You hopped right into bed with them. You have the Hon. Deputy Premier indulging in a little foreplay all summer, he and Jean Chretien, before the marriage was consummated in the fall.

Mr. Speaker, as I say, they are just Liberals in drag and that's all they are. They stand up on the constitution with a public warning by Pierre Elliott Trudeau himself about how much the federal government fears a solid western block of opposition. What happens? Does Allan Blakeney join the solid western block? He sits on the fence because he really wants to help out Pierre. Even today he's still sitting on the fence and he won't join the court action. He won't join Alberta in a court action to protect our resources. He's prepared, as he did on his proposal for a national energy bank, to give our resources to Pierre Elliott Trudeau, because he's secretly in love with Pierre Elliott Trudeau and it's only the restraint of the public of Saskatchewan that's keeping it opposite.

Mr. Speaker, I'll show you how confused they are opposite. Another issue is acid rain. Some of the members opposite are against the acid rain problem. Half of their supporters down east who paraded against Ronald Reagan are made at these guys because they think acid rain is something to drink and they don't want it prevented, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Hon. Minister of Agriculture gets up in the House and says he is all for removing crow but it has to be done a certain way, and it still has to be kept statutory. He goes to SARM and changes his mind. You know, we'd be very, very curious to see where the government opposite does stand on the crow. It doesn't stand with the western agricultural conference position; it doesn't stand with the wheat pool; it doesn't stand with the NFU;

it doesn't stand with anybody on the crowd but it seems to be against it. Figure that one out. The farmers can't and the public can't, Mr. Speaker.

A very interesting thing, and what this budget exemplifies, is the fact that after nearly 40 years of CCF-NDP government the economic structure of this province is based on two things: resources and agriculture. For 40 years, and this budget is proof to the people you have been totally unsuccessful and complete failures in developing a strong, dynamic, private sector base, in this economy.

For 40 years they've had a chance. In 1971, the present Premier even recognized that. He knew there wasn't a private sector base. He was going to do something about it. He was going to develop an industrial strategy. I can quote, in short:

Our development strategy is not one based solely on bigger resource-based industries. We believe in a balanced approach. We believe in resource development, but we want to develop industries which will serve the prairie basin.

Where are they? Was Shane Industries one of your great success stories? What about the other Sedco blunders that have gone on? The fact is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that Allan Blakeney, in 1971, recognized the need for development of a strong private sector.

We look at the budget today and see that revenues are solely from resources and agriculture. The goal of 1971 has been an abject failure in developing the strong private sector that this province needs.

Last night, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we heard the ultimate. The member for Saskatoon Mayfair said that the free enterprise system should be done away with. He asks what the free enterprise system has done. He said that it has destroyed a presumption we used to have about one another, that most people are reliable, honest, and trustworthy. That idea has been succeeded by the destructive profit-motivated approach. There are too many untrustworthy people around to trust people.

Perhaps the most insidious aspect of the effect of our failing economic system, is that it insists people not think for themselves, the member said. What a bunch of hypocrisy.

The member should sit over here for a day and watch a bunch of sheep who can't think for themselves. The hon. minister responsible for industry and commerce, ends up supporting the budget, contrary to what he should be doing. In fact, we had one of the most vicious, insidious attacks on the free enterprise system. And the member, last night, stated in no uncertain terms his hatred for the private sector, for business, and his lack of understanding for business, and why the NDP has been unsuccessful, after nearly 40 years of government, in developing a strong, private sector in this province.

We take a look around at the development in this province. What do we see? We see government buildings and bank buildings. Why? We see government buildings because they can't get the private sector to do much of the activity. We see bank buildings because they have \$1 billion in resource revenue. Anyone could build bank buildings if he had \$1 billion sitting around. That's easy. What is difficult is trying to develop . . .

Let me tell you what Barclay's Bank said. Read it a little further, hon. member, and you

tell me of a bank in Canada, or the world, that wouldn't come where there is a billion dollars. You try to get an industrial sector.

You stand up with Zenon Park Industries. Zenon Park moves out of a small town, and your macaroni and noodle factory goes into receivership. You're trying to recover that one. Shane Industries, the flagship of economic development, goes down the tube.

So, that's the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I could go on with that very lengthy list. We have seen this because the government opposite doesn't understand business. The government opposite ties up massive amounts of resource capital. It ties it up . . . You are one of the few entrepreneurs left, and I'll talk about your development in Dallas, but . . . Oh, I'm sorry he's gone, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They've tied up hundreds of millions of dollars in capital that's not being put to work. I suggest that's an indication of a lack of understanding of business.

Businessmen take capital and they use it. They generate more capital. They use it over again. They try to parlay it into more developments. What has the government opposite done? It has become static with it and has bought up existing companies. Let's take two examples.

What has it done about Ipsco (Interprovincial Steel and Pipe Corporation)? What it has done about Ipsco, instead of taking that money and generating new businesses to come into the province, is to increase its equity — a very static position. What has it done with P. A. Pulp Company? Equity should be used to generate new business. What happens? They used the equity to buy up 100 per cent of the P. A. Pulp Company — not using that capital to generate new businesses, not using the capital . . .

I wouldn't even object, and I'm talking personally, if they went on the open market and bought some companies and moved them here instead of buying what's already here. You can take a look at some of the sales on the open market. I don't know what the impact on the economy would have been if you had bought Hudson Bay Company, bought it on the open market, moved it here. I suggest that you would have established Regina once and for all with the most solid economic base you ever could have established. The key, of course, if that activity were embarked upon, would be to stay out of the management and let those who know business run business. And that's something that you don't do.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — It's interesting that that approach was even suggested by a former NDP member of this Assembly, Mr. John Richards. He said that one of the fundamental differences between Alberta and Saskatchewan was that Alberta took pride in the entrepreneurial spirit, tried to encourage the entrepreneurial spirit, recognized the contribution that entrepreneurs can make to industrial and economic development. But the government opposite did everything it could to destroy the entrepreneurial spirit, did everything it could to drive the aggressive businessman out of this province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, they simply don't understand business, and they don't recognize the contribution that the business community makes to this province and could make to this province, if in fact it was understood and assisted by the government opposite.

It's very, very strange that after nearly 40 years of government all we hear about in their speeches is the depression and how the CCF started in the depression in 1939, and how we have to protect people, and how we have to keep going and keep that

depression mentality. That's what their attitude is. And let me tell you, this province is mature enough and the people are mature enough to welcome and understand private sector development. This budget does absolutely nothing to help the businessmen of this community get established, grow, and contribute. It's an indication they haven't learned their lessons over the last 40 years, and it's an indication as well that Allan Blakeney, in his statement of 1971, has failed to develop the private sector in this province.

We suggested some common sense alternatives to allow that private sector to develop. They were listed in a positive way. We need the infrastructure. We need the amenities. We'd like an amenity like clean water for people in this province. It should be an amenity. We need cable TV in rural Saskatchewan so people will be attracted (without the porn movies, I might add). We want executives and entrepreneurs to want to come to this province, to feel comfortable in using their business skills and their management skills and to be able to contribute to the growth and development of this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we take a look at agriculture. What has happened? Now they are starting to catch up on research — \$5 million a year. Let me tell you, when agriculture is one of our most prominent industries, \$5 million should have been an ongoing expense for the last 30 years in research and development, not a sudden deathbed repentance — all of a sudden, we are going to concentrate on research. Do you think nothing is happening out there; nothing has been going on for the last 30 years? Now, all of a sudden, something will happen? In fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that just indicates it is a bit of crisis management. The public and the industry knew they were so far behind that they put on the pressure. The government's answer to a dynamic agricultural economy has reduced the farm size. What is it going to be, one section? Is it going to be a half section? Is it going to be a quarter section? Tell us what your farm size is going to be. They are buying up farms. In fact they are not developing an aggressive agricultural industry in this province. Their agricultural policies have put Saskatchewan in a secondary position in terms of farm income, not in the leadership position which it held previously. It all came about when they got involved; when the farmers were doing something on their own at least they were making money and staying in the number one position.

The hon. member asked me to talk about Crown corporations. Let me talk about Crown corporations. I'll just give a quick summary of where things stand today, because of their economic development program. Unemployment is up. I think that the first figures today indicate that the trend in the holding pattern started to break. That doesn't include the hard core unemployment. For example, 15 per cent of the people of this province are below the poverty line. The number of people on welfare, according to their own statistical bulletin, is somewhere in the range of 40,000 people — as of December, 40,581. That doesn't include, Mr. Finance Minister, those who received assistance under the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development in the province of Saskatchewan, which puts the figure at some 63,000 people. What do they do about it?

Let's take a look at the estimates for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. There is supposed to be 10 years of development and growth in northern Saskatchewan. What happens? Social services needs to be increased nearly 33.3 per cent for inflation. The Saskatchewan Assistance Plan needs to be increased dramatically. The number of day care centres is to be increased dramatically, which one should think would mean that there are more people working. But if you take a look at the assistance plan in social services, there are probably fewer people working. There are more people needing

government assistance because of your 10-year development program in DNS has not solved the problem. All it has done in northern Saskatchewan is to increase the number of government employees.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want the finance minister in his closing remarks to tell the people of this province why there was no freeze on Sask Power rates. There was a 30 per cent commercial rate increase announced when that Crown corporation had a surplus. I want the Minister of Finance to tell the people of Saskatchewan why there is a 28 per cent increase in one year in SGI rates. I want the Minister of Finance to tell the people of Saskatchewan why there is no freeze on Sask Tel rates if it makes a profit. I want him to answer that because none of the others over there, all through this budget speech, said one word about it. I want him to tell the people of this province why he didn't give a 10 per cent across-the-board tax cut, and why he gave only 1 per cent this year. It was noticeable in this budget debate that only about two members opposite dared touch the 2 per cent income tax saving. That's how embarrassed they were about it, and why the whole budget has backfired and boomeranged. There's nothing in this budget to deal with inflation. I want you to point out why you didn't help the people to fight inflation.

Why didn't you use the resource revenues to develop the private sector, and why didn't you use the resource revenues to cut taxes and ease inflationary burdens on the people of Saskatchewan? Those are the questions that none of the members opposite gave answers to in this budget speech. I want answers; the people want answers. For that reason, I'm supporting the amendment and I don't think anyone in their right mind, on analysis of that budget, would ever support the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Order! It is my duty to draw to the attention of the Assembly the rules and procedures of the Legislative Assembly, section 14(3) which states:

On the fifth of the said days, at 30 minutes before the ordinary time of adjournment, unless the debate be previously concluded, Mr. Speaker shall interrupt the proceedings and, after allowing 20 minutes for the mover of the budget motion to exercise his right to close debate, shall forthwith put every question necessary to dispose of the main motion.

I therefore call on the Minister of Finance.

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me begin by saying that the remarks of the member opposite have just indicated the contradiction that exists on the opposite side of the House. Let me give you one example. He said, very clearly a moment ago, that one of the problems with the economy of Saskatchewan is, and I quote him, 'our revenues in Saskatchewan are almost solely from resources and agriculture.' Well, what did his lead speaker, the hon. member who is the critic for the Department of Finance and the critic for the budget, say? He said, '70 per cent of the revenue in the province of Saskatchewan comes from taxation purposes.'

If you analyse, as I have done, the budget debate that has taken place on the part of the members opposite, you will find without any doubt that throughout that whole debate there were those kinds of contradictions over and over again.

The member opposite spoke about the lack of economic and industrial development in

Saskatchewan. I won't dwell very long on what he had to say, except to give him some examples so that he will learn what is really happening here.

He failed to mention that through the efforts of the Crown corporations of Saskatchewan this year, there will be over 4,000 jobs created in the construction industry, and the spinoffs from that are going to be extensive and massive and will benefit the economy. He never mentioned the fact that we are able to entice and encourage the establishment of a major fibre optics plant in Saskatoon — a high technology industry of the future. It's coming to Saskatchewan because it's a good place to come. He never spoke about the Ipsco expansion.

The Minister of Agriculture, in his speech last night, told of the success of the plains poultry establishment at Wynyard and what it is doing with the processing of agricultural products in Saskatchewan. There is a lot happening in the economy of Saskatchewan with regard to industrial and economic development. While the Massey-Fergusons of this world have been laying off thousands in Ontario, in the last 10 years our small farm manufacturers in this province have been thriving and growing and expanding.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the private sector in Saskatchewan is certainly a lot stronger than is the private sector in Ontario. I want the member to know that.

I just want to indicate, before I go on, that I want to express in this House an appreciation to my staff in the Department of Finance for the tremendous job that they have done in helping us put this budget together.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — They are dedicated and capable people. I think that indicates once again that the public service of Saskatchewan is a very high-calibre public service, and we're proud of them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — It disappoints me to no end to hear members over there day after day after day get up in this House and make personal attacks on many of those public servants in Saskatchewan (not the member who is the finance critic, but some of his other colleagues). I find that very unacceptable.

I have listened with interest to this debate all week, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have watched the members opposite as they struggle to mount an opposition to the budget. Some of them have said it's not enough and we should spend more. Some others have said we're spending too much. The member for Thunder Creek got up in his place last night and he said that we're spending like drunken sailors.

In this debate we have heard from some of them their leadership campaign speeches, and through it all, not one word from the invincible Leader of the Conservative Party, Mr. Devine. Unfortunately for the opposition, they couldn't have found much to criticize because, as the member for Qu'Appelle just did, they spend most of their time talking about something else.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I introduced the budget a week ago, I said I was proud of it; I

was proud of the programs it contained. It met the needs of today and was building with confidence for the future. As one Conservative member after another rose and spoke, my confidence in this budget grew.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — As my colleagues rose and spoke in this debate and one by one took apart the few weak arguments mounted by the opposition, my confidence in this budget was reassured, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was proud of my caucus colleagues. They did a tremendous job in this debate and I extend my thanks and my congratulations to each and every one of them.

This is a sensitive and a progressive budget and the response that we have received from the public since it was introduced, has confirmed this view. The comments of the opposition were predictably negative, and I guess we should have expected that, but behind the politicking and the puffery, there was little substance and even less credibility. The Tory finance critic, the member for Regina South, called the budget deceitful and a sham. I want to say the only thing that has been deceitful and a sham in this debate has been his and his colleagues' use of inaccuracies, wrong information and deliberate avoiding of the facts.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I guess I have been here long enough now to kind of expect that from the members opposite and reluctantly, almost even accept it. It's more important to me, and it's more important to our members on this side of the House, to hear what the public, the people of Saskatchewan who will be affected, have to say. They, the people of Saskatchewan, have said it is a good budget for them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member for Qu'Appelle just said that the budget, in his words, 'backfired.' Let me just take one minute to give you some quick examples of the reaction of the people of Saskatchewan. Here's a *Star-Phoenix* headline: 'Increased Day Care Funding Lauded in Saskatoon'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — The director of the cancer clinic, Dr. Klassen, in referring to the new research thrusts which we are funding, said it was a breakthrough, and he was very pleased. The mayor of Prince Albert, speaking about the new technical institute in Prince Albert, said he welcomed the announcement as the most significant development here since the pulp mill or Gateway North Plaza.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — An editorial in the *Prince Albert Herald* called 'Good News Budget' says:

Thursday's provincial budget speech can be simply labelled as good news.

An editorial in the *Leader Post*, March 6, 1981, states:

In fairness it can be said the budget moves broadly on a wide front and appears responsive to quite a number of publicly voiced concerns.

The member for Qu'Appelle said how difficult it is for the private sector. I disagree. So does the president of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce because, when he took a look at the budget, I quote:

The president of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce said, if drawing up the budget had been his responsibility, he probably would have produced a similar package.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — As the member for Rosetown-Elrose indicated in his remarks, both the chamber of commerce in Saskatchewan, representing the business sector, and the trade union movement in this province, said in this headline in the *Leader-Post*, 'Business, Labour Representatives Pleased with Budget.'

So I say the members opposite can say all they want. I'm interested in hearing what they want to say, but I'm more interested in wanting to hear what the people of Saskatchewan have to say, and they have spoken.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the centrepiece speech for the opposition was delivered by the finance critic on Monday, as it had to be. I must congratulate him on his speech. It was vigorous, it was feisty, and, if nothing else, it was long. However, it lacked something, and that something was a concern for accuracy. The member for Regina South has a peculiar way of using statistics. Unfortunately, I don't have enough time to deal with all of them and respond to all of them today. For the member opposite that is, I'm sure, a great relief. The factual errors, the contradictions and the pie-in-the-sky schemes could only be a part of a fantasy interlude between the presentation of the budget speech and the job he should have done in reviewing the budget in detail. The inaccuracies and the distortions that were used to glue together the arguments in that speech on Monday are not to be taken seriously. Nor, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are the policies of the Progressive Conservative Party.

Let us go back to the debate. Let us go back to the debate and consider what was really said. It is clear, from what they have said, that the opposition members have no regard for doing their homework, for getting their facts straight and, lastly, for building a sensible policy platform on that basis. Let me point out this example. The member for Regina South said in his speech:

Many years ago, the Thatcher government made investments that assisted Ipsco in locating in Saskatchewan.

Well, I want to remind the member opposite that the fact of the matter is that Ipsco was established by the Tommy Douglas government in 1957, seven years before Mr. Thatcher came into power.

It was said by the member opposite that the provincial gas tax rate is 30 cents a gallon. That's not correct, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In fact, the tax on clear gas is currently 23.2 cents per gallon or 5.1 cents per litre. How does this compare to other provinces? Well, let me tell you how it compares to some Conservative provinces. In Prince Edward Island, it's 30 cents and I know that's a long way away and so is Newfoundland at 27.3 cents a gallon; in Quebec it's 24.1 cents a gallon; British Columbia (and we're getting a little closer), 24.2 cents a gallon; and in Manitoba, which is right on our doorstep, it's

23.6 cents a gallon which is higher than in Saskatchewan. And then he went on to say that in 1975 potash sold for \$75 a ton and in 1980 the price for potash was \$68 a ton. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is totally incorrect. In fact, the average price per ton of potassium oxide rose by 90 per cent during that period from \$67.57 a ton to \$128.50 a ton.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — The member for Qu'Appelle wanted me to respond on the utility rates. Well, let me respond on utility rates. The member for Regina South said our utility rates were among the highest in Canada. In fact, the table on page 90 of the budget speech shows that an average home in Saskatchewan, using 168 mcf of natural gas annually pays only \$419, the lowest rate in Canada. And he said, with respect to health and education and social programs, that Saskatchewan places seventh and eighth in Canada. He also stated that almost all Progressive Conservative provincial governments spend more per capita on their services than does Saskatchewan. Let me respond to that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facts are quite different. We have the most comprehensive range of health programs in North America, matched by no one. In education Saskatchewan ranks first among all provinces in per capita spending, and in social services we have the broadest and most comprehensive range of programs in the country. But I have to admit that the demand for social assistance has not risen rapidly in recent years because our unemployment rate has been held to the second lowest in Canada.

There are other things I could deal with, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the member for Regina South and his colleagues talk about, but I am limited by time. I want to go on to one important area.

In all the years that I have been in the legislature, I have heard a lot of remarks on budgets and they have been of some interest to me. The attempt that was made by the Conservatives to provide some policies and proposals, I found particularly interesting, because the Tory story is full of contradictions. The finance critic says, and I quote because it's important for everyone in Saskatchewan to recall what he said, 'Government acquisitions in the areas of the private sector where government has no business being, should be done away with.' Let's consider that for just a moment. While he was saying that, on the other side of his mouth, he advocated equity participation by the provincial government in a \$1 billion heavy oil mega-project. And I say that they should make up their minds.

I asked the members opposite sometime during this session to tell us which government acquisitions, which Crown corporations, in which order, they would do away with first. Would they begin with the Saskatchewan Power Corporation? Would they begin with the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan which they would like to see owned by some foreign company in Germany or France? Or would they begin with good old Sask Tel and give it over to Bell Canada which recently asked for a 30 per cent increase in its rates that it will charge consumers in Ontario. And I invite the members opposite at some point in this debate, to tell us what their position is.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the job of a finance critic, obviously, is to oppose the government and the budget and I expected that. But for once I would like the members to try really hard to understand how so many well-informed people now regard Saskatchewan as the success story of the 1980s. Take a look at comments made by Barclay's Bank, which is come to Saskatchewan. I think that reflects the attitude which the business

community has of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. TCHORZEWSKI: — I invite comparisons, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If the members opposite are willing to look at these comparisons, I have no doubt Saskatchewan will do very well indeed — certainly better than British Columbia, which members will admit is a resource-rich have province. If I had more time, I would speak at some length about this year's tale of two budgets — the NDP Saskatchewan budget, and the Conservative-Social Credit British Columbia budget. It's quite a tale. In British Columbia the 1981-82 budget presented on March 9, is a balanced budget, just like ours. But to achieve the balance it raises the sales tax from 4 per cent to 6 per cent. Our tax reductions are a \$50 million saving to Saskatchewan taxpayers. In British Columbia there is an increase of over \$600 million in taxes.

I think this is a good budget. Because they couldn't make up their minds, I invite the members opposite to reconsider their position on it. Join with my colleagues when we vote on it and support a budget which is doing so much for Saskatchewan people.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Amendment negatived on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 13

Birkbeck	Duncan	Lane
Taylor	Collver	Rousseau
Swan	Hardy	Pickering
Muirhead	Katzman	Garner
Andrew		

NAYS — 34

Blakeney	Pepper	Kaeding
Romanow	Smishek	Bowerman
Tchorzewski	Robbins	Baker
Skoberg	McArthur	Gross
MacMurchy	Mostoway	Banda
Vickar	Kowalchuk	Dyck
Engel	Feschuk	Byers
Cody	Koskie	Matsalla
Shillington	Lusney	Poniatowski
Prebble	Johnson	Long
Nelson	White	Solomon
Chapman		

Motion agreed to on division.

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

CONSOLIDATED FUND BUDGETARY CASH OUTFLOWS

AGRICULTURE

Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 1

The committee reported progress.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Representation to England on Saskatchewan Constitutional Position

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I arise to inform the House that Mr. Romanow, Attorney General and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, will be leaving tomorrow for a week of meetings in London, England.

His objective is to ensure that Saskatchewan's position on the federal government's constitutional resolution is fully appreciated in London. He will also attempt to impress upon the United Kingdom parliamentarians the implications of acceding to a request from the federal parliament in the face of vigorous objection by 8 of the 10 provinces.

A number of meetings have been arranged. Among others, Mr. Romanow will be meeting with Sir Anthony Kershaw, who chaired the select committee which examined the United Kingdom parliament's role in relation to Canada's constitution. He will be meeting other members of the Kershaw committee, the all-party group of parliamentarians which has shown an interest in Canadian constitutional matters and other members of parliament and of the House of Lords, from both the Labour and Conservative parties. Mr. Romanow will also meet with the agents general of other provinces and with representatives of the British and Canadian press.

I attach great importance to Mr. Romanow's visit, and this effort to impress upon British parliamentarians the seriousness and the divisiveness of the federal government's action.

Upon his return to Saskatchewan, I will ask Mr. Romanow to report to the legislature on his meetings.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LANE: — We would feel a little more confident if we knew what position the Attorney General is taking over that he is going to talk about. It would certainly make a difference to the people of Saskatchewan to know which one the government is taking on this little junket . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . That's right. It may be a little better with him going instead of the Premier.

We would like to advise the Assembly at this time that during the course of the rules committee trip to England, two of our members, Mr. Andrew and Mrs. Duncan, made it quite clear to certain members of the United Kingdom parliament exactly what the Conservative position is on the constitution and how the people of Saskatchewan feel about the constitution.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would hope that the Premier would have a change of heart from when he so pointedly refused to give the opposition the information as to whom the deputy minister of intergovernmental affairs saw in England, and with whom he had discussed positions — whether, in fact, it was primarily Labour, or just a training program for the deputy minister on social matters, as opposed to constitutional matters.

We hope that the Attorney General, when he is there, makes it quite clear that the government opposite, because of its failure to take action in the past, has seriously discredited the people of Saskatchewan, and that he makes it quite clear that the position of the federal government, fearing a united western front, has been seriously undermined by the actions of the government opposite, and that the failure of the government opposite to join with other western premiers enticed and lured the Prime Minister of Canada into his constitutional position today. I hope he makes it clear, in no uncertain terms, that the position of the government, if it is against the constitution, is one that has been held by the people of Saskatchewan for the longest time — from day one — and is a recent conversion by the government opposite, in fact, that their position only comes about because of political pressure.

I suggest that it is incumbent upon the government opposite to make it clear to the House of Parliament in England that the people of Saskatchewan have always opposed Trudeau's constitutional position and will continue to oppose Trudeau's constitutional position, notwithstanding the position of the government opposite.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: — Did you want to reply to this ministerial statement? That would require the leave of the House. Does the member have leave? Agreed.

MR. COLLVER: — I'm glad that the members didn't have to vote on it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that leave was granted, because I imagine after what I say they may wish they hadn't granted leave. This will be brief.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as someone who does have some reasonable knowledge of history and recognizes that the Statute of Westminster passed in the 1930s presumably made it apparent and clear that Canada was an independent country, I resent the Premier of Saskatchewan sending a minister of the Crown to another country to put his position forward on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, on the strength that some other country is going to make the ultimate decision on our behalf instead of our accepting the responsibilities ourselves.

We in Saskatchewan oppose Mr. Trudeau's constitutional package. We in Saskatchewan oppose the kind of plundering that's going on by Mr. Trudeau of western Canada. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to suggest for one moment that we in western Canada should be dependent upon the backside bussing that the Attorney General is going to do to other politicians in another country, asking them to decide our future, is absolutely ridiculous and we have no right to call ourselves an independent country if this is the kind of thing we are up to.

The Assembly adjourned at 1:05 p.m.