

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
December 2, 1981

The Assembly met at 2 p.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. ALLEN: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, sir, and to other members of the Assembly, this afternoon, a fine group of 33 students who are with us from Dieppe School in Regina Rosemont constituency. They are accompanied today by their teacher, Mr. Dick Lupastin, and parents, Jean Heidi, Wayne Erickson and H. Harris. I hope all members of the House will join with me in welcoming the students to the legislature and in hoping that their stay here this afternoon will be both interesting and educational.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. MUIRHEAD: — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to introduce, sitting in the east gallery, approximately 20 students from the Craik High School in my hometown of Craik. They are grade 12 students, Mr. Speaker, they are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Glen Hymers, and I see the principal, Mr. Ray Johnson, is there. This is a school I attended, and I ask each and every one of you to welcome this class to the session this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Services Provided by School Boards

MR. SWAN: — My question is to the Premier. With your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read a short quote that came off the news wire:

Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan's rural affairs minister says some rural school boards are not as responsible as they should be about keeping mill rates down. Edgar Kaeding told a meeting in Moose Jaw last night that boards could be asked to collect some of the cost of education through local taxes as one way to keep a check on rising expenses. He said, "Although the government pays 70 per cent of the cost of education, some school boards may be providing their students with Cadillac services."

My question to the Premier is simply this. Mr. Premier, do you agree with the policy position taken by your minister and do you agree that school boards, indeed, are providing Cadillac services?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I don't agree with the statement, whether or not made by the member for Saltcoats, that all school boards are providing Cadillac services. I'm certainly not in a position to deny that some school boards may be providing Cadillac services. I'm not sufficiently well-informed to give a blanket denial.

MR. SWAN: — Mr. Premier, yesterday, in your opening remarks in reply to the Speech from the Throne, you referred to your government's not interfering with other forms of local government. Yet, here we see the Minister of Rural Affairs becoming the soon to be minister of education. Mr. Premier, do you agree that we should have the school boards collecting the tax, setting up a dual system out there with the RMs collecting tax and the school boards collecting tax? Is this the policy of your government?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — No.

MR. TAYLOR: — Supplementary to the Premier. Mr. Premier, are you aware that today in the area of Vawn, Saskatchewan, in the school district of Turtleford, there are nine students being bused by their parents because of an amalgamation of school busing which would require elementary students to ride one way 90 minutes a day? Do you call that a Cadillac system, Mr. Premier?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I doubt whether I am called upon to express opinions on the level of services offered by a school board elected by the ratepayers in the area. Accordingly, I do not offer any comment as to whether that is adequate, inadequate, or more than adequate.

MR. TAYLOR: — The supplementary then will go to the new minister of education. You say that there are systems which are supplying Cadillac services. If that is correct, would you name the systems you are referring to?

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! I wonder if the member for Qu'Appelle can curb himself while another member has the floor. The member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

MR. TAYLOR: — Mr. Minister of Rural Affairs, name the systems you are referring to in this article as Cadillac school systems.

HON. MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the correspondence he refers to took place at Moose Jaw or at Lafleche, during a question period, when I was being asked whether there was any way that we could arrange a different mechanism of taxation so that school boards would not be passing through requests to the rural municipalities to pick up their taxation. I suggested to them that it was pretty difficult to do that because it was most appropriate that we pick it up through the municipal system. But if there were a demand on their part that it should be done, we might consider the possibility of setting it up so that school boards pick up their own taxes. So that was simply a remark made in response to a question.

As far as Cadillac service is concerned, I am not saying that school units have Cadillac service. I said it was possible. I think it is possible. I think there may be some circumstances in which school boards are developing programs which may be at a higher level than the people in particular area wish. If you would take exception to that, I suggest you go out and check it.

MR. TAYLOR: — Did you not say that they were Cadillac systems? If you said they were, would you name them for this Assembly?

HON. MR. KAEDING: — I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that I said there may be six systems out there which are operating on Cadillac service.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Premier, we've now been four days in session. For the fourth consecutive day we see a very flagrant example of you on the opposite side of one of your cabinet ministers. My question to you is very simply this: does all this disarray and disunity on that side mean that a major cabinet shuffle is imminent on that side of the House?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I note that our seating plan is much the same as it was last time, and I note opposite that the seating plan is very, very different ..

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — .. indicating a considerable measure of disarray. I would expect that the hon. member for Thunder Creek would be well informed on matters of disarray. I would not want to tangle with him on that. All I can say is that our government is in its usual state of cohesion and that we are able, I think, to address all questions which may be put to us by members opposite.

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question to the Minister of Rural Affairs. Mr. Minister, you have acknowledged that the wire report is accurate. You have acknowledged that the terminology is basically correct. Again, Mr. Minister, my question to you is simply this: will you be specific and name what school boards are providing the Cadillac services? Would you tell this Assembly and the school boards whether you think having the proper number of teachers per students is Cadillac service and whether you think having the normal programs that people in the urban areas have is Cadillac service? In other words, will you tell us exactly where the units are and what the Cadillac services are, or else back off completely and say that you didn't know what you were talking about in the first place?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I've attended a lot of municipal functions and I've had this complaint from a large number of municipal governments — local governments.

AN HON. MEMBER: — Name them.

HON. MR. KAEDING: — I'm not going to name them because there are a lot of them. One of the questions that continually comes to me is: how can we deal with this question of school boards simply assessing a level of mill rate and passing it on through the municipal government? In many cases, they have said to me that they think some of these school units are not watching their budgets as carefully as they should. That's their statement. I'm not saying that they're right or wrong. I'm simply indicating to you that some of the municipal governments feel that there should be more responsibility on the part of the school boards in setting their mill rates.

MR. SWAN: — My question is to the Minister of Rural Affairs as a supplementary. Mr. Minister, you have coloured every school board in this province by your comments, and I think it is up to you now to state clearly to this House who and what the Cadillac services are; either that or withdraw the statement. I think you have done a grave disservice to every school board in the province by making comments such as this.

HON. MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I said there may be some school units with Cadillac service, and I suggest that from the discussions I have had with some

municipal governments that that is the way they feel. I'm not sure they're right, but that's what they have communicated to me.

New Sask Tel Building

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, a question to the Premier. Mr. Premier, last Monday night you took part in the opening of another gold tower in the city of Regina by the Government of Saskatchewan. The gold tower has 65,000 square feet of plate window. When we stopped on the 13th floor on our tour we noticed that there were skylights, two water fountains, walk-in showers. Mr. Premier, how can you justify an expenditure from the public purse, from the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, on a golden tower such as this? And can you guarantee the people of Saskatchewan that there will be no increase in telephone rates for one year or more, so that the people of Saskatchewan do not have to pay for another golden tower for the Blakeney administration?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member opposite may be suggesting that was a particularly expensive building. He suggests that when he gives it the title "golden tower." He is of course, referring to the reflective cladding which is on the outside of the building to save energy. I know that will not commend itself to the members opposite, but it certainly commends itself to us. We believe that is a building which is appropriate for Sask Tel; we believe it will prove to be a sound investment; we are well aware of the fact that when the Sask Power building went up the same accusations were made against it. Now, I believe it is generally thought to be a credit to Regina and a building which does not have standards of excessive opulence.

The same criticisms were made of the Sask Tel building at the corner of College and Albert, now generally believed to be a building appropriate. I think that the same will be found to be true of the current new Sask Tel building. We will see, I think, that it is no more lavish than buildings regularly built by the private sector, or by Conservative governments elsewhere. I believe it is, as I say, an appropriate type of building which will be found to be so when 10 or 20 years have gone by.

MR. GARNER: — Mr. Premier, the reason I'm concerned about this is that I remember when the first golden tower, the SGI building, known as the Clarence Somebody building, was opened by your government, and the people of Saskatchewan did get the bill. They got the bill from SGI, from your government, to construct that tower. Mr. Premier, where are your priorities? You have raised taxes; you have raised utility rates — just to building another golden tower in the province of Saskatchewan. Will you tell this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan where the government's priorities are?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a comment or two on that. If members opposite suggest that it would be cheaper for Sask Tel to rent office space over any long period of time than to own its own building, I question their business acumen. I believe that government can, in fact, own buildings and operate them more cheaply than they can rent them, for pretty obvious reasons. Governments can generally raise money more cheaply than the private sector and, accordingly, when the something involves a large capital investment, governments can usually get the advantage of cheaper capital. I believe that is what Sask Power has done in the past. I believe that is what Sask Tel is doing now.

I know that hon. members opposite are bitterly opposed to the whole idea of the government participating in a renewal of downtown Regina. It is the policy of our government to renew the downtown cores of cities, and we are taking our full part in

that.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

New Cardboard Ballot Boxes

MR. LANE: — Mr. Speaker, I have the proposed new cardboard ballot boxes that the chief electoral officer has unveiled today, and I'm going to ask a question of the Premier. Do you endorse the use of these cardboard ballot boxes and the use of the paper seals as proposed by the chief electoral office?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, we are giving some consideration to whether or not that would lower election expenses, and our simple answer to that is if all members of this House are satisfied with that arrangement, we will go ahead with it. If all members are not satisfied with that arrangement, we will not go ahead with it.

MR. LANE: — I'm glad to hear that the Premier will reconsider, because they have already become known as the "Blakeney ballot boxes." Let me show you a very simple trick. One from the top, and (I know the Premier wouldn't agree with this) one from the bottom. I don't think it's a very funny matter that any government, in a democracy like Canada, would come before the people of a province with a cardboard box that can be stuffed from the top and the bottom.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, if I may make a couple of observations. First, the Government of Saskatchewan has not come forward with that. It was proposed so that you could have a comment on it. If you would have been courteous enough to your comment to the public servant instead of holding his proposal up to scorn in this House, fine. But you didn't have that courtesy and we have come to expect that sort of conduct from the member for Qu'Appelle. Mr. Speaker, I may be in error, but I am informed that such ballot boxes are used in Ontario. It may be that Ontario is not a democracy, having had a Conservative government for over 25 years, but my understanding is that very type of box is used there.

MR. LANE: — I'm going to assure the Premier that the public servant today was shown dramatically that you can put a matchbook through the bottom of this. He was shown in the demonstration today, and for you to stand up in the House and say that we didn't ..

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order! The member is continuously debating an issue. The purpose of the question period — and I might remind some members on the other side as well — is to seek information and to give answers, and the member is clearly debating the issue. Now, if he has a final supplementary, I'll take it.

MR. LANE: — Will the Premier give his unequivocal statement and commitment that this form of ballot boxes and the paper seals will be withdrawn, they will not be used in the province of Saskatchewan and we will go back to the metal ballot boxes that we have used with the metal seals?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am informed that the representatives of the

opposition declined to give a view at the meeting. My colleague, the member for Biggar, has just advised me that when the opposition screws up its courage and gives its view as to whether or not that box can be used, we will be guided by its judgment. If they don't want it, it won't be there. But there is no point in coming to the committee, refusing to take a position as hon. members opposite did, and then coming in this House and suggesting that there's something terribly wrong with something that you didn't find sufficiently wrong to raise an objection to in committee.

Gasoline Prices

MR. THATCHER: — Question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since you raised the subjects of scorn and ridicule and screwing up courage, I'd like to ask you a couple of questions about the price of gasoline. Mr. Premier, as of yesterday, the price of unleaded gasoline at an Imperial Esso station in Calgary was \$1.41 a gallon, 31.4 cents per litre. In Regina, the same gallon of gas is \$1.79, or 39.6 cents per litre. Mr. Premier, that is a discrepancy of 38 cents per gallon in favour of Alberta. We all know that interest and energy costs are the two biggest causes of inflation, and 40 cents a gallon, which is maybe \$5, \$6, or \$7 to every Saskatchewan resident every time he fills up his car with gas, is quite a bit. Will you consider some relaxation of that gas price and give the residents of Saskatchewan some relief from one of the ravages of inflation, which you can do something about today?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I regret that the province of Saskatchewan is not in the happy position of the province of Alberta, of being able to have no tax on gasoline. In any case it would not be our policy, as it is the policy of the Government of Alberta, to charge no tax on gasoline, but charge a Medicare premium for a family of over \$200 a year. Those do not represent our priorities. Our gasoline tax is at the same level as the gasoline tax in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia and a good number of other provinces. By and large, they're pretty well all at 20 per cent. That seems to us and to a great number of other provinces, most of them Conservative, to be an appropriate level of taxation and, accordingly, we believe that this is a reasonable place to raise revenue in order to build roads. It is, in effect, a road user tax. It is, in effect, a payment by those who use highways and we think it not an unreasonable way to have those who use highways pay for highways.

MR. THATCHER: — Supplementary question to the Premier. I guess you always know when you have them up against the wall because always the answer is, "They have a medicare premium in Alberta" or whatever. Mr. Premier, the same gallon of gas which I was describing from Calgary to Regina, when priced in Toronto was 38.4 cents a litre. That's \$1.72 a gallon when you go back to the old system. In other words, residents of Ontario pay 7 cents less per gallon of gas that they do in the city of Regina. So the obvious supplementary question is this. Ontario has no oil and has limited resources and we apparently have them all. Would the Premier inform the people of Saskatchewan when they are going to get some benefits from their natural resources which they can see, instead of some screwy, pie in the sky, broken down airline, or some expansion, or a golden tower at Sask Tel? When will they receive something they can see in their pocketbooks instead of something which is part of an ego trip by the New Democratic Party?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I invite the hon. member to look at last year's budget. Look at what happened to oil revenues and you will see that sums very nearly

approaching the total amount of oil revenues received were, in fact, paid over to the consolidated fund to pay for such worthy causes as salaries for MLAs and expenses of the legislature, as well as, of course, school grants to permit school boards to offer services at levels which the hon. members are suggesting are not too high. Grants to local governments, a cut in income tax, grants to hospitals — all of these basically come out of the oil royalties which we collect. Not the total amount but a very, very large portion of our budget, around 25 per cent, comes out of the heritage fund. I would be very surprised if citizens of Saskatchewan did not appreciate those services, and I would be very surprised if they did not know that they are largely paid for out of resource revenues.

Number of Doctors in Saskatchewan

MR. COLLVER: — I have a very simple question to the Minister of Health. Yesterday during a conversation with me, he explained to me that one of the reasons for the ever-increasing costs for medical care was that we have too many doctors in the province of Saskatchewan. Would the Minister of Health be prepared to repeat that statement in this Assembly?

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I have the statistics before me as far as the number of doctors is concerned in this province. I indicated to the member that at a health ministers' conference recently held in Toronto, I believe, all ministers of health in Canada were concerned about the number of doctors that were coming into their provinces. Particularly Ontario and British Columbia were very concerned and they wanted to set up a committee to study, first of all, how to control the number of doctors that were coming in and, secondly, the distribution of doctors. If the member were honest with the Assembly here, we indicated in our conversation that we had some problems of doctors coming in to the larger cities and not being able to get them into the smaller areas. So let's put it into context.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to say that in 1964 we had a total number of physicians in this province of 560 and in 1980 we had 984. The population in this province, from 1964 to 1980 or 1981, I believe, has increased about 5 per cent. If that is correct, either the people in this province were underserved in 1964 or they may be better served in 1980. I am not going to make the judgment as to whether or not we are overserved. I am simply saying that if we thought it was adequate in 1964 and we have more doctors now, then we must be better served in 1981. But I do want to tell the member that we could use (and so could every other province) specialists in certain areas. In other areas, however, we would not need any more GPs (general practitioners).

I have discussed this recently with the SMA (Saskatchewan Medical Association); I have discussed it with the college of medicine to try to convince them that they should use whatever incentives they could to get people into the specialty areas that we need. Every other province is doing the same thing. We are wrestling with the problem. I think the four western premiers spoke about this when they met. I think it is a problem that we must look at and it's a challenge that lies before us in the 1980s.

MR. COLLVER: — If I have time for a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I might just ask the minister if he is aware of the ratio of doctors in the province of Saskatchewan to the population as compared with the national average of Canada. With all the government's boasting about medicare, how can the Minister of Health possibly state that Saskatchewan has too many doctors when in fact there are 780 persons per physician in the province of Saskatchewan and 646 persons per physician as a

national average? If you're really going to boast, surely there should be more doctors in Saskatchewan than there are in the rest of Canada.

HON. MR. ROLFES: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think one should measure the quality of medicare or medical services by the number of doctors that one has in a particular area. That is not necessarily .. Mr. Speaker, I don't want to take the Premier's time, so I will answer some other time when they are read to listen.

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATE

Address in Reply

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Chapman and the amendment thereto moved by Mr. Berntson.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned the debate yesterday, I had an opportunity to congratulate the mover and seconder of the motion, the members for Estevan and The Battlefords. Their contributions to this debate were a source of pride for me and my party, and I'm sure for their constituents. The members for Estevan and The Battlefords are two of the newest additions to this, the government side of the House, but we have many fine members who have made, and will continue to make, important contributions to the work of this Assembly.

Yesterday, I also had an opportunity to congratulate the member for Souris-Cannington. For the third session in a row he is standing as Leader of the Opposition. That was a job which the Tories told us he would be filling only on a temporary basis, only until the Conservative leader could get himself elected to this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, they've told us that for more than two years. It was two years ago last month. That was then the Conservatives chose an advocate of neoconservatism to lead them to the electoral promised land. Come to think of it, Mr. Speaker, that was the first and last elected office that he has ever won in this province. In 1978 he was rejected by the voters of Saskatoon. Since 1979 he has been rejected twice, first by the voters of Estevan and then by the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal.

I would hope that members opposite will be busy deciding on who is next. I am talking not about who is going to be the next leader, but which Conservative MLA is willing now to sacrifice his seat in order to give their leader an opportunity to move from the public galleries to the floor of the Assembly. Who will be the next Bob Larter? I hope that members opposite will remember that it has to be a safe seat, and I do mean safe! We all know what happened in Estevan. The former Conservative, Mr. Larter, had captured 55 per cent of the vote in 1978. The Conservative leader cut that 55 per cent to 36 per cent. It will have to be a considerable margin. Perhaps the member for Thunder Creek will be the next to stand aside, or the member for Regina South, or maybe the member for Indian Head-Wolseley.

It may well be that no one will want to risk his seat — I can understand that — and the Conservative leader will still be in the public galleries. He will have some solace there. The Liberal leader will be there with him. Perhaps they could take the opportunity to make up after their battle for second place in the Estevan by-election. Perhaps the Conservative leader will admit that Mr. Goodale is, in fact, a resident of Saskatchewan. He is indeed, and I suspect that Mr. Devine will have reason to regret that fact.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, there is some evidence to suggest that the Conservative leader is not really interested in winning a seat in the Assembly. I bring to your attention an article in the July 18 *Leader-Post*, in which it states: "Leader without a legislature finds a silver lining in his electoral setbacks." In this article he says that not being an MLA has some advantages because he has more free time to campaign.

Well, that free time I hope will be spent in explaining what the Conservative leader and his colleagues mean when they speak of this "bold new vision for Saskatchewan." I say that, Mr. Speaker, because it seems that members opposite are going through a bit of an identity crisis.

Just let me review. In February of this year the Conservative house leader, as he then was, the member for Qu'Appelle, was quoted in the Yorkton newspaper as saying, "The NDP in the West is the Liberal Party in the West." He was the same member who stood in this House earlier this year and called the members of our party "Liberals in drag." Now, we have the Conservative leader (and I don't mean the leader in this House, but Mr. Devine) saying he can see a growing provincial bond between the Liberals and the Conservatives.

Mr. Speaker, if we are to accept both of these statements from the party opposite — that we're just Liberals in disguise, yet the Tories want to jump into bed with the Liberals — what am I to conclude except that perhaps we're being propositioned?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I don't know whether that's true, Mr. Speaker, but if it is, the answer is thanks, but no thanks. I suppose that explains some of the vitriol which we've heard from members opposite in recent days. Hell hath no fury like a lover scorned. The identity crisis of members opposite grew deeper yesterday when the member for Souris-Cannington told us that Conservatives stood foursquare behind the achievements of the old CCF. "The CCF was okay," he said. "It's these new folks, the NDP, who are so bad." I am sure that Conservative supporters were a little disconcerted by that pledge of allegiance to the CCF, just as I am sure they were a little upset by something the Conservative leader had to say this summer during his free time for campaigning. On July 18 he is quoted as saying, "Thirty years ago I might have voted for Tommy Douglas but that was thirty years ago."

Mr. Speaker, first they accuse us of being Liberals; then they see a common bond with the Liberals; then they pledge allegiance to the CCF. You can understand why I suggest that the party opposite is in the midst of not only a leadership crisis but an identity crisis — of just trying to figure out who they are and whom they represent.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, it's getting worse. It's getting worse; it's not getting better. We had the member for Thunder Creek quoted not so long ago, doing an assessment of his party leader, saying:

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

winning a general election.

Mr. Speaker, you can understand why Saskatchewan people must think that his bold new vision is just a little bit blurred.

In the beginning my remarks on the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, I would like to refer to the Lieutenant-Governor's comments on voluntary organizations. In the throne speech he spoke of how much this province owes to volunteers. The Lieutenant-Governor, as he so often is when reading the Speech from the Throne, is absolutely accurate.

Members of this Assembly will know that the province of Saskatchewan has the highest rate of volunteerism in Canada. Nearly 27 per cent of Saskatchewan's working-age population did some volunteer work during the course of 1980. The national average was just over 15 per cent. So I was pleased and proud that we were able to say thank you to those individuals and their organizations, not only in the throne speech, but at the banquet which marked the opening of this new legislative session. Some 48 voluntary organizations were represented, Mr. Speaker, from the Arthritis Society to the YWCA, from 4-H clubs to UNICEF. Our purpose was to say thank you; thank you for the many hours of service which volunteers provide to these and so many other organizations.

These people personify what we, on this side of the House, so often describe as the Saskatchewan way, Mr. Speaker. That is a dedication to making this province a sharing, caring society. Not a society of passive people, as suggested by members opposite, but a society of active people who are working hard to create in this province a sharing and caring society.

There are those who say that in this world of future shock and the wired city, there is no place for this spirit of altruism. I disagree, and so many people in Saskatchewan disagree. I suggest that the fine work of voluntary organizations is proof that that spirit lives on and needs to live on.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I was pleased that the former chief justice of Saskatchewan, the Hon. E. M. Culliton, agreed to speak at the banquet in honour of voluntary organizations. His long years of community service in this province are a truly impressive record. He was chairman of the first search for Red Cross blood donors in Regina, chairman of the Saskatchewan Golden Jubilee committee from 1952 to 1955, served on the boards of the national and provincial branches of the CNIB (Canadian National Institute of the Blind) and the Grey Nuns' Hospital and the Mercy Hospital, occupied many positions at the University of Saskatchewan. The list, Mr. Speaker, goes on and on. His record of service to Saskatchewan and to Canada was recognized most appropriately earlier this year when he was named a Companion of the Order of Canada — a great citizen of Saskatchewan, a great Canadian.

HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I want to take some time this afternoon to review the constitutional negotiations and the results which have been obtained from those negotiations during this last month. As members will know, a constitutional accord was signed on November 5 of this year by the federal government and the governments of

the nine provinces — all the provinces excluding Quebec. This accord dealt with patriation and future amendment of our constitution.

I would like to review the events which have resulted in this historic agreement, and I know this review will be painful for members opposite, Mr. Speaker. I can recall the abuse heaped on the Saskatchewan government in this Chamber over the past year. Day after day, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite accused us of indecision on the constitution. In fact, in this same debate in December of last year, I can recall the hon. member for Souris-Cannington telling this Chamber, “The Saskatchewan government can no longer sit on the fence.” That was the favourite refrain of members opposite, Mr. Speaker. It seemed as if the Tories had their speech writers working overtime to discover novel ways of saying the same thing, and I regret to say that not all of their material took the high road.

On December 1 of last year, at page 49 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Moosomin told this Assembly, and I quote:

.. there are two key components creating separatism in western Canada; one is the Crown Prince of national disunity, the Prime Minister himself, and (the other the Premier of Saskatchewan) the Neville Chamberlain of the national unity debate, alias the weak link in western Canada.

I’ll come to what happened after all of these decisions by members opposite, all this labelling of who was weak and who was strong. On December 8, page 293 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Arm River told the House this:

The Saskatchewan government and constitutional reform is a modern-day version of Nero fiddling while Rome burned.

Mr. Speaker, the member went on to mix both his metaphors and his hyperbole — not an uncommon occurrence with the member for Arm River. He went on to say this:

Until the Premier gets off the fence .. the story of Blakeney fiddling while Saskatchewan burns will continue to painfully plague our history.

Again, on March 2 of this year, at page 471 of *Hansard*, the hon. member for Qu’Appelle said:

Sitting on the fence is not Saskatchewan’s nature. It is also not the nature of Saskatchewan to have its political leaders refuse to take strong and dynamic stands .. The middle of the road is not the answer.

This is the same hon. member, Mr. Speaker, who a few days later referred to members of my party as “Liberals in drag.”

I think you get the picture, Mr. Speaker. This government was being told almost daily to choose sides. That certainly would have been the easy route, Mr. Speaker, but too often that has been the reflex action of politicians when dealing with the constitution or other complex issues. “Take a stand. Declare an enemy. Refuse to negotiate.” This “High Noon” approach to politics makes for great theatre, Mr. Speaker, but it can also be a cop-out, and not a very smart one at that.

The politician who says he will never discuss or negotiate a position is also telling you

that he won't work to resolve that disagreement. That politician is telling you that he is not a party to the solution, he's just part of the problem.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that when the federal government decided to move unilaterally to patriate and amend the constitution in October 1980, choosing sides was the popular thing to do and the easy thing to do. Ontario and New Brunswick supported Ottawa's unilateral action. All the remaining provinces, except Saskatchewan, quickly began a campaign to fight the federal resolution. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan felt that the best way to proceed was to try to convince the federal government to change its package so it could be supported by other provinces. In this way we hoped to make a unilateral action into one based upon consensus.

Let me emphasize, Mr. Speaker, our position was different from that of any other government. The federal government claimed that it could legally and properly act without the support of any provincial government. Ontario and New Brunswick agreed. Of the other side, six and eventually seven provinces claimed that all 11 governments must agree before the constitution could be changed. This was the position of British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and then Nova Scotia. Saskatchewan said, "You are both wrong." We said that what is required to change the constitution is a double majority — a majority in the House of Commons on the one side and a consensus or majority of the provinces on the other.

Mr. Speaker, we tried for a number of months to get such a consensus. For that effort which failed, I make no apologies. But when the federal government made clear that there would be no further changes, in February of this year, we stated again our opposition to the package. By that time, the court challenges to the federal resolution were under way. Saskatchewan joined the so-called gang of eight in opposition to Ottawa's unilateral process. However, Mr. Speaker, we did not adopt their arguments. This is key. The basis of our court challenge was very different from that of the other seven. What would have happened had we joined them at the outset, would be, as I hope to show, that the federal government would have had complete victory.

As you may suppose, Mr. Speaker, the seven provinces argued before the supreme court that Ottawa could not amend the constitution without the unanimous approval of Canada's 10 provinces. On the other side, Ottawa and its two provincial allies, Ontario and New Brunswick, defended its right to act unilaterally. Saskatchewan argued that constitutional tradition and practice (what the lawyers call convention) required substantial provincial agreement but no unanimous agreement. We, and we alone, argued Mr. Speaker, for a third option between unilateral action on the one hand, and unanimity on the other.

What was the reaction of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker? Well, on April 3 of this year, on page 1797 of *Hansard*, the member for Qu'Appelle belittled this government's supreme court position. He made this prediction, "This province is going to look pretty foolish." Once again we were told to choose sides. Were we with the federal government or were we with the provinces fighting the federal government and insisting on unanimity? Again and again we heard cries of "Get off the fence."

Well, Mr. Speaker, on September 28, when the Supreme Court of Canada gave its decision, we were joined on the fence by the Supreme Court of Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Our views were accepted and the arguments of the other provincial governments, so loudly touted by members opposite, were rejected 100 per cent. On the narrow legal question the seven provinces lost, as did we. On the broad constitutional question the seven provinces lost, and so did the federal government and its two provincial allies. We, and we alone, had our position sustained. If we had followed the advice of all the Conservative members, we too, would have lost 100 per cent. The fact is that if we had followed the advice of members opposite, there is a very good chance that the federal government would have had a total victory.

How would the supreme court have ruled if there had been no middle ground argued before it? How would it have ruled if it had only the choice between the extreme of unanimity, urged upon us by members opposite, and the extreme of unilateral action, the stand taken by the federal government? I suggest that the court would have found, however reluctantly, for the federal government? The supreme court, after all, decided that the federal resolution was legal because the courts don't have power to declare a resolution of parliament illegal any more than they have power to declare a resolution of this legislature illegal. In the same way, without the Saskatchewan position before it, it is entirely likely that the supreme court would have found that the federal resolution was constitutional because unanimous consent was not required for such action. Instead, Mr. Speaker, the court, quoting directly and extensively from the Saskatchewan submission, found that, yes, unilateral action by the federal government is unconstitutional, but no, a unanimous consent is not required for constitutional change.

On the vital question — the key question — the submission put forward by Saskatchewan, and Saskatchewan alone, was accepted by the court. Some fence, Mr. Speaker. Some company.

It's important to realize that that decision by the supreme court opened new doors. It was no longer possible for the federal government to believe that it could take its package to Westminster and have it acted upon quickly. It was no longer possible for any single province to believe that it could hold up constitutional change. There were new rules, new rules suggested by Saskatchewan and adopted by the supreme court. It's important to realize that the first constitutional conference held under the new rules resulted in an agreement. That's a fact, Mr. Speaker, of which all Saskatchewan people can be justly proud.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The accord itself contains much which Canadians can welcome. It provides for patriation. That is, after 114 years as a nation, Canada will now be able to bring home its constitution from the British parliament in London. It will be our constitution totally. No longer will our constitutional decisions be the topic of debate in another country.

The accord also provides a flexible and equitable amending formula for future constitutional change. Under this formula, constitutional amendments will require the approval of parliament and seven of the provinces with at least 50 per cent of the population. No province will have a perpetual veto over change under this formula but, at the same time, if any future amendments take away the rights from a province (for example, the right of ownership of natural resources), the province will be able to opt out of that change.

The November 5 agreement also contains a charter of rights and freedoms, a charter which has been the subject of a good deal of public debate.

The Government of Saskatchewan believes that bills of rights are a good idea. After all, Mr. Speaker, this province had the first bill of rights in Canada and our present human rights code is one of the best in the country. But we still have strong doubts as to whether a bill of rights should be entrenched in the constitution in a way which puts court decision beyond the reach of any parliament or legislature.

Saskatchewan agreed with the November 5 consensus because we believe that agreement, that accord, struck a good balance. There was an entrenched charter of rights and freedoms. However, the governments agreed that the most complex sections of the charter could ultimately be dealt with by parliament and the provincial legislatures. These are the sections of the charter which entrench fundamental freedoms, legal rights and equality rights. They are subject to what is known as a notwithstanding clause, permitting parliaments and legislatures to make ultimate social decisions.

The November 5 accord says that parliament and provincial legislatures have the right to pass laws which conflict with these sections of the charter. Some people have called this an override clause, Mr. Speaker, I prefer to describe it as a constitutional escape valve.

I believe that this charter strikes a good balance. Rights and freedoms will be protected in the constitution, but at the same time the basic principles of parliamentary democracy will be preserved.

Since November 5, two groups of Canadians have lobbied hard for changes to the accord. These groups were women and native people. Women's groups did not want section 28 of the accord, which guarantees that all rights and freedoms in the charter will apply equally to men and women, to be subject to this parliamentary escape valve to which I have referred. Mr. Speaker, while section 28 appears to be a simple statement of sexual equality to which no one could have any possible objection, this government is concerned that it could pose a legal threat to affirmative action programs. These are the very programs which make men and women, in law, unequal by giving women a special preference, the very programs designed to break down discrimination against women and others who may be discriminated against in the workplace or elsewhere.

To put it bluntly, we are concerned that equality before the law could be entrenched in the constitution at the expense of equality in practice. We may get legal equality and in fact inequality.

We've expressed our concerns to a number of women's rights groups. They have informed us that they are willing to risk this possible undermining of affirmative action programs so long as section 28 is placed beyond the reach of parliament and provincial legislatures. So, if they wish to take that risk, we have no objection. When the federal government proposed that the legislative override, the parliamentary escape valve, be eliminated for section 28, the Government of Saskatchewan readily agreed. The Deputy Premier, Mr. Romanow, confirmed that in a Telex to Mr. Chretien on the afternoon of November 18. That November 18 Telex went on to say that if the constitutional accord was going to be reopened to change the effect of section 28 then

Saskatchewan also wanted to have native rights (that is, treaty and aboriginal rights) affirmed.

A section which recognized the treaty and aboriginal rights of Canada's native people had been dropped in the final negotiations which led to the November 5 accord. Mr. Speaker, we regret that dropping. Few groups, if any, in our society possess less economic and political power than native people. Because of this, they lack the ability of other groups to press their claims for constitutional protection. Our government had promised to press their case if the accord were reopened. I made that promise to the FSI (Federation of Saskatchewan Indians) and to the AMNSIS (Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan) about November 12. Mr. Speaker, we kept that promise. Unfortunately, our position was sadly misunderstood by the national news media. From November 18 to November 22, Ottawa- and Toronto-based news reports claimed that the Government of Saskatchewan opposed the inclusion of equal rights for men and women in the constitution. That was simply not true. Some reports even suggested that we were bargaining women's rights against native rights. Again, not true.

I ask the members of this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan and the national news media to consider these facts. On November 18 at 3:30 in the afternoon our Deputy Premier sent a Telex to Mr. Chretien which said that if the accord is to be reopened there should be changes both for women and for native people. Two days later, on Friday afternoon, the federal government changed its position and agreed to include the native rights section in the resolution. They were always willing to have the equality of men and women section free standing. The same day two key provinces, Alberta and British Columbia, publicly stated that they were willing to accept a native rights section. By Monday, November 23, just five days after Saskatchewan stated its position, all Canada first ministers who had signed the original agreement had accepted that position. Because of this government's stand, Mr. Speaker, native people know that their existing rights are protected in the constitution until such time as native leaders and Canada's first ministers can agree on a further definition of those rights.

Mr. Speaker, I think that is an important breakthrough. I'm proud of what we have been able to do, notwithstanding a hail of abuse from people who urged us to abandon our insistence on the protection of the rights of native people of Canada. Many, many people suggested it was inappropriate for us to say, "We wish to see two new things in the accord — equality for men and women and native rights." We took the position that both should be in there; notwithstanding very severe criticism, we held to that position, and in due course every signatory to that agreement agreed with our position.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, as he has been throughout the whole constitutional negotiations, Saskatchewan's Deputy Premier was the key player in that breakthrough.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The members of this side of the House, and I believe all Saskatchewan people, have reason to be grateful and proud of the role played by the member for Saskatoon Riversdale, my colleague, Mr. Romanow. During the last two years he has done an outstanding job for Canada. I expect that by now a resolution has been passed by the House of Commons which will mean that the House of Commons

has agreed to a resolution to patriate and amend Canada's constitution with the consent of nine provinces. The very real joy at that event is of course tempered by the fact that the Government of Quebec has not signed the constitutional accord, this in spite of the fact that a number of changes have been made to the accord which were designed to meet the concerns expressed by Premier Levesque before and during the conference and in the days which followed that conference in Ottawa in November. It is very difficult to gauge the true feelings of the people of Quebec on this issue. On the one hand we had the PQ government saying no. On the other hand, we had most of the Liberal members of parliament from Quebec (and the Liberals hold 74 of the 75 seats in that province) saying that it's a good idea — two diametrically opposed viewpoints, two diametrically opposed political parties both elected by the same people. That's what makes this problem something of a conundrum for the rest of the country. But I believe that when time takes its toll we will find that the people of Quebec have accepted that resolution, however reluctantly, and we will have something which is generally acceptable across Canada. Obviously I could be in error on this, but I believe we have achieved something which has eluded Canadians for more than 100 years.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, let me emphasize that this constitutional accord simply sets the rules for future constitutional change. Changes desired by Quebec and by other provinces can now be decided within a clear set of made-in-Canada rules. I believe that fact will help reduce regional tensions and will contribute to a stronger Canada. I believe what we have achieved in constitutional reform will have very positive and lasting results for all Canadians.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, let me turn to a very different topic, the topic of agriculture in Saskatchewan. The past decade has been one of solid achievement for Saskatchewan farmers, achievement that helps give us confidence in the future, confidence to face challenges which are going to be very real challenges for Saskatchewan farmers.

The livestock producers' times continue to be very difficult. In any totally competitive market smaller and particularly financially weak producers are driven to the wall; that's just what's happening now for many beef producers.

For grain producers, the future offers more optimism and greater challenges. The Canadian Wheat Board export target of 30 million tonnes by 1985 is the biggest short-term challenge of the '80s. People of the world need more food and we believe, Mr. Speaker, that we can grow it.

To help farmers grow it, we have begun what I think may become one of the most exciting programs that this government has started — FarmLab, the sort of forward thinking program for which this government has become famous and which members opposite usually oppose at the outset and later on decide is a great idea. FarmLab is a five-year \$25 million research agreement between the government and the University of Saskatchewan. What's so exciting about it is that it's a partnership between farmers and scientists. Although some of the research will be carried out at the university, the majority of the projects will be conducted right on family farms by farmers, men who are experts in their own way. In the past 10 years we have set out to diversify production, to keep farmers on the land and to stabilize incomes. We have not been totally successful, but the strategy is very definitely working. The proportion of young farmers in this province is now greater than in either Alberta or Manitoba. Not all of this

can be attributed to programs like FarmStart and land bank, but a good deal can be; a good deal of the success can be attributed to those programs opposed by members opposite at every stage.

There are now 2,700 land bank farmers and 4,700 FarmStart clients in rural Saskatchewan. Although farms have tended to grow larger in recent years, we are still a province of primarily small and medium sized farms. This is frequently denied by members opposite. Over half of our farms are five quarters or less; nine out of ten are ten quarters or less. We are keeping smaller farmers on the land. I know that won't suit the Conservatives whose leader is on record as saying that all those small farmers should be gotten rid of. "Turf them out," he says, "in favour of big efficient farms. Four out of five of those small farms must go." That's modern Tory policy.

Here is what the Conservative leader said some time ago, speaking about the future of prairie agriculture. I will quote what Mr. Devine said:

Realizing that most of our food is produced by less than 20 per cent of the farmers, who tend to be good businessmen as well as producers, society may not wish to support higher food prices or producer security so that the non-productive 80 per cent of the farm population can live in the country at a profit.

That maybe sounds tough, but perhaps all rural people don't have to be farmers, or at a minimum, there might be less expensive ways of maintaining a rural population.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Devine is not the only one. I'll take the opportunity to quote the hon. member for Moosomin, as he is quoted in the *Western Producer* of June 29, 1978:

The economics in agriculture that dictate bigger is better should be given priority over an outmoded concept of a family farm.

He was the agriculture critic. I see where they have felt if he is going to talk that way, while it is certainly Tory policy, it may not be politic. I suspect someone else has been made agriculture critic.

Mr. Speaker, we have on the record what Mr. Devine has said and what the hon. member for Moosomin has said. There could not be clearer statements of the Tory philosophy that bigger is better and huge corporate farms are a wave of the future. The Tories believe that four out of five of our farmers are non-productive. On this matter, we of the NDP are not modern. We are old-fashioned, Mr. Speaker, and we are proud of it.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — We still think that with some help family farmers can survive and prosper and we intend to give them that help.

In 1976, we introduced the Saskatchewan Hog Assured Returns Program (SHARP) for hog producers. This year's voluntary beef stabilization program for slaughter cattle

means that producers in that program can now be assured of recovering at least their basic costs of production. That beef stabilization program, Mr. Speaker, is solidly opposed by members opposite. I believe they voted against it not once but four times. I readily acknowledge it's not a complete answer. We know that a national program is needed but it is a step to help our beef producers, particularly our small producers, and on that account it is, of course, opposed by the Tory party which wants nothing to do with small farm producers.

But for farmers in the 1980s, Mr. Speaker, the biggest challenge of all may be the attack on two institutions which we believe are fundamental to the preservation of the family farm in this province — the statutory freight rate and the orderly marketing system for grain, the wheat board system of marketing. And make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, both these institutions and the principles which underlie them are under attack. The attackers are many and powerful and they stand to reap big money if they succeed. They are the grain companies. Cargill for one, which want to undercut the wheat board. Who are they, members opposite? I was at a meeting of the Canada Grains Council in October and I saw them in their serried ranks — Federal Grain, Cargill, the CPR — a great number of people . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — The CPR is against orderly marketing?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The CPR is certainly against the statutory rate. If the member for Thunder Creek is not aware of the fact that the CPR is opposed to the statutory grain rate then he lives in an even more sheltered environment than I thought. I don't expect he rubs many shoulders with ordinary farmers, but I would have thought he had heard of the fact the CPR wants to do away with the crowrate. And I say branch line abandonment fits into their plans since it makes delivery to the large terminals like Cargill more likely, and branch line abandonment advocated by members opposite will deal a death blow to the wheat pool.

Mr. Speaker, it is not good enough for them to argue. I have heard in this House the member for Thunder Creek extol the virtues of inland terminals and unit trains and his vision of how grain ought to be moved out of the Prairies. If the wheat board is destroyed, Mr. Speaker, and if the farmers must truck their grain over greater distances, it's not difficult to guess what the effect on farm income will be.

The railways, too, Mr. Speaker, are leading the attack on the statutory rate for grain. They're making grain transport the scapegoat for all the shortcomings of the railway system, even the shortcomings of the main line west where grain represents certainly less than 25 per cent of all the total goods moved. Yet somehow the grain rate is what keeps them from building tunnels or double-tracking or the other things which everyone knows need to be done to make our train system effective in moving goods from the Prairies to the West Coast.

The federal government is clearly leading an assault. We know, Mr. Speaker, that the railway system needs improvement. We've demonstrated our commitment with 1,000 hopper cars bought out of the heritage fund, a fund we wouldn't have if members opposite had their way — 1,000 hopper cars which move to seaboard 1 million tonnes of grain a year. I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that the federal government is clearly leading an assault on the crowrate. The recent budget of Mr. MacEachen included \$1.3 billion for railway improvements, but this money was to be available only if there was what he called "a consensus on the crowrate." Shortly put, this means only if farmers agree to pay more than the crowrate. It may even mean (and I've heard some statements from

Mr. Pepin which lend credit to this) only if farmers agree to abandon the statutory rate. Mr. Speaker, that should tell us something. yes, we know that the rail system needs improvement, but we don't buy the line that the destruction of statutory rates is the answer. If we're to preserve orderly marketing and statutory rates, this province must speak with a strong voice. Up to now, it has done so. As far as this government is concerned, we will continue to speak with a strong voice.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — The enemies of the statutory rate will not relax. Neither can we afford to relax. We must resist, too, those who say that the existence of the wheat board is a dead issue. Members opposite were suggesting that they didn't know anybody who opposed the wheat board system of marketing. Well, I say that I know some. I say that this is not a dead issue. It's very much alive. We had better be fully alive in defending these two principles — the statutory rates and the wheat board — or we will be the ones who will be dead, economically and socially.

Members opposite are committed opponents of both the statutory grain rates and the wheat board. Not so our party, Mr. Speaker. In the past, we have defended the statutory rate and we have defended the wheat board — both of them. In the future, we will continue to fight for them. Whether or not members opposite join with us, we stand foursquare for the wheat board and for statutory rates.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, the philosophy of this government is in sharp contrast to the Conservative philosophy in yet another area. It was displayed during the year-long showdown with Ottawa over its national energy program. You will recall that when the federal government introduced the national energy program and its smorgasbord of new energy taxes some 13 months ago, much of the petroleum industry in western Canada effectively closed down. Although the stated objectives of the national energy program were to increase Canadian ownership in the energy industry and to guarantee security of supply by 1990, it appeared to many people as a simple revenue grab on the part of a financially strapped federal government. That feeling was reinforced when we brought the problems of our petroleum industry in Saskatchewan to the attention of the federal government. We suggest that, in spite of its laudable objectives, the national energy program was having a disastrous effect on the oil and gas industry in Saskatchewan. What was the federal government's response? They told us that, if the industry is having a revenue problem, then the Saskatchewan government should reduce its royalties — reduce its share of the revenues from petroleum production. "Very simple," said Mr. Lalonde, "we'll raise the taxes; you cut your royalties. No problem. If we want to raise the taxes again, you can cut your royalties some more." Needless to say, Mr. Speaker, that suggestion annoyed us a little bit more than somewhat.

Ottawa's stand ignored a lot of things:

1. It ignored the fact that between 1974 and the middle of 1980 (I picked 1974 because this was the year in which oil revenues began to increase sharply), the people of this province — a province whose per capita income during this period was below the national average — had already contributed more than \$3 billion to the rest of Canada by accepting less than the world price for their oil.

2. It ignored the fact that in the five years prior to the national energy program the people of Saskatchewan, the owners of the oil, received an average of only 32 cents on every dollar of revenue from the sale of this product, and on an average the federal government, which is a mere tax gatherer, took more than 30 cents of every dollar. That was the average, Mr. Speaker.

In some years, the federal government's take from the sale of Saskatchewan oil was actually larger than the provincial government's share, and we're supposed to be the owner of that resource. We found the situation unacceptable and we rejected Mr. Lalonde's suggestion that would make the imbalance even worse.

Mr. Speaker, I assume that most members of this Chamber understand that the Governments of Saskatchewan and Alberta do not always see eye to eye on every issue, but on this issue Saskatchewan and Alberta made common cause. Both provinces agreed that the owners of the resource, whether it be oil or gas in western Canada, or gold in Ontario, or hydro-electric power in Quebec, deserve a fair share of the benefits from the sale of that resource. Incredibly, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite took issue with that position. Incredibly, Mr. Speaker, they sided with Ottawa in this important resource showdown.

You will say that can't be true. I offer the proof in black and white. The *Regina Leader-Post* on January 24 of this year — if I may, Mr. Speaker, I would like to read just a few of the words in this article. It begins as follows, and I quote:

If the federal government refuses to ease the tax burden of its national energy program, then the provincial government must lower its taxes, Progressive Conservative leader Grant Devine said Friday.

That was the Tory position, Mr. Speaker: give in to Ottawa; let them raise taxes on Saskatchewan oil as high as they wish; let the owners of the oil, the people of Saskatchewan, reduce their share of the profits. And this advice came from the Tories even before the negotiations with the federal government had begun in earnest.

Outside of this Chamber it is difficult to know what one would say about the negotiating stance urged by the Leader of the Conservative Party. How naive can one get? Here is the Leader of the Conservatives telling us to give in to Ottawa on as crucial an issue as energy pricing and revenue sharing at the very beginning of negotiations. In a face-to-face confrontation with Ottawa, this man would not only flinch — he would prefer not to show up in the first place.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure there are still some members opposite who were convinced that a reduction in Saskatchewan's royalties last winter would have been a good negotiating tactic. Needless to say, our government rejected this Tory prescription for disaster and stood firm with Alberta against the federal government's revenue grab.

I admit that it was tough for several months for the industry, for the province of Alberta, and for the province of Saskatchewan, but I say the results have justified our stand. The result on October 26 was a five-year agreement on energy pricing and revenue sharing. The result has a good number of advantages for the people of Saskatchewan.

First, under the agreement the owners of the oil, the people of Saskatchewan, will get a fairer share of the money from the sale of the product. Under the agreement,

Saskatchewan's share will jump from the 32 cents of the five-year average to 38 cents of every dollar generated by the sale of its oil. At the same time, the federal government's share will drop from an average of 30 cents to 23 cents, and the industry's share of the revenue will go up from 37 cents to just under 40 cents.

I will repeat those figures again so that all hon. members will record them in their minds — our share, up from 32 cents to 38 cents; the federal government's share, down from 30 cents to 23 cents; industry, up from 37 cents to just under 40 cents.

Second, people now know what the price of oil and gas will be for the next five years. Although no one likes to see higher prices, higher prices are inevitable when you're dealing with a depleting resource. At least now, farmers and business people and government, can plug their price increases into their planning for the next five years, and this will be a great aid to certainty and to rational ordering of one's affairs. Uncertainty has been considerably reduced.

3. The energy agreement should get the industry back at work in Saskatchewan. I say that because the agreement contains a number of important concessions from the federal government that take account of the special needs of the industry in this province. It contains incentives which will make the construction of a heavy oil upgrader viable in this province. It contains concessions to assist the owners of marginal oil wells, and it has provisions that will encourage research into how to get more of Saskatchewan's heavy oil out of the ground through enhanced recovery projects.

Mr. Speaker, all of those things which are in our agreement were not in the Alberta or British Columbia agreements. They obviously did not deal with the heavy oil upgrader or marginal oil wells or heavy oil as a major part of the agreement. But what are the Conservatives telling us now? Have they apologized to the people of Saskatchewan for their bad advice, their improvident advice, their silly advice of earlier this year? No. You see, in Saskatchewan, being Tory means never having to say you are sorry. Being Tory means never having to answer for irresponsible statements or bad advice. Why? Because people so seldom listen to you in the first place.

The Tories latest suggestion is that we should use the money that we will get from the energy agreement to cut taxes immediately. I want to remind the House that the agreement provides for no increases in the dollar amounts which Saskatchewan will receive in any energy price increases that took effect in October, or virtually none for price increases that take effect in January. These have been arranged so that they flow through to the industry so we can get the industry moving again.

But I note that Saskatchewan Tories, ignoring the fact that money has to be moved immediately to the industry, ignoring the fact that we will have virtually no increase in our revenue until late next year, maybe even 1983, are already out there spending the money. They have adopted that great Tory financial motto, the one used also by the Ottawa Liberals, "Spend now and find the money later." I say again that we will not be getting money until late 1981 or probably 1982. We have already lost a good deal of money in 1981. Twenty-five per cent of our oil production was shut down for much of 1981. This will have to be brought back on stream again. It's coming back but it will take sometime. We, in fact, will not get as much money in 1981, and perhaps in 1982, as we might have had there not been a national energy program.

Notwithstanding that, Mr. Speaker, Conservatives are out there spending money that we don't have. These Conservatives want to run around like a bunch of tourists on a credit card shopping spree. Well, the Ottawa Liberals have done this for years and we know what the results are. The results are the inflation, high interest rates and unemployment that we now have. I would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that the Conservatives would at least advocate some reasonable financial policies, but not a bit of it. They have taken a leaf from the Conservative Government of Manitoba and they are advocating a huge deficit — "Spend the money now; who knows, it may come in later." We think most people in Saskatchewan take a much more responsible approach to public financing.

Let me just raise a point to you, Mr. Speaker. Three provinces in this country have traditionally lived within their means. Seven provinces in the federal government like the buy now, pay later approach now advocated by the Conservatives. Those three provinces which have traditionally lived within their means are British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. It just happens today, Mr. Speaker, that three provinces are reasonably well off: British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. It just happens that in three provinces there are some jobs and not widespread unemployment: British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

It is no accident, Mr. Speaker, that this buy now, pay later proposal of members opposite looks good for a year or two, but when the chickens come home to roost, there is nothing but disaster. Ask them in Manitoba; ask them in Ontario; ask them in Ottawa. I think Saskatchewan people want common sense, not promises, not big spending on borrowed money, particularly if you have to borrow at rates set by the improvident federal Liberals in Ottawa.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I listened with a good deal of interest to some of the remarks of the member for Souris-Cannington on the issue of public ownership. Here is an area where our policy differs from that of members opposite, as well.

The history of this province, Mr. Speaker, is a story of struggle, the struggle of Saskatchewan people to gain some control of their own lives. The CCF and now the NDP have been in partnership with the Saskatchewan people in most of these struggles. I am happy to note that, at least in the early struggles carried on by the CCF, members opposite are acknowledging that many, many victories were won — victories of which they used to be bitterly critical, but which they now have to acknowledge were good for the people of Saskatchewan.

Together we have fought the CPR and the grain exchange, the multinational corporations and their friends in the old-line parties. The victories have been hard fought and numerous, and most of these victories can be traced to the development of a way of life which is unique in Canada and perhaps in North America. That way of life depends upon social ownership in various forms to help this province gain control over its future. Not social ownership of everything, or indeed a majority, but of a significant part of our economy.

The co-operative movement was the first form of social ownership to develop in this province. Today it probably remains the form most familiar to the majority of Saskatchewan people. Co-ops with their roots in the early struggles of our farming communities have become a major force in our economy. For example, nearly 600,000

Saskatchewan people belong to one of the 230 credit unions in the province and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, with 70,000 members, handles over 60 per cent of the grains and 50 per cent of the cattle marketed in this province.

Let me repeat, Mr. Speaker, our party and the co-operative movement were born of the same roots and throughout much of Saskatchewan's history have been partners in progress. Throughout much of that history the old-line parties, the Tories and the Liberals, have been on the other side. The old-line parties and their friends in big business see co-ops as organizations which defy the principles of free enterprise. The idea that each co-op member, no matter what his financial status, has an equal say in the operation denies their principles. The principles they espouse for the organization of our economy are very simple: the rich decide and the rest abide. But you won't hear the members opposite say straight out that they're against the co-op movement in Saskatchewan. They know it is one of the foundations of Saskatchewan society that remains extremely popular.

So, Mr. Speaker, the old-line parties use the indirect approach. Instead of attacking the co-ops themselves, they attack the things that make co-ops strong. The Tories favour more competition for the Canadian Wheat Board in marketing grain. Surely that cannot be denied. Surely we have heard over and over again from Tory spokesmen that they support the wheat board, but they don't want it to have a monopoly. That is a simple attack on the wheat board system of marketing. They also favour inland terminals, and I hope members opposite are not going to deny the remarks they have made in this House on other occasions about the fact that our grain-handling system was old and decrepit and what we needed was inland terminals and unit trains. The member for Thunder Creek is on record on numerous occasions.

Who would be hurt most by a return to the days of the grain exchange advocated by members opposite? Who would suffer if large inland terminals forced farmers to haul their grain lengthy distances? I'll tell you who. Family farmers, the kind of farmers who belong to the co-ops like the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, and the pool, with its hundreds of country elevators and a good number of those branch lines, would be dealt a mortal blow.

That may be their way, Mr. Speaker, but it's not our way. Co-ops are a type of direct social ownership which our party fully supports. We would like to see Saskatchewan people control more of their own lives and their own destinies through co-op organizations.

There is another method of social ownership: indirect social ownership through government corporations. You know, Mr. Speaker, this is commonly referred to as public ownership. However, the basic purpose is still much the same as with the co-op movement, to allow people to gain some measure of control over their own economic lives. There are two basic forms of public ownership in this province, Mr. Speaker. The first is public ownership geared to provide essential services in an equitable way — power to every farm, telephones to every community, insurance to protect us from catastrophic loss, bus service to link our communities. These are all services provided, not primarily on the basis of profit, but on the basis of equity.

Here again, the Tories are opposed to public ownership, even for these essential services. But once again they don't come straight out and say they oppose the public ownership of power; they don't come straight out and say they would sell Sask Power or Sask Tel or even the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, although in Tory Alberta

or Tory Manitoba, there is certainly no public transportation company. They know they can't come out and say directly that they oppose services and corporations of which Saskatchewan people are proud. So they pick and they poke. They accuse these corporations of poor management if they show a loss. They accuse them of rip-offs if they show a profit.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I had occasion to point out that last year the allegation by members opposite was that the power corporation was making a large profit and this was a rip-off, that the automobile accident insurance fund was incurring a large loss and this was bad management. I said that I expected the reverse would be true this year; the power corporation would incur a loss and the automobile insurance fund would make a profit. And I could confidently predict that when they said last year that the power corporation was a rip-off, this year they will say that it is bad management. When they said last year that the automobile accident insurance fund was bad management, this year they will say that it is a rip-off.

It is not constructive criticism; it is a simple attack on any grounds. It is simply any stick to beat any of these corporations with, however illogical, from time to time. The Tory tactic is to nibble away at public confidence against the day when they can tear down the whole edifice.

Mr. Speaker, I know it is said that utilities like power and gas have never been dismantled in Canada. My recollection is that a gas utility was, in fact, privatized. We have seen an air line in this province privatized. We have seen numerous public enterprises — admittedly not of the utility stamp — privatized in British Columbia. In contrast to members opposite who are looking for way to criticize these corporations, which on the record have served Saskatchewan people outstandingly well decade after decade, we on this side are proud of the record of the Saskatchewan's public utilities and we will defend them against all these attacks.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Now the second type of public ownership involves direct participation in the competitive economy. In Saskatchewan this type of public ownership has been concentrated in the resource sector. I am thinking of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, Saskoil, the Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation and Sask Minerals, to name a few. This is the only form of social ownership which the Tories dare to attack directly. Some of these attacks do not look so sharp in the light of the performance of some of these crown corporations. For example, Mr. Speaker, I can remember the former Tory leader, the current member for Nipawin, talking about the government's decision to enter the potash industry. In 1978 he said that we were dumping taxpayers' money into used holes in the ground. Or was it second-hand holes in the ground? He claimed that we would have made more money by just putting the money in the bank.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the original investment by Saskatchewan taxpayers in the potash corporation was \$418 million. After five years PCS has earned profits of more than \$270 million (and that's after it has paid more than \$200 million in provincial taxes and royalties). We have an asset which has greatly increased in value. Can anyone doubt, Mr. Speaker, that the equity of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is hundreds of millions of dollars more than we paid for it? That corporation will pay a dividend of at least \$50 million this year to the shareholders, the people of Saskatchewan. All this

from a \$418 million investment.

What do the people of Saskatchewan own? They own a corporation which employs more than 2,000 people, including more than 200 head office jobs (top jobs) which would not be in this province if the head office of the corporation was not here.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — There are private potash companies in this province. Ask how much of their research is done here. How much of their engineering is done here? How many of their senior officers are resident in this province? You will get answers of nil or next to nil in every case. Here with the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan we have a major industry producing for Saskatchewan people and giving Saskatchewan people opportunities for these jobs right here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that earnings record, that contribution to the economy of Saskatchewan is not bad for second-hand holes in the ground. No bad, Mr. Speaker, not bad at all.

Now, I ask, Mr. Speaker, who says that the taxpayers of this province would have been better off if they'd put their \$418 million in the bank? Who says we would have had more economic benefits if we had put that money in the bank? I ask: if that's true, which bank? From which bank could we have got those benefits by putting our money there?

So, Mr. Speaker, the contrast is clear. This government supports social ownership in all its forms; the Tories oppose it in all its forms. I ask the people to remember that fact. The facts are simple: the Tories don't like crown corporations. They would get rid of most of them, all that they dared. The rest they would hobble. Saskatchewan people have been well served by crown corporations. Under this government, Mr. Speaker, we will keep this vital part of our heritage and keep it working for all the people of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, my colleagues will deal with a number of other matters. My colleague, the Minister of Finance, will address some remarks to this House on the federal budget. That topic is a very difficult one, a very dreary subject, because the budget is not going to redound to the benefit of Saskatchewan people. I know the Minister of Finance will want to review it in some detail.

I look forward to an opportunity to address some words to this House on the heritage fund and its operations, and this House will have a full opportunity to debate those. Unlike some other provinces which do not make their heritage fund details available, we, in this province, debate our heritage fund, and we have the opportunity, each one of us, to debate every dollar that's spent for that heritage fund. We, therefore, do not have any need for any filibusters or other activities which seem to be happening in provinces to the west.

I want now to touch on another subject, the subject of health care, because members opposite have mentioned this a bit. I say that the New Democratic Party is a pioneer in the field of health, and will continue to pioneer new approaches to health needs. We're all becoming more aware of the importance of our surroundings, the way we live. We're all becoming aware that this is important in keeping our health. We're realizing that the best kind of medicine is preventive medicine. We're recognizing that we need not only to treat disease but we need to prevent it wherever possible. That approach to health

care is an exciting one and a challenging one, and I very much hope that we will pursue it.

I believe that nobody can meet the challenge of preventive health like we can, the New Democratic Party, the party of medicare, the authors of the best health care system in the country — health without premiums, health care accessible to anyone. Do you know that 97 per cent of the people of this province, including people in remote constituencies of the North, live within 25 miles of hospital services and a resident physician. We're committed to building on what we've achieved.

We've already embarked on a number of programs aimed at prevention. The dental plan is one. Our dental plan just received a six-year checkup in the form of an independent study and evaluation, and I'm happy to say, "Look, Ma, it's working." The report said that our dental plan is working to improve the dental health of young people, to prevent problems before they start, and doing it cheaply and effectively.

Mr. Speaker, the Conservatives fought that dental plan and fought it bitterly, and fought it in this House, and fought it in the last couple of years, not simply back in the distant past, but just in the last year or two. No doubt by the next election they will claim it was their idea. I noted that Premier Lyon, after scrapping a dental plan based upon ours which was just being put in place by Premier Schreyer, had in the last days of his election campaign promised a dental plan. Too late, too late, nobody believed the Tory promise on health care and small wonder with their record.

I read that at the Tory convention here in Saskatchewan, they said that they were not going to be defensive about medicare. In fact, some Tories who lead the battle against medicare are now claiming to be its friends. Well, all I can say is that with friends like those Tories, medicare doesn't need any enemies. It will be sabotaged at every turn by its so-called friends. Yes, the Tories say that they are not going to be defensive about medicare, and I must say that sounds good. I hope they get right out there and explain the Tory program on medicare.

They could start by explaining why a super rich province like Tory Alberta needs hospital deterrent fees and a family premium of over \$200 a year, or why rich Tory Ontario needs family premiums of over \$500 a year, or why far more doctors extra bill in Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario than here in Saskatchewan. They can explain that; they can get right out there and defend this Tory record in health all across Canada. That would be a good place to start on this offensive they are going to go on. I have noted in many ways that Tory programs on health are offensive, but I really want to see them take the offensive and attempt to explain their policies. In fact, I challenge them to defend the Tory record on medicare and on all health programs coast to coast. We'll match our health programs against those put forward by any Tory government in Canada.

I challenge them to say what they have done in Ontario, what they have done in Manitoba, what they have done in Alberta. I ask them to get out there and defend the Tory policy on health. I challenge them to do it, but somehow I think that's one challenge I won't have to take up.

Mr. Speaker, now I'd like to say a word or two on senior citizens. They deserve opportunities and it is the objective of our government to see that they get opportunities to live as independently as possible and to receive as much care as they need at a cost they can afford. Our home care programs and our nursing homes provide

a real choice for senior citizens. This year we restructured the fees for special-care homes to make them consistent and we reduced most of the fees substantially. Along with medicare and the drug plan, aids to independent living and innovations like the special holiday packages designed by the Department of Tourism and the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, these Golden Green Wednesdays, I think that we are making real progress toward providing security and opportunities for older people.

We have the finest range of programs for senior citizens in all of Canada. I'm proud of that, but more can be done and more will be done by a New Democratic government in the years ahead, and certainly after the next election.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne and this debate clearly spell out the wide gulf which separates our party from members opposite. They are advocates of unrestricted private enterprise: we advocate a mixed economy. Between open marketing of grain and marketing through the wheat board, they choose open marketing; we choose the wheat board. Between statutory grain rates and rates set by the railways and the CTC (Canadian Transport Commission), they choose to kill the statutory rate; we choose to defend the statutory rate and defend it we will.

Between the corporate “bigger is better” concept of farming and the family farm, they choose the corporate farm; we choose the family farm. In negotiating on the constitution, they choose legal positions which sound tough against the federal government, but lose on every count. We, and we alone, choose a legal position which stops the federal government and forces fair negotiations — negotiations which eventually produce an agreement. Between developing our resources by the multinationals and developing them by our crown corporations they choose the multinationals; we choose our own Saskatchewan corporations. Between low royalties and money for the oil companies, and fair royalties and money for the heritage fund, we choose the oil companies. We choose the heritage fund owned by the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on speaking the truth, which is such torture to the Leader of the Opposition, as he freely admits. But, Mr. Speaker, no more need be said in comparing the record of our government in the policies of our party against the policies of their party; they regrettably have no record to compare. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that any rational person would reach the conclusion that this province would be in dire straits (to use a popular phrase) if members opposite should have the misfortune to find themselves on your right, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, this province has been well-served by the New Democratic government and by the CCF before it. They grudgingly admit that with respect to the CCF and in short years they will grudgingly admit it with respect to this government. I know one, Mr. Speaker, just as Tommy Douglas was changed from sinner to saint, I look forward to the day when I, too, will be changed from sinner to saint.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — As the Tories are always a generation or two behind, the policies which are forward looking today will be acceptable to them in about 1990. Mr.

Speaker, I need say no more. As it will be clear, I will oppose the amendment and support the motion.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLVER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the pleasures of speaking in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, is that the member for Qu'Appelle and members opposite can enjoy a conversation while everyone else is speaking.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, what has happened to this government, the NDP government, just within the last year or two. I recall, when I was leader of another part, Mr. Speaker, the NDP being solidly behind their leader. Never, Mr. Speaker, would any NDP minister of the crown make a comment that was untoward, unreasonable, unrealistic, or irrational, because he knew that his leader, this totally rational man who had not aged, would correct him. So ministers were very cautious and very capable of putting forward the same statements time after time.

But something, Mr. Speaker, has happened in the last two years. Something dramatic has happened. Mr. Speaker, I believe that what has happened is that the NDP has joined that new organization “nobodies of the world.” The motto of this organization is “Nobodies domiciled in perpetuity.” As a matter of fact that, I think, begins NDP if I am not mistaken.

The Minister of Health told the members of this Assembly that one of the greatest efficiencies which can be offered by the health care system in Saskatchewan is to maintain a waiting list at a hospital. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a marvelous statement: a waiting list at a hospital is a sign of efficiency. Mr. Speaker, I will have to agree with the Minister of Health in that statement. As the waiting lists increase in the province of Saskatchewan, the hospitals will in fact become more efficient because no one will be able to enter them.

Mr. Speaker, these people will be treated in the funeral homes of the province of Saskatchewan. That's what creates efficiency. That's the way you diminish the waiting list in the province of Saskatchewan — you increase the number of funeral homes.

I notice, Mr. Speaker, that in my very own constituency of Nipawin the NDP government is supporting a funeral home. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, why is the NDP pouring money into this funeral homes when there already is a funeral home in the constituency of Nipawin? As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I wondered very seriously about it when the NDP started pouring money into this extra funeral home, because the president of my constituency happened to be the funeral director in Nipawin. I thought maybe it was political, but now I realize, Mr. Speaker, as a result of what the Minister of Health has said, that if a lengthy waiting list in hospitals makes hospitals more efficient, the idea is to increase the number of funeral homes in Saskatchewan to take account of those waiting lists.

The Minister of Health on another occasion (and this is how he entered the club “nobodies of America” said, “I teach an alienation seminar, but hardly anyone shows up.” Another member of “nobodies of America” is Mr. Smishek, the Minister of Urban Affairs. He once said, “I went to work for the government and haven't been heard from since.” Nobody works for the government. Another member who recently joined this club is the unnamed minister of uranium development, Mr. Prebble. He said just a short time ago, “I put my bra on backwards and it fit better.”

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLVER: — I notice the Minister of Labour chortling over there, but he's a member of the "nobodies club of America," too. This is what he said to a meeting recently, Mr. Speaker: "When I answer my doorbell, the caller looks at me and invariably asks if anyone is home." Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see the last member of the "nobodies club of America" in this Assembly today: the Minister of Industry (or lack of it), Mr. Vickar. He recently said, when he went into the new Cornwall Centre, "Every time I get into an elevator, they say, 'Basement?'" "

What's happened to the NDP, Mr. Speaker? What's happened to this government? Well, they've fallen into the trap. What is that trap? The trap that the socialists find themselves in today, Mr. Speaker, is that they are looking only at the benefits of socialism. They are not looking at the detriments. Of course there are benefits to centralized control. Every society in the world has found benefits to centralized control. During the Second World War, for example, it was essential to centralize control in Canada, in order to make a maximum effort to win the war. In Russia, where they were fighting against czars and all kinds of oppression it was essential that they centralize control and change the system in 1917 — absolutely essential. Whether or not it was communism or socialism or any other ism that took over in Russia, it was absolutely essential to provide some benefits for the people because at that time the people were receiving no benefits and it was necessary. But, Mr. Speaker, what does socialism do? It remembers the people and forgets the persons. That's what socialism does — centralization of power, established centralized farm policies, FarmStart and the land bank. And all of this myriad of farm policies forgets the family farm. There are no family farms developing in Saskatchewan. The only ones that exist today are the ones that have been there for the last 100 years. But there are other kinds of farms developing in Saskatchewan and developing rapidly and dramatically — farms which owe their support to the government, farms which owe their very being to the government, farms which must be rented from the government, not owned by the family and not passed on from generation to generation.

Whom have they forgotten, Mr. Speaker? They have medicare but no medical care. My son-in-law can't get into hospital until next July to have his broken wrist fixed. He lives in Saskatoon. Next July, can you believe that, Mr. Speaker? The man has to walk around with a broken wrist until next July. He has medicare. He's covered. But he can't get medical care.

Mr. Speaker, they have a family of crown corporations but people can't afford to own a family home. They have a family of crown corporations but families are falling apart in our society. "Remember the people," they say; but they forget the persons. They have Sask Potash but workers can't find jobs and are being laid off at potash mines. They have Sask Power but the Premier said yesterday — no one has picked it up yet — that Sask Power lost a ton of dough last year. It's going to be interesting to see how much it lost. It's going to be very interesting.

AN HON. MEMBER: — \$40 million.

MR. COLLVER: — Well, you could say \$500 million and it might be just as true. How in the name of heaven could Sask Power lose money last year when it had three utility increases in the one year? But it could lose money, Mr. Speaker. The Premier himself said so yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, they have Sask Housing, but people are losing their homes. They have the Department of Industry and Commerce, and small businesses are failing all over the province.

Mr. Speaker, they're very fond of saying that this is the way it is in Ontario; this is the way it is in Alberta; this is the way it is in British Columbia. Mr. Speaker, surely there isn't anyone in Saskatchewan who is going to buy the overused adage that because we have the NDP in Saskatchewan, it's much better managed than anywhere else in Canada. Mr. Speaker, I don't think anybody is going to buy it because they've forgotten the person, forgotten the individual, forgotten the citizen.

All any citizen of Saskatchewan need do to find out how much they've forgotten the individual is walk into this Chamber, sit in here and watch the way members of the legislature perform, watch the way this legislature runs roughshod over the rights of individuals, and watch the way individual members in opposition have to be made in order to find out the simple information from the Government of Saskatchewan that the people of Saskatchewan are entitled to. That's all they have to do. You want to find out how a government that has forgotten individuals behaves? Watch the Attorney General walk into this Chamber and decry the fact that \$65,000 was spent to find out if wrongdoing was done in government. The people should be happy that \$65,000 was spent; no, \$650,000; no, \$6.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, it is a crime to throw away the rights of individuals in order to benefit the rights of the so-called people. The so-called people are nothing more than a collection of individuals and when we forget that, as this government has forgotten completely, then we are lost as a free society.

They say, Mr. Speaker, that they provide, as an NDP government, benefits for people and benefits for the people. Yes, Mr. Speaker, there are people and there are even some individuals who get benefits from the NDP government. There has been a litany of them mentioned in this House over the last five or six years. People who have worked hard to campaign for the NDP in various provincial elections get distinct benefits from this government. People who have worked diligently and politically for years get great benefits from the NDP government. Ordinary people who cast their ballot, who are not politicized and who are not dependent upon the NDP for their living get very few benefits from the NDP government.

For whom are we creating this great monolithic giant called Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan? The president of PCS, Mr. Speaker, who worked for the NDP for many years; the lawyers in PCS, Mr. Speaker, who have worked for the NDP for many years; the employees at the top in the head office that the Premier likes to talk about, who worked for the NDP for many years — they are who this giant is being created for. The Premier in his speech today outlined the \$518 million it cost the people of Saskatchewan to buy the potash companies.

I hope the official opposition asks, no, demands the returns of the potash corporation before the next provincial election — not from a year and a half ago, but up-to-date figures. Get the results for this year and find out how much the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is going to make when there are layoffs in the industry and it can't sell its potash. Put that into your five-year average and find out how beneficial it is to the people. But even with that five years of benefit, Mr. Speaker, he could only say \$270 million on a \$518 million investment.

Had you put the \$518 million into Credit Union Central, you would have over \$300 million today in the province of Saskatchewan to spend for the people, and you would have made Credit Union Central a stronger organization instead of what you are trying to do to it now by weakening it, because you want to totally control the financial situation in Saskatchewan. The point is: when you remember the people and forget the person, you are no longer fit to govern.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLVER: — Take the Department of Education, Mr. Speaker. Expand the Department of Education so that you spend millions and tens of millions of dollars, but then require the children of Saskatchewan to race universities all over North America with such an unsatisfactory education (I hope the education minister is listening; he's not; he's not here) that 78 per cent of the graduates of the province of Saskatchewan facing university entrance have to take remedial reading — 78 per cent. Hundreds of millions of dollars are spent on education — huge edifices, huge structures — while 78 per cent have to take courses in remedial reading to go on to a university career.

Bussing children? Certainly, Mr. Speaker. Decry the bussing of children all over the United States and then listen to the member for Indian Head-Wolseley explain what is going on in his own constituency and others all over Saskatchewan; there isn't enough commitment to education to enable the local school boards to properly and adequately serve their children. Remember the people, but forget the individual citizen.

What about that child who has to face life needing remedial reading? What about that individual who can't get an operation until next July? What about that individual who wants to create a family farm, and is faced with a state farm? What about that wonderful new building called the Sask Tel head office? It's a beautiful, beautiful head office, but there isn't a citizen in Saskatchewan today who can afford the telephone . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Mr. Speaker, they scoff at that. Ask the people what they feel like when they're paying the bill for telephone service every month.

Mr. Speaker, do you know who's taking Sask Tel for a ride? The members of this legislature. Their telephones are paid for. They don't have to pay a telephone bill, so they don't know. But go out and ask a citizen of Saskatchewan how he feels every time he writes his cheque for that telephone bill and ask him whether he supports, or ask her whether she supports, that magnificent head office building in downtown Regina. Benefits for people — sure, it's a nice building. Benefits for persons — where the heck are they?

Mr. Speaker, I am going to have a great deal more to say tomorrow on the matter of health care. I'm going to have a great deal more to say on the matter of the cheap shots being taken by the government opposite at the political party to my right. I am somewhat of an expert on cheap shots, I can assure you. I have been the recipient of more cheap shots than anyone in the history of Saskatchewan. I only shot once myself, and I have had to receive all those cheap shots from this House ever since I've been here. I am going to mention this tomorrow on the radio, because I think it's important.

There is an ever growing body of opinion in the province of Saskatchewan that says a change must occur — ever growing.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. COLLVER: — Before I finish my remarks . . . Don't applaud, members to my right. There is an ever growing body of opinion that says a change must be made. But the change must go to someone who is responsible and responsible to the needs of the people of Saskatchewan. I say to the members to my right: over the forthcoming months (because the election is just shortly thereafter), for goodness sakes, get out there and meet those needs and responses and you will win the election.

Never mind the cheap shots; ignore the cheap shots. Those cheap shots are meaningless. I say to the members to my right, work for your leader, because too often members to my right have messed around with their leaders. Too often members to my right have said their leaders were no good — while they were still in office! I don't mind them saying he's no good after he's out of office, but for heaven's sake, while he's in office, say he's good.

I notice the member for Thunder Creek smiling. He's the one I'm looking at now, and many more like him in Saskatchewan. That's why the Premier can take cheap shots — because you're taking cheap shots. If the members to my right will stop taking cheap shots at their own leader and will get out and work, they'll beat these guys opposite, because there's this ever growing body of opinion that's going to win for them.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that the nobodies of America across from me, who are presently in office, will be changed at the next provincial election. I hope that members to my right will take advantage of this opportunity, will ignore those cheap shots, and will go forward with the leader they have, because he's a good one. I hope the NDP members, the nobodies I've referred to, will persist in making the kinds of statements that they've made in this House in the last two days. "The sign of an efficient hospital is a waiting list." Lord, let's have a 12-year waiting list. That's better. You'd have the most efficient hospitals in the world.

I hope they keep making those statements, Mr. Speaker, because it's a sign that they are nobodies. It's a sign that they have fallen apart. It's a sign that their day is done. Mr. Speaker, nothing will give me more pleasure than to come back from wherever I may happen to be to a bunch of smiling faces when a change — a real change — that benefits persons and not people happens in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 21 — An Act to amend The Rural Municipality Act

HON. MR. KAEDING: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a Bill to amend The Rural Municipality Act.

Motion agreed to and the Bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

STATEMENT BY MR. SPEAKER

Procedure on Ministerial Statements

MR. SPEAKER: — Before orders of the day, I would like to make a statement. Yesterday

there appeared to be some confusion regarding procedure on ministerial statements. I indicated that I would clarify the procedure at a later date. The purpose of a ministerial statement is to provide an opportunity for statements on government policy and administration to be made to the Legislative Assembly. The precedents of this Assembly offer straightforward guidelines for ministerial statements. A speaker's ruling on March 22, 1967 states:

It has long been the established practice of this legislature for ministerial statements to be made upon the orders of the day and it is a tradition that cabinet ministers should, as a courtesy to the House, if the House is in session, make any major policy statement or announcement in the House. Each of such statements should be brief, factual and specific.

It has further been an established practice of the House to allow, by courtesy, a brief, strictly relevant comment to be made thereon by the Leader of the Opposition or some other senior member, but it must be understood that a debate cannot take place, no motion being before the House.

The citation is from the *Journals* of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, March 22, 1967, page 156.

I would like to emphasize to all hon. members that debate will not be permitted on ministerial statements. Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules and Forms*, Fifth Edition, paragraph 262, states quite clearly:

The purpose of the ministerial statement is to convey information, not to encourage debate.

This is not a limitation on debate or the right of free speech for, if a debate is desired it can be achieved by other means. For example, a resolution could be introduced in the Assembly after due notice has been given.

According to The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, chapter 85, *Statutes of Saskatchewan*, 1978-80, section 3(1), the Unionest Party does not qualify as a third party in this Assembly. Therefore, I have not accorded the Leader of the Unionest Party the privilege of responding to ministerial statements. However, if the member for Nipawin desires to respond to a ministerial statement, he may do so with leave of the Assembly. This has been, and will continue to be, the practice of the Chair.

MR. THATCHER: — Mr. Speaker, I'm speaking about your ruling. Yesterday you indicated to the member for Qu'Appelle that it was a requirement in this Assembly that when the opposition replies to a ministerial statement it must follow the identical format used by the minister giving the ministerial statement. I believe, Mr. Speaker, you were asked by the member for Nipawin and me to provide the rule in Beauchesne's or Robert's, or wherever, where this had to be done. I think that's where much of our hassle came from. Again, Mr. Speaker, I'll ask you, in light of yesterday's dialogue, to repeat exactly where that rule is that caused the trouble yesterday.

MR. SPEAKER: — I'm not permitted to debate in this House. I cannot debate in this House; therefore, I shall not. The member is really not qualified to argue with the ruling that has been delivered from the Chair. Now I took the trouble to read the debate of yesterday and am unable to substantiate in my mind anything that the member for Thunder Creek has stated at this time. My ruling is before the House. The debate that

took place in the House is before the House. Members of this Assembly can put the two together, and I'm afraid that's all I can deliver to them at this time.

The Assembly adjourned at 4:22 p.m.