

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Twelfth Legislature
14th Day

Tuesday, March 2, 1954

The House met at three o'clock p.m.

FINANCIAL AID TO PROSPECTIVE FARMERS

Moved by Mr. Swallow, seconded by Mr. Walker (Gravelbourg):

That this Assembly urge the Federal Government to give consideration to the setting up of a loaning agency, or alternatively, to the improvement and extension of present loaning agencies, in order to provide the necessary financial assistance whereby young men who are qualified and wish to farm, may be given the opportunity to establish themselves on economic farm units.

Mr. A. P. Swallow (Yorkton): — Mr. Speaker, this resolution asking for financial assistance to start young men up on farms raises a very important matter. I am sure that all members can think of young men who are very anxious to start farming on their own; who will never have the opportunity unless there is some form of a loaning agency set up to supply the necessary credit. Otherwise, many good prospective farmers will never have the satisfaction of owning homes of their own and becoming members of our many farming communities.

It is not only important for the sake of these young men themselves, but it is very important for the economy of this province and the country as a whole because, when they become purchasers of equipment and all the supplies that are necessary to operate a farm, it will naturally create more employment throughout Canada in all the rest of our national industries. We are thinking of this programme as a national programme.

Some young men are fortunate in the fact that they have parents who can either give them land or assist them to purchase land. On the other hand, there are many smaller farmers who only have sufficient land of their own, who are not of the age of retirement, and who have sons who wish to farm, but the parents themselves are financially unable to assist them unless there is some agency, with the result that these young men float away to the East to work in our industries and are lost to the West.

Some years ago, a young man, if he could become the owner of four horses, a plough, a set of harrows and a drill and a binder, even if they were secondhand, could then go out and rent land in his neighbourhood. That is a thing of the past, Mr. Speaker. The method of farming has so changed that the old-fashioned machinery won't do the job. To cope with the weed problem, which is increasing each year, and the general conservation of our soil, it is necessary now to have the most modern machinery, the wide-level discs and the one-way disc. Being a former Massey-Harris agent for many years, I would say they should have a Massey Harris wide-level disc, naturally, and I imagine the member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley (Mr. Wahl) will agree with me. There is land to be purchased, Mr. Speaker,

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But the same thing takes place in regard to land; the prices are very, very high.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! The hon. gentleman knows he must not advertise in the Chamber.

Mr. Swallow: — Sorry, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, that land is available but the price is very high, so the average young man cannot purchase land unless he has a lot of capital. To compete with the established farmers and those who have money and can purchase land, he simply cannot get land unless, as we are asking, some financial assistance is available.

This resolution is not asking for something new in principle, because there are many national loaning agencies that give credit to farmers in one form or another, but the regulations under which they operate are not broad enough to assist the men that we are thinking of; that is, the young man with a limited amount of capital. We have the V.L.A. national agency which has done a good job in establishing young men, and within this province I believe there are 4800 young veterans who have been established on farms. It seems that the V.L.A. (as you check over these agencies) is the nearest to the type of agency that is needed to establish other young men, apart from veterans. The supervision carried on under the V.L.A. seems a very good feature of the plan and is well accepted by the veterans. But the maximum amount of the loan is far too small to start a young man off from scratch, and the terms of repayment are far too short.

Another national loaning agency that we have is the Farm Improvement Loan Act. This, we know, is pretty well limited to the purchase of equipment and, in general, acquiring facilities to operate the land that a farmer already owns. We also have the Canadian Farm Loan Board. This assists present farmers to expand their holdings, or consolidate their debts. It is not designed to assist the farmer who has not got any great assets.

When thinking of assistance to farmers, this Government is to be commended on the policy of making Crown lands available to farmers on a 33-year lease, and approximately 15,000 farmers have been assisted in one way or another, involving 8½ million acres. This includes straight crop leases, partial crop and grazing leases; also grazing leases alone, and, as I said, 15,000 farmers are affected.

I think it was two years ago in this House that the Opposition brought in a resolution trying to force the Government to abandon that policy. If that resolution had been carried the Crown lands of this province would have been thrown open on the market. That was what they asked, and, as we know, it would have come into the hands of the highest bidder. We also know that the highest bidders would have been the established farmers, the speculators; it could be businessmen with money who wished to invest in land, and others. And the present holders of these leases would have been out of luck.

The interim report on Agriculture and Rural Life indicates that mistakes have been made in the allocation or the administration of this land; but even if mistakes have been made, it is better than that

the land should come into the hands of speculators. We want to remember that the part of the land which this report refers to is a very small percentage of our Crown lands.

I remember reading, last summer or last fall, an account of Manitoba where large financial interests in the States were buying land in northern Manitoba at low prices. They were sending large outfits in there and clearing the land, breaking it up, and then selling it for high prices. That is what would have taken place in Saskatchewan if the resolution brought in by the Opposition had been carried. That cannot happen in Saskatchewan.

It is hard to estimate how many young farmers could qualify or would qualify under this plan of loans. It is also hard to estimate what size of loan, what minimum or the maximum loans, should be made. It seems that the smallest economic unit that would be considered an economic unit would be a half-section of land for mixed farming – and I am sure that all of us in here, including the Minister of Agriculture, I know, would agree that that is the safest type of farming, the most secure and also the safest to make loans to. Now, there are some sections of this province, that is the heavy clay areas (and some members in the House are fortunate to have land in those areas; the Minister of Highways, the member for Lumsden and I believe the member for Milestone are fortunate), in which I don't think it would be possible to purchase land and sell it to young men to get started. We have areas where land is more reasonable, however. Up in the Yorkton country we have areas where you can get a goof half-section of land today at from \$12,000 to \$51,000, with buildings. That is more what I think the young men would have to start on. A new line of machinery would possibly cost around \$8,000 or, if he was using secondhand machinery (which would be possible) it would be half of that, \$4,000. So, making a rough estimate, it would seem that a young farmer, to start up, would need a loan of approximately from \$15,000 to \$20,000.

The most important thing in such a loaning plan would be selection of the right kind of men that would be qualified farmers. They need to have a real love for farming because, if they are going on to a mixed farm, they really have to have a love for farming to do the work and to put in the hours that they have to do. I often think that some of the members here who farm on the heavy clay land, who only farm for a short period in the year, don't know what mixed farming is. But that is the only kind of farming, I think, that would be profitable and would be safe in advancing money on.

The experience of the V.L.A. has been that among their failures it has been those who were not in the first place qualified and did not have that real love for farming I mentioned. They have had failures among that class.

The next important step would be that the loans be payable over a sufficiently long period to take care of the fluctuating returns that we know farmers have, so that the man getting the loan could make the yearly payments, and could also keep his holdings up to an efficient standard and at the same time enjoy a decent standard of living, because the terms of these loans have been suggested up to about 30 to 40 years,

so that would be a long time out of a man's life.

A national loaning agency like this, Mr. Speaker, with careful selection of the applicants, with the proper control and supervision, should prove to be a successful plan. It also should prove to be self-liquidating. So I have pleasure in moving this resolution.

Mr. E. H. Walker (Gravelbourg): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to associate myself with the hon. member of Yorkton (Mr. Swallow) who has moved this motion and, although he has covered it very well, I hope to bring out a few figures and facts which will help to convince the hon. members of the House that such a programme is very necessary, and if we can convince the Federal Government at Ottawa that it is very desirable.

I am very happy to associate myself with this resolution since it affects me directly, and it affects a good many of my constituents. First of all, I want to remind you that there are, generally speaking, five groups of people owning or holding land in this province. First, we have the established farmers whom we are not too much worried about in this particular resolution. They are established on economic units; a good many of them have larger than what are commonly known as economic units. Then we have the farmers who are established on uneconomic units who have not sufficient land to justify the investment which they have to put up for their capital, for their machinery, for their operating expenses. Then we have the young farmers, or the people who wish to become farmers. Those people are going to need quite an extensive agency to control and operate this programme, and it is going to take a considerable amount of money, because to be effective it will have to be a very long-term loaning basis and a low interest loan.

Then we have the retired farmers, or farmers who would like to be retired who feel that they no longer wish to carry on farming operations, and a good many of them have a very good unit of land. Some of them have what would be called an economic unit; some of them have units which could be split up and probably make two or three economic units. Those people are in rather a predicament because, as I suggested, they wish to quit work. They wish to retire and live on the earnings which they have made throughout their lives. A good many of them have no way of selling their land; they have no way of getting the money out of the land which they have invested, simply because the young people who should be buying the land have not got the capital to buy it with. Then we have the landholding companies – absentee landlords; people a good many of whom are not interested in selling their land. However, if they had an opportunity to get a cash sale they probably would let their farm go, and I think it would be to the interest of all concerned if a farmer who wished to farm that land could get assistance to buy it from those holding companies or absentee landlords.

First of all, I want to remind you that one of the most important things in the economy of Saskatchewan is to get the people back onto the land. That statement should not be taken too flatly. It should be remembered that, if we are going to put people back on the land, they must be established on economic units; they must be established in a financially sound business manner. We do not want to see land which the Crown may hold thrown open to speculators, and we would like to see land which is held by large farmers who

wish to retire made available to young people, who want to establish themselves in the business of farming.

It has been suggested that in a good many districts, such as Rosetown and Milden district, as much as 80 per cent of the land has never been held by resident farmers of those districts. That is a very sad state of affairs, but unfortunately it does not apply in too many districts. However, there is in most districts far too great a percentage of land held by absentee landlords.

The financial assistance to the farmers in this group – I want to include all farmers. I know the resolution has suggested young farmers who are qualified and wish to farm. We are suggesting in the resolution that it be given to young farmers, but I don't think any loaning agency could separate young farmers and probably all the rest of the farmers, except by examining each individual case. I don't think we would want to try to separate them too distinctly. We have suggested young farmers there, because we think that they are probably the most important group. They are the group that are feeling the disastrous effects of the present setup.

We know that the cost of farming in the last few years has risen tremendously. The former speaker suggested that, a few years or a generation ago, a farmer could get some old machinery, a few horses and he could start farming. I think someone suggested in the House, the other day, that if a Liberal government was in office he probably had to get oxen. However, that does not matter here; we are out of those days and I hope we will go at this in a new and positive approach. The demand for credit for farming operations in Saskatchewan has risen. In 1936, operating expenses were estimated at \$132 million; in 1951 it has risen to \$270 million. That would indicate that just for operating expenses alone, even the established farmer needs some form of cheap and readily available loans.

In 1938 the retail value of new machinery was estimated at about \$10 million. In 1951 that had risen to \$75 million. That is due partly to increased mechanization of farms, due to farm labour shortages, due to the fact that farming is changing from a non-mechanized industry to a highly mechanized industry, to a highly competitive industry, to one which a person on the farm must have modern machinery and the proper machinery; otherwise he cannot make a living. The annual demand for working capital is estimated at \$350 million. That is a tremendous figure, for the farmers of this province have to carry sometimes two or three years, if it happens as it is happening right now, they cannot sell their wheat; if a crop failure exists sometimes in particular districts those farmers have to carry their working capital, their operating expenses for sometimes a year or two years and sometimes more. Some form of capital should be available to those people.

If the 1926 figure is taken at 100, investments for livestock are now 202; investments for machinery are 209; for land and buildings, 147. We can readily understand that. In 1926 the farmers of Saskatchewan had pretty well established their buildings. There has been considerable building since then, but they were much better established in their buildings than they were in their machinery, or even in their livestock.

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In 1926 the expenses expressed in a percentage of total investment were 9.8 per cent; that is their expenses were about 9.8 per cent of their total investments. In 1951 that had risen to 12.4 per cent, a considerable increase, which again indicates the extent to which mechanization has taken place on the farms of Saskatchewan.

The demand for mechanization has been tremendous, as we all know, in the last few years. It is expected to stay reasonably high if the farmer can get enough money for his products because, first of all, the machinery which is being produced today is not built to do the amount of work that the machinery was built to do a few years ago. Then, too, farm machinery, at least in the past few years, has been changing rapidly, and we have every reason to believe that it will continue to change rapidly. We know also that a good many of our farm machines are not doing the job that they should be doing. Therefore we can expect some mechanical changes which will improve them to do a better job, a more efficient job. There are still some areas in the province which are still not very highly mechanized, particularly in the fringe areas of Saskatchewan. A good many of the farmers there are still using horses or secondhand steel-wheeled tractors and the like.

The prevailing drive for greater productivity is, over a period of years, going to be on the increase. Right now we may be experiencing surpluses in a good many of our livestock and grain products; but over a period of years, we can expect that we are going to have to increase our output. Certainly we are going to have to increase the efficiency of our methods.

We know that the stores and implement agencies and fuel dealers have experienced considerable difficulty in the past few years. The statistical summary of the Bank of Canada gives us some indication of that where they point out that, in 1949, the cash in personal loans was about \$297 million; in 1953 it had risen to \$547 million. That includes consumers, because farmers are also consumers and some of them fairly large consumers. We can realize that their consuming spending has increased quite rapidly as well as their farming operation expenses. A good many businesses in Saskatchewan realized that they were in a very dangerous position, this fall, when they looked over the credit which they had extended to the farmers and found that their customers were not going to be able to pay all or very much of the credit which they had extended. The Bank of Canada estimated that consumer credit buying jumped to over \$500 million in the last year. That is a tremendous increase which the farmers also have to finance for themselves.

Credit, as I suggested before, is needed to help to break up some of the larger farms to help to get young individual farmers on that land to farm it either individually or co-operatively. If they wish to form a co-op, I think the credit which is extended to them should be extended to them whether they form a co-op or whether they farm individually.

The amount of machinery sold in Saskatchewan has increased quite sharply and so has the amount of financing which went on that machinery. Of tractors and combines sold in Saskatchewan from 1948 to 1951, approximately 43 per cent of the tractors and 82 per cent of the combines were

financed through Farm Improvement loans. In 1951, approximately 42 per cent of the tractors and 85 per cent of the combines were financed under the Farm Improvement Loan Act.

The Farm Improvement Loans Act, we all recognize, is doing a fairly good job. We don't complain about the job they are doing. We simply point out that we don't think they are extending their loaning facilities far enough. We suggest that the Farm Improvement Loans Act should lengthen their term of loans and make them available to more farmers, including the farmer who is not on necessarily an economic farm unit. Sometimes he needs assistance to buy more land to get onto an economic farm unit, and sometimes he simply needs money to take off his crop. To do that the Farm Improvement Loans Act would have to investigate the individual case and see whether the particular farmer was over-borrowing. We suggest that any extension of loaning facilities, or the setting up of a loaning agency, should investigate to see if the farmer is over-borrowing; first on his ability to farm and secondly on the unit on which he is farming.

The Canadian Farm Loan Board has been doing, I think, an excellent job since they were re-established in 1935 after the Saskatchewan Farm Loan Board ceased operations. One of the big improvements which they made was that they took politics out of the making of loans. They now make them purely from a business point of view. They have quit giving loans to uneconomic farmers and to giving loans far larger than the farmer needed, and things like that. They are now being a little conservative in making their loans. The adjusters or assessors have to go out and assess the property on which a loan is to be made, and the biggest complaint seems to be that the assessors are evaluating the property a little too low. We don't complain about that too much, because we want to see anything such as this setup successful not only through good years, but through depression years. The Canadian Farm Loan Board had a big advantage in that it allowed the farmer to do some refinancing; it allowed him to consolidate his loans so he knew exactly where he stood; and so that the Canadian Farm Loan Board knew exactly where it stood. The Canadian Farm Loan Board has always had sufficient funds, which, of course, may indicate that they were a little bit conservative in making some of their loans, and, of course, they always make a careful appraisal of the repayment ability of the individual getting the loan. They tend to be a little over-cautious. For instance, they generally refrain from making loans to farmers unless they are actually living with buildings on the land.

Now, a young farmer buying some land, sometimes he cannot afford or cannot get the capital to build his house immediately, or to build all of his buildings on that land. Nonetheless, if he is a conscientious farmer and if they are satisfied he is conscientious, I think they could be justified in making certain loans of that nature. The Canadian Farm Loan Board will not help 'beginning' farmers. They can only borrow a percentage of the appraised value of the property which they have. They will loan 50 per cent of the appraised value, with a maximum of \$5,000 on a first mortgage and 60 per cent with a maximum of \$10,000 on a second mortgage.

Now, I would like to see the Canadian Farm Loan Board or some other agency loan money to help those farmers get hold of their first bit

of land. The Canadian Farm Loan Board, along with the Farm Improvement Loans Act, the loans by Banks and any other private loaning companies, have one other big disadvantage, particularly to the beginning farmer and that is that they require equal annual repayments. We all know the experiences of the farmer during the 1930's in which the loaning companies experienced severe difficulty. The governments of the day had to put in debt adjustment boards to give protection to the farmers to prevent seizure of their property because they could not repay a loan. We think that any loans which are made should be made with an equal responsibility to the loaning company as to the farmer who takes the loan, in that the loaning company must recognize that loans will be repaid when they can be repaid according to crop conditions.

The V.L.A. has had some very good experience in that they have found, generally speaking, that any farmers who were on a crop repayment share basis met their payments better and from an overall point of view they made their payments quicker than those who were on a straight equal repayment basis. It should be as much the responsibility of the Canadian Government to assume economic disaster as it is for the farmer to expect to assume that economic disaster. The Federal Government is the only one that is capable of controlling our borrowings, our spending, our markets and, therefore, control the very economic lifeblood of Canada and, because of those facts, must assume the responsibility of credit to the various businesses in this country.

The V.L.A. has some limitations with some of the features of their assistance to young farmers. First of all, they were limited to veterans. We would like to see that extended now to include any young farmer, who has the ability and who can find the land. The V.L.A. provided a maximum of \$6,000, providing the veteran put up 10 per cent, plus anything extra that was necessary. If the land which he was buying cost him \$8,000, he would have to put up 10 per cent of the \$6,000, plus the extra. If it only cost him \$3,000 or \$4,000, he would still have to put up the 10 per cent and any of the extra he could borrow to make improvements on the land, to buy machinery, or to build buildings. Those features, we think, are very good but not large enough. If the veteran remains 10 years, he has to repay only two-thirds of the total amount borrowed.

The V.L.A. had fairly good success in buying suitable farming land. They attempted to buy land which was similar to the other farm land in that district. In some cases they did get some poor land, simply, I suppose, but of not quite enough supervision in the particular veteran or in estimating what the land was – whether it was good land or poor land as to its productive value. They had fairly strict regulations as to the suitability of particular veterans. Sometimes they made the veteran who applied, and who appeared to be fairly qualified, get some experience on a farm or go to agricultural college and get some experience there. We think all those features are good features and should be kept in any loans that are made, whether it be to the veterans, or through the Canadian Farm Loan Board, or loans through Banks. We think they are good features and they should be adopted. I think that is one of the main means of preventing over-borrowing by farmers, and it can be very useful in preventing catastrophes such as happened in the 1930's when the farmers found they could not begin to meet the repayment of their loans.

The V.L.A. had one other particularly good feature and that was a follow-up, or supervision of the operations of the veteran. Veterans appear to like it all right. They don't seem to object to the Veterans Department coming out and supervising and suggesting that they do such and such a thing, or suggesting that they do not do it. They seem to get along very well, and I think the veterans who were under V.L.A. realized that it was their responsibility to meet the loans which had been made to them if they possibly could. Most of them were prepared to accept the advice of the officials of the department. The Federal Government paid all administration costs in the supervision of V.L.A. loans, and they only pay a part of the administration costs in the Canadian Farm Loan Board.

The Canadian Farm Loan Board has been able to keep their interest rates fairly low but they have been experiencing some difficulty in not being able to raise sufficient funds for the administration costs, and yet keep their interest rates at the low figures at which they are now. I think it is very important that they do keep their interest rates low and I think on the other hand, the farmer who is taking advantage of this loaning agency, or agencies, should be prepared to pay for most of the administration.

I think I have mentioned a few things which should at least stimulate some interest in the matter, and I hope that hon. members of this House will support this resolution because I think it is certainly in the interests of young people who wish to get established on farms. I think it is in the interest of farmers who are already established on farms. Further, and I think more important, it is in the interest of the economy of this country to keep the agricultural land of Saskatchewan in the hands of the people of this province, to be used in the manner in which it should be used; people who have an interest in the farm and interest in Canada, from a point of view of making a living, not from the point of view of making money. I hope all hon. members will feel free to support this resolution, and I think we have a responsibility to our constituents to support this resolution in every way we can, not only in voting for it in this House, but I think we should urge our M.P.'s and our Government of Ottawa to press this matter, to get it as soon as we can.

Mr. R.A. McCarthy (Cannington): — I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

(Debate adjourned)

FEDERAL AID FOR HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

Moved by Mr. Howe, seconded by Mr. Gibson:

“That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan recommend to the Government of Canada that more assistance is urgently required for the ever-increasing need for highway construction in Saskatchewan.”

Mr. Peter Howe (Kelvington): — Mr. Speaker, we are going to have quite a variety here, this afternoon, by way of resolutions. I think, however, that the one I am moving this afternoon,

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is as important as any resolution that we have ever had before this House. It has to do with Federal assistance for construction of highways.

There are two problems which, generally speaking, people feel really affect agriculture in western Canada. We find a lot of people move into towns or into cities, and yet continue to farm. We feel that there are two things that possibly contribute to that. One is the question of rural electrification on the one hand, and good roads on the other. We know that many people move into town because of the road conditions in the wintertime, the difficulty of getting the children to school and what-have-you.

The problem facing the province in regard to roads is a much greater problem than that confronting any other province in Canada. We have figures that indicate that, in Saskatchewan, we have something like 37 per cent of all the road allowances or surveyed roads in Canada and only 7 per cent of the people. In other words, 7 per cent of the people have to carry the burden of building roads on 37 per cent of the surveyed roads in Canada. That is quite a burden to undertake. It is not that the Government of Saskatchewan has relaxed in any way in spending money to extend our highway system. The first year we were in office, I think we spent something like \$3½ million on highways, whereas the last year under review, we spent something over \$17 million on highways. The province is using all its resources the best way it can in expanding in the field of highway construction.

We do make a lot of comparisons with our neighbours to the south of us. I think that most of us here in this House have probably, sometime or other, been across the border and travelled on American roads. We see such a vast difference between the road conditions down there and those in this Canada of ours.

Well, to start with, Mr. Speaker, we are probably 50 or 60 years behind in development in this country as against the United States. I think it is fair to say that they had started their development in every way, about 50 or 60 years ahead of us and yet, on the other hand, in methods of transportation, the way that people travel on the Canadian side or on the American side, there is really no difference. It looks, to me at least, that the kind of trucks and transports and the means of travel in the United State are just about the same as here in Canada. That is why we feel it so much, and recognize this tremendous need for more money for highway construction, because we are so far behind in the development of our highway system on this side of the border.

It is true that the Federal Government is making contributions to the Trans-Canada Highway. They have already started by entering into an agreement with the various provinces (except Quebec, I think) to share in the cost of a Trans-Canada Highway. This is to be shared roughly on a 50-50 basis, so that a start has been made. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that we have got to go much further. The Federal Government today should assume a much greater responsibility than they are doing at the present time for the construction of highways throughout Canada. When we were negotiating with the Federal Government to participate in the cost of this Trans-Canada Highway I felt (and I know that many people felt) that the cost of the

Trans-Canada Highway should have been borne entirely by the Federal Government and that the provinces should not have had to pay a part of that cost. However, the province of Saskatchewan, like other provinces, felt that half a loaf is better than none, so they entered into these agreements with the Ottawa government on the Trans-Canada Highway.

The increase in automobile traffic, the increase in numbers of trucks and transports, is tremendous in this Canada of ours. Take in Saskatchewan alone the new cars and trucks and buses that were sold in 1939. There were 5,900 automobiles sold in Saskatchewan in 1939 as against 19,800 in 1952, a tremendous increase. In trucks and buses, there were a little less than 3,000 sold in Saskatchewan in 1939, but by 1952 there were over 13,000 sold in the province of Saskatchewan. So this machine age and the modern means of transportation have been moving forward so rapidly that we in Canada particularly have fallen behind in trying to provide the type of roads that this type of transportation demands. In the first place our roads, unfortunately, are not built to the standards that they ought to be. Consequently, when these heavy transports and trucks of all kinds travel on our highways the deterioration is tremendous, depreciation is tremendous, and it needs a tremendous amount of repairing and upkeep.

In the province, generally speaking, we feel (I think) that the moneys we get from licences and registrations of cars, and from the gasoline tax, belongs to the roads and the highways of this province. While it is not earmarked, we are nevertheless spending that money on our roads in this province – and a lot more than that.

I got some figures in regard to the amount of excise and sales tax that the Federal Government is collecting on the sale of automobiles and buses and trucks and so on. In 1950, the excise and sale taxes collected was \$91½ million, but in 1952 that had increased from \$91 million to \$138 million. This is something we should look upon, I think, as a fund that should be used to help to build and construct and maintain a highway system in Canada. I think it belongs there because of the fact that every time we buy a car or a truck, we make a contribution by way of an increased price on the car or the truck, which goes to the Federal Government and little or nothing comes back except, we might say, in regard to the Trans-Canada Highway. This is a very small contribution that is being made by the Dominion Government, it does not really amount to very much. But I do think that we have a just claim on the moneys the Federal Government is collecting on the wholesale prices of cars, trucks and buses and so on, for the building of highways and roads in our province.

According to the annual report of the Bureau of Public Roads in Washington, Department of Commerce, they passed an Act in 1921 which is termed the Federal Highway Act, and they give various types of assistance to building roads in the United States. They have four headings here, and I just want to go over these headings to show you the variety of support they give to roads down there. Federal aid primary highway system is No. 1; federal aid on secondary highway system is No. 2; federal aid or urban primary systems No. 3; and then No. 4, a national system of inter-state highways. One paragraph I took out of that report I want to quote to you, because it does show the many types of assistance that they give. Before that, however, I want to mention that, in 1953, the federal aid funds in

the United States amounted to \$500 million and on the programme for 1954 and 1955 authorizations have already been made to provide \$575 million for each one of the years 1954 and 1955. Here is the paragraph I want to quote to you:

“Twenty-three thousand miles of highways completed during the year of 1953 included 600 miles of highways and 999 bridges on the federal aid primary highway system outside of cities and so on. And 758 miles of highways and 390 bridges on urban portions of the federal aid primary highway system. 15,403 miles of highways and 1535 bridges on secondary or farm-to-market roads in the United States and 784 miles of highway in national forests, parks, public lands and flood relief projects.”

Another very important undertaking they have contributed to is in regard to safety. “Advancement of the long-term programme of eliminating hazards to life at railway-highway crossings included completion of 125 crossing eliminations, reconstruction of 22 inadequate grade separation structures, and protection of 356 crossings by flashlights or other safety devices.” You can thus see they are giving assistance in a good many ways across the border in regard to highway construction, and on main market roads and also on the rural and country roads.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think I'll not labour this any more. It is a resolution that is going to be very acceptable, I am sure, to every member of the House. I don't think there will be any disagreement. Therefore I move this resolution, seconded by the hon. member for Morse, (Mr. Gibson).

Mr. James Gibson (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, in rising to second this motion, I would like first to congratulate the mover for his presentation of the case for Federal aid for highway construction in Saskatchewan. I may not be able to add anything new to what has been said, but I think that I should at least give re-emphasis to some of the points that have been brought out.

I think, for example, that we in Saskatchewan should remind the people of the rest of Canada, and constantly keep reminding them, that, as the hon. member said, we have got only 7 per cent of the population of Canada in Saskatchewan, but that we have within our provincial borders over one-third of the total road mileage of Canada. We have 24 miles of surveyed road for every man, woman and child in this province and, on a per capita basis, we have three times the mileage of Manitoba and twice that of Alberta. With such odds against us, Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder, with 24 miles of road for each and every one of us to build and maintain, that we have not got the roads, nor the highways sufficient for our needs, and is it any wonder that we are now asking the Federal Government to assume a proper share of highway costs on this province?

Everyone knows there is an insistent demand for more and better highways, and the wear and tear on highways because of the increase in the number of vehicles, has been great in recent years. The speed of all cars has increased as well as the weight and size of all trucks, and truck

transportation has expanded rapidly and, too, the number of school buses has increased materially. As a result, accidents have mounted and traffic congestion occurs on rural as well as on urban highways, and this has created a demand for wider and a heavier type of highways, with all the safety features of a modern highway. We would like, I am sure to build heavier, wider and safer highways. I am sure the Minister of Highways would like very much to be able to do that, for we know it is the most economical kind of highway we can build. We know it would save money in maintenance cost; it would save money in wear and tear on motor vehicles; it would save money on gasoline and insurance costs, and, most important of all, it would save lives.

At the moment we haven't money enough to build enough of the highways of the type we are presently building, without embarking on a wider and heavier type of highway, much as we would like to do so. It is just a question of money – money that we haven't got; money that we are now trying to get and expect to get from the Federal Government in the form of aid for highway construction.

In the past nine years in Saskatchewan the number of licences for cars and trucks issued has more than doubled, and during that time, we have been devoting an increasing portion of our budget to highway construction. We have now reached the point where we have just about got to the limit of the amount that we feel we can allocate for that purpose. Let it not be said that the people of Saskatchewan are not doing everything they can to finance highway construction. Saskatchewan is doing its full share. If we look at the per capita figures for highway construction based on provincial, municipal and urban expenditures, we will find that, taking the United States, their capital expenditure is \$22.00; in Canada as a whole, our per capita expenditure is \$20. In Saskatchewan it is \$29 per capita, so surely it cannot be said that we are not doing our share towards highway financing in this province.

The sad thing about it is that, although we are spending \$9 per capita more than the rest of Canada is spending as a whole, we are not spending half enough to meet our highway requirements; and the reason is obvious. The reason is that we just don't have the money to spend. In 1953-54 we spent on highway construction alone \$6 million, plus \$2 million, our share of the Trans-Canada Highway. Our total budget for roads and highways this last year was, as the hon. member stated, \$16 million. And incidentally, Mr. Speaker, that is just six times what it was in the fiscal year 1943-44. If we have any hope of Saskatchewan's economy continuing to expand as it has expanded in the past few years, then we will just have to have more and better highways. We need them now, and we feel that it would be better for our own economy, as well as for our national economy, if we did have them now. But the only way I know of that we can hope to get those highways is through Federal aid and, certainly, we should be getting that now. We feel we should have got it long since.

It has been truly said that you pay for good roads whether you have them or not, and we pay less if we have them than if we do not. Our whole economy suffers from the lack of adequate highways. For this reason alone, I feel that we are not asking too much to expect the Federal Government to assume a larger share of highway transportation construction costs. The Federal Government of the United States have long since recognized this responsibility. Last year, they paid in grants to the state governments and

to the rural and municipal governments over \$3/4 billion for highway construction.

Mr. Speaker, my figures, you will notice, may not gibe with the figures that my hon. friend has just given, because I have taken into account all of the money the federal government paid for road construction, last year, in the United States. The hon. member for Kelvington just mentioned \$500,000 and that was for certain grants to municipalities. But in the United States, in addition to this sum, they assume responsibility for a lot of other roads, as my hon. friend said. For example, the Pan-American Highway within the borders of the United States is the total responsibility of the United States. In Canada of course, the Trans-Canada Highway is a 50-50 proposition.

Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member said, possibly we are 50 years behind the United States in development. Well, I think maybe he is just a little out. I think we are only 42 years behind, because it is only 42 years since the United States assumed responsibility for assisting to build main market roads – that is farm to market roads – and highways. Surely now, Mr. Speaker, 42 years later, it is not too soon to expect that our Federal Government will do likewise.

I would like to point out that highway transportation is big business. To prove that it is big business, I would like, with your permission, Mr. Speaker, to quote just a few figures showing what they think about the highway transportation business in the United States, according to the Brookings Institute:

“Highway transportation, as we know it in the United States, is the greatest single combination of economic activities in man’s history. It pays one-sixth of the nation’s taxes and provides over 10 million jobs. Six million workers, for instance, are truck drivers. More people are employed in all branches of highway transportation than on all the nation’s farms. Individual business establishments directly connected with highway transportation number 700,000. The people of the United States pay over \$50 billion a year on highway transportation services. Motor trucks account for 15 per cent of freight ton miles and 77 per cent of freight tonnage hauled yearly. Highway transportation also accounts for 95 per cent of all passenger miles of travel in the United States. In some states the automobile, together with the highway system, has made the tourist industry the single most important producer of wealth. It is also an important arm of national defence.”

And, Mr. Speaker, I would like you to pay attention to this part, if you would:

“In the words of President Eisenhower next to the manufacture of the most modern implements of war as a guarantee of peace through strength, a network of modern roads is as necessary to defence as it is to our national economy and personal safety.”

There is one other quotation here. It says, 'The Nation wants and needs Safe and Adequate Highways.' But, in reference to what President Eisenhower said about the importance of a network of highways, I just want to say, in connection with our Trans-Canada Highway that one of the reasons, I understand, we are getting assistance at all to build it is because it is thought necessary in the interest of national defence. But in the United States such roads are the total responsibility of the federal government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, may I point out the overall problem of roads in Saskatchewan. Actual construction of roads now totals nearly a hundred thousand miles including 50,000 miles of market roads, and 43,000 miles of local roads. In addition there are 8,300 miles of gravelled highways and, in view of the magnitude of the problem of highway construction facing the Saskatchewan Government in comparison with our neighbouring provinces of Manitoba and Alberta, I submit there is a good case to be made for increasing the amount of Federal aid to our highway programme. I am pleased to second this motion.

The question being put, it was agreed to unanimously.

RE INDIANS AND METIS

Moved by Mr. Berezowsky, seconded by Mr. Feusi:

“That this Assembly requests the Federal Government to take necessary steps to grant the Treaty Indians of Canada full rights of Canadian citizenship without abrogating any privileges and rights provided by Indian Treaties; to modernize and expand existing educational and hospital facilities for Treaty Indians and thus enhance their security and provide equal health and educational opportunities for these people; AND FURTHER, that this Assembly urges the Federal Government to give favourable consideration to sharing with the Provincial Governments the costs of a comprehensive rehabilitation and re-establishment programme for Indians and for Metis, in order that the social, economic and racial problems of these underprivileged people may be solved at an early date and thus expedite their assimilation to and integration with contemporary Canadian society.”

Mr. W. J. Berezowsky (Cumberland): — Mr. Speaker, this motion asks for the rehabilitation of our underprivileged native Canadian people whom we sometimes call Indians and Metis.

I feel rather inadequate in moving this motion. I wish we had a native Canadian member here in this House, who I am sure would be able to do a much better job but although they were here before my forefathers came and probably before any of your forefathers came, they are not represented and I regret that exceedingly. However, I will do the best I can to present the problem as I think it faces these people here in Canada today.

Before dealing with the problem of rehabilitation, I think it is necessary to give some time to the background of these people, and I am quite sure that we all realize that the people of native origin, the Indians and the Metis, follow a life completely different from that followed by those of

us who have come from Europe and settled here. The aborigines were essentially hunters and fishermen; they were traders in furs; they led a nomadic life, travelling from one place to another; they at no time, with the exception of a few of the southern tribes in the United States, living in communities such as we know. The Metis, of course, were the children of the immigrants – the Scotch, the Irish and English fathers and native mothers; but to some extent the life of the children of these fathers was very similar to those of their Indian forbears, and they were as nomadic in their habits, trapping and fishing for a livelihood. It is to be remembered that during the hunting seasons they left their small settlements, separated out into the forests or the prairies and there carried on the work that they used to do. Each man provided for his family as best he could.

When we talk about free enterprise, those people were free enterprisers; but they did realize that to struggle against the difficulties of survival they had to follow a law of survival and so, when one of these hunters obtained game and others were hungry, they following the policy of co-operation and divided the animal among all those who required food. Conservation, of course, with them was a natural thing, and we find that in 1850-1860 and prior to that time, there was no difficulty so far as obtaining food was concerned. The buffalo were plentiful, the deer were many as were the animals such as the fur-bearers which provided the peltries which these native people could trade to the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company. Furs were plentiful and was the product from the sale of which the natives obtained their ammunition and other necessaries. In some ways, I would submit that these people had a happy life which gave them a certain amount of satisfaction.

Then we come to the time of the Selkirk settlement – I think it was about the beginning of the nineteenth century, 1815, 1817, or thereabouts. We find the white man migrating into western Canada and it is rather remarkable as we look into the history of western Canada we find there was actually no conquest of the native people. I would like to go into this matter for a minute or two because, when we look at the settlements in the United States – when the white people moved into the west we find there was conquest; the Indians were slaughtered, and in return the Indians of that country had to slaughter the whites to try to protect themselves in their survival. We find when we look at New Zealand that there was a conquest there, and we find today when we look at South Africa that the conquest is still going on in that country. We find when we look at South Africa that the conquest is still going on in that country. Fortunately, I think it can properly be said that as far as western Canada is concerned, and for that matter eastern Canada, although the natives surrendered their lands and their rights, yet there was actually no conquest in the sense that I understand it, or a struggle such as a war with those people. And that is rather important.

Stemming from this statement, I think it is also necessary for us to look to the matter of how the different countries solved the problem of the natives' assimilation into the society that has developed. We find that, in New Zealand, for example, I think it was Sir George Grey who developed a policy whereby they followed the idea of having the native institutions amalgamated into the institutions that the white man brought in. They had no segregation such as we know in Canada or as we have known in the United States. As a result of this particular policy we find that, in New Zealand, there is today no problem of amalgamation of the New Zealanders into the society of the whites; the problem is settled.

In the United States, for example, and South Africa, as I see it, we find that there were actually two steps. The first step was conquest, as I pointed out, and some of it, as you know, has been very bitter. Some histories misrepresent that conquest, making the native Indian (who has

always been a very peaceful individual) into a villain, and, of course, anybody who knows his history takes exception to that. But there was a conquest, and there was destruction. There was an attempt to annihilate the native people of those countries and to some extent, in South Africa, I think the attempt is carried on today, as I have previously pointed out. After the conquests we find segregation in those countries has been the policy. In the United States, there has been segregation until very recently. I am happy to report that now, I understand from a very recent Bill, President Eisenhower has given the Indians of the United States the same rights as their whites have, and I think the United States should be commended for that particular step. That is the least they could do for the injustices that were committed against the Indian people in the past.

In South Africa they still have segregation. They are still trying to take the coloured people and enclose them in concentration camps, the reservations. Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, as we look into Canadian history we find that Canada adopted a different policy from that of New Zealand and from that which was followed in the United States. Our policy actually is two step, and so it was, I think, enunciated by our Government. The first step was segregation and the second step was to be amalgamation. In trying to get to the first step of segregation it was decided by the Government of Canada at the time (that would be about 1870 or 1871) that it would be necessary to have discussions with the native people of the west and try to persuade them to give up their rights and their lands to the government and in return they would be provided for to a certain extent as well as granted certain reservations. There was a certain intention at that time, which I think this House should know. We find that, in the signing of the first treaty in Manitoba, Mr. Simpson, who was Indian Commissioner at that time, said this to the Indian chiefs:

“Your Great Mother wishes the good of all men under her sway. She wishes her children to be happy and contented. She wishes them to live in comfort. She would like them to adopt the habits of the whites – to work land and to raise food and store it up against the time of want. She thinks this would be the best thing for her Red children to do, that it would make them safer from famine and distress and make their homes more comfortable. But the Queen, though she may think it good for you to adopt civilized habits has no idea of compelling you to do so. This she leaves to your choice and you need not live like the white man unless you can be persuaded to do so of your own free will. Many of you, however, are already doing this.”

He goes on and says:

“I drove yesterday through the village below the fort; there I found many well-built houses and many well-filled fields of wheat and barley and potatoes growing and giving promise of plenty for the winter to come. The people who till these fields and live in these houses are men of your own race and they show that you

can live and prosper and provide like a white man can. What I saw on my drive is enough to prove that even if there is not a buffalo or a fur-bearing animal in the country you could live and be surrounded with comfort with what you can raise from the soil.”

At that time the government of the day (and that is just about 100 years ago) felt, in the experiences they had with the natives, that the native could live in the same way that a white man could live; he could cultivate the fields, he could live a civilized life. And I submit, Mr. Speaker, that the government of that day was right. Yes, Mr. Howe and others who were in the Federal government at that time were right; they have been proven to be right. Then what is the difficulty? Since the first treaty was adopted in 1941, I believe, it has been 80 years, and we still have the problem of the native Indian and his Metis brother; and I think it is not due to the fact that the native cannot be assimilated. It is not because he does not want to be assimilated. It is due to the fact that somebody failed – and I submit that it is the governments of Canada and of the provinces that have failed those people.

Going back to the time when these treaties were first signed, and I point out to this House that there were plenty of buffalo, and the Indians, being simple people, and not the foresight that perhaps they should have had. So they did not make the demands upon the government of the day to the extent that they should have. I shall indicate to you how very little they obtaining in ceding all their rights and lands to Canada, by quoting a few figures that I obtained the other day. Here is all the Indians were given as far as acreages were concerned, in reservations; this is for giving up all of western Canada and a considerable amount in the east. We find that, in Nova Scotia, there was set aside a reservation of only 30 square miles; Prince Edward Island, only 4 square miles – that is all the Indians got there; in New Brunswick, only 59 square miles; in Quebec, only 281 square miles; in Ontario, 2,435 square miles; in Manitoba 821 square miles; in Saskatchewan, 1,000 square miles; in Alberta, 2,296 square miles; in British Columbia, 1,274 square miles and 9 square miles were reserved for the Indians in the Yukon – a total of only 9,089 square miles, out of millions of square miles of Canada. That is all they received, and, Mr. Speaker, when you consider that the Canadian government at that time granted 55 million of acres of land, for free, to the Canadian Pacific and other railways, you can see what a grave injustice was done the native people.

I point this out for the simple reason that often we hear of people of Saskatchewan, and I presume of other provinces, saying, “Well, why don’t they go and farm on their reservations?” I don’t know, but I believe that, today, if you gave every native who lives on a reservation a parcel of land, I doubt if there would be a quarter-section for each one of them. There is not enough land; so something must be done about the rehabilitation problem.

Going back to the point I made at the beginning – that we did not have any conquest – I would like to make a further point, and it is that one of the reasons we had no conquest, and no conquest was necessary is because of the fact that we had men in between – the Metis – who, being

partly native and partly European in origin, desired peace. They wanted trade, desiring to see development in Canada. The Metis wanted to make a home; and he was always the man, when Indian treaties were being considered, who was called in and who influenced the native Indian chiefs and the Indian people to cede their rights and privileges so as to avoid any trouble or wars in this country. So I submit it is a debt of gratitude that we owe to the Metis people, and it always irks me when I see any person assuming a superior attitude and calling a man a 'half-breed', branding him as something not equal to the white man. When I consider how they were responsible for assisting the Government in settling this country on a peaceful basis, I am aware how wrong such people are in making statements of this kind, and how much greater it would be if they tried to do something to see that these people were re-established, re-habilitated and guided to live a modern and model life as the white man envisions it to be.

At this point I would like to mention something about the Riel rebellion. It is often thought, often said and often taught in the schools that the man responsible for all the trouble, the revolutionary, the man who had to be hanged, was Riel. Yet, when you delve into history, you find that he was only one during that time who was trying to obtain justice from the government of the day for the west. We find that there were other men – for example, Mr. Jackson of the Prince Albert district – who was very active in trying to obtain rights for the people in western Canada on the plains; and here is what we find in the declaration that was made at that time. I am quoting from the book 'The Birth of western Canada' on page 300. This is a reference to the movement of trying to get, as I said, fair play and justice for the people of that area. This is directed to the citizens of Prince Albert, and here is what it says:

“Gentlemen: we are starting a movement in this settlement with a view to obtaining provincial legislation for the northwest territories and if possible, the council of our own resources, that we may build our railroads and other works to serve our own interests rather than those of the eastern provinces. We are preparing a statement of our cause to be sent to Ottawa as a matter of form. We state the various evils which are caused by the present system of the legislature . . .”

Here is another quotation from the same book, on page 504, referring to Riel and the Metis in and around Prince Albert. It says this:

“Although Prince Albert and St. Laurent were the centres of Riel’s political sections among the whites, Metis and Indians, other sections (mind you this) of the northwest territories were also carrying on an agitation for northwest rights. At Qu’Appelle a Settlers’ Rights Association has been pressing for the reform of the land laws and for legislation in the interests of the settlers. During the summer of 1884 a series of meetings were held throughout Assiniboia to discuss the commercial and political situation of the territories. Demands were forwarded to Ottawa for

representation in the Dominion parliament and for the construction of a railway to Hudson Bay. In December a meeting was held at the town of Wolseley and a committee appointed to take the necessary steps to organize a deputation to press their case personally before the Dominion cabinet.

“Commenting on this meeting, the ‘Northwester’ of Calgary declared that it was a war whoop which it was determined should be heard in Ottawa . . .”

And it goes on in this tenor. I am trying to point out, Mr. Speaker, that today, when we blame the Metis for the rebellion up in the north, they were no more to blame than the whites in the south; they were all asking for the same rights. They wanted to have a local government here; they urged to have a railway built; they desired to have the right to settle on land of their choice. Yet we have blamed the Metis and today, up in my country, it is often referred to that they are the revolutionists and the people who would not live in conformity with the laws. That is not true. It is not true that they did not wish to conform with the laws of this country. They wanted laws; they wanted the country to be opened up; they wanted to make it a great northwest.

Thus we keep the natives on the reservations or, as somebody said the other day, in concentration camps – and that is all it is; segregated when they should not be segregated. On the other hand, you have the problem of the Metis. They are partly people of the same origin; they were often Indians who did not wish to reside on the reservations. For example, you find one of the Indian chiefs, Big Bear, who made the statement that he was being forced to stay on the reservation, but as a free man he would not stay on the reservation; and there are people of that type, of native Indian blood, who left their reservations. Now let us see what the government of the day did for them. For those who left the reservations and for those who had native blood in their veins, scrip was granted. That is how the Government dealt with them. They were given scrip, originally (think it was in 1885) and the scrip amounted to the value of \$240; and for that \$240, or land equivalent to \$240, the native was expected to give away all his Indian rights forever. Yet, on the other hand, we see that the government of the day promised, as we look through the treaties, to see that as long as the sun shone and the rivers ran they would be given the necessary assistance. Because they refused to go into concentration camps they were required to accept \$240 which at a later date was reduced to \$160, or 160 acres. As late as 1921, for example, up in the north they were paid \$160, and that meant that their rights were ceded forever – for \$160.

Now it may be all right for a government to make deals of such a nature, and if the people are rehabilitated then none of us need object; but the difficulty is that \$160 or \$240 cannot rehabilitate anybody. Nor can it do that today up in the Beauval district where we have natives, Metis people, who were offered on the average \$100 to give up their trapping rights and fishing rights. That will not rehabilitate the native Indian or the native Metis. Something more must be done, and I think it is time that the people of Canada realized, just as I think we realize in

this House, that the most important resources that we have is the human resource; it is people. I think somebody mentioned, the other day, "What is the value of all these – our natural resources, our agricultural land and forests and everything else – if we haven't the people to put such natural resources to use, to utilize them, to provide people with a higher standard of living?" All resources are secondary, people come first. We recognize the principle, and the nations of the world recognized it when they considered the Colombo plan. Today we are trying to rehabilitate the people in India and Pakistan and in Indo-China and elsewhere. We would like to rehabilitate all the people of the world, wherever they are underprivileged and underdeveloped. But if we are to do so then why can't we start at home?

I submit, Mr. Speaker, that today any person standing on a platform has a right to indict the government of Canada and the governments, I will say, of the provinces (it works both ways) for not having done what they should have done, for not having started charity at home, for not rehabilitating those people who can help to make our country great. Further I will say that, to me, the matter of how much it is going to cost does not mean anything. Certainly the cost at the moment will be high; but after the job is done we will have accomplished the aim. There is no reason, today, why we should say those on reservation are Indians, these are Metis; somewhere else Dukhobors are pointed out. Why can't we all be called Canadians, working for the common good of our country? But to achieve that goal we have to spend money – this Government has to spend money and the Dominion Government has to spend money; but not only money, Mr. Speaker. I submit that the governments of this country, and particularly in reference to the treaty Indians the government at Ottawa has to recognize, as it recognized back in 1870, that the people on the reservations have the same pride and the same dignity that any white man has, or any man anywhere in the world. They have the same rights, and we must recognize these rights. But as long as they are going to keep those people in those concentration camps, as on those reserves; as long as they do this the natives will not have the dignity, they will not show the dignity they have by right of birth. They will always feel as they feel today. When you associate with them, unless they know you, they mistrust you; they say "we cannot believe the white man; we cannot trust the white man." Why? For the simple reason that we have created conditions as a result of which they cannot trust and believe in us, and it is time we did something about it. This is not a political issue. This is something that we must do for our country and for the people living in our country.

I do not want to take up too much time, Mr. Speaker. I feel very touchy on the question. I would feel very touchy on the question if it concerned any other people – Indians or any other racial origin. I have always believed that if you give people an education, if you give people an opportunity to attain a better standard of living, then you find that you can associate with them, then you will find out, very surprisingly, that they have as much brains as we have. They are just as good in every way; but they are underprivileged economically and from the point of education. Yes, this Government has done considerable, particularly in the north, and I understand they are doing considerable among the Metis people here in the south. I hope we will be able to do

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as much for the Metis people in the north in this coming year. But the fact still remains that this province of Saskatchewan cannot do the job itself. It has to be a programme that will be worked out between the Federal Government and the Provincial Government, because, as I said, it is going to take a considerable amount of money; it is going to take a staff and a long-term programme.

I do not intend for a minute for anybody to think that I am suggesting any paternalistic programme, because all underprivileged people hate paternalism. It has to be a programme of the nature whereby we can go to these people and say now we will help you to help yourselves.

How can that be best achieved? It can be achieved, for example, by trying to get these people established on farms. The Dominion Government, I think, through their agents, are doing that in some cases, but in too few cases, and the objection I think is that the people are complaining that somebody is always telling them what to do. They would like to do these things themselves, and I think they are right. They should be given an opportunity to do things themselves, but they need to be trained. The governments can step into the picture in providing personnel and the equipment and the accommodation for the training of these people, for those of them that would be farmers.

Among the native people and among the Metis people there are those who will never be farmers, just as some of us will never be farmers. They might make good schoolteachers; they may make good engineers. I know of a case in my own district where a lad left the reservation, and under a private individual he trained himself to be a welder and, Mr. Speaker, you can't find a better welder anywhere in Canada than that man is. Now there is a boy who could have been given training in a school. He didn't get any training in school; but having ambition he got his own training, and he is living today in the city of Prince Albert, is married happily, has a lovely family and is doing very well. Those are the things we have to do, not only, as I say, to make agriculturists out of them, but try to get them into certain professions and industries.

Therefore, when this resolution suggests first of all "that the natives of Canada get their full rights and privileges without the abrogation of their rights under the Treaties" it means just that. We have to give them the right to vote – not only in Saskatchewan. We can easily do that right now, but that doesn't mean anything. They should have Canadian rights as citizens, rights such as I have and you have, Mr. Speaker, in order that we can restore to them that pride and dignity that people must have. But some will say "if you do that, some will spend all their time in the liquor stores." I will stand by my belief that if the native people of this country are given the same rights and privileges that we have, they will be no worse than we are. Not only that, when I heard Mr. Brass speak in the city hall, the other day, when I read Mr. Kennedy's article in the 'Leader-Post', when I speak to the natives of the north and they say they want these rights. I challenge them with "What are you going to do in connection with the liquor problem?" They replied "You leave the problem for us to solve. It is time that you were not paternalistic. We want to be like you and we won't be any worse than you are." So that is the first suggestion in the resolution.

The second thing in my motion is that, in order to do something for the other group, the Metis, whose problems are similar and also Indians who are non-treaty, the governments get together (and I hope this Government will be favourable to that idea) and work out a programme for the rehabilitation and the re-establishment of those people. Now you will not be able to rehabilitate them all, you won't be able to re-establish them all; but it will be much better than waiting another 100 years or 80 years to see if the problem will solve itself.

I would just like to point out to the House that there were underprivileged people who came from Europe and from Asia to this country and they settled in communities and today they have made progress. Why? Because they were not on a reservation. At first they built their churches, they built their halls – yes, they didn't even try, perhaps, to speak the English language. But as time went on and when they realized that the rights and privileges were there for them to adopt and to accept, those people went out into Canada and today you find them fully assimilated into Canadian society and, being one of them, I am proud of their accomplishments.

I am not going to take any more time, Mr. Speaker. I hope this House will give full support to this motion. I think it is a good step in the right direction. It is a good step for the native people, the Metis people, and all of Canada. I am happy to sponsor this motion, seconded by Mr. Feusi.

Mr. Arnold Feusi (Pelly): — Mr. Speaker, this resolution has been very ably presented by the member from Cumberland (Mr. Berezowsky), and I feel that he elevated it to a very high plane. My contribution here probably will be a little more earthy in that I have three reserves in my area and I know them quite well.

Recently, in the papers of the province there was a pitiful problem that was before the courts, and most citizens of Saskatchewan are familiar with this problem; but it has given my area, particularly the town of Kamsack, very grim advertising. I do agree that we are a little bit of a 'Chicago' insofar as our electioneering is concerned, but there have been problems that we have been faced with in our area probably mainly due to the Indian reserves, that we are not altogether proud of, but it is beyond the scope of the community itself.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Cumberland and my deskmate (Mr. Wahl) gave very good contributions on the subject matter of this resolution, one in the Throne Speech debate and one directly preceding my address, but I believe that I will have to probably give the Federal Government some credit for some attention in the solution of this matter. They haven't been altogether to blame, and when I say that I will have to be earthy. I am going to go right into the Indian problem as I know it, because I have been quite familiar with Indian dealings. I have been a game warden and my territory took in the three Indian reserves.

One of the things I would like to point out is the fact that many people consider the Indians all bad. There is the thought in a lot of our minds that the only good Indian is a dead Indian. Mr. Speaker,

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there are many fine Indians. I would like to call to the attention of this House the contribution made by a lot of our young Indians in the war just past and in the war of 1914-18. These young fellows were put into Canadian uniforms; they took pride in that uniform, and their part as a soldier was a very good contribution.

I have in mind a little story that took place – it was a sergeant in the S.S.R., a friend of mine who told me of it. In field manoeuvring that soldiers had done as part of their training, they came off the field very brown and healthy and I believe a number of them were given leave and they hit out for London. Of course, at the first train stop they boarded the trains (the trains in the old country are a little different than they are here), and there was barely standing room; but there, for some strange reason foreign to us here, anybody with a bit of money could take possession of an entire compartment that would probably accommodate six or eight people. Our lads there just crowded into a compartment much to the resentment of a dowager who probably didn't understand our Canadian way of life and she wanted the conductor to expel the fellows from the compartment. But when the conductor came in and saw the soldier shoulder patches he excused himself, and said he had business elsewhere; he wasn't going to stir up a hornet's nest. After about a half-hour ride in the train the lady sort of warmed to the situation and she started a conversation and her first words were: "Oh yes, you are from Canada; you are all Indians aren't you?" And, of course, all the fellows agreed, much to the amusement of the few Indians present; but to her eye there was no difference between us and the Indians in uniform.

I would like to point out that they have given a very good contribution through past wars, but as soon as they got back from the war they lost their privileges as free citizens. They had the rights to the 'pub' and the rights to the liquor store; but as soon as they were out of uniform they lost those rights; and, of course, they got back to the Indian reserve which was previously classed as a 'concentration camp' and there their pride went. Today, I find young fellows who probably wore a uniform some years ago; today they line up with the rest of them, for handouts – handouts of pork which comes from a heavyweight animal which is roughly classed as 'sowbelly'. And they have lost that pride, Mr. Speaker, that they did have.

I would like to go a little further and point out what is actually happening to a lot of our young folks. Before I do, I want to give credit to some of the older folks who still have a great deal of pride. I happened to be in hospital, a few years back, with a couple of elderly Indians in adjacent beds, along with one or two old-timers, and I recall them speaking. One oldtimer had homesteaded from 50 to 60 years ago in an area about halfway between Kamsack reserve and the reserve south of Yorkton, and evidently the Indians, in their travelling back and forth, used his farm as more or less of a stopping place. The Indians in those days were very trustworthy evidently, because he said he never had a lock on his door. If he wasn't home they made themselves at home, but the place was always left in good order. To me that sounded very strange when I know of our Indians, and more so, our white behaviour, in these days. My friend, the member for Cumberland, tells me that that is common practice up in the north; you are more or less an outcast if you use somebody else's cabin and do not leave it in fit shape for the owner when he comes back.

I would like to pass on another little story in this connection, to show the pride and some of the decency that is inherent in some of the older Indians, before they were corrupted by the habits of probably our lesser whites. This story takes place in southern Alberta, when the first great cattle drives took place from the central and western states up into the ranchlands of central Alberta. It seems that one young cowboy had a saddle that he valued very much. Evidently it was embossed with Mexican dollars, and he was very much worried about it. They drove across an Indian reservation where they had to stop for the night, and chose a place where there was water after obtaining permission from the Indian chief. The young fellow went up to the Indian chief and asked him if his saddle would be safe there. The old chief looked down his nose, across the horizon, and his words were: "Mm, saddle safe; no white man for 50 miles." This sort of points out, Mr. Speaker, that they had pride and dignity, and they have lost it, to a certain extent, by their contact with white people.

I would like to point out that the greatest problem that I find on the reserves is the problem of the younger folks. We have a great many of our prideful older folks, and the younger ones have picked up the bad habits of the whites to quite an extent. Here are some of the bad habits they have: cheating, shiftlessness, untidiness, immortality, and one of the very bad habits they have is 'common law.' Marriage as we know it is not a fixed ideal with the Indians, and the exchange or taking on of a new life partner is done quite readily. Probably it is the state they are in on the reserve that is to blame for it, because, in going back in the history of the Indian, I find it was not as bad as it is now. They had much greater respect for family life long before the time of the white man. They did not have the habits that they have today.

With common law goes one of the great problems we have today – illegitimate children. There is hardly an Indian family on the reserves in my area that you don't find in that situation. I had occasion to deal with several families recently, and I must say that they deserve credit for the way they look after these illegitimate children. We would throw them off on to society and have the state look after them; they take them into their homes. I had one parent come to me. He had six children of his own; his elder daughter has two illegitimate children. He was a little worried because he had rations for the six of his own children but no rations for the extra two; but he was dividing the rations in order to feed these illegitimate children.

My deskmate here mentioned the fact that on his reserve the Federal Government had not provided good schools. On my reserve it is the opposite. We have probably as fine schools, set up by a religious order – the St. Phillip's Indian Mission – as there are anywhere. We have another mission, an Anglican mission or school on another reserve. Then on Cote reserve, within the past couple of years, the Government has built a very fine public school for the Indians. It compares very favourably with our modern schools. I am going to deal here with the St. Phillip's Indian School.

These boys and girls who go to that school are taken out of the family life and they remain in the mission for the duration of the year, other than for the summer holidays. They are given, probably, better

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training, a better practical education, than our own children get in our schools, up to the age of 15, or grade eight. They learn butter-making, dressmaking and so forth; they look after the setting of tables, and home responsibilities go hand in hand with the care those children get. But for some strange reason, as soon as they are through the public school and go back to the reserves, all that training was for nothing; they drift back into the habits of the reserves. I believe a great part of education is missing there. Those youngsters are not ready for the shiftlessness of reserve life. At the age of 15 they go to the reserve, they drift hither and yon; they are not wanted more or less; because the reserve is not very much more than a concentration camp. We find immorality creeping in, and it is a very sad situation insofar as the young girls are concerned. By the time they reach the age of 20, when they are supposed to know better, their lives are ruined.

The newspapers, recently, have given us examples of this immorality. The Indians are not to blame. I would like to go back to the school again and tell you just that the school has done insofar as the young boys are concerned. This year, St. Phillip's Indian School had a first-class hockey team. They didn't get more than the good Father there could give them, but they are keen in sports, they are given good care and good food in the mission and they are healthy. The St. Phillip's Indian School had a very fine hockey team – in fact, so good that on all occasions when they met Mr. Kusiak's 'Boston Bruins' they trimmed them and trimmed them handily, up until recently. But it is a sad thing that as soon as they leave school they probably last a few years and then they burn out as athletes; possibly through improper diet in their homes. They become unhealthy through drinking and bad habits, long hours hanging around the town; and bad habits probably that are common to our own society. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, they burn out physically; you don't find an Indian athlete that lasts very far into the 20's or 30's and it is a sad state of affairs.

I mentioned idleness on the reserves, Mr. Speaker. I believe idleness is the greatest problem. For some reason they drift back and forth without any direction. That is the greatest fault. Education is carried on just until they leave school and then we forget about them. I find that on my three reserves there are hardly any of the skill or the crafts the Indians were noted for in the past. They have lost that; they have taken on white men's ways and they have taken on white men's bad habits.

I have had occasion to check; we did have a very capable teacher, a young lady, in one of the schools, and I did check to find out just what our Indians were doing with education. I found that none had gone further than public school, none of them had gone into the professions; there were no teachers, no doctors, no nurses, plumbers, or what have you. Their education ended there, and they went right back to reserve life and all the fine teaching they were given was practically lost to them. Probably the knowledge they had gained through their years in public school was used to try and 'beat the game' insofar as the help that the Government is giving them at the present time is concerned.

I would like to point out one instance here. Last fall I did some work on the Indian reserve on behalf of my neighbour. He had rented a half-section from two Indians who each had a quarter-section. I believe they were given 40 bushels of wheat for themselves, for the winter. There

is a mill in Kamsack. They took the wheat to the mill and had it ground. This wheat was supposed to be for their own use; but I understand that a lot of them didn't keep it for their own use. They peddled and sold it for probably half-price to conniving whites. That is what some of the education is used for today, and I must say that I bring this to your attention because I hope it will get into the papers. Our Indians are partly to blame; probably our Federal authorities haven't gone far enough and there must be, as previous speakers mentioned, a more or less correlation of activities between the Provincial Government and the Federal Government as well as our Indian people.

People might think that probably our Indians haven't the ability to follow the rest of society into professions. The Minister of Labour is sitting next to me, and I would like to say that, last winter, in one of the trade schools, a young man with Indian blood went through the final course in the plumbing trade, and he did a very good job of it, I am told. There is no reason why more and more of our Indians should not be taken into the trades and into the professions, but for some reason or other they hold back from it. They feel they are sort of outcasts; that there is a class barrier between them and us, and that should not be. I think if there was any activity on our part, or any work done together with the Federal people, we have to encourage those people, pick the better ones out of the schools and put them into schools where they can take advanced training for the professions and take their proper place in our society, so they could go back to their reserves – not to stay, but to show their own people that there is a higher plane for them to work for.

It is very necessary, Mr. Speaker, that we assimilate our Indians at an early date. On my reserves the Indian population has reached a pitch that is going to lead us into difficulty shortly. On some reserves there are more families than they have quarter-sections for. Two years ago, when I was a game warden, I got the rights for some wild land for the Indians, giving them sole rights for trapping on wild Crown land. There is only a small bit, but I do know that the Indians owned that land many years ago, and they did tell me that through some conniving of the whites they lost that land; and they tried to do some research work to find the record of the loss of that land but they were told that a fire had destroyed the records.

I mentioned over-population. It is a serious problem that we are going to be faced with, provincially. We are going to have to take some of those young folks and give them occupations.

I want to get now to a point that is interesting, but where the Indians are probably going to have a little problem in fitting into our way of life. I would like to mention the word 'potlatch'. It is a word that is used in B.C. Evidently the Indians there had a habit, in the past, that whenever one of them accumulated a little more Indian wealth, he divided it up among his neighbours. I think it would be a very good thing if we had a 'potlatch' among the members; I know it would help a few of us. It is a very good habit, from my point of view anyway; but with it goes a lack of thrift – you do not find the Indians hoarding like we do. Hoarding can be a bad habit as far as the whites are concerned, because you will find that some of them will be starting and others will be living in great wealth. Much of our society and our laws are being utilized to this day to try and bring about an equilibrium. The Indian has that right in his

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makeup, much more so than the white; but there lies a problem in this respect that it is difficult to get the Indian to save or to look into the future; to plan. They will live in plenty and later starve, because they haven't looked and planned for the future.

I would like to go into a matter that was brought to our attention by an Indian chief, in the 'Leader-Post' of February 8, and I shall read a small part of the item he had in there. It was a very fine article, and it is an example of what an Indian can rise to. That man has a very fine mind and Indians, in general, can be proud of him and the contribution that he is making to the welfare of the Indians. Here is the excerpt from an article by Dan Kennedy:

"I had occasion to pay a brief visit to Fort Peck Indian reservation in Montana, this fall. I could hardly believe my eyes at what I saw. Every Indian home had modern facilities and electric lights, refrigerators, washing machines and other electrical appliances. Most of the Indians lived comfortably from the revenue derived from the proceeds of the crop share lease of their allotments; others operate their own farms. With the exception of the superintendent, the head office of the reservation is staffed by the Indians. I don't find that down our way. I worked in the office of this agency in 1896-97 and at that time the Canadian Indians were more progressive than their American cousins; but in the intervening years they have outstripped us, whilst we Canadian Indians are marking time they have forged ahead. What is the answer to this Indian problem?"

And he goes on:

"The Indian reserves could be made self-supporting and lighten the burden of the taxpayer."

Now, Mr. Speaker, my Indian reserves are in probably some of the finest farming or agricultural land in all Canada. That area north of Kamsack is beautiful farming land, and I feel that my Indians could be in better circumstances than they are today. I blame them partly. It isn't the Federal Government altogether that is responsible. The Federal Government has gone quite a way on my reserves in providing them with assistance, but I question the administration of that assistance, Mr. Speaker.

I mentioned that my Indians could be well off. During the thirties they had fine cattle herds, in fact several of the Indians had fine herds of purebreds and the Indians ran a very good ranching setup; but then with the change, with the value of grain rising in comparison with that of cattle, land was broken up and today I believe it is more than 100 acres per quarter-section that is broken on the Indian reserves in my territory. The Federal Government has given some of the returned Indian veterans a 'break' by giving them a chance of farming their own land, and they were provided with machinery through veterans grants; but for some reason or other I believe it was a little previous, and it hasn't worked out too happily. I believe the Indians are partly to blame for it.

Perhaps I should go a little more into reserve life, Mr. Speaker, and endeavour to find out why they failed, particularly our veterans, after being out in so-called civilization for a number of years. I want to mention the home. Back in the first world war, the Federal Government did send across the reserve a few skilled builders, axemen. I know on my reserves this was done and the mark of their passing is the two-storey homes of that day. These were log homes and plastered homes. They were fairly comfortable but they are not modern; but they were quite an improvement on the homes that the Indians had before that time. Earlier, they had rough log homes of their own construction, and the average Indian hadn't taken too much pride up till then in the quality of his home. It was an improvement and a change then, but from that time until now the homes haven't altered at all; in fact they have gone back.

I find very little pride in the homes today. I know they have built frame houses, and some of them could be fine homes if they had been painted and if proper chimneys had been put into them. I believe there were Indians who got a building grant – I am not sure of that; but they have fairly comfortable little homes. Of course they lack modern conveniences, and I believe modern conveniences could have been provided by the Indians had they co-operated. I know of some of them who could have worked along with the farmers that do now farm their quarters, and I know that farmers who are farming the Indian land have to be qualified farmers. They have to provide results, and they are providing good results. Had the Indian worked along with the farmers, I believe they could have earned good wages during the summer months, and probably could have put into their homes the earnings of their crop, but they have not done so. They have sort of drifted on the fringes of society and have taken to the bad habits of the whites. Therein lies their problem, Mr. Speaker.

Concerning the matter of health, today we have a public health nurse provided, I think, through the Indian Department. They are qualified nurses, but I would like to see them go further than just examining the Indians in the schools or at the agency. I would like to see them go into the homes. I would like to see some activity towards stimulating the Indians to building and maintaining better homes. We have a forestry area adjacent to the reserves where timber can be obtained very easily by the Indians, and good homes can be built with very little cost, good homes that would provide the comforts they require, but we find very little direction given them in that way, Mr. Speaker. There should be that direction. There should be some stimulant given them to have better gardens, yards, to improve their places, paint them up and so forth. I know, for instance, in my own town they have prizes given for the best street, the best yards and so on. That could also be carried out on the Indian reserves but I do not find anything like that being done. It appears they care for them and are responsible for them until they are out of school and from then on they are allowed to shift and all the good done in the schools is practically lost. There has to be an incentive given to the Indians to improve from the present conditions. A lot of their homes are just a one-room shack and families live in that one room; and with Indians visiting back and forth there are probably two or three families living in the same room for a time, making for increasing immorality, and ill-health.

In the matter of democracy, I think the Federal Government is failing us very badly. We also probably, provincially, if we had some rights on the reserve, are failing to put across to the Indian the meaning of democracy. I know of a young teacher who had spent some years up in the Arctic on Baffin Island among the eastern Eskimos in Northern Saskatchewan and northern Alberta, and she made a life study of the native Canadian Indians and Eskimos and, like the member for Cumberland, she took very deeply the failings of society to put across to the Indians, what we should be doing, an idea or a grasp of a better life. She went into the Indian homes. They respected her and she in turn respected them, and through discussions they told her they would like to study the Indian treaties and our Game Act. There was much that went on in the laws of the day that they were unfamiliar with, so she arranged that they would have evening study groups, and she started off a class. The first thing that happened, the first night, the Indian agent came down like a ton of bricks: "Oh no! Your place is in the classroom; that is what you are hired for. You have no business here teaching the adults." She held her ground, Mr. Speaker, but they brought the weight of the entire Indian Department in western Canada down upon that girl and she finally had to give up the idea that the Indians had advanced. We have failed dismally in putting democracy across to them. They haven't got as much right in the handling of their affairs as they should have.

I was interested in Dan Kennedy's article where he said the Indians staffed their own reserve – there was only one white and that was the agent. We haven't got that today. A lot of the Indians on the reserve do not know what is being done with their own affairs. They are shoved here and there, and they should have that knowledge; in fact, for the general good we should know, because we do not know just what the agents are doing with the Indian property. I mention that, Mr. Speaker, because I haven't too much respect for the agents. I find that the chief qualification is that he is a good political 'heeler'; that is the chief qualification required. The agent in our territory has neglected the reserve to a certain extent; he is in every committee that he can find his way into in our territory.

Mr. Berezowsky: — The man now in Meadow Lake?

Mr. Feusi: — That is the same gentleman, yes. I could point out incidents where he is far from democratic. He doesn't know the first principles of democracy and if he is going to sell to the Indians the principles of democracy, if the Federal Government intends to put across their programme, they have the wrong people to do it.

Just to prove that to the gentlemen opposite, Mr. Speaker, let me give you an example. This gentleman gets into all the organizations around town; he does neglect the reserve. Indians, who have the right to ask him for information, meet him on the street, and he ignores them completely; they are just like so much dirt beneath his feet. They resent it. Last fall, the chiefs and councils of the three reserves united and sent a petition to Ottawa, but nothing has come of it.

I would like to give an example to my friends opposite, as to what is in the mind of the man as far as democracy is concerned. In one of the organizations – the Film Council at Kamsack – our political organization has a membership in it. We like to use films for public meetings.

It is a privilege to use the films – national films as well as our provincial films, Mr. Speaker. He had the gall, at one of the meetings, this winter, when our representatives were not present, to bring in a motion that our political organization be banned, be not given the privilege of rights to the Film Council. Now we do not disturb the Liberals at all that way, Saskatchewan, we respect their rights insofar as their rights are concerned in the Film Council and they know it. If they want to improve their brains, their minds, by using national and provincial films, all the more power to them but they are not going to take away our rights. I believe the Federal Government deserves a strong warning in this matter, that the democratic rights of people cannot be abrogated or taken away. But these are the kind of people that have the wellbeing of the Indians before them, and I contend they cannot do justice to the Federal programme or to any democratic programme.

One more item I would like to mention, in passing, is the matter of truth among the Indians. As a game warden I was connected with Indian matters for about seven years. I had occasion to take them into court many times and, Mr. Speaker, during those seven years I had them ‘over a barrel’ many times but not once during those seven years did I have an Indian lie to me. I thought that was a wonderful thing. Yet I have had many of our own people, in similar circumstances, use every evasive tactic possible. I just mention that to show that they have qualities, qualities that we should be building up on, and I think society is the poorer not having assimilated them into our group.

Many years ago the Indian had a habit of scalping his enemies, the white man had the habit of ‘skinning’ his friends. Today, the Indian has changed. He doesn’t scalp his enemies any more; but the white man still skins his friends.

I would very strongly support this resolution that more attention and urgent attention be given to Indian problems because it is a shame to modern society that we haven’t assimilated them sooner.

Mr. Dunfield (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

(Debate adjourned)

The Assembly then adjourned at 5.55 o’clock p.m.