

Mr. E. C. Manning

Interview #20

September 2, 1980

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LS: I'd like to start this morning, Mr. Manning, to talk probably for the last time about the Social Credit Board.

In March of 1948 the Board as such ceases to function. In looking back over some of the recommendations and reports that the Social Credit Board made from its inception until 1948, I think it's fair to say that they often made recommendations or comments in their reports which, when compared with the final actions or responses of the Government, seemed to reflect a gulf - differences between the two. The Board often recommended things that were less pragmatic, more radical, than the Government was prepared to go along with.

Why those differences?

ECM: To put it in context, in the early years of the Board's operation, it was very active in trying to develop specific proposals to implement the Social Credit monetary programs in the Province. It was almost a section of government dedicated to that particular field of work.

As the attempts to implement legislation designed to achieve those goals were defeated by reason of being declared ultra vires of the Province, or in some cases disallowed, the Government became convinced that there was nothing to be gained by going on repeating introduction of similar legislation.

A number of times we had revamped bills that had been declared ultra vires, trying to meet the particular point on which they had been challenged in the Court. The Board was very active throughout the period in that type of work.

When it reached the stage where the Government was convinced there was no point in pursuing that line of action further, the Board became more of an

academic exercise, examining into aspects of the economy and making any recommendations it felt appropriate, that the Government might consider to advance the basic monetary principles of Social Credit, at least in some degree.

Because most of the practical approaches had been explored and tried repeatedly, the area that was left to the Board was more in the theoretical, abstract realm that lacked practicability. As a result, you're quite correct when you say that the recommendations that they made in that period were pretty theoretical. They might have been very ideal things to do if you'd had the constitutional power to do them, or were not obstructed by legislative restrictions. But they really hadn't a great deal of practical value, and they leaned more and more into that abstract or theoretical field.

As a result, while the Government read them and examined them, we didn't find in them very much that could be translated into legislative action.

In addition to that, by that period the Department of Economic Affairs had been set up, and it was now able to carry on the broader economic analysis aspects of the work of the Board. It reached the stage where really the Board was redundant. It was going through academic exercises and coming up with recommendations that had little practical value. To do the things they suggested would have been mere repetition in another form of what we'd already tried to do half-a-dozen times, and the end result would have been the same.

There was also another aspect that led to the Board's ultimate demise. I think it would be fair to say that because they were trying desperately to come up with new ideas and approaches, they did become rather extreme in some of the things they talked about. I know the last two or three reports of the Board were actually embarrassments to the Government. Some of the things they were talking about (even though they were presented merely as discussion papers and not as concrete ideas) were picked up by the media, and became sources of embarrassment to the Government.

I recall a couple of examples. I remember in one report they went into the whole question of the ownership of land. This was a theoretical analysis, admittedly, it wasn't a concrete proposal. But the interpretation that was very easily read into it was that the Government should own all land. That land was a heritage that should belong to all society, and the individual farmer or operator of the land should be on some long-term arrangement that guaranteed him security, but he didn't actually own it. There were a lot of abstract theories advanced as to why this was a fine thing. In the first place, it was completely foreign to anything the Government believed in or would even have considered. And secondly, it was the type of thing that was picked up in the media, who said that the Board representing the Government was arguing that the Government should take over all farm land. This was a pretty impractical and objectionable thing, as far as the Government was concerned. That's one example.

Another one that caused a lot of controversy was a whole thesis in one of their latter reports, on the secret ballot. Again, to be fair to them, most of what was said in the report was misinterpreted or and the ideas taken out of context. They agreed that the secret ballot has all the merits and advantages for which we defend it and recognize it as the best way of getting a public expression, but they had a long dissertation on the issue of responsibility and that the secret ballot was a method whereby the people could avoid the responsibility of standing up and being counted.

For example, you see illustrations of this in some meetings. One case that comes to mind is, for example, a vote on a labour agreement in a union. The individual members often don't want to stand up and be counted because there are strong feelings on both sides, and they're afraid it might prejudice their job, or their standing with their fellow union members. But a secret ballot gets around this, and it's used therefore for very good reasons.

But the Board developed the idea that the secret ballot was indirectly destroying the sense of responsibility on the part of people. Shouldn't they be prepared to say publicly, "I support soandso," and not shelter behind the secrecy of the ballot.

This was a rather innocuous theory, I suppose, but again it was picked up by the press who said, "The Social Credit Board is advocating the abolition of secret ballots for elections."

We had gone through two or three of those things, and they all contributed to the decision to wind the Board up altogether and terminate its activities.

LS: Was the Board a divisive factor within the Caucus?

ECM: Only to a limited extent at that stage. We had gone through all the period of the so-called insurgency. There had been a couple of elections; there were new members; and the membership generally was solidly committed behind the Government to go ahead and try to develop the Province and give sound, solid administration, particularly in resource development, rather than going on repeating the attempts to implement Social Credit monetary proposals.

So while some of the Caucus were sympathetic to what the Board was talking about, it wasn't any great factor, and for that reason it wasn't divisive, other than among the few who became known as the "Douglasites" - the theorists - as against the ones that took the more practical approach.

LS: In this period of time, Mr. Byrne was dismissed, or resigned, or was asked to resign. Also Mr. Ansley, Minister of Education. I'd like your comments on those resignations.

ECM: Mr. Byrne at that time was Deputy Minister of the Department of Economic Affairs. He of course had come to Alberta as one of Major Douglas' emissaries, brought over by the Board in the early years, along with Mr. Powell, who had gone back to England. The Board, in those last years of its existence, was associated with the Department of Economic Affairs, which had really taken over a lot of its functions. So Mr. Byrne was still the chief advisor to the Board, and therefore was primarily responsible for a lot of the ideas that went into the Board's reports.

It was one of their reports, I think the one on the secret ballot, that came out that year. Also, I think it had a reference in it to the land suggestion. The Government of course repudiated that report, but Mr. Byrne (I supposed because of his association with the Board and because its recommendations had come at least in part from his input) defended the Board's report. The Government took the position that you couldn't have the Deputy Minister of the Department taking a position contrary to the Government on a matter of major policy, and so he was asked for his resignation.

Mr. Ansley, who was Minister of Education and who had been one of the very active so-called "Douglasites" in the earlier period, supported not only the Board's report but Mr. Byrne's defence of the report. So I had no alternative but to ask for Mr. Ansley's resignation too. Again he, as a Minister, was taking a position contrary to the position of the Government as a whole. You can't have a Minister remaining a Minister and publicly saying that he disagrees with the policy of the Government. So he was asked to resign.

LS: I get the impression from the sources that I've read that making the request for Mr. Ansley's resignation was more difficult than it was with Mr. Byrne. Mr. Ansley, you felt, was a good Minister of Education. Was that not the case?

ECM: Yes, Mr. Ansley was a good Minister. He was a conscientious man. But away back before the election, at one time, there was quite a serious split in the Social Credit organization, with Mr. Ansley almost the leader of one faction and Mr. Aberhart of the other. In fact, at one time Mr. Aberhart resigned and said he was through, because he was being accused of not presenting the theories and beliefs of Major Douglas accurately. And the chief man who was saying so was Mr. Ansley.

Mr. Ansley had been a teacher, and he was quite a capable man. But he was completely dedicated to Douglas' theoretical approach to things, and he was not too practical a man. He didn't sometimes see the practical problems of implementing some of the theories that he was very strong for.

His resignation was difficult to ask for, as any such resignations are. In the case of a Deputy Minister, he's a member of the civil service, and you just ask for his resignation and that's it.

I recall the incident quite well. When this came up in the Cabinet and the Ministers all agreed (with the exception of Mr. Ansley) that Mr. Byrne's resignation should be requested, Mr. Ansley still defended Mr. Byrne's position and the report of the Board. It was pointed out to him in the Cabinet discussion that he could not retain that position and expect to remain a member of the Cabinet. Some of the other Ministers made a very strong point of that in the discussion. He said he didn't feel that this was any reason to resign; so I said, "Mr. Ansley, I can give you a reason right now. I'm asking you now for your resignation. Now that's a good reason to resign." So he resigned. Then he crossed the floor and he sat as an Independent.

LS: On this issue I have a quote from the Edmonton Journal of June 18th, 1948. We've talked in the past about Professor J. A. Irving, and he is quoted in this Journal as saying, "Premier Manning has conducted a skilfully planned purge in Alberta's Social Credit Government, removing from power most of those who advocated anti-Semitism and religious and racial intolerance of any kind." The article goes on to say, "He said the report of the Social Credit Board advocating abolition of majority rule, of the secret ballot, and of the political party system 'springboarded the 1947 political crisis in Alberta'."

What was the political crisis in Alberta in 1947?

ECM: There wasn't any political crisis in 1947. These were developments that I've referred to within the Board and the Board's approach to things. They weren't crises; they were problems that you had to deal with. I think the rank and file of the public was not particularly interested in it at all. It was more an internal problem that we had to face.

In the Board's reports, there were statements from time to time which provided fuel for those who were arguing that Social Credit and Major

Douglas himself were anti-Semitic. In his later years, Douglas did get much more into the abstract theoretical arguments about world domination of finance, and with great emphasis in his writings and speeches on the role of the Jewish financial leaders in that field. Of course this was reflected in some of the Board's reports and observations, and statements by people like Mr. Ansley and others who took everything Major Douglas said as being the last word of gospel truth.

I remember making a very emphatic repudiation of that type of thing in the House one day, when some issue of anti-Semitism had been raised, or some report of the Board or speech or book of Major Douglas had been quoted. I pointed out that we had absolutely no tolerance for that kind of thing at all, it was foreign to the whole position of the Government, and we disassociated ourselves from it 100%.

Professor Irving's reference to a "purge" is a bit exaggerated. There was no systematic, carefully-developed plan to "purge" the Party. As these problems arose, we dealt with them. They weren't big issues. We were occupied with a lot more important things than sitting down to devise a master plan for purging the Party. The problems were minimal, but they were there, and we got rid of them.

LS: There is one small reference to a Douglas Social Credit Council; I am assuming that was a spin-off of these events. Mr. Kenneth Burton and Mr. John Patrick Gillese were two names that were mentioned with that Council. Do you have any comment on that?

ECM: I vaguely recall that Council. I think it was just what you say - a little spin-off group that formed themselves into a "Council". As I recall, they became active (to what extent they were a factor at all) more in the federal field than they did provincially. In the federal representation of Alberta (which was almost solidly Social Credit in those days) there were two or three men who were very strong so-called "Douglasites". Of course they disagreed with the Provincial Government on the position we took on abolishing the Board and the resignation of Mr. Byrne. This little Council was made up of that group in both the provincial and federal parties.

LS: Was Mr. Low's decision to move to the federal arena a part of this, or not?

ECM: No. That came about in different circumstances altogether. We were all very anxious to see a strong national Social Credit Movement, and they lacked a strong national leader. They went through a period when they had quite a difficulty getting a strong national leader. The federal Social Credit members had been looking for a leader, and certainly we as a provincial organization were concerned that there should be a strong national movement - and you couldn't have a strong national movement without a strong leader. So they were searching for such a person.

Mr. Low had been approached a number of times. He was a strong man, a key Minister in the Government (he had been Provincial Treasurer) and a very capable man. He had been under persuasion for quite a while, to take this on, and he finally agreed.

I think I mentioned in our previous talk on this, there was talk at the time that this was partly because he and I didn't see eye to eye on the refinancing of the provincial debt, which was true. We didn't quarrel over it, but we didn't see alike on it. And I think it was probably correct to say that that disagreement undoubtedly was a factor in Mr. Low's decision ultimately to accept the invitation to take on the national leadership.

I know he wasn't happy in the Provincial Cabinet as long as the debt was unfunded, because he as Treasurer was bearing the brunt of much of the criticism and the attacks that were being levied because of the default in both interest and principal. So I think he wasn't altogether unhappy to get out of that situation which he would have preferred to have had handled by a re-funding of the type that he had endorsed. But when the Government felt we couldn't go along with all that he was prepared to suggest in the way of re-funding, I don't think he was unhappy to be free of that position.

But I don't want to give the impression that that was the main reason. I think it was a factor, to some extent.

LS: I'd like to move on to a broader question about this period of time. I'm going to quote from Larry Pratt's book called Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West. On page 35 of that book, he says:

"The symbolic end of Social Credit as a right populist movement came in the year oil was discovered at Leduc. That year Manning disassociated the Government and Party from the Board after its annual report to the Legislature had discreetly supported Douglas' politically unacceptable ideas. Shortly thereafter, the Board was dissolved and the Douglasites lost control of the Social Crediter. Although Social Credit remained in office until 1971, in Alberta the populist thrust was spent."

I'm interested in your comments on whether you indeed saw (and see) Social Credit as a "right populist movement". Do you agree with his analysis that this period of time was the "symbolic end of Social Credit"? In talking with your son Preston last week, he said that what Pratt was saying here was that anything innovative in government was over at this time, and Social Credit now moved into a maintenance stance. I'd like your comments on both Pratt's and your son's analysis of this.

ECM: Pratt's argument that this was a "symbolic end" is a figure of speech. It really bears no relevancy to what was happening in those days. We had gone through the long period of trying by various pieces of legislation to make some progress in implementing Social Credit monetary proposals, and we had been stymied. While we were accused by many people of being "theorists" for having spent so much effort and time on the Social Credit theories of Major Douglas, if we were theorists we were equally realists as far as the Government was concerned. We reached the point where we felt it was just unrealistic to go on spending the bulk of our time and energy on repeating what had been thwarted over and over again by virtue of constitutional limitations and so on.

Now this didn't mean we had abandoned the principles we had worked for; it didn't mean that we were repudiating them. But as the Government of the people we were faced with deciding what was the most realistic, constructive thing we could do in the interests of the people of the

Province. We were only there and trying to implement the monetary proposals in the interests of the people of the Province. If we couldn't meet their needs that way, what else could we do?

As I've already indicated, before this Leduc period we had long been convinced that Alberta did hold great potential in resource development, and that there was a potential there to improve the economic conditions of the people. And that became the area in which we concentrated to a great degree.

That involved trying to get investment capital for geophysical work, exploration and development work. We tried to get the financial interests and investment firms of Central Canada to interest capital in coming to Alberta for that field - without any success. We sent a delegation of the Government and the petroleum industry to the Old Country in 1938, to try to interest British capital. We had a good reception, but with the threatening War situation, nothing came of that. Then we went after American capital, and we did get a good response there; it was the response in that direction that largely led to the upsurge in exploration and development, and then of course with the War stimulus and the need for more energy, that created an added impetus.

These were the things which led ultimately to the Leduc discovery in 1947. But this was something that was under way long before 1947, as far as the Government was concerned, and long before the Social Credit Board was abolished. It wasn't a matter of coming to a point where we said, "Now we're going to abandon this and go off and be a caretaker government."

But the Social Credit Government did not become a "caretaker government". We tried throughout all the years to be innovative and bring new approaches to the problems we faced. I think anyone would recognize that when a government is in office for a third of a century, a great many of the things that it can think of have been tried, repeatedly. And it does become more difficult to come up with still further new approaches to the resolution of problems. But I would disagree completely with the concept that after Leduc came in we were happy to sit down and count the dollars

that came in from oil revenues, and just become a "caretaker government". That was never the role of the Social Credit party.

LS: Social Credit is often referred to as a "right populist movement". Is that accurate?

ECM: I don't like the terms "left" and "right". I think they're complete misnomers; they mean different things to everyone who uses them. The Social Credit Movement was certainly a populist movement. It was born at the very grass roots; it was dedicated to the welfare of the individual citizen, so it took in everybody; it was definitely a populist movement.

It was branded as "right" because we were strong believers in the free enterprise system as the best method of producing the goods and services needful to take care of the social needs of people. If analysts had wished to, they could have zeroed in on the social concern of the Social Credit Government and argued just as strongly that it had dedication and commitment to the social needs of people as great as or greater than most socialists had. But our approach to meeting those social needs was through the private enterprise system.

So it depended which side you looked at. If you looked at the very strong commitment of the Social Credit Movement and Government to social concern, you could argue that it was committed as far in that direction as the most avid socialist. If you looked at it from the standpoint of the method that the Government believed was the best one to provide the means to meet those social needs, then of course it was what's called "right wing" because it was a strong champion of free enterprise.

Really, if I can jump ahead a little bit, the book I produced years and years after this time we're talking about, on "A Challenge to Thoughtful Canadians" - the philosophy of social conservatism was this very thing that we were trying to practice.

By "social conservatism" we meant that we recognized the absolute necessity of social concern, that that should be the dynamic behind any really

meaningful government - the concern for people. Not "interests", not oil companies, not any interest group, but the people as a whole and their social concerns.

What I advocated in that book was that what we need in this country as a whole is a party that combines humanitarian and social concern (which is usually identified in the public mind with the socialist direction) with the dynamics of a strong, vigorous free enterprise economy - which is the best way of producing the goods and services to meet those social needs.

Now that was really the philosophy we were following in the Social Credit Party, going way back to the time of Leduc.

LS: I'd like to move on to some other events of 1948 for your comments. Apparently in February of that year, Mr. Hooke (one of your Ministers) went to England to put together a program that was to bring 5,000 immigrants to Alberta. I'm interested in why the Government felt that kind of program was necessary. Were we short of manpower in Alberta?

ECM: We faced a situation that had been rather characteristic of this part of Canada and in fact the country as a whole much of the time. We had unemployed as we have unemployed today, but there has been generally in this country a shortage of skilled technicians. We were anxious to obtain that type of person for Alberta in those days because there was the beginning of the upsurge of the petroleum industry, refineries, processing plants, and so on, with a big demand for that type of tradesman. We didn't have an adequate supply of that type of tradesman.

The reason we were going to England was that we already had an Agent General's office in London, and most of the Provinces have, in fact. The Ontario Government in that period brought thousands over from the Old Country, through Ontario House.

One reason for the emphasis on people from Britain was that they were British subjects, and the immigration problem was nonexistent as far as they were concerned, in those days. A Canadian was a British subject

before the Canadian citizenship legislation, so this really didn't involve "immigration" in the sense of somebody from a foreign country coming in and becoming a Canadian citizen. These people were British subjects, and our legislation in Canada (federally and provincially) used to say that in elections, the terms "British subject" or "Canadian citizen" were treated as though they were synonymous.

So all we were doing was using the facilities of Alberta House in London to screen people from Britain that were interested in coming to Alberta, who had the technical skills that we were looking for. And trying as far as possible to have job opportunities available for them before they left England. And as I say, Ontario did this on a very large scale, and some of the others did also.

Ontario had very great industrial needs after the War. For one thing, the War itself had stripped the country of so many thousands of young people. And when they came back, they didn't all want to go back into the same trades, or they went to University. It was quite an upheaval in the matter of obtaining the kind of workmen that you needed.

LS: Did the Government of Alberta continue that kind of program for several years?

ECM: Yes, it went on for several years. I don't remember the total number brought over. We really acted as a sort of liaison through Alberta House in London. It wasn't a matter of the Government paying people to come, or anything like that. We looked after the arrangements, and had men over there that recruited people wanting to come to Alberta to be sure that they had skills that would ensure that they could get employment when they got here. We didn't want people to come who didn't have those skills, because they would just add to the unemployment rolls here, and it wouldn't be any kindness to them. It was a screening process more than anything else.

LS: So the program didn't involve helping to pay their way over here?

ECM: No. I don't recall the details. I think there was some limited help given which was repaid. It wasn't a Government-financed program, although I

think there was some measure of assistance given to some, which they repaid after they got here.

LS: Another item that recurs in this post-War period, in the five years after the end of the War, is reference to teacher shortages in the Province. I'm interested in why there was a shortage at that time, and how the Government responded to that.

ECM: I think the shortage which did develop in that period was due to several things. First, teachers were very poorly paid in those days. Second, there was the growth of the Province and an increase in the number of schools and the demand for teachers. And I think too, partly, in that post-War period there were a lot of opportunities opening up in other areas. And a lot of young people were going into areas of training other than education. Probably in earlier times, education was one of the more stable things because there weren't the opportunities in industry and engineering, and all those things that came along with the post-War industrial and resource development period.

So a shortage of teachers did develop, and the Government took steps to enhance the status of the teaching profession, to improve their incomes, to provide pensions, and things of that kind which were inducements to get more of them to go into the Faculty of Education.

LS: There's an article in the Albertan paper of March 24, 1948. It alludes to an occurrence that we haven't referred to before, although we have referred to Mr. Champion and we have referred to Oil Sands Limited in terms of the pilot project in Fort McMurray. I want to quote to you from that and have your comments: "Opposition Leader Percy Page was unsuccessful in the Alberta Legislature in an effort to obtain an explanation for the appearance of two Cabinet Ministers in a newspaper picture with officials of a company the Social Credit Government is suing." The article goes on to name a number of people, among them Mr. Champion who was president of Oil Sands Limited.

I'm interested in why the Government of Alberta brought a suit against that

company.

ECM: I don't recall the basis of that suit. As we've mentioned in earlier discussions, there was quite a long period and process of evolution of that tar sand activity in the North. Dr. Clark, who had developed the hot water flotation process; Mr. Champion, who was a financier and promoter who came along and got a pilot plant under; the Federal Government took that one over, it didn't achieve anything and they abandoned it; it came back to the Province.

In this process, some issues apparently arose on which a legal action was started. I quite frankly don't remember the particular thing. It wasn't any major thing, I'm quite sure of that.

LS: I'd like to move on then to a Public Accounts Committee inquiry of that year. Apparently there was such an inquiry into the operations of the Treasury Branches, into the Provincial Marketing Board, into something called Marketing Services Limited, and into the Postwar Reconstruction Fund - I believe about the policies of loans.

In the discussion in the newspapers of that time, certain companies are named, such as Golden Fleece Woolen Mills of MacGrath, Clash Foods Limited (and apparently there was a connection of Mr. Tanner to Clash Foods), O'Sullivan Construction Company of Lethbridge. There was also reference to Mr. George A. Clash who used to be Chairperson of the Provincial Marketing Board (apparently it had been suggested that the Board gave loans to a store or business his wife operated).

I don't know if these were large issues or not, but they received press coverage. And perhaps more importantly, why the Public Accounts Committee inquiry at that time?

ECM: There was nothing unusual about the Public Accounts Committee. The procedure that was followed during those years in the Legislature was that during the Session there would be a series of meetings held by the Public Accounts Committee (which is a Committee of the Legislature). And because

the Public Accounts are so extensive, it was mutually agreed between the Government and the Opposition that each year they'd pick out one or two departments and concentrate on those departments, rather than jumping all over the entire public accounts.

The year that you refer to was a year when the selection was of these particular branches of Government - the Marketing Board, Marketing Services Ltd., and so on.

All the Public Accounts Committee hearing involved was that the Provincial Auditor and staff of the Provincial Auditor's office would appear before the Committee and answer questions from the Members. And in preparation for those studies of course the Members (particularly Opposition Members) would go through the public accounts in detail, with respect to the particular departments it had been decided to investigate that year. Investigation wasn't made because there was some particular reason for investigating. It wasn't a matter of accusations of something wrong in the departments, but it was a matter of selecting two or three departments and doing a more in-depth study of their functions rather than jumping all over the place, which had been the earlier proceeding in the Public Accounts Committee.

So that particular year was the year when by mutual agreement the Opposition and Government Members on the Committee had decided to look into the operations of these particular divisions. I think the reasons for selecting them is rather obvious. They, much more than ordinary Government Departments, were primarily in semi-commercial business. The Marketing Board, for example, had depots around the Province, and they bought and sold merchandise. They encouraged the development of Alberta-made goods, made arrangements with industries, and things of that kind. So it had a significant commercial connotation rather than being just a government service department. And naturally the Opposition Members very understandably were particularly interested in being sure that if the Government was involved to any degree in what could be regarded as commercial business transactions, they were being carried on properly. Any slackness was grounds for criticism. So that was the reason for the

inquiry. The next year they'd go on to, probably, agriculture, or something altogether different. But it didn't arise as the result of any criticism; it was a routine procedure.

On these particular ones you mentioned: I recall the Golden Fleece Woollen Mills was a little company down at MacGrath which had been assisted by the Provincial Marketing Board. One of the main things the Marketing Board did with respect to small industries was buy raw material for them, hold it in stock, and then let the industry take it off their hands as they needed it. The reason for this was that for a little industry to buy raw material in little bits and pieces was the most costly way of doing it. If the Government could step out and buy in bulk and stick it in a warehouse, then the industry only paid for it as they took it off the Government's hands, this gave quite a stimulus to little industries.

In this case, I remember the Government had bought a considerable amount of raw wool and stored it. And this little plant that processed it would take it off their hands as they used it. That was typical of the type of thing that was going on.

LS: Do Marketing Boards still do that?

ECM: No, that was Alberta Marketing Services Ltd., and the Alberta Marketing Board, which went out of existence long ago. It was a unique thing. It was a commercial arm of business, both on its own (they had depots where they purchased certain types of goods and made them available even directly to consumers) and through the other division that bought raw materials for little industries. But that ceased long ago.

LS: You don't recall Mr. Tanner and Clash Foods Limited?

ECM: Mr. Tanner was the Member from MacGrath, and I don't know what involvement he would have, other than the fact that he came from there and was probably closely associated with some of the people that were in the company.

Mr. Clash, who was the Chairman of the Alberta Marketing Board and

Marketing Services Ltd., before coming into the Government was a merchant in Medicine Hat. He operated a large business in fact. I think it was a semi-department store, with several different departments, and his wife was active with him in the business. When he came into the Government, of course he divorced himself completely from the business and it went into a family company or something, and it was something that occasionally the Opposition would zero in on. They would try to establish that there must surely be some connection between him as Chairman of the Provincial Board and the fact that the family business was still carried on. But Clash was a scrupulously honest, honourable type of fellow, and there was never any substance to anything of that kind.

LS: During the 1948 Session there were three special committee or commission reports that I'd like your comments on. I'm particularly interested in why it was felt to be necessary to have a special committee or commission on that area, and perhaps some of the recommendations and results of them.

The first was the Judge Commission which had to do with the whole question of provincial and municipal tax bases. I know that the Commission recommended larger school grants from the Province to the municipalities. It recommended taxation on all Crown commercial enterprises apparently, and larger contributions by the Province toward child welfare, indigent relief, mothers' allowances. Do you recall why a special commission was put together? And what happened with it?

ECM: The reason for the Commission was the same reason that has given birth to quite a few comparable commissions in more recent years. With the growth and development that was taking place, the municipalities were finding it increasingly difficult to meet the financial burden with their limited tax base, particularly in the fields of social welfare services. Many social welfare services in those days, more so than today, were jointly financed by the municipalities and the Province. There were long discussions, of course, on what was the appropriate percentage of the cost to be borne by each level of government.

LS: Would that be like hospitals?

ECM: Yes, and relief and mothers' allowances, and child welfare care. They were mostly joint programs. And the reason for that was, I think, a pretty valid reason. I rather regret that they've gotten away from that as far as they have today. The local people (local, municipal government) is the one closest to the people, particularly in welfare and social needs. They know the people better than a government does. It's better, from the standpoint of the quality of service, to have this as close to the people themselves as possible, particularly in the little communities like the towns. If somebody really needed welfare, the town people knew. If he was a chiseler, they knew this. Whereas to some bureaucrat in an office 500 miles away, he was just a figure in a book, and they had no knowledge of him.

That was the philosophy behind it. But as the costs of the services increased, and the number of people increased and services had to be enlarged, the municipalities then as now were very hard pressed to meet the costs. They were constantly pressuring the Government to assume a bigger share of the costs or to give them bigger grants, or take over some of the services - all these different alternatives.

This particular study was a result of that situation. Mr. Judge was later Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs, I believe. He was a government official - it was an internal study. He was asked to do an in-depth study of the financial condition of these municipalities and recommend what changes if any should be made in the allocation of costs. And he came up with the recommendations that you've mentioned.

The Government agreed to pay grants in lieu of taxes on provincial buildings, so it put the municipality in the same position as if it were a commercial building on their tax roll - not necessarily the same rate, but something comparable. There were also increases made in the Government's share of mothers' allowances and a number of services of that kind where the Government took over a bigger share as a result of Mr. Judge's recommendations.

LS: I think it's important and interesting when you state that you felt at that time and still do, that these kinds of social programs should somehow be administered as close to the grass roots as possible. Did your Government continue to try to do that? And if not, why did we move away from that?

ECM: We did continue to do it, to a large degree. The biggest single factor that caused governments to move away from it was the constant pressure from the municipalities for the government to take over most, if not all, of the financial costs. When you get to the place where the Provincial Government is paying most or all of the costs of a service, then you have some very real practical problems of having it administered locally.

If you're paying the bill, you're responsible for it. And if the local people become mere administrators, spending money which is provided 90% or 100% from another source (and I don't say this critically; it's just a general situation that I think anybody would recognize), you do not get the same attention in that administration to the economics, which you would get if they themselves were responsible for, say, 50% of the cost. It's the old story.

If you're spending somebody else's money, a lot of people unfortunately are not quite as careful as if they're spending all or part of their own money. And as the trend developed, with more and more social service costs were taken over by senior governments (not only provincial but federal) there was less and less local administration for that reason. The other government is responsible and says, "If we're responsible, we're going to have our people administering, to be sure the money is properly and wisely spent."

LS: I wonder if there's any way around that.

ECM: One way around it, and it has some difficulties but is one that many municipalities favour, is the straight unconditional grant. But governments are reluctant to do that because again you're paying out money; you're responsible to the people whose money you disburse; and if you give a half million dollars unconditionally and say, "You look after your own

local services entirely," you still have to answer to the people whose half million dollars you turned over to somebody else with no strings attached. So you get attacked from that side.

On the other hand, from the municipality's end, they constantly complain (and understandably so) that they are administering things under the restrictions of other governments. So it's 50-50. There are problems both ways.

Another thought that's just a little off the track, but I think it's rather significant. One of the unfortunate things, I think, that's happened in this country and others. More and more we've moved the social services entirely into the hands of senior governments, and it's destructive to voluntary service.

History shows that where social services are administered and at least in part financed at local level, you usually get a pretty good degree of voluntary supplementary services. The people know they're paying for it. And they know the people - they're interested in them. But it's a local approach. There has been so much good done in the past by auxiliaries of different organizations, churches, service clubs, and so on, which has been done without a single dollar cost to the public purse. But once these services are taken over by senior governments, that seems to put an end to that. People say, "Well, it's far removed from us. It's not a local thing any more. It's administered from 500 miles away, and the government's paying for it. What are we fussing around in it for?" And it destroys public volunteer service.

I think it's a great loss to this country, not only from the standpoint that it saved the public purse millions of dollars in the aggregate. There is something about the quality of voluntary local service which you can't duplicate or substitute for. People who do it voluntarily are doing it because they're interested in the people. It's a matter of genuine personal interest; it isn't just a bureaucrat doing his job and going home at night and saying, "Well, that's that."

LS: It's their neighbour.

ECM: Yes, it's their neighbour; someone they're interested in. I think we've lost a great deal by destroying public voluntary service. And of course one of the bad things about the whole bureaucratic structure is that they in many cases resent voluntary services. I've seen that even in the last few years right here in our own province and city - organizations that were very anxious to do a job in volunteer service who are discouraged from doing it because they're just regarded as a nuisance. "What are you coming fussing around here for, interjecting yourself? We have professionally trained people to do this. We don't want you doing it as an amateur."

LS: It's the age of the "specialist" in that sense?

ECM: Well, yes, it's the age of the specialist. I wouldn't put it quite that graciously. I think it's the age of the trained bureaucrat who thinks that everybody who isn't a trained professional in his particular division is incapable of doing anything worthwhile. That's maybe an exaggeration, but that's the attitude. And this is particularly true in the social services field.

I'm digressing here, but an area that's quite sensitive right now in our own province and city is this child care and day care. I've watched this thing over the years, and certainly there's a lot to be said on the need for improvement of standards and protection of the children from inadequate standards. But on the other hand, we've all seen over the years a good many mothers who have a fondness for children and an instinct for what a child likes, full of love for them - and if you had to make a choice, I'd far rather see a child of mine in a day care centre with somebody like that running it, than somebody who's a highly trained, skilled social worker, but it's purely "these are the rules of the book, and this is what you do." I'm not belittling their skill and training, you need that too, it's vital. But there's a place for the other. And unfortunately, the one drives the other out, and today you've got all kinds of cases right here in our province and city, where bureaucrats have built up regulations (and maybe they had some very valid reasons for them - some case that came to

their attention) to where it has made it almost impossible for the non-professional, non-government-financed group of people to say, "Look, we've got a place here. We can accommodate a dozen kiddies during the day, and we'll take turns at looking after them. We'll love them from the time we get them until we send them home at night." Today, somebody comes along and says, "You've got to have four more windows in this room if you're going to let them in the door. You've got to have a trained nurse in case one of them gets sick. You've got to have a whole string of thing." And they say, "There's no way." So you lose that. It's a sad thing. It's a big loss.

LS: Another report at this time which is in this whole area of social aid and services was something called the Hincks Report. Dr. Hincks was head of the National Mental Health Organization, and was brought in by your Government to look at mental hospitals here. This came out of some criticism which had been levied by an MLA by the name of Williams, about the facilities in Red Deer, Oliver, and Ponoka. Why was the report put together? And, what were the recommendations, and the results?

Secondly, I'd like your comments on why mental health has been a particularly sensitive and ongoing issue in this province, during the Social Credit years of Government, and I believe continuing on.

ECM: We've referred previously to Dr. Cross, who was the Minister of Health in Alberta during 25 years of the Social Credit Government's administration - an extremely capable, dedicated man. He was very committed to progressively improving and expanding the health services of the Province - physical, mental, whatever the need was.

Again, with the growth of the Province the facilities for the care of the mentally ill were inadequate. For one thing, you have to remember that in that period we were still suffering the aftermath of the long period of Depression where there was practically no capital construction of any kind, hospitals or otherwise, because there just wasn't any money to do it. The same with the universities - everything was at a standstill. The facilities were getting old; they were not adequate as to quality or

sufficient in quantity to take care of the increased population and the number of mentally ill patients.

There was criticism, and there's usually criticism in that field. While some of it's unjustified, there's valid reason for the criticism. You never reach an ideal situation in areas of that kind.

Dr. Hincks was the head of the National Mental Health Association, and he was obtained because he was an outside, independent person (we felt that was better than having some internal person) and he was recognized nationally as an authority in the field.

He did a study, at Dr. Cross's request, on the mental health facilities, particularly at the main centres. And he made recommendations for both enlargement and improvement of the facilities. And this was done, not as fast and to the extent that we would have liked to do it, or that he had recommended, but again it was a matter of how many dollars could be diverted to it.

Dr. Cross was very committed to the improvement of the mental health facilities, and he did build up over the years in Red Deer and Oliver, and Ponoka (which was the old institution) a very comprehensive set of facilities.

There has been quite a change in the philosophy in recent years; I think there's argument on both sides. The trend in recent years has been away from the large institutions for mental patients, to more, smaller institutions. This certainly has some advantages, in that you can keep people closer to their loved ones and families rather than being away in two or three big institutions. They are more personal than the big institutions.

On the other hand, there is another side to the question, and it's a matter of trying to get a balance between the two. Particularly in the field of mental health, skilled personnel have always been in short supply. I know Dr. Cross's view was that it was just not possible with the economic

conditions in this part of Canada to adequately staff with really capable people, a lot of small mental institutions scattered all over the Province. If you had fewer of them, you could have a good core of top-flight psychiatrists and sociologists and so on, who are vital to that kind of service.

This is a point on which you'll never get general agreement. Some say, "The answer to that is, spend whatever is needful to generate enough psychiatrists and sociologists to have one in every community." But it's not as easily done as it is said.

Dr. Cross favoured increasing the number of institutions - he favoured the concept of more and smaller institutions - but he felt that the availability of trained staff and the economics of providing quality care dictated the other direction. We did open a few extra ones, one south of Calgary, another in the eastern part of the Province - these were smaller institutions. So that was the outcome of the Hincks report.

You ask about the general situation of mental health, which has always been a controversial field. One good thing that has developed in recent years has been to get away from the old concept that mental illness is a peculiar area of its own, which even carried a stigma. Today the concept, which I think is a far better concept, is that you treat the overall health of an individual as one situation, whether it's physical or mental, or whether his handicap is physical or mental. That's in a sense incidental to his total health care. The concept of looking at the overall health needs, physical or mental, is a good concept.

I think the reason why mental illness fell into a different category, especially in the early years, was the great degree of hopelessness in those days that attached to any adequate or meaningful treatment of the mentally ill. It's not like an illness where the person gets ill, goes to the hospital, and gets better. They don't get better with these other things; many of them are life-long conditions. So that in itself tends to isolate it from a normal illness which has a beginning and a care period and an ending.

Today the attitude is very different. I think the care is improved. I think we're making a lot of mistakes still today, and we will for a long period because this is in a sense still an experimental period. One of the great areas of controversy in our own Province and many other areas including the States is in the area of the mentally handicapped or mentally disadvantaged.

There again, in the area of mental retardation and brain damage and things of that kind, you have two conflicting philosophies. The old philosophy was that many of these patients were best cared for in institutions with specialized supervisory care. The modern philosophy in that particular field (and I'm separating it again from the serious mental illness which requires them to be confined for their own protection and the protection of society) the tendency is to try to integrate them back into society as a whole to the maximum degree.

I have very grave reservations as to how sound that practice is as a general rule. It's ideal for those who are able to be assimilated, who themselves can adapt to that system. And here again, there are no two mentally handicapped people alike. You can't pour them into a common mold. But the disadvantages, and I speak from some rather close personal association in this field, are various.

For one thing, particularly in the younger years of a mentally handicapped child, they don't understand why they can't do the things that other children can do. They want to do what others do, and they can't. And this builds up a terrible amount of frustration on their part. And it also leads them to feel rejected by others, because you can't criticize them - the normal child isn't tolerant of somebody that can't keep up and is always at the bottom of the list, and they show it and bypass him, and it's pretty cruel. It's not intentional cruelty, but it is cruel.

On the other hand, if these children are in an institution with others of comparable disabilities, you have a peer group that's quite similar. They can compete there, whereas they couldn't compete at all outside. They may be able to come out on top, or well up, with another group who have roughly

the same disabilities. And I don't know how you measure the value of that, but I've seen some children who have been terribly warped by the rejection that they constantly face, often by people who would be very gracious and kind to them if they stopped to think, but you can't expect them to stop and think all the time.

So I'm not at all convinced that the present trend is the best trend, if it's made the only kind of treatment. It seems to me that what would be the most advantageous thing in this field is the small institution. I don't like the big institutions; I think they have a lot of disadvantages. You can get a group of 20 of these kids together (it's almost like a big family; it isn't big enough to be an institution) where they can have supervisory care.

This is another area where there is so much misunderstanding. A lot of people think of these institutions as custodial care. These mentally retarded people don't need custodial care. They're not criminals - you don't have to lock them up. But what they do need is supervisory care, because in many cases they're not capable of making decisions that protect themselves. Or put it the other way around - they will do things which can be physically very dangerous to them. But all they need is a little supervision. Sometimes they can't even look after their eating habits; they can't care for their clothing. They need kindly supervision. I think that is the ideal.

We're not getting that today. We have group homes today, a few of them right here in the city, for the mentally handicapped. And they're doing a good job, but there's very little in the way of supervisory care. It's just a place, and there's somebody there, but it's part of the philosophy today that you can't supervise them or you're interfering with their rights. Many of these are not children - they're past the childhood age.

As a result there are some pretty pitiful cases where they're just incapable of looking after themselves adequately, but the measure of success today is, "How many did we get out of the institution?" Well, that's very nice, but I think what many of us are concerned about is,

"Where did they go when they got out?" They may be living in conditions where it's pretty terrible because they're not able to assume the responsibilities that go along with being so-called "integrated into society".

I think we've made some progress; people are more understanding and sympathetic to people who are disabled, both physically and mentally. But there's a long, long way to go yet. These people are not accepted, and often, again, it's not intentional. But because they can't do the things others can do, they become almost a "nuisance" to other people. They have to make special consideration for them, and this becomes an irritant to the "normal" people that are not overly sympathetic.

So I'm very much in two minds about this thing, from our experience over many years in the government and long close personal experience with it. I think that the big institutions of those early days were not the best - I think that goes without saying. The ideal thing is a number of smaller institutions, and for many of the mentally handicapped children, they do not require the top psychiatrists and sociologists. That's not their problem. They have some disability which has been diagnosed; they know what's wrong with them; their illnesses are usually controlled by medication (many of them are epileptic and that can be controlled today with medication quite effectively).

What they need is kind, attentive supervision, in a group that's big enough so they can have a peer interest, enjoy sports together. And incidentally, there's some very good work being done in that field today. They've even got now to the place where there are the "olympics" for the disabled, and it's a tremendous thing. There these people are competing with their peers, and to them that's just as big a thrill as the professional athlete competing with his peers.

But as I say, you need a small institution where there are enough of them to have regular sports and activities that they can all participate in roughly on a peer level. The small institution enables you to segregate them by categories. You don't put a severely mentally handicapped child

with one that's slightly mentally handicapped. You try to get a peer balance. And a great deal can be done in that area, much beyond what's being done today.

LS: I'm not very optimistic personally about moving toward that kind of....

ECM: No, I'm not either. One other thing that's happened in this Province and I guess in many places (and I know this can easily be misunderstood but I don't say it from the standpoint of criticism, just as a statement of what I believe is fact), in the earlier days of these institutions (for example in the Red Deer School Hospital) the major supervisor was a medical doctor, in fact a psychiatrist. The staff was medically oriented, because the children were regarded as having a serious medical problem. They were all on medication, and the balance of medication in those cases is very important.

What has happened over the years is that the emphasis on the medical supervision has almost entirely disappeared. The social workers have taken over. Today the people who operate the institutions are social workers. And no matter how well-trained the social workers are, they are not psychiatrists and they are not medical doctors. And this can be almost a dangerous situation at times.

This again goes hand-in-hand with the trend in recent years to great emphasis on "individual rights" and bills of rights. I know a case personally of a chap in one of the institutions in Alberta who decided he didn't want to take his medication any more. He's over twenty-one, so he has this right. You can't tell him he has to take medication - this is the modern attitude. Well, in the old days, when that institution was run by a good medical doctor, he wouldn't have that nonsense for five minutes. He'd call the lad in and say, "Look, this is vital to your health. If you don't do this, you're going to have seizures; you're going to be in trouble." And 99 times out of 100 he could make the person realize it.

But it does happen today that they will just say, "Well, he's over 21, and he has the rights of an adult. If he doesn't want to do this, what right

have we to tell him he has to, any more than the doctor has the right to tell a patient he has to take his medicine?" This kind of thing can be very, very dangerous.

And the same thing applies in the supervisory care when they're out being "integrated into society". Whatever they want to do, there's very little supervision, on the grounds that "we have no right to interfere". I don't say this applies in the case of little children, but when they get on to the age of maturity, this is the attitude today. So they can go off and do the craziest things which can even endanger their lives, but you don't tell them they can't, because you're interfering with their rights.

I think this is tragic, because these people can't look after themselves. That's why they're there. They haven't the mental development to make wise decisions on their own.

LS: I'd like to move on, just to finish off the special reports. There was a committee in 1948 on the Workers Compensation Act. I'm interested in why a committee was established; the provisions of the Act in the end; and why there was a minority report put forward by a Mr. Lissemore who was a CCF MLA. According to the press coverage of the time, the Speaker of the House rejected the tabling of a minority report by Mr. Lissemore. I wonder if you have any comments on that.

ECM: In the first place, going back before our time the practice was established by the Farmers' Government that there were certain pieces of legislation which would only be amended maybe once every four years - once during each Session of the House. And one of those was the Workmen's Compensation Act. The reason for that was that it's a pretty complicated piece of legislation and it involves all the provisions for injured workmen; it's important that workmen know what their rights are, what the provisions are. If you're going to be changing a Bill of that kind every Session, there's no way of keeping people informed.

Then the amendment would be done by setting up, a year in advance, a legislative committee to receive representations from labour, management,

and anyone who was interested. This focuses the attention of the workman on the fact that his Bill is being examined. If he has some views on it, the representation is not limited to organizations, and any individual can make a representation. By the time the new legislation passed, just about everybody knows it has been changed, and they've become acquainted with what the changes are.

It just happened to be the year for revision of this Act, which took place every four years. The committee therefore was set up the Session before the Act was to be amended. The committees always consisted of members from both sides of the House, a majority from the Government side of course, and a chairman from the Government side. They would hear these representations during the year, and then meet themselves, thrash through all the information provided, and come up with a set of recommended changes in the Act. That was then prepared and ready for the next Session of the Legislature, when it was debated.

Now the case of the minority report you referred to. The minority report was brought in by the CCF member on the Committee - he would be the only CCF one on it because they never had more than two or three Members of the House. As you know, the socialist party has always tried to represent itself as the champion and representative of labour. I think this is a misnomer, because a great many people who are very rabidly anti-socialist are stronger champions of the rights of working people than some socialists are. However, that's been their position.

The task of a committee on that type of legislation is very difficult because in the first place all compensation is paid for by levies on industry - it's not paid out of the public purse. There's no public money in it at all. So while industry as a rule recognizes their responsibility for compensation for injured workmen, they're concerned about the level of compensation because it reflects itself in the levies that they pay. Some of these levies are very excessive.

Industry is broken down into categories for the purposes of the Workmen's Compensation Act, depending on their accident record. This is done for two

reasons. One, it's not fair to charge the industrialists in a non-hazardous industry the same premium as you would charge those in a very hazardous occupation. The other thing is, the fact that they are paying a levy for their category is a great inducement for that category to be safety-conscious and to implement measures for the safety of their workmen. So it's advantageous all around.

But it's hard to reconcile the two positions. Management ends up usually by saying the maximum that should be provided is considerably less than what labour says. In this case, the CCF Member wrote a minority report accepting quite a number of the recommendations of the labour unions which had been rejected by the Committee, or at least rejected in part.

The reason he wasn't permitted to file the minority report is purely a procedural thing. Under the Legislative Assembly provisions for setting up Committees of the House, there is no provision made for minority reports. It is a Committee of the Assembly, and the Committee reports. If a member of a committee wants to write a minority report, he can do it, but he can't officially table it as a minority report because the legislation only provides for "a committee which shall report to the House".

LS: I'd like to move now to the legislation in 1948. Perhaps you could give the name of the Act, in the order you have them before you, and describe anything significant about the background of the Act, and its main provisions.

ECM: The first one is an Act to Provide for Voluntary Retirement Pensions. This was enabling legislation. It created a corporation called the Administrator of the Retirement Pension Fund. This provided that any organization or company could enter into an agreement with this agency of the Government and pay pension monies (usually the employer paying part and the employees paying part) into this pension fund. The Administrator administered the Fund.

The reason for this was that, particularly in small companies, the administrative end of a pension fund is quite a problem. First of all,

they don't have enough money to really have a proper investment program. If you can lump all this money together (which has become a very common practice in recent years) you have a far better investment potential.

This provided a government structure that could accept these funds and administer them. It also provided that the Administrator could provide technical and actuarial administrative facilities for the companies interested in pension plans, make actuarial and other calculations for any employer desirous of considering whether his industry was such that it was feasible to set up a plan. In addition to that, this entity became the administrator of the Teachers' Retirement Fund Act, and also the Municipal Districts Employees' Superannuation Act. There was special legislation for those, but the administration of them now was permitted to come under this Administrator of the Pension Fund.

LS: Is that still the case for the Teachers' pension fund?

ECM: I don't know what's happened in recent years. As long as I was with the Government, the government office had a role in it. It became so large, I think they have pretty well handled their own in recent years. This legislation came in in 1948 when there was very little in the way of pension plans in the private sector. And there would be a period of time when the ones that did come into being would not be big enough to function properly on their own. This was quite an inducement to them to go ahead and lump the money together and let some professional administrator look after the work for them.

The next was an Act to Amend the Provincial Lands Act. This was not a very major piece of legislation, but it did provide that the Minister (in this case the Minister of Lands) was authorized to pay from monies he received from the proceeds of the Department's share of a crop on leased land - where Crown land was leased and payment was on a crop share - a percentage back to the Municipal District or Improvement District where this was located. Again, this is the kind of legislation that grows out of the criticism of local authorities that this is government land, and so they

don't collect taxes on it. In this case, where the payment to the Department was in crop rather than in money, the Act enabled the Department to pay something back to the area where the land was located and defray the expenses that they had.

Another interesting piece of legislation that year was an Act to Incorporate the Medical Services of Alberta. This was a private organization, not a Government thing. A group of citizens had applied to the Government to be incorporated for the purpose of providing pre-paid medical services to people that wanted to take advantage of it. In a sense, this was probably the beginning of pre-paid medical services in Alberta. There was none of that type of thing in existence in those days, except a few companies that had some arrangement with a medical doctor to look after their people and things of that kind. This set up a corporation and authorized the corporation to provide medical services, to levy premiums. It was a voluntary thing. If any person or a company's total staff wanted to join it (maybe with the company paying part and the staff paying part of the premium), it provided the machinery to do it.

LS: Where did the idea for that kind of legislation come from? That's innovative.

ECM: It grew out of the growing concern of that period that medical and health services were inadequate. Up until that time, if you had a medical problem, you went to the doctor and you paid your bill. The hospitals program had developed a little further. Some of the municipalities had hospitals where the municipalities levied a special mill rate for the hospital services, and that entitled the rate payers of that municipality to go to that hospital. They'd maybe not receive totally free hospital services, but a much lower price.

That situation was developing, and the pressures for that kind of service. But this was the first branch off into the medical field. The hospitals moved first, because medical service in those days was regarded as being entirely between the individual and his doctor. So that was really the

start of pre-paid medical services.

In the same year there was an Act to Incorporate the Associated Hospitals of Alberta. This provided a province-wide organization for the hospitals, largely because they saw certain advantages in pooling their experience, and even to some extent in the purchase of supplies. They all had comparable interests and concerns. But the other interesting feature in the act of 1948 was that it provided that this Corporation was authorized to arrange and operate a voluntary plan for the provision of hospitalization on a pre-payment basis. It was called the "Blue Cross Plan" - that was the origin of the Blue Cross plan in Alberta.

LS: Just a further point on these pieces of legislation. Would Dr. Cross have been the person who put them together and brought them forward? Is that necessarily the way it would be?

ECM: He would be the one responsible for bringing the recommendation to the Cabinet where it was approved. Then he was responsible with his departmental officials, for preparing the legislation. I think it should be said that the motivation for bringing it forward came undoubtedly from a number of sources.

One would be his own interest; he was an innovator and very concerned to see medical services made available to everybody at a price they could afford to pay. He was very aggressive himself. Secondly, quite a few of these suggestions would come from, or be augmented by, departmental officials who ran into the practical problems in the administration the little bit of legislation that did exist. And the other would be representations from provincial organizations. I know briefs used to be submitted to the Cabinet from the labour organizations, chambers of commerce, and bodies of this kind would often deal with recommendations for improved and enlarged health services. So it would be a feed-in from all of those different sources.

There was another Act that year establishing an Economic Research Bureau. This was not a major new piece of legislation. Prior to this time we had had in Alberta an active Statistical Branch that compiled provincial statistics. This Act enlarged the functions of the Statistical Branch and turned it into a bureau of economic research so that in addition to keeping statistics it was authorized to make investigations and studies into economic conditions and make recommendations for improvements in any of those areas.

Then there were two pieces of legislation that went hand-in-hand. One was an Act to Create a Department of Lands and Forests, and the other an Act to Create a Department of Mines. What these two Bills did was split into two separate Departments the former Department of Lands and Mines. With the growth of the Province and the greater activity in petroleum exploration and development, and forestry and lumbermills, it became too much for one Department. It was felt it was preferable to split it into two Departments, each of which then had its own Deputy Minister. There were no great changes in the functions or powers of the Department, but it put them under two separate administrations.

For quite a long period, the Minister who had been the Minister of the combined Department was Minister of both these new Departments - that was Eldon Tanner. But each had its own Deputy Minister and staff, so the administrative end was separate, but the Minister in charge was the same.

Then there was an Act which was on rather an inconsequential issue, although in those days it used to get a lot of newspaper headlines - it related to Daylight Saving. It seems rather absurd today when all this is taken for granted across Canada. But in the early days there was a war in Alberta and Saskatchewan every year over whether they would or wouldn't have "daylight saving".

This was largely because in those days the Province was rural-oriented, and the farm population never liked daylight saving. I think many of them

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couldn't have told you just why they didn't like it, just what basic difference it made. To them, you got up when the sun got up and you went to bed when it got too dark to work anymore, and they didn't like this monkeying around with the clock.

It became a very hot political issue again and again. However, this legislation was brought in for a rather more practical reason than that. Central Canada went on daylight saving as a matter of course - it had been established there for years. So some provinces did, and some provinces didn't, and it did create real havoc across the country. If you were travelling across the country (in those days it was largely train schedules, or even plane schedules because the airlines were operating) you might be on daylight saving in British Columbia, standard time in Alberta, standard time in Saskatchewan, daylight saving time in Ontario, and so on.

What this legislation did was to ban daylight saving time unless it was authorized by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council. And secondly, it authorized the Government to approve any plan of daylight saving plan, provided it was approved by at least two other Provinces, or was made national. The idea of this was to try to get away from the different times in Provinces across the country.

Later on of course it was made national, and that put an end to the whole thing.

LS: The other ramnification would be doing business across the country.

ECM: Yes, it was very difficult, particularly for the business and financial people between, say, Vancouver and Montreal and Toronto. Already between Vancouver and Toronto there's three hours' different, and if you had one area on daylight time and the other not, you could have as much as four hours' difference. So as far as getting transactions on the stock exchange, out of a six-hour day you had two hours to do business if you lived in one of the far Provinces.

The Alberta Labour Act was another one that was amended on the same general basis as the Workmen's Compensation Act, with amendment once every four years. It was not applied quite as much as with the other one, but we did try not to change it every year, again because it was dealing with so many people. In this case, the Act was re-written that year, after a lot of hearings and representations to the Agricultural Committee of the House, which is a Committee of the Whole House.

The Act provided for some new things that were not in before. One of the most significant ones was that it permitted employers to discharge employees who went on illegal strikes. And because of this rather broad power being given to employers, it was necessary to look very hard at how you defined an illegal strike. So provision was made in this for court references, which was rather unusual in the labour circles. It was felt that if an employer was going to be able to dismiss a man for going on an illegal strike, in fairness you had to be very certain that it was an illegal strike, not just that the employer or the government said it was illegal. There was provision for a reference to the courts on the legality of the strike; if it was declared illegal, then there was authority for the dismissal of those who went on strike.

LS: Was this legislation viewed as being particularly anti-labour?

ECM: I'd have to say that in my years of experience in the Government, we as a Government were very, very sympathetic right from the outset to the problems and concerns of working people. Certainly in the movement that gave birth to the Social Credit Government, we worked very closely with labour, not just labour organizations (because only a small percentage of the workers of Alberta are organized even today) but unorganized labour. We always felt that the working man was entitled to fairness and justice and equity, and it was the Government's responsibility to fight to get it for him.

We didn't change our thinking on that. We did discover after we got into government that it was extremely difficult to provide as much as organized labour felt they should have, without in our view being unfair to the other

side, the management end, and also risking impairment of the economy of the Province as a whole. We were afraid of creating situations where it was going to cost people jobs. You can put so many demands on management that somebody who was going to start a little business could say, "I can't live with that. It's beyond me." And while this never gets publicity because it's something that never came into being, you know in a government that it happens. They come to you and tell you their problems. And every time that happens, it may just be a little thing that would create 10 or 12 jobs, but it doesn't go forward and the jobs are not created. And labour doesn't realize what it loses, because it never gets off the ground.

So while we felt we were going as far as we could appropriately go, labour branded this as anti-labour because it certainly didn't go as far as labour wanted.

This doesn't come up in this Act, but I remember the thing I'm talking about coming up from time to time in minimum wage legislation. We brought in minimum wage legislation and extended it. At first it was limited to Edmonton and Calgary, and then it was extended to the rest of the Province. And labour never was satisfied with the rates of minimum wages that were set, not only by our government; I don't think they've ever been satisfied by what's been set by any government.

And they can present some very valid arguments about why these rates are too low. But I remember a lot of representations on this where we were quite concerned that particularly with young people (student employment where they were dependent on making a few bucks to get back to school in the fall) if you jacked the minimum wage up, a lot of casual employment was lost. With stores, messenger boys, delivery boys, the merchant says, "I can't afford to pay that; I'll just forget it." So you deprive these kids of a job.

Labour on the other hand says, "You can't live on that." Well, that isn't the purpose of a minimum wage. That's more the purpose of a negotiated wage. The minimum wage is to see that somebody isn't exploited. But if some young person, or older person for that matter, who's out of work and

out of money, says, "Here's a job that pays me maybe \$2 an hour (in those days), I'm willing to work at that to get a few bucks." Then if the Government comes along and says, "You've got to pay \$3 an hour," the employer says, "I can't. It's not worth it to me." So the fellow doesn't get the job.

Now who have you hurt? You haven't hurt the merchant; you've hurt the very people you're trying to help.

LS: I'd like to move into a whole new theme that we haven't really talked about before. In 1947, Leduc is discovered. I'm interested in your description of and comments on the background to Leduc, and some of the "behind the scenes" events surrounding the Leduc discovery. Reactions to it, what people at that time thought, and in particular what you and your Government thought of the potential for this.

ECM: The Leduc discovery was the climax of what had been a very difficult time for the petroleum industry in Alberta. There had been an upsurge in discoveries back in 1939 when the crude oil wells came in in the north end and flank of Turner Valley. There had been a few discoveries around the Province, nothing too significant. Then there was a long period when millions of dollars were spent by the oil companies in geophysical and seismic work all over the place, including the Leduc area, with practically no discoveries - they found some gas, but no oil.

A lot of money had been spent in exploratory wells, and the great bulk of them were dry holes. The petroleum industry was getting pretty discouraged. They had spent a staggering amount of money, for no return. The area around Leduc had been gone over quite thoroughly with seismic research, and written off as not being viable. Imperial Oil had been very active in that exploratory period; they spend millions of dollars. And finally in Leduc they decided to punch down another well, and go to a deeper stratum where the geologists didn't think you'd find oil!

And old Leduc Number One came in. That was a historic day, first because

it was a big producer and the indications from the formation were that it was a significant formation, which of course it proved to be. Secondly, because it regenerated the whole interest in geophysical and exploratory drilling, because this was an area which had been written off by many as not being an attractive place to find oil. Now they'd discovered a stratum below what they'd talked about before, and here was the oil. If this was true at Leduc, how many other places were there that had been looked at and should be looked at again?

So it discovered what became a very major oilfield, and it gave a whole new impetus to exploration and exploratory drilling, which of course led in the next year to the Redwater field coming in, and they never looked back from that time on.

It also had a tremendous impact on the inflow of capital for exploration and development. It had reached the stage, before Leduc Number One came in, where it was getting pretty difficult for the oil companies to talk their boards into allocating more money for exploration in Alberta, because they were getting little result, and no returns.

But once Leduc came in, the whole picture changed. The companies started allocating millions of dollars for exploration and development. So every way you looked at it, it was significant.

Of course, from the Government's standpoint, the royalties on the oil then started to become a factor. It's rather important that this be recognized in history: It was only after Leduc that the volume of oil being produced in the Province really generated enough royalties to become a significant factor in the revenues of the Province. We did have royalties from the Turner Valley naphtha wells and so on, but it was a very minor thing. It was from Leduc on, and particularly from Redwater on, that the volume got up to where the royalties became significant.

I mention that as being significant, because I've read and heard so many recitations of how it was oil that made Alberta, and everything that the Social Credit Government did they owed to oil. We had been in office 12

years before Leduc came in, and we'd started in the depths of the Depression with the Province in bankruptcy for all practical purposes. We had gone through those 12 years without borrowing a dollar of money to run the Province, except a little bit in the first few months we were in office to pay the civil service salaries, and a bit of federal relief money and Treasury Bills. But we hadn't been in the market. We'd put the Province on a pay-as-you-go basis; we had built a lot of roads; we'd hard-surfaced some roads; we'd started a construction program at the University; we'd built a lot of hospitals. And all of this had been done before oil was a factor at all.

I don't say that to minimize the impact of Leduc and the future oil development on the Province, but it's not factual to say that nothing happened in Alberta between 1935 and 1947, nothing happened until oil was discovered. That simply isn't the case.

LS: Do you recall what you were doing, or how the news came to you?

ECM: No, I don't. I remember Mr. Tanner, the Minister of Mines, phoned and told me of the discovery. He was called immediately of course, and he went down with a bunch of his officials. He phoned me and said this well had come in, and it looked as if it had a very good potential. Of course it was some time before it was proven; you can't judge an oil well by what happens the first few hours. But all the oil people felt that it was something big.

LS: That was Imperial Oil.

ECM: Yes.

LS: The newspapers at this time (1947-48) seemed to carry a bit of an opposition stance when they said that the Government favoured a "monopoly of Imperial Oil". What are they talking about?

ECM: I don't know. There certainly wasn't any truth in that. Imperial was a big operator because it was the largest single company in Canada. But

there was no monopoly as far as the Government was concerned. From that time on, once oil became a factor, we put up Crown land for lease by tender, and it was open to anybody to bid on it. It went to the highest bidder, so it was wide open to whoever wanted to bid on it.

In the case of the smaller operators, what they quite often did was go together and half a dozen of them would put in one bid. They couldn't afford to put in a bid individually that would be large enough to compete, but they'd go together and then divide it up; they'd each have a sixth interest in it.

No, I don't know why they would make statements like that. I find it rather amusing because we had been accused quite a number of times by Imperial Oil of discriminating against them. I think you'll still find some senior Imperial Oil fellows that will tell you that we were unfair to them in those days!

Really I think a lot of credit should go to Imperial Oil. They were one of the few that hung on. Quite a lot of them had pulled out, in the period between 1943 and 1947 particularly. They spent a lot of money and got no results, so they packed off to the States and did their exploration and drilling down there. But Imperial stayed with it. They were a Canadian company (a Canadian subsidiary of an American company) with Canadian management, and they had to argue loud and long to get their board to continue to give them the money for further exploration and development in Alberta because of the bad record.

LS: Were you or your Government actively part of convincing the board?

ECM: No, we kept completely out of that. That was their responsibility.

LS: I'd like to refer back now to the book that I talked about early. The author, Mr. Pratt, looks at what he calls the "Social Credit regulatory regime for development". He asks a series of questions in his book, and I'd like to put those questions to you. I'll quote them directly and then

perhaps we can take them one by one:

1. "Why did Social Credit choose certain policy instruments and reject others?"
2. Why did Alberta rely so heavily on legislation and regulations borrowed from Texas and Oklahoma?
3. Did the Manning Government see realistic alternatives to an extreme dependence upon foreign capital?
4. Why did most of the contentious political debate over the pattern of provincial development turn around the export of natural gas?
5. How efficient was Alberta's regulatory structure at capturing rents from oil and gas development?"

Interestingly, he also puts a footnote to all those questions, and says, "Unlike Saskatchewan, Alberta's decision making process must remain a subject for educated conjecture and speculation. We have used interviews and the public record wherever possible to answer certain questions. But until the files for the Social Credit years after Leduc are opened to the public, the answers must be regarded as tentative."

I'm not quite sure about the footnote, but I'd like to go back over some of these questions. His first one was, "Why did Social Credit choose certain policy instruments and reject others?"

ECM: I'm not quite sure what he means by a question like that. As far as the policy of the Government with respect to natural resources development, it was very firmly established from the early years. We recognized that the resources, at least 85-90% of them, belonged to the people of the Province (held in the name of the Crown). Some had been alienated in the years that the Federal Government had administered them.

So our number one policy position was that these resources belonged to the people, and in their development our first responsibility was to get a fair return for the people as the owners of the resources.

Secondly, we were strongly committed to sound conservation; no matter how

much oil we had, we didn't have a barrel to waste if it could be saved. So that any company doing development would have to develop under regulations which would insist on procedures that would conserve the maximum amount of oil and insure the maximum amount of ultimate recovery of oil.

Third, while the Crown owned these mineral rights, we believed that the most efficient way of having them developed was to have them done by the private sector. We were not going to go into the oil business physically. But we would control the rate and manner of development, and the returns to the public from the development, by the terms of the leases which would be made available to private industry for development.

That was our policy from the beginning. I don't know if by "why did we reject others" he means, why did we reject public ownership, which was the Saskatchewan approach. Of course, this man's a CCFer, a socialist, so he was oriented that way. We rejected it because (1) we were convinced that development by the private sector would be far more efficient than the government going into the business, and (2) we (I guess selfishly) wanted to have Alberta cash in on the wealth of experience and expertise which was in the oil industry, and which certainly wasn't in the Government or in any government.

In our view, we were going to get the most for our money, and the most for our people, by cashing in on the expertise of oil companies that had been drilling oil wells for years and had been through all the hassles and problems of development. Our position was not complicated. We rejected policies which we thought were unsound and not in the best interests of the public; we accepted and adopted those which we thought were.

LS: When he talks about looking at "realistic alternatives to an extreme dependence on foreign capital", did you go through a process where you looked at more than the final policy?

ECM: As I mentioned earlier, our preference (could we have obtained it) would have been to have the oil developed by Canadian capital. That's why when we started our efforts to stimulate exploration and development we went to

the Canadian investment houses, to try to get Canadian capital diverted to Western Canada for oil exploration and development. But we were not successful. In that period, the great field of investment for Canadian capital, controlled out of Toronto and Montreal, was pulp and paper in Quebec (a big industry) and mining in Ontario (very, very profitable).

This idea of taking capital and "squandering" it in a "gamble" to try to find oil in Western Canada just didn't have an appeal to Canadian capital. Canadian capital had the first opportunity. It would have been our preference, naturally.

When that didn't succeed, as I mentioned before, we tried to get British capital. And we didn't get British capital, largely I think because of the looming war clouds at the time.

That left us with no other sources, really, except American capital. I think this is the history of American risk capital - they are perhaps among the most willing people in the world to take risks. They are much less conservative in their investment policies than we are in this country, or they are in the Old Country.

LS: He asks questions too about "reliance on legislation and regulations borrowed from Texas and Oklahoma". In our next discussion, we're going to talk more about that, but I wonder if you have any comment on that now?

ECM: Well, I would say that's a most ridiculous statement. Just look at the circumstances. Here was an area of Canada with practically no oil development, and no experience in the field of large-scale oil development at all. Here were Texas, California and Oklahoma, that had been in the oil business for years, that had hundreds and hundreds of oil wells. The states had gone through all the hassles of getting regulations and legislation put in place, with conferences and goodness knows what else, for years.

So we did what we thought was the only sensible thing to do, when we were going to have to produce what we wanted to be an ideal set of legislation

and regulations for exploration and development. Before we finalized anything, we sent our people to those areas of North America where they'd been in this business for years. And I must say, they were most cooperative. They gave us their legislation; they gave us all their regulations. We had reams of the stuff.

It wasn't a matter of adopting it. We took their material, the results of years of revisions and years of experience, and said, "What can we find in this now that's applicable to our circumstances in Alberta?" And that's how we put our legislation and regulations together. We didn't adopt it holus bolus, but we took out every good idea we could find, that was applicable to our situation here.

I don't say this with the intention of sounding boastful, but when I read these amusing statements by socialists who always are anti anything that comes from the United States, for many years (and I think it's still largely true) Alberta's oil and gas development legislation and regulations were regarded as the best in North America. That didn't come from us; it came from other places. In the latter years, the situation reversed, and we were the ones getting inquiries from other parts of North America, to get our legislation and regulations.

I recall one time in Barbados, they were quite ambitious about finding oil. They're not too far from Venezuela. And the Governor of Barbados got in touch with us and asked if we would permit our Minister of Mines (Mr. Tanner at that time) to go down to Barbados with a couple of our key officials in that field, to sit down with their people to draft legislation and a set of regulations for oil exploration and development. Which they did, at the expense of the Barbados government. They could have gone to Texas or Oklahoma, but by that time Alberta was recognized as being the "top of the line" for this kind of legislation.

But we certainly recognized that we owed a lot to the great amount of information we obtained on both legislation and regulations, from the States that had been in the business for years.

LS: Another question that Pratt puts is, "Why did most of the contentious political debate (and that's one question - was there contentious political debate?) over the pattern of provincial development turn around exports of natural gas?"

ECM: I think the media were responsible to a large extent. As far as oil development was concerned, the discovery of oil in Alberta didn't make any tremendous noticeable difference to the purchaser of petroleum products. He had been getting petroleum anyway; it was coming from the States. The person going to fill up his car at the filling station didn't ask "Where did this gasoline come from?"

As Alberta oil was developed, it displaced the imported oil in Alberta, so it wasn't long before we got to the place where we could displace all imported oil coming into Alberta. But it made no difference to the man buying at the pump. In other words, he never stopped to think whether the gasoline coming out of the pump came from Alberta crude or American crude--it had always been there.

Then we took over the market in Western B.C., east of the mountains, and in Saskatchewan and Manitoba - the western region. By that time, you'd reached about as far as you could move the oil by tank cars on trains. And that's when the InterProvincial PipeLine got into the picture, to take it to Ontario. But all Alberta did in that regard was displace oil which was already there.

But the case of natural gas was altogether different. We weren't getting gas from anywhere else. We didn't have gas until we had our own, and people burned coal. Now, natural gas came along, and brought about a fundamental change in their heating habits. Now they used gas instead of coal - this is Alberta gas. Industry started burning gas. It was a fundamental change, so there was a lot more public interest in the gas than there was in oil, because it changed their whole pattern of energy consumption.

Then when the volumes of gas reached the place where we started getting applications from companies to exports some of it (because they couldn't

sell it domestically, the market was saturated) then the media said, as they do today to a large extent, "Oh, don't sent it out of the country. Someday we'll need it." And they made a big hassle in opposition to exporting any gas.

The Government developed the policy which has been in effect ever since, although they've changed the period a little bit in recent years. We had the Conservation Board in place by this time, and we had them do a study of the quantities of gas, proven and potential reserves, the projection of Alberta requirements, and so on. And we said, "Our first stipulation is that no gas will be exported from Alberta until we have a guaranteed supply for 30 years of Alberta consumption. And that will be a rolling guarantee. In other words, when we have enough proven gas to insure Alberta's needs for 30 years, then as new gas comes on we just keep rolling that on to the future. But we always will keep a cushion of 30 years."

We would only authorize for export from Alberta gas in excess of what was required at the time to insure 30 years' supply. When we got to that stage, we authorized exports, as far as Alberta was concerned. Now they had to get federal authorization of course, to go out of the country.

But the opposition was the fear, generated largely by news media, that we didn't have enough gas, someday we'd run out. We had to keep it all. Don't sell any of it. And of course, it wasn't as much in those days, but you had the anti-American negative feeling. Socialists particularly, who didn't want to sell anything to the United States. They forgot that all during the War years we'd have been crippled completely if the Americans hadn't sold us their oil when we didn't have any.

LS: I want to leave Pratt's questions for now, and return to them in our next talk.

I'd like to take a few minutes on the events of 1948. There were two things that happened: There was an election on August 17th of that year, but part and parcel of that election, I believe, was also a referendum or plebiscite on rural electrification.

I'm interested in the background of the plebiscite, and what it was all about, and the outcome. And secondly, the election itself, what you thought were the main issues.

ECM: To deal first of all with the electrification question, by 1948 there had been a lot of progress made in getting electrification into the rural areas. This was a difficult and costly thing, because Alberta farms tended to be on the large side, particularly in some areas, and the problem was not the electricity but the transportation costs which were the big capital expense. If farms were one or two miles apart, that's a long way to build a power line to serve one farm.

After a lot of discussion and debate, it was decided that we would encourage the development of rural electrification societies which were really cooperatives. They would own the rural electrification facilities. They would buy the power from the power companies and they would handle the distribution through their own rural electrification societies.

So that was done, and there were various provisions made to assist them in the initial financing. A lot of these societies were established. And they were in a debate from the beginning as to the price of power - what should they pay the power companies for power. And again, the socialist element (politically represented by the CCF in those days) advanced the same arguments that you've already heard. If the Government owned the power companies this would produce cheaper electricity, and so on.

We favoured the private generation of power. We felt that the private sector was quite capable of generating the capital needed. We didn't want to take Government money and spend it on something where the money was readily available in the private sector. We felt our role was to encourage the rural electrification societies and get the power lines built out into the country, but not to take over power.

Anyway, they made a big pitch for having the power facilities of Alberta publicly owned. So in the election of 1948 we included a plebiscite question (with the election ballot) asking whether the public favoured the

public ownership of power, versus the retention of private ownership. It wasn't really on rural electrification. It was on the public versus private ownership.

And the vote went in favour of private ownership, by a narrow margin. In a sense it's something that points up the weakness of plebiscites. In the urban centres it went heavily in favour of private power. In the rural, it went the other way. So when it was all over, the rural communities said, "It didn't settle anything, because the majority of our people said they wanted it publicly owned." The urban people said, "It settled it because we said it should be privately owned, and we were the majority."

This is one reason why I'm so scared of plebiscites today on national things. Even if a plebiscite carries numerically, if there is a definable region that rejects it, they're still going to say, "It was forced on us by somebody else." In this case, the CCF said, "This wasn't a fair plebiscite. The people in Calgary and Edmonton forced private ownership on the rural communities which, if they had voted by themselves, would have carried it the other way."

LS: What did the Government do in reaction to that result?

ECM: Just went on as we had before. We treated it as a vindication of our position that private ownership of power was what the people wanted. It was best.

LS: What about the 1948 election? It was viewed as a phenomenal success for the Social Credit Party. What were the issues during that election?

ECM: That period was a period of great development, with the Leduc and Redwater discoveries in those years. It had vindicated the claims that our resource base was such that there was great potential there. And we zeroed in pretty much on that aspect of it. The Province had adjusted now, in the post-War period.

There had been a great deal of fear that with the end of the War we would

suffer a serious economic slump. There had been so much activity out here, stimulated by the building of the Alaska Highway, the ^{CANAL} CanAlk pipeline, the exchange of arms between the United States and Russia (they used to fly the planes up here to Edmonton, the Russians would come down and pick them up here), and there were all kinds of activities directly connected with the War effort.

And there was a lot of concern over what would happen when all that ground to a halt. Well, a recession didn't set in. And in part it was certainly helped in Alberta by our Post-War Reconstruction Committee and all this planning that had been done during the War for the post-war period. As far as Edmonton and Calgary were concerned, they just took off population-wise. There was no cut-back at all.

So things were quite buoyant. Everything was booming. And on top of that, Leduc and Redwater oil came in; refineries were being built; there was talk of pipelines to tie these fields into a tank farm, and so on. It was quite a buoyant period in 1948. And we simply said that this was falling into place nicely along the lines that we had talked about - Alberta having an industrial and resource base, the post-war rehabilitation had been generally successful, and we were all set to keep going.

LS: The Edmonton Journal at that time made a statement that really there were only two choices for the voters, either the socialists or Social Credit. They didn't see the Liberals as being particularly strong; so-called "independence" was fading away. Was that your analysis?

ECM: There was some substance to that. What had happened was this: The Liberals and Conservatives had ceased as separate entities when they formed the Unity Party, the Independent Party - it went through a series of names. This was an unholy alliance of people that didn't believe the same things, but had united for the express purpose of throwing out the Social Credit Government back in 1940. They tried again in 1944. they had had no success, and after the 1944 election they were completely disenchanted. The Liberals said, "We'd be smarter to go back on our own." The Tories

thought they were being used by the Liberals to give them a little more support.

So they were in a real process of disintegration. The old Unity and Independent Party collapsed, and the Liberals struck out on their own first. Then the Tories said they had been double-crossed, and they did the same thing. They were in no position to do anything; they had no organization, and had forfeited their provincial identity during the years they had been amalgamated.

The CCF had capitalized on this, and they moved to the fore. They had only one Member, or two at the outside, in the house at that time (LS interjection: Mr. Lissemore and Mr. Roper), but they made a big pitch in 1948. In fact, they even announced the people they were going to have in their Cabinet - they were all set to go.

If I remember rightly, that was the year that Mr. Roper himself was defeated, although it might have been one election later. He was a victim of his own commitment. He tore all over the Province trying to get his candidates elected, and neglected his own constituency in Edmonton - and ended up by being defeated.

They made a big pitch, and they lost completely. That was the end of the CCF here for a long time. It was a bitter disappointment for them, because they felt they were getting some support.

LS: Just to finish off, two small items. One newspaper that in fact was among those personal papers that I received in what I call the "blue suitcase" gives a headline that goes as follows: "Manning 'Deeply Grateful' for Overwhelming Vote". I think it's referring to something you said in your speech right after the election results. The article goes on to say the following: "It (the election victory) washed away for one night at least the look of over-tiredness Canada's youngest Premier has been unable to hide as he nursed his health these past months". Were you unwell during this period of time?

ECM: No, no. That's just some newspaper guy that didn't have a good story that day. I'd be tired at the end of an election campaign, and would look tired, but it wasn't anything other than just working 16 hours a day for 6 weeks.

LS: This wasn't a recurrence of an earlier illness?

ECM: No.

LS: Finally, in that same year, you received a U. of A. honorary doctorate of law. Was there any repeat of the kind of circumstance or discussion that Mr. Aberhart went through?

ECM: No.

LS: Any reference to it?

ECM: Not that I know of. I had been approached before this, and had refused on the grounds of the way they'd treated him. But there had been changes. We'd gone through another election, we'd been elected in our own right. And there had been changes at the University. They said, "We really want to do this. This other thing had no endorsement from any of us that are there today. It was a mistake; it was wrong." I felt it wasn't fair to hold that against the then administrators, so I said, "Okay."

LS: It was an honour.

ECM: It was. I appreciated it. They asked me to give the Convocation talk that year.