This being the day appointed by Proclamation of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, dated the twenty-fifth day of January, 1972, for the meeting of the Second Session of the Seventeenth Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan, and the Assembly having met:

Mr. Speaker informed the assembly that he had received a communication from the Private Secretary to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor stating that His Honour would open the Session at three o’clock p.m. today, Thursday, the Twenty-fourth day of February, 1972.

3:07 o’clock p.m.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber and, having taken his seat upon the Throne, was pleased to open the Session with the following Speech: —

Mr. Speaker,

Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is my privilege to welcome you to the Second Session of the Seventeenth Legislature of Saskatchewan.

My Government will proceed at this Session to enact legislation in fulfilment of its four-year program, which was presented to and endorsed by Saskatchewan electors in June of 1971. The changes contemplated in that program are significant. Many important pieces of legislation will be laid before you.

To enable my government to implement its program you will be asked to approve major changes in the organization of Government.

THE ECONOMY

The year just past in Saskatchewan has been a year of partial economic recovery. Almost all indicators showed a marked improvement in the Saskatchewan economy in 1971, compared to 1970.

Yet, in spite of improved economic performance, unemployment continues to be a serious problem. Although the unemployment rate in Saskatchewan as measured by Statistics Canada is characteristically lower than the Canadian average, it remains far too high – particularly among younger people.

EMPLOYMENT

Immediately upon taking office my government took emergency action to create jobs.

On my Government’s initiative, millions of dollars in provincial public works projects were accelerated to provide employment during the winter months. When the Federal winter
works program was belatedly announced in October my Government, with the full co-operation of local governments, made a maximum effort to generate more job-producing projects.

In addition to the Federal program, my government has committed more than $10 million in provincial funds to loans and grants for winter works.

In total, it is estimated that the combined Federal-Provincial Municipal effort will produce over 13,000 man-months of employment this winter in Saskatchewan.

In the year ahead, my Government will take a series of steps to create new jobs, particularly for young people.

New programs will be introduced to provide employment for students and other young people seeking work in the summer months.

Provincial investment in public works will again be increased.

Park and recreation development will be carried forward in many parts of the Province.

In order to stimulate house construction, the house builders’ grant program will be continued, but with a new emphasis on assisting those on low incomes.

Contingency plans for special municipal and local work programs for the winter of 1972-73 will be formulated during the summer. This will enable local governments to plan their projects more effectively, and provide even more jobs, than was the case this winter.

AGRICULTURE

There are encouraging signs in the farm economy. Crop yields were high in 1971. Cattle numbers and prices increased, and hog prices improved. Wheat exports regained lost ground.

In recent months, my Ministers took the initiative in bringing together their colleagues in the two neighbouring Prairie Provinces to make common cause with respect to agricultural problems and policies.

My Government welcomes the announcement that the Federal Government intends to inaugurate a two-price system for wheat. This will introduce a greater measure of equity in the farm price for wheat destined for domestic consumption.

My Ministers in co-operation with their prairie colleagues will, however, continue to urge upon the Federal Government the pressing need for a grains income stabilization plan which recognizes the impact of farm production costs.

Many serious and chronic problems continue to beset agriculture. My Government is dedicated to use its full powers to move toward solving these problems and to strengthen the family operated farm.

To ease the transfer of farm lands from one generation to the next, and to facilitate the entry of young men into farming, you will be asked to consider legislation establishing
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a Land Bank Commission.

The signal success of the first Western Canadian Agribition in 1971 won international recognition for the Saskatchewan livestock industry. My Government will take steps to encourage further development of that industry.

Legislation will be introduced to provide for veterinary inspection of all feeder cattle and hogs sold at auction.

You will be asked to extend The Livestock Loans Guarantee Act and to approve a program to assist in the construction of veterinary clinics.

Uncertainty in prices for feed grains has hampered both livestock producers and grain producers. Legislation will therefore be introduced to provide a measure of price stability in the marketing of feed grains.

My Government has noted with approval the rapid increase in rapeseed production. You will be asked to approve amendments to The Margarine Act which will encourage greater utilization of rapeseed oil.

To assist dairy producers, you will be asked to provide funds for grants to encourage the production of manufactured milk.

Legislation will also be introduced to provide a more equitable method of determining compensation to farmers for surface rights acquired by mineral producers.

INDUSTRIAL AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Although there has been considerable improvement in retail sales in the past year, my Government continues to be concerned about the problems faced by small businessman, particularly in our towns and villages. Legislation will be introduced to provide new services and financial assistance to merchants and business concerns.

Earlier, my Government restored the option of net royalty bids in the disposition of oil exploration leases. Further measures will be placed before you to increase the returns to the people of Saskatchewan from the production of mineral wealth in the Province.

Construction of an all-weather road through the heavily mineralised section of northeastern Saskatchewan to the uranium mine under construction at Rabbit Lake will be undertaken this year.

TAXATION

My Ministers have had many consultations with the Federal Government over the past months concerning the extensive changes recently approved by the Parliament of Canada in the Federal tax system.

As a result of these changes, you will be asked to approve complementary provincial income tax legislation.

The Federal Government has withdrawn from the estates tax and gift tax fields in favour of the Provinces. Legislation will be introduced to occupy these tax fields with provincial
succession duties and gift taxes.

You will also be asked to approve amendments to The Education and Health Tax Act.

**FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS**

The present Canada Fiscal arrangements Act expires at the end of the current fiscal year, and it is anticipated that new Federal legislation concerning tax sharing will be enacted in the coming weeks.

My Ministers have urged the Federal Government to broaden the base of equalization payments to the less wealthy Provinces by including municipal revenues – particularly school revenues – in the new formula.

My Government is alarmed at suggestions that such tax sharing arrangements are unconstitutional. My Ministers are preparing to defend with vigour the constitutionality of these arrangements. A constitutional secretariat will be established to protect Saskatchewan’s interests in these matters.

**CONSUMER PROTECTION AND INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS**

Major moves are planned to extend consumer protection, enhance individual rights and protect civil liberties.

Legislation will be introduced to establish a new Department of Consumer Affairs.

You will be asked to approve measures to control pyramid selling, to protect against unscrupulous vendors of privately operated training courses and to permit review by an individual of files of credit reporting agencies which pertain to him. Other legislation will be introduced to give greater protection to consumers in their credit transactions.

Legislation will be introduced to establish a Human Rights Commission and to provide for an Ombudsman.

You will be asked to lower the age of majority to 18.

My Government also plans to assist people seeking answers to their problems of requiring information from Government agencies. An information and referral centre will be established, with toll-free telephone service from any point in Saskatchewan.

**YOUTH, CULTURE AND RECREATION**

My Government recognizes the need to assure that the multi-cultural and recreational activities of the people of Saskatchewan are freely developed as a dynamic source of creativity for all our residents. Accordingly you will be asked to approve legislation establishing a new Department of Culture and Youth to co-ordinate and advance these aspects of our community life.

To provide a further incentive for our young athletes, you will be asked to approve funds for the Saskatchewan Games, to be held in the summer of 1972.
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ELECTORAL BOUNDARIES

To remove the fixing of constituency boundaries from the influence of partisan politics, you will be asked to approve a Bill establishing an independent electoral boundaries commission.

ENVIRONMENT

My Government intends to take comprehensive measures to preserve and enhance our natural environment.

You will be asked to approve legislation establishing a Department of the Environment, consolidating existing pollution-control functions and expanding monitoring and research capacity.

A concerted effort will be made to recover and recycle derelict automobiles now scarring the landscape.

You will be asked to approve funds to provide grants to farmers to control pollution from livestock operations.

NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

The development of Northern Saskatchewan in the interests of the people who live there is a matter of prime concern to my Government. Of equal urgency is the provision of opportunities for developing human resources in all parts of the Province – particularly among these persons outside the mainstream of the majority society.

You will be asked to approve legislation which will make possible sweeping changes in my Government’s approach to the people of the North and the problems of northern development.

Legislation will also be introduced to abolish the Saskatchewan Indian and Métis Department. You will be asked to approve the establishment of a new Human Resources Development Agency, which will be concerned with all disadvantaged people, in whatever circumstances.

CO-OPERATIVES

My Government believes that co-operatives and credit unions have an important part to play in the life of our Province. Steps to strengthen the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development will be proposed.

In the coming year credit unions will be relieved of payment of inspection fees levied heretofore by the Department.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Legislation will be introduced to facilitate the inclusion of chiropractic care as an insured health service.

Promising methods of procuring and distributing prescription drugs and hearing aids at greatly reduced prices are under intensive study.

It is my government’s intention to emphasize health
services rather than sickness services. To this end, improvements in the delivery of health care are being planned.

You will be asked to approve funds to increase payments under the foster home program and to improve the ratio of welfare staff to clients in regional offices.

**EDUCATION**

In the current fiscal year, my government introduced Saskatchewan’s first bursary program for post-secondary students. You will be asked to approve legislation which will provide increased aid to students and to expand student bursaries.

To prepare for the creation of community colleges, and to administer the province’s participation in all phases of university and other post-secondary education, legislation will be introduced to establish a Department of Continuing Education.

The year ahead will see expansion in the technical institutes at Moose Jaw and Saskatoon, and the opening of the first phase of the Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences in Regina.

Establishment of the Lakeland regional library system is scheduled for the coming year, to serve the area from North Battleford to Lloydminster. This is the sixth of seven regional libraries required to serve the entire settled area of the Province.

**LABOUR**

My Government has already taken steps to improve the lot of working people. Legislation will be introduced at this Session to raise benefits under the workmen’s Compensation Act.

You will also be asked to approve legislation which will promote industrial harmony by strengthening conciliation, mediation and arbitration procedures.

**MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS**

Legislation will be proposed to assist my government in dealing with the growing problems of urban centres.

**ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

A quarter of a century ago, the Government of that day pioneered the development of no-fault accident insurance. Today, my Government believes that it is time to expand that concept.

You will, therefore, be asked to approve legislation providing major increases in benefits to persons injured in automobile accidents, including a 40 per cent increase in weekly indemnity payments.
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NATURAL GAS

In the year ahead the Saskatchewan Power Corporation will accelerate its program of extending natural gas distribution to smaller communities in the Province.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

My Government is pleased with the diligence and thoroughness with which the two special committees of the Legislative Assembly have undertaken their tasks. Careful consideration will be given to their recommendations respecting agriculture and crop insurance, and concerning changes in liquor regulations.

1973 CELEBRATIONS

My Government looks forward with anticipation to 1973 as a year to be marked with special celebrations in Saskatchewan.

1973 will be the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, an event which holds particular significance.

1973 will also mark the 100th anniversary of treaty Four between Her Majesty and Indian bands in Saskatchewan.

My Government is pleased to lend its support to the Silver Broom International Curling Championships which will be held in Regina in 1973.

My Government commends 1973 to the people of Saskatchewan as a year to be celebrated, and my government will use the occasion to give increased emphasis to the developing tourist industry.

The Public Accounts for the fiscal year, together with the estimates for the year commencing April 1, 1972, will be submitted to you.

I leave you now to the business of the Session with full confidence that you will favourably discharge your duties and responsibilities.

May Divine Providence continue to bless our Province and guide this Legislature in all its deliberations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APPOINTMENT OF CLERK ASSISTANT

MR. SPEAKER: — I beg to inform the Assembly that Ian Peter Phillips, Esquire, has been appointed Clerk Assistant during the present Session.

INTRODUCTION OF PAGES

MR. SPEAKER: — I would also inform the Assembly that Randy Austring, Joanne Nelson, Joanne Neuman and Bryan Cox will be pages during the present Session.

The Assembly adjourned at 3:34 o’clock p.m.