

December 5, 1986

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Clerk: - According to order and under rule 11(7) I hereby present and lay on the table the following petition of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities praying for an Act to amend its Act of Incorporation.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Consolidation of Government Departments

Mr. Shillington: - My questions is to the minister responsible for the Public Service Commission. It has to do with hints in yesterday's throne speech that while this government has millions of dollars for the Peter Pocklington of the world, it can't find money to maintain jobs and provide adequate services in this province.

When the throne speech talks about plans to consolidate government departments and agencies, is that not, Mr. Minister, a code phrase which means that a number of public services workers are about to be unemployed? Doesn't consolidation means a loss of jobs, and why would you brag about putting people out of work?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: - Mr. Speaker, no, it is not a code word for anything. What it is is a commitment on behalf of this government to provide efficient and effective service for the people of Saskatchewan - nothing less and nothing more, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Shillington: - Supplementary. In light of the comment in the throne speech about inviting individuals and firms to compete for the delivery of specific government services, can the minister confirm that this means a contracting out of public services and giving a number of public servants the option of transferring to the private sector?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: - Mr. Speaker, where there is some efficiencies, some dollars to be saved, an opportunity to be even more effective than the current method of providing that service, if contracting is a viable option, that's one that will be looked at because all we are interested in is being as efficient as possible, as effective as possible, and using the taxpayers' dollars as wisely as possible

Mr. Shillington: - Can the minister tell the taxpayers of Saskatchewan whether or not this contracting-out plan is based on the Highways department model - the model whereby hundreds of workers were fired, equipment was auctioned off at a fraction of what it was worth, and the highways have continued to deteriorate ever since. Is that the model that the government is using?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: - Well there is no special model, and the instance that the hon. members refers to and his view of the facts as far as what happened there, his view and my view might differ, Mr. Speaker, and all I can say is that it will be proceeded with on an instance by instance basis, if you like, and where it makes most sense.

Mr. Shillington: - Well does an instant by instant case mean that, as was the practice with this government in the past, you're flying by the seat of your pants, or has this government done any studies about the economies of contracting out? And if those studies have been done, will you table them?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: - Mr. Speaker, insofar as how we proceed on this, as the hon. member full well knows, the throne speech lays out the broad framework. The details on how it will be done will be fleshed out and in fact, Mr. Speaker, as they themselves suggested yesterday, it might be wise for us to consult with some others - others in the industry, others in Saskatchewan - as far as how one might pursue it and in what areas that it might make most sense. So consultation and co-operating with others out there might well be a trade mark of how we approach this.

Mr. Shillington: - Thank you. I take it from that that no studies have been done. One final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Is this kind of privatization of the public service not really just an attempt by the PC party to rid itself of professional public servants, whom you have tried buy failed over the last four years to manipulate, and replace them with private contractors who will have to be regular contributors to the PC Party in order to get these contracts?

Hon. Mr. Hepworth: - No.

SaskTel Contracting Telephone Repairs to Alberta Firm

Mr. Lyons: - Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My first question in this House is directed to the minister responsible for Saskatchewan Telephones and, Mr. Speaker, it deals with an example of contracting out of public services. I have here photocopies of SaskTel invoices, invoices that show that SaskTel paid more than \$67,000 between January and early April of this years to a Calgary firm, a Calgary, Alberta firm named Palco Telecom Limited, to repair and refurbish telephones.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of work that can be done right here in Regina and is being done, in fact, by SaskTel employees at the corporation's depot here. But in recent months more and more of that work has been going out of the province as part of SaskTel's contracting-out policy. Can the minister explain how this contracting-out policy is good for Saskatchewan when it is shipping jobs and tens of thousands of tax dollars to Alberta?

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane: - Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll take notice of the question and get information for the hon. member. I would expect in a case like this that it's probably highly specialized equipment that may require some special expertise that we may not have. If that's not the case, I'll be glad to take a look at the matter. SaskTel, as other Crown corporations, do have specific instructions under the new government policy to serve Saskatchewan, and if that policy is not being compiled with, appropriate action will be taken.

Mr. Lyons: - Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Given that the minister referred to more complex equipment, I see here by the invoices that the complex equipment he's referring to are Contempra telephones which are being done here at the depot in Regina. They're being done, Mr. Minister, at a cost less than that of the cost being done by the Alberta firm. Why is it, Mr. Minister, that when Saskatchewan is the only province between November of this year and November of last year which has fewer people working, are you shipping jobs out to your Tory friends in Alberta?

Hon. Mr. Lane: - Well I'm glad the hon. member mentioned employment, and it's with a great deal of

pleasure that the people of Saskatchewan have noted today that Saskatchewan has the second-lowest unemployment rate in Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Lane - I suggest to the hon. member that the reasons for that are the policies of this government, and we can compare our record with that of any other government of Canada, and I think we stand up well, given the fact that we are a resource- and agricultural-based economy.

I've indicated to the hon. member that I will take notice and report back to the members, that if the repairs are being done and not source Saskatchewan as contrary to policy and, and I said, appropriate action will be taken.

Mr. Lyons: - Supplementary to the minister. Policy, Mr. Minister, is obviously not being followed in this case; it's not being followed as recently as the 18th of November — the 18th of November. I have here a photocopy of a very recent work order to the tune of \$68,000 worth of work which went to the Conservative Palco telephone firm. Will you say before this House that . . . will you give a commitment to this House that in fact all work done by Palco telephones will be transferred to the Regina depot?

Hon. Mr. Lane: — Obviously I'll want to know what the work is being done first, and I think that . . . I would caution the new member not to fall into the trap of believing some of your old members, that all work done for the Government of Saskatchewan is done by Conservatives, and if you happen to believe that I'm sure that you may have — and I know you're a new member — inadvertently insulted a great number of Saskatchewan contractors, Saskatchewan small business, that do a lot of work for the province of Saskatchewan.

I know that the hon. member is new and probably will apologize for his statement when the facts are there. I have indicated what the policy is; it is to source Saskatchewan. And if the corporation is not carrying out the policy, I've undertaken to report back to you. I've now said that three times. I will take notice. I will report back to you. I've indicated to you what the policy is, and I'll try and get the answer for you. I've indicated that now three times.

Appointment of President of SPC

Ms. Simard: — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Power Corporation I'd like to direct this question to the Premier. It deals with the appointment of George Hill as the president and chief executive officer of SPC. I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, when Mr. Hill's appointment takes effect; what salary and fringe benefits will the former PC Party president receive in his new government job?

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Mr. Speaker, I will consult with the minister responsible for Sask Power to find out exactly when the new president takes office. I believe that it's, if not by the end of the year, early in January or February. But I'll get that information and, as well, any other financial information that is appropriate for members of the Crown corporation. I know some of it is, and some of it is not made public, but whatever is normally made public, I'll provide to the House.

Ms. Simard: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In 1982 the PC Party promised to de-politicize Crown corporations, and I'm wondering how the appointment of a former president of the PC Party to the top administrative job at the biggest Crown corporation in Saskatchewan de-politicizes the Crowns.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as you know, we want to hire the very best people possible in the province of Saskatchewan and put them into Crown corporations, and in this case the very best happens to be a Progressive Conservative. Obviously, in a democracy . . . I heard, Mr. Speaker, people across the legislature speaking about democracy and tradition yesterday at some length, and surely they wouldn't deny anybody from any political persuasion to be appointed to a Crown corporation. I mean that's the essence of democracy.

An Hon. Member: — Or to the bench.

Hon. Mr. Devine: — Or to the bench, or to any other place in society. So, Mr. Speaker, I would say that we have looked all over the country, we have consulted with people, and Mr. George Hill comes with high qualifications as a man who has been on the bench, a man who has been an active lawyer in this province, and a man who has been a Progressive Conservative.

Now he is a very talented individual, he has management skills, he was chairman of the board of Sask Power. He has worked on and initiated projects like the Rafferty dam, completed the Nipawin power project, and many other things. So he's a man of extensive qualifications and I am very proud to say that we have a first-class individual, Saskatchewan individual, as president of Sask Power.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Simard: - Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. The Premier appears to be denying that Mr. Hill's appointment will politicize the Power Corporation. Yet in recent days, even before Mr. Hill is officially in his job, he's fired a long-time professional public . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Does the member have a supplementary? And if you do, please get to it quickly.

Dismissal of Employee from Sask Power

Ms. Simard: - New question, Mr. Speaker. I'm wondering if the Premier's aware that a long-time professional public servant, Mr. Don Moroz, has been fired from the Saskatchewan Public Corporation. And I'm wondering if he can explain why the former president of the PC Party decided to fire this professional public servant.

Hon. Mr. Devine: - Mr. Speaker, I read in the newspaper that the employee resigned from Sask Power and beyond that, I mean, I can't comment. With respect to the activities that go on in Sask Power, I would refer to the minister or to . . . well, the minister of Sask Power to provide additional information.

Fiscal Responsibility and Political Integrity in Government

Mr. Goodale: - Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. With the recent election campaign still fresh in our minds, the Premier will know that I have a keen interest in those references in Wednesday's throne speech to fiscal responsibility and political integrity.

Consistent with the government's commitment to high ethical standards in public office, which is the language used in the throne speech, and in response to the Premier's general invitation for constructive opposition suggestions, I wonder if the Premier will present proposals, or would he support proposals presented by the opposition to, first of all, curtail political advertising by government; secondly, to require proper tendering and competitive bidding on all government contracts; and thirdly, to implement

a public review process to examine all patronage appointments before they come into effect.

Hon. Mr. Devine: - Well, Mr. Speaker, I will say to the hon. member that we would be glad, and I would be glad, to look at any suggestions that members of the opposition bring forward to make sure that tenders are fair and that advertising is appropriate, or anything else that goes on with respect to the Government of Saskatchewan. As the hon. member probably knows, virtually all large contracts are tendered, smaller contracts usually aren't, across Canada. From province to province it may vary to some degree with respect to the exact amount. But we would be glad to look at it.

I share many concerns with respect to the advertising that went on in Crown corporation that just advertised the Crown corporation, information advertising on new programs for farmers and new programs for students, pension legislation and so forth. I believe there's a very good role for the public sector to inform people how to get at it.

If people think there is political advertising done by the government, then I would be glad to discuss it here or to review it or to look at it. But information to the public, I believe a government has a responsibility to inform the public of new programs and new ideas and access to information that they want to have. But marketing a Crown when it's a monopoly, probably that is political, and I don't agree with it.

Mr. Goodale: - Mr. Speaker, on that final point mentioned by the Premier in relation to government advertising, I wonder when he might be in a position to provide the House with a figure, in detail, on the amount of money spent by the government, particularly during the summer of 1986, in respect of a whole range of government advertising programs that appeared to be, when you added up all the various modes - radio, television, direct mail, all of that - appeared to be a rather enormous flood of advertising. I wonder when the Premier might be in a position to provide some detail on that, including the overall total cost to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Devine: - Well, Mr. Speaker, we would be glad to. And I believe that there is a process where we can put requests in on order papers so that you can get the information. And we would be glad to fill it out and provide the hon. member with as much information as we have now. Obviously when we get into estimates in the new year, we'll provide complete packages of how much the advertising is year after year after year, as we always do.

So if the hon. member wants to put the request in, we can put our officials as it and we can provide the information, or as much as we have, as quickly as possible.

Status of Ex-Cabinet Minister

Mr. Solomon: - Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation. It deals with the status of one Sid Dutchak who the people of Saskatchewan fired on October 20 from his position as a PC cabinet minister.

Mr. Minister, you referred to Mr. Dutchak as 'your helper' when you announced his temporary appointment to head up the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and you were quoted as saying, "Mr. Dutchak is doing all of this out of the kindness of his heart."

Can the minister confirm that Mr. Dutchak is now on the public payroll, and can you tell this Assembly what Mr. Dutchak's duties and salary are.

Hon. Mr. Klein: - Mr. Speaker, at the time that I assumed my responsibility we lacked a president at Sask Housing, and we were in the middle of one of our most successful programs in the last four years, our home program. That corporation is involved presently in creating some 60 brand new jobs a day. We estimate that probably 4,000 jobs have been created in the last few months. With the extreme success of that program it has generated some \$230 million of activity. Those figures are starting to reflect now in the new unemployment insurance figures that have just recently been announced.

As a result, we needed somebody over there that was familiar with the program, that was familiar with the senior management that was in place. Mr. Dutchak was available, and we're very delightful to say that he came with us for a 90-day period and he's running the corporation in a solid and efficient manner.

Mr. Solomon: - Supplementary, Mr. Speaker, is the minister of Sask. Housing telling us, and Saskatchewan people, today that there were no professional public servants within the corporation capable of taking over as acting interim president?

Hon. Mr. Klein: - Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that senior management itself was looking for guidance and they welcome the opportunity to work with Mr. Dutchak. He's highly respected by the business community. As a matter of fact he's pretty highly respected by the people of our province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Solomon: - When and how will the government move to fill the job of Saskatchewan Housing Corporation president on a permanent basis, and to your knowledge will Mr. Dutchak be a candidate for this job?

Hon. Mr. Klein: - Mr. Speaker, I can hardly speak for other people, but I can tell you that there is a search presently under way for the presidency of Sask Housing Corporation.

Mr. Solomon: - Final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Was the position advertised, that Mr. Dutchak now holds, in any fashion, even within the corporation, or did you just decide on your own that Mr. Dutchak was the best man for the job?

Hon. Mr. Klein: - Mr. Speaker, in most instances searches are conducted for the presidency, not only of major Crown corporations but of any major corporation throughout the country, and we are presently conducting that search. And it's not a matter of advertising in your favourite reference material, the Regina Leader-Post, and hoping somebody's going to come out of the woodwork. We are doing a thorough, positive, professional approach, and in due course we will announce a president.

Mr. Solomon: - Is the Minister for Sask Housing then telling us that all of the former Conservative MLAs will be eligible for all the jobs to heap up Crown corporations and government departments in the short future?

Hon. Mr. Klein: - I really don't know how to respond to a question like that short of saying, I suppose if our former MLAs applied through the proper channels when a search was being conducted, I'm sure they would come out shining and be very good candidates for almost any kind of job that they might apply for, Mr. Speaker.

New Electoral Boundaries Act

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: - Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier and it deals with the announcement in

Wednesday's throne speech that the government has a plan to introduce, and I quote, "a new electoral boundaries Act." Mr. Speaker, I was puzzled because it will be known that there is already on the statute books a process for constituency redistribution, and its two principles are that there shall be an independent commission chaired by a judge chosen by the Chief Justice, and the basic principle is: one person, one vote.

Can the Premier tell us why he is calling for a new Act, and which of those principles — the independent boundaries commission headed by the judge, or the one person, one vote - is unacceptable to him so that he needs a new Act?

Hon. Mr. Devine: - Well, Mr. Speaker, we're introducing new Act, not to address either one of those principles, but if there are additional things that should be considered with respect to population changes or polling during elections or various other kinds of things that the House wants to consider, then we believe it's appropriate.

Every eight years, as the hon. members knows, we have the three-member commission review it. They bring their recommendations in here, an Act is passed, and we carry on again for the next eight years. Well, we are going to at least allow the province to look at any other alternations they might want to have with respect to the whole process. So that's why it's introduced.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: - Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Premier, you will know that in order to carry on the process every eight years we don't need any legislation. It's already there. You will know that if we wanted to make small adjustments you would propose an amendment to the Act, not a new Act. My question to you is: what fundamental principle of the old Act do you propose to change which requires a totally new statute?

Hon. Mr. Devine: - Mr. Speaker, I can assure the hon. member that the commission will be totally independent - absolutely independent. And the reason for this - the introduction of this - is to allow for any other changes that this House may think is appropriate or necessary, and certainly at that time we can discuss them; we can debate them; we can review them; we can suggest them. Any suggestions you may have, or any suggestions that I may have, can be put forward. That's the reason for the introduction of the Act.

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: - Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier will know, any matters dealing with advertising, or polling, or expense limits - and those matters are not in the Constituency Boundaries Commission Act but the Election Act. The Constituency Boundaries Commission Act, as he will know, is limited in its effect to a commission and the manner in which the boundaries are to be distributed.

My question again, Mr. Premier, is this: which of those few principles that are set out in the Act do you find so reprehensible and abhorrent, that you are proposing to have a whole new Act and not simply an amendment to the Act to deal with some matters you want to change?

Hon. Mr. Devine: - Well as I said, Mr. Speaker, neither of those. And I don't find them . . . And I believe that it will be - and I assure you that it will be - independent. I'm just making sure that if there are other suggestions with respect to the process that you might have or your colleagues may have or some others may have, or other jurisdictions or the public may have, that we can consider them - and at that time there may be, and there may not be - so that the Act will allow us to do that. I mean, I'm sure that the public knows that we have some ridings with 23,000 people in them, and not too far away we have some ridings with 10,000 people in them. And we have some constituents that have to travel 150 miles in their ridings because of sparsity. We know that. We have, Mr. Speaker, the opportunity in this

Act to look at any new suggestions that members opposite have, or the public has, in general.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Shillington: - Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I wonder if I might have leave to introduce some guests who were overlooked earlier.

I would like to introduce 11 adults who are here with the Independent Living Skills group from the Regina Plains Community College. I look forward to meeting with you later on in the day, in a half an hour or so.

I want to congratulate the Regina Plains Community College. My riding is right next to the Legislative Building and yet there are very, very few schools from Regina Centre which actually come to the Legislative Building. This is a college which at least once a session, and sometimes oftener, brings groups over. So I want to congratulate the college, and I will look forward in half an hour or so to meeting with you and discussing what you see here.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

SPECIAL ORDER

ADDRESS IN REPLY

Mr. Martineau: - Mr. Speaker, I am deeply honoured to move the address in reply to the Speech from the Throne.

Before I begin, Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to the office of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. The regard, the respect, indeed the esteem of all members of this Assembly is humbly presented to you today, Mr. Speaker. In offering our sincere support we wish you the greatest success as you fulfil your duties and responsibilities.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank the constituents of Saskatoon Eastview for the confidence they placed in me on October 20, 1986.

As a first-time member of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I am greatly humbled when I think of the many members who have preceded me in these Chambers. Their personal standards, their beliefs, and their efforts on behalf of the people they have represented have helped make Saskatchewan the great province it is today.

I acknowledge their efforts today, Mr. Speaker, because any time something is being built for the present and for the future, it must be built on a strong foundation. In Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the foundation goes back to men and women who pioneered and settled this province. Not only did they want, but they pursued and carved out their right to establish their own standard of living and quality of life. They simply would not settle for anything less, but absolutely demands that we continue the spirit of building established at the turn of the century.

It is up to us; we must be builders that open the future for the generations to come. We are rapidly moving into the last decade of this century, and we must move with the same zeal, dedication and disregard for obstacles as did our forefathers.

As Premier Grant Devine just said recently, this is not the time for standing still. This is the time to believe in ourselves, and in the strength of our province. We must meet the challenges and shape the future of the best of our ability.

Mr. Speaker, in reviewing the Speech from the Throne, it is obvious that the government of Saskatchewan is not standing still, and indeed, is continuing to build on the strong foundation it has created during the past four and a half years.

While identifying the need to diversify our economy in order to provide new and exciting opportunities, this government remains committed to the continued protection of individuals, families, communities against the hardships they neither create nor control.

As pointed out in the Speech from the Throne, this government will also carry on with the initiative to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the government and its departments.

Mr. Speaker, the track-record of this government during the first term - its accomplishments and its performance in delivering for the needs and aspirations of Saskatchewan people - are again the foundation of our new government.

Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of representing in this House the great constituency of Saskatoon Eastview. Its people are hard-working and honest. They are people of integrity. They are also people who believe in a job well done. I know I speak for many of them, and for many who live in other parts of the biggest city in Saskatchewan, by acknowledging appreciation for the initiative of this government in building and creating new facilities and opportunities in our city since 1982.

For example, Mr. Speaker, the new \$17 million cancer clinic which is 100 per cent financed by the provincial government; a new \$78 million world-class agriculture building for the University of Saskatchewan; over \$200 million worth of planned and ongoing construction for expansion at St. Paul's University, and the construction of a new city hospital; over \$40 million in school construction and renovations undertaken since 1982. Construction and approval of 433 special care home beds under the five-year special care home construction program; about \$25 million for a new 240-bed special care nursing home, the largest in our province's history; over \$11 million in grants to organizations in support of the handicapped since 1982. Over \$40 million in science and technology research has been allocated to 12 research facilities in the city. Funding for the new Saskatoon multi-purpose arena project has been assured. The attraction of Canpotex, the international marketing agency for Saskatchewan potash, which moved its head office from Toronto to Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, these are but a few of the benefits our city has received as a result of the efforts of this government since 1982.

This government is quick to acknowledge that there is more that must be accomplished in Saskatoon over the next four years or so, and with the continued co-operation of individuals, community leaders, community organizations, industry and local government, more will, in fact, be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, during the first term of this government its members had the foresight to prioritize those areas which will prepare the province for the years ahead. Agriculture, jobs, healthcare, and education were, in fact, labelled as cornerstones of our future success.

And our government delivered to these areas as never before. The problems facing agriculture in the last few years have been monumental. The challenges in providing new jobs amidst tough economic times were many and complex. The necessity to provide in health care and education were so directly related to our quality of life and future security that both demanded immediate action. They could not be

compromised.

When young farmers could not afford to buy their own farms - an intolerable situation in the province built on the tradition of fathers and sons working side by side - this government established the farm purchase program providing 8 per cent mortgages, this at a time when interest rates were at 20 per cent. When drought and grasshoppers threatened the existence of many farm families, this government provided assistance and incentives unmatched by any government in this history of Saskatchewan. Not satisfied with only short-term assistance, your government, Mr. Speaker, created the \$200 million agricultural development fund for agriculture research development and marketing opportunities.

To ensure the same opportunities for individuals throughout the province, this government created the \$600 million employment development fund to create and maintain jobs.

In education, a \$400 million endowment fund provided for the creation of the \$275 million education development fund. Mr. Speaker, I believe no one in this Assembly would argue with the fact that it is our sacred responsibility to ensure our children be provided with a solid education.

In the area of health government has spared no effort in providing protection against illness. To finance new health care facilities and renovate those we have, the \$300 million health care capital fund was created, this on top of an annual budget which equals about \$1,200 for every man, woman, and child in our province. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the foundation in this province is solid.

During the first term, Mr. Speaker, this government committed itself to providing protection and opportunities for all residents - for the farmers that work this land from border to border; for the oil workers in Estevan, Swift Current, Lloydminster, Kindersley and Weyburn; for the teachers in every school, both large and small; for the nurses and doctors; for the labourers whose skills we cannot do without for the small-business men who employ more people than all other sectors combined; for our senior citizens whose courage, wisdom, and knowledge we rely on so heavily.

The reason for the commitment was quite simple, Mr. Speaker. The people made it clear it was their priority, thus it became the government's responsibility. Among the many programs and policies that we developed to deliver protection and opportunity, we want to highlight just a few.

The Saskatchewan Pension Plan protects the people of Saskatchewan and helps them secure their own futures. Then plan gives those without a pension plan an opportunity to have a pension of their own. Home-makers, employees of small businesses, small-business people and farmers now have an opportunity that was never before provided in this province, nor indeed was provided in this country.

Senior housing, for instance. The senior citizens' home repair program has helped enhance the quality of life for seniors in the form of a \$1,000 grant for home repairs. The senior citizen's heritage program is designed to protect seniors by offering a property tax rebate to seniors earning less than \$30,000 per year. Enriched housing for seniors encourages and promotes an independent life-style, with rent control to no more than 25 per cent of their income.

The mortgage interest protection plan protected home owners and their families and jobs in the building industry by placing a ceiling of thirteen and one-quarter per cent on mortgage interest rates up to \$50,000.

The Saskatchewan new home program is our latest initiative and will create up to 25,000 jobs made up of two major components - a mortgage protection plan which extends the mortgage interest reduction

program guaranteeing home owners nine and three-quarter per cent mortgage interest over 10 years to a maximum of \$50,000, and the home improvement plan which offers a matching grant of up to \$1,500 for repairs or improvements, and a \$10,000 loan at 6 per cent interest for up to 10 years for home repairs.

The production loan program protects Saskatchewan farmers from high operating costs, providing loans of \$24 per cultivated acre at a rate of 6 per cent. Over 1 billion has been distributed under the program to over 56,000 Saskatchewan farmers.

The farm fuel rebate program helps to lower farmers' operating costs by giving farmers a 21 cent a gallon rebate on gas and diesel fuel used in farm equipment. In 1986 farmers will save about \$42 million.

The Saskatchewan natural gas distribution program has brought natural gas to some 10,200 rural and 7,217 urban customers, saving as much as 50 per cent in fuel costs.

Mr. Speaker, your government has many examples of its efforts to encourage private enterprise projects in order to create opportunities for all of us.

The purchase of the Prince Alberta Pulp (and paper) Company (PAPCO) by Weyerhaeuser, along with the building of a new paper-mill, will create 250 new direct jobs, hundreds of indirect jobs, and over 700 construction jobs.

The new Gainers bacon plant in North Battleford will create 185 jobs. The \$7 million Philips cable plant in Moose Jaw will create 40 new direct jobs and many more spin-off jobs. The Canapharm plant in Wolseley provides 40 new jobs and an important addition to our growing high technology industry. Intercontinental Packers in Saskatoon expanded its operation by installing a \$2.5 million blast chiller, creating 70 permanent and 30 seasonal jobs. The \$23.9 million second stage under construction will create 730 new jobs. Again, Mr. Speaker, the foundation is strong. We are building on our strengths, our people, and our resources.

I want to retrace my steps for just a moment, Mr. Speaker, to talk a little more about this government's commitment to jobs and opportunities.

A major innovation of this government during its first term was the establishment of the Employment Development Agency created to examine, promote, and co-ordinate government programs dealing with employment and to ensure that every opportunity for a job is made available to Saskatchewan residents.

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A strategy was developed: a short-term plan to ease seasonal employment; a medium-term plan for those who need education, training, and retraining, and a plan to aid those seeking that all-important first job; long-range plans for economic development to ensure that our province has the necessary economic activity to create jobs in the future.

Earlier I mentioned the employment development fund - a five-year, \$600 million fund totally designed to create jobs. I now want to give you a few examples of the programs that have evolved from this fund: the opportunities program in 1983 and '84 where over 7,500 young students received summer employment; the Canada/Saskatchewan Opportunities '85 program which helped about 10,000 students find summer employment; and the Opportunities '86 program which provided over 11,000 students with

summer employment. The winter works program is designed to create employment opportunities during the winter months., About 10,000 people found work under this program over the past two years.

The New Careers corporation will continue to provide welfare recipients with new opportunities through career-related training and community colleges, technical schools, and universities. As well, practical working experience on various capital projects across Saskatchewan is provided. Already over \$2.5 million has been allocated for 1986 and '87.

The Saskatchewan employment development program has committed \$28 million since 1982 to help provide jobs for people on social assistance. The Saskatchewan employment support program has created over 3,600 jobs since 1982 for people who have physical disabilities. The youth Access program was designed to create jobs for unemployed youths. To date, over 3,100 jobs have been created with the most significant factor being that 76 per cent of employers intend to keep employing these young people after the government subsidy has ended.

Mr. Speaker, these examples are only a part of the picture. A long-term objective of the fund is economic development. To that end, several initiatives were developed, supported by the spending of \$3.25 million for regional development in 1985 and '86.

The small business interest reduction program allowed 5,500 small business to have their rates brought down to 9 and five-eighths per cent, and after April of this year the program offered an 8 per cent rate on loans of up to \$100,000.

The industrial incentive program provided \$16 million for incentive payments to companies which undertake capital investment and permanent job creation in manufacturing and processing. Since 1984 the program has helped to generate \$100 million worth of industrial capital expansion and has created 3,500 new permanent jobs in 74 communities across this province. A total of \$58 million for a number of capital works project including \$4 million for the new Saskatoon arena and \$2.25 million for the final phase of the Buffalo Pound filtration plant.

Mr. Speaker, there were other initiatives that helped to stimulate job opportunities in this province; introduction of the oil royalty holiday which reopened and revitalized our oil industry and resulted in the creation of over 7,000 new jobs in the oil patch. Mr. Speaker, because of the world crisis in the oil industry, maintaining many of these jobs has now become a priority of this government.

The elimination of corporate income tax on small manufacturing and processing firms provided \$4 million in assistance to the small-business sector, and a two-year provincial income tax holiday for small business was established; introduction of the venture capital program which provides tax credits to both individuals and corporations who invest in Saskatchewan's small business.

An active, enhanced trade promotion has been designed to assist local manufacturers and exporters to compete more aggressively in an increasingly competitive world market-place. Mr. Speaker, let me report, the foundation is strong.

I have touched on only a few initiatives and accomplishments of this Progressive Conservative government and only in a few areas of responsibility. There are many more.

And there is, Mr. Speaker, one area that I do not want to omit. Its significance has always been rated of major importance, evidenced by the initiatives and development of policy regarding all related issues and concerns. What I am speaking of, Mr. Speaker, is our government's commitment to the women of

Saskatchewan. To ensure that women's interests and views are fully represented in our society, our government established the Women's Secretariat in 1984. It has also been instrumental in developing policy to provide jobs and opportunities for Saskatchewan women.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the women's services branch was created in the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower in April 1983 to address equal access and opportunity for women in both the labour force and the educational system.

Under this government many new programs and initiatives were designed and introduced for women and their families. Among the most notable, Mr. Speaker, is the automatic enforcement of maintenance orders; the Saskatchewan pension plan; the establishment of sexual assault centres in Melfort, Kindersley, and Swift Current; improvement in representation of women in management and non-traditional positions in government; first-ever operating grants for day care programs; continued lobby of federal government for stricter laws regarding pornography.

We are all aware that times are changing. Traditional roles in many cases are no longer relevant. This is especially true as it applies to women and the role they now play in business. Women are starting businesses in Saskatchewan in record numbers. Estimates indicate that women are opening small businesses at a rate three times that of men and are successful in their business at the same ratio.

In the last five years the number of self-employed women in Saskatchewan has grown by more than 30 per cent. Given estimates that 70 per cent of new job creation is now the small-business sector, women are responsible for the majority of new jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this government has provided a number of economic initiatives for small businesses. In addition to a number of measures to streamline and improve government assistance to reduce the burden of excessive regulation, our government has and will continue to ensure that information and support programs for small business address the particular needs of women in business and family operations.

Three conferences for women starting new businesses have already been held with great success. Mr. Speaker, the foundation is clearly in place. Through a process of listening and working in co-operation with people all over this province, this PC government has paved the way for continued growth in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne opening the first session of the 21st legislature is a formula to address the problems and concerns this province is facing while building our strengths and opening new directions and opportunities for everyone.

Yes, we are clearly in the midst of transition in the world and here at home. We still face tough, hard economic problems that affect us all financially, but we are not easily discouraged. No matter the setback, the people that make up this province do not quit. They simply work harder to overcome the obstacles.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to note that this is the same approach this government is taking. Having established direct communication with individuals, communities, business, industry, and local governments, we are now going to work even harder to find the appropriate solutions to our problems. As indicated in the throne speech, this does not mean that government must increase in size or produce more regulation. Rather, it must work as efficiently and with as much thrift as possible.

We must all be encouraged by our government's commitment to retaining its spirit of openness to seek

out the ideas and aspirations fuelled by so many within our constituencies.

Just recently we have all been made aware that Saskatchewan's people, its builders, want to see new business and manufacturing plants created here. Not only are they prepared to accept diversifying our economy, but they whole-heartedly encourage it. Why? Because it means new jobs, more opportunities, and a foothold in competing more effectively in a world market-place.

The emphasis given by the throne speech to begin economic diversification within our strongest resource, agriculture, ensures credibility and success. It will also help to create an even closer association between urban and rural Saskatchewan. I firmly believe that the encouragement of increased manufacture of agricultural chemicals and fertilizers is the first step in gaining future control of our future in employment and agriculture.

The inclusion of small business and tourism in further diversification will help break our dependency on forces outside our province. However, I believe we all realize that government cannot achieve success by itself. If business in Saskatchewan will support our attempts, the likelihood of building a strong, stable, prosperous and diversified economy can be ours for generations to come.

The recognition that training and education are key to long-term success is evident through the identification of new institutes for tourism and hospitality, industrial research institutes, and commitment of resources to make sure that excellence is the goal of our education system, simply cannot be over-estimated in their value. Our government knows that if we are to meet future challenges, we must continue with the process of renewal and development within our primary and secondary schools and universities.

We remain committed to initiate this process in partnership with all participants of education, of the education community — parents, teachers, students, trustees, and others. The emphasis placed on education in the Speech from the Throne is certainly good news for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, the encouragement of labour unions to participate in creating new jobs is a continuation of this government's co-operative spirit. Encouragement, too, to our aboriginal peoples to become involved in business, manufacturing, and processing, is a challenge guaranteed to create positive results for the entire province. The assurance of equal access to credit is a further step to ensure Saskatchewan's women enjoy every available opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed establishment of a Saskatchewan entrepreneurial institute deserves separate and special recognition. Our young people deserve the opportunity to gain expertise and experience in the business world. They should not and will not have to leave their home to gain this valuable education.

Mr. Speaker, creation of the new department of human resources, labour, and employment will not only ensure consideration for the needs of those concerned, but it will provide more efficient delivery to benefit Saskatchewan's taxpayers.

The legislation to extend the provisions of The Farm Land Security Act and The Farmers' Counselling and Assistance Act is a continuation of the commitment this government has created in protecting farm families. Our promise to push for the early delivery of the \$1 billion deficiency payment is further evidence of this commitment.

The concerns of the oil industry are also being recognized. Protection of the livelihoods of our province's oil workers is of primary concern and will continue to be a focus of cabinet.

The legislation that will guarantee mortgage security for Saskatchewan home owners is a further tribute to a government that created protection for Saskatchewan families. It will be joined in legislation by the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, which offers the first even pension plan to home makers and those who have no access to a pension plan.

(1100)

Mr. Speaker, this government promises to carry on in providing quality health care, to review its social assistance programs in order to combat poverty, remaining consistent, and ensures protection for those in need.

The development of a rehabilitation for young people and their families who are encountering the increasing pain related to alcohol and drug abuse is an essential step in solving a very serious problem.

Mr. Speaker, we are facing some difficult times - times that require strong management. Saskatchewan people want to see their government managed in an efficient yet effective manner. They realize that money is hard to find, but that the demands for money are only increasing.

The direction taken in the Speech from the Throne regarding administrative efficiency and effectiveness is not only responsible, it is essential. Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne builds on the foundation our Progressive Conservative government has put in place since 1982. Indeed, it will become an integral part of the foundation that will launch us into the 1990s and beyond.

Mr. Speaker, in moving the Speech from the Throne, I have saved the best for last. At the core of every effort, program, initiative, and incentive of this government has been the leadership of Premier Grant Devine. This is acknowledged freely by every member of the PC government's caucus.

Mr. Speaker, it's a rare individual who can inspire another. It is rarer still for one individual to accept the responsibility of the fellow man, not just as a duty of the office he may hold, but out of a desire to see everyone succeed.

Our Premier understands the concerns and aspirations facing Saskatchewan people. He believes in those who dare to dream and those who reach the goals they have established and those who caution for caution's sake. He believes in the framer, the teacher, the welder, the waitress, the nurses, the doctors, the clerks, the salesman, the engineers, the labourers, the repairmen, the oilmen, and yes, even the lawyers.

He understands what Saskatchewan is all about, simply because he believes in listening and then listening some more. He has challenged his government caucus to be the very best it can be. He has challenged us to rise above ourselves and to create the kind of Saskatchewan that only pride and hard work can produce.

Mr. Speaker, our Premier has gained the respect of people everywhere. He is an example for all of us to follow. We must know our people, their concerns and their dreams if we are to be effective representatives. It's our duty and our pleasure.

Mr. Speaker, I have now spent some considerable time reviewing portions of our government's legislative record and of its proposed initiatives. There are points on which I have not touched, both on our past record and of our future intentions, but I believe I have stressed the Progressive Conservative

government's general character and intentions since I rose from my seat.

Mr. Speaker, we have and will continue to listen closely to Saskatchewan's people, and as before, we will respond quickly to provide opportunity and protection for all Saskatchewan's people. It is a commitment of which I am proud, and it is a commitment that will grow in the years ahead.

My pride in this commitment causes me to move, with honour, Mr. Speaker, and seconded by the member for Pelly, that a humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To His Honour the Honourable Frederick Johnson, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

I so move, seconded by the hon. member for Pelly. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: - Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the MLA for Pelly constituency, I am indeed honoured to second the motion to move the Speech from the Throne. I wish to express my sincere thank-you to the constituents of Pelly for the confidence they have placed in me on October 20, 1986. On that day, they elected me as the first Progressive Conservative MLA in the history of Pelly constituency.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: - As a result, today I am about to deliver my maiden speech to this legislature and at the same time have the honour of seconding the motion to move the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, may I first of all congratulate you on your election to the office of Speaker of this Legislative Assembly. I know, Mr. Speaker, that you are respected and held in high regard by all members of this Assembly. All of us who serve as members to this legislature wish you, sir, continued success in your new position.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to express my confidence in the Premier of our province, the hon. member for Estevan. It is because of the excellent leadership of the Premier and the Progressive Conservative government that I am here today representing the constituency of Pelly. The Premier and his ministers were given a renewed mandate by the people of Saskatchewan on October 20th. The electorate re-elected a Progressive Conservative government. The message from the people was that they put their trust, their confidence, and their faith in the future in the policies of a Progressive Conservative government.

Today we are gathered here to begin the second term of the government of Premier Grant Devine. The Speech from the Throne, which His Honour the Lieutenant Governor delivered to this Assembly, spells out the course this government will allow in the months and years ahead.

I'm exceptionally pleased to be able to speak in support of the Speech from the Throne. The people of this province have faith in the Progressive Conservative government. Saskatchewan has been on the move for the last four or five years, and the people want that to continue. People are proud of our province and all that it stands for. The future for us is bright. The people have continued confidence in their Premier and his government.

The Progressive Conservative government is a government that cares about people. It is a government that has the courage to protect people when they need to be protected. It is a government that wants to build and provide opportunities for people. It is a government that listens and carries out the will of the people. It is a government that is open. It is a government that has faith in people. On October 20th the people of Saskatchewan said yes to that government. The people said yes, we want to have another four years of a Progressive Conservative government. The voters put their confidence in our Premier.

The people of Pelly constituency sent me to this legislature because they wanted to be a part of the Progressive Conservatives' faith in the future. They wanted to have a member on the government side of the House. Mr. Speaker, they put their trust in the leadership of our Premier and the policies he put forward to Saskatchewan.

In the four years the Premier of Saskatchewan has become a nationally respected premier. When he sits down at a first ministers' conference, the other nine ministers listen. The Prime Minister of Canada listens to him, and they all respect him. That's why the premiers endorsed the excellent national agriculture policy put forward by the Premier of Saskatchewan. And that is why the government in Ottawa made a commitment of \$1 million to help Saskatchewan's farmers - because they respect Saskatchewan's Premier.

The Premier of this province has the courage to help people when times are rough. He had the leadership to help home owners some five years ago when he pledged to help them combat high interest rates. The Premier did the same for farmers. Not once, but time and time again, the Premier and the Progressive Conservative government had the vision to help people.

Saskatchewan families in turn showed their confidence in these policies by endorsing the leadership of the Premier Grant Devine. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of our Premier and the fact that Pelly constituency elected a PC MLA for the first time in history. That proves they, too, believe in Premier Grant Devine.

Mr. Speaker, we look to the future with confidence. On every farm, hamlet, rural municipality, town and community the people said on October 20th, let's move forward with confidence. We face a future of sustained economic growth. We face a future of building Saskatchewan.

The exciting record of achievement of the past four years will be continued. Since 1982 this province has consistently had one of the lowest unemployment rates of any province in Canada. We shall continue to create jobs. Since 1982 this province has had an excellent record of positive economic growth. We shall continue to build a strong economy. Since 1982 this province has been a leader in protecting agriculture and the family farm. We shall continue to be leaders in agriculture. Since 1982 we have put forward health and social programs unequalled anywhere in Canada, and we shall continue to help people.

Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative government believes in protection, in building and opportunity, openness and participation by Saskatchewan people. I said this government will continue to create jobs. That is what the Saskatchewan Builds program is all about. This bold new initiative will

emphasize agriculture and economic diversity. That is why in the Speech from the Throne there is the announcement that this government will encourage the local manufacturer of farm chemicals.

Small business will play a key role in the Saskatchewan Builds program. The Premier has said that \$50 million will be committed over the next five years to encourage business growth. The government is taking a leadership role in a program to increase the purchase of goods and services from Saskatchewan sources. We are strongly committed to a Buy Saskatchewan policy.

Mr. Speaker, tourism is very important to Saskatchewan. The Saskatchewan Builds program will put a major emphasis on tourism. In the area of job creation we see over 7,000 new jobs in the hospitality industry over the next five years. I'm excited about the fact that this government intends to establish a Saskatchewan tourism and hospitality institute. This tourism institute will provide new jobs in an expanded industry. We plan to build on the reputation Saskatchewan established at Expo '86. Our pavilion was hailed as one of the best at Expo. Tourism will help build Saskatchewan.

(1115)

Mr. Speaker, it is the intention of this government to keep on building on the strong economy of our province. Labour unions will be encouraged to participate in the creation of new jobs through the labour venture capital program. Young people, women, aboriginal people, all will be provided opportunities to become involved in the community.

The major new department, the department of human resources, labour, and employment, is a major part of building Saskatchewan. It is proof that the Progressive Conservative government believes that in building the economy the interests and needs of people are always foremost.

Mr. Speaker, a solid education system is vital to our province's future. We must provide young people with an education equal to or better than any other jurisdiction in North America. To give them excellent education opportunities is to say that we believe in the future.

Mr. Speaker, as a farmer I am both thankful and satisfied with your government's record in protecting and providing opportunities for our farm families. When the Premier of a province also serves as Minister of Agriculture, it sends a message to farmers. It says we believe in the family farm and we believe in agriculture. The Premier is on record saying that the Progressive Conservative government will continue to ensure that agriculture remains in the forefront in Saskatchewan.

The Premier has committed this Progressive Conservative government to four significant steps in building agriculture. One, the Saskatchewan Builds program, an injection of \$10 million annually to help new manufacturing plants locate in Saskatchewan. The first goal is to have 50 per cent of the farm chemicals used in this province, produced in this province by 1991. Two, a strong emphasis for Saskatchewan farmers to receive the lion's share of the federal government's \$1 billion payment for western farmers. Saskatchewan farmers, we believe, should receive the majority of the funds. Three, an extension of the Saskatchewan Farm Land Security Board to December 1987. And four, deferral of payments on the principal of loans received under the production loan program.

Mr. Speaker, this is what you call a solid commitment to farmers. The farm is so important to Saskatchewan's heritage. Agriculture is sacred to the future of Saskatchewan. The farmers of this province had confidence in the farm policies of this government. This government has never restricted farmers. We have helped them build time and time again. The Premier of Saskatchewan knows and understands the business of agriculture and farming, and the farmers know that he knows. That's why,

for example the rural people in Pelly constituency decided to put their vote behind the Progressive Conservative MLA to this legislature.

Mr. Speaker, your government's track record in defending the family farm is exemplary and will be maintained. That is the commitment of the Progressive Conservative government to Saskatchewan farmers.

Mr. Speaker, protecting people against factors they alone could not protect themselves from is important to this government. The Progressive Conservative government believes that protection against unforeseen increases in mortgage rates is important to provide security to home owners, but will also create jobs in the housing industry. This government is the only government in North America with the courage and the vision to guarantee an effective mortgage rate of 9 and three-quarters per cent for 10 years on principal residences. Yes, Mr. Speaker, I call that courage and vision to protect people the way this government has and is.

Mr. Speaker, in all western democracies, especially here in North America, people have been sending a message to government. The message is: we want governments to be more effective and more efficient. Government is the servant and not the master of people. The government is going to seriously address the question of government efficiency and effectiveness. After all, the taxpayers who elected this Progress Conservative government put their trust in us to be custodians of their tax dollars. They want their public service, their government, to be effective and efficient.

Mr. Speaker, this government will, as stated in the Speech from the Throne, improve the delivery of programs and services while constraining the costs to taxpayers. New legislation will be introduced to reorganize and consolidate provincial government departments to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness. Again, this government is demonstrating courage and leadership.

The province of Saskatchewan can look forward to having one of the most effective government administrations in all of North America. Mr. Speaker, all of the programs and policies in the Speech from the Throne are the result of vision and leadership. I believe the people of Saskatchewan have faith in the leadership of our Premier and the Progressive Conservative government.

In the recent election in this province the Progressive Conservative Party showed leadership and the people stood with us. The people of Saskatchewan support the kind of leadership that brought about mortgage protection and saves the homes of over 44,000 families. They believe in a leadership that protected the family farm. The people of Saskatchewan support a leadership that responds to their hopes, their concerns, and their aspirations.

Mr. Speaker, since 1982 this government has provided dynamic and effective leadership for the province of Saskatchewan. The people of Saskatchewan recognize and value the leadership of our Premier. He represents the heritage, the traditions, and the values of our people throughout this great province.

In four years the Progressive Conservative government, led by our Premier, showed leadership by building and protecting Saskatchewan in difficult times - difficulties over which we had no control - and yet this government had the vision and the courage to take action.

We helped small business to build, we helped the farmer to build, we helped young people, we helped seniors, because we believe in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, all of the record of the past four years took leadership, and on October 20th the people said, we will give you another four years.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to, as part of my maiden speech to this Assembly, make some reference as to why I entered public life, and at the same time pay special recognition to the constituency of Pelly. Mr. Speaker, on July 29, 1919, the people of Pelly elected the first women to the Saskatchewan legislature, Sarah K. Ramsland. And I'm sure that she would be pleased to note that your government, Mr. Speaker, appointed the first two female cabinet ministers and is committed to providing equal access of opportunities for all women.

It is also very significant that on October 20th the voters in Pelly elected a Progressive Conservative MLA for the first time ever. I would like to thank the people of Pelly constituency for the trust they have put in me as their new MLA. I also wish to extend my appreciation to the Premier for his personal confidence in me by having me as part of the Progressive Conservative caucus.

Pelly constituency is in many respects a mosaic of what rural Saskatchewan is all about. It has communities such as the historic town of Veregín, home of the national Doukhobor village. Each year on July 13th they celebrate heritage day in this community.

Near Pelly, we have the historic Fort Livingstone, which was established in 1874. The first session of the Northwest Territorial Council was held there in March of 1877. The early settlers of this area are in evidence today with the existence and heritage of three Indian reserves. Mr. Speaker, Pelly constituency is rich in history and in tradition. The people of Pelly constituency are hard-working people who believe in the spirit of our pioneers. The residents of such places as Kamsack, Mikado, Norquay, Danbury, Arran, Rhein, Calder, just to name a few of the 21 communities that make up Pelly constituency, are people who have strong family ties to Saskatchewan. I'm pleased to be here to represent Pelly constituency and hope to serve them for many years to come.

Mr. Speaker, I put my name forward as a candidate for the Progressive Conservative Party in Pelly constituency because of my belief in the Premier and the record of his government - a record that has seen new opportunities develop for people. real and meaningful jobs; a record of building and improving on the quality of life for people; a record of real economic growth, a record of making Saskatchewan a province we can really be proud of. Those are some of the many good reasons why I offered to serve the people of Pelly constituency. Each of us has a calling in life and I believe the time had come for me to step forward and contribute in whatever way I could for the betterment of the people who elected me as their MLA.

Since 1905 Saskatchewan has moved ahead because of the noble idea of building our province. Our pioneers build a rich province out of the land, and like most pioneers, this Progressive Conservative government has a vision for the future. That's why we're here. We will make Saskatchewan the model for all other provinces in Canada to look at and admire. We will build the strongest province in the Confederation of Canada. Our record in health care is already the model for Canada; so is our record in agriculture. In the next four years we will move to the forefront in building small business, tourism, and a further strengthening the provincial economy.

Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne is a message to the people of Saskatchewan. It says we respect your confidence in this government. We will honour your trust in us. Mr. Speaker, as we commence the second term of the Progressive Conservative government, we do so with renewed confidence and faith in the greatness of Saskatchewan and its people. We are proud of our accomplishments and proud of what we will accomplish in the future. October 20, 1986, will go down in the history books as the day the people of Saskatchewan said: we want a government that has the vision and the courage to lead and to build. Mr. Speaker, in years ahead October 20, 1986 will be the day recorded as the time Saskatchewan decided to stay the course with the government of Premier Grant Devine. History will

record that they made the right decision. I say that with confidence.

Mr. Speaker, as we begin the job ahead of us I conclude by saying to every member of this legislature that I have nothing but the greatest confidence in our Premier and the Progressive Conservative government. The Speech from the Throne reconfirms my confidence. I say to this House that I shall faithfully work hard for Pelly constituency, ever mindful of the trust the people of Pelly have put in me as their new MLA.

Mr. Speaker, on that note, I am proud to second the motion in support of the Speech from the Throne and thank this Assembly for the honour of having had the opportunity second the Speech from the Throne.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: - Mr. Speaker, my first words are to congratulate you on your election to the office of Speaker. This is my first opportunity since your election to have the opportunity formally to do so.

As you know, sir, the office of Speaker is a very important office in our legislative system and whether or not this legislature is effective in doing the job that the people of Saskatchewan expect it to do depends in no small way on how you perform your duties. No one thinks it's easy to be a Speaker. I congratulate you on your election and hope that we on this side of the House can give you some support in discharging the onerous duties which fall upon you. I wish you well in discharging those obligations.

I want to congratulate the mover and the seconded. I think they did a very creditable job, particularly in view of the materials they had to work with - the Speech from the Throne containing, as it did, rolling phrases and crashing clichés but little else. A positive paucity of content offered them very little to work on and I noted therefore, that they tended to dwell on what happened in the past rather than what as in the Speech from the Throne - exactly the course of action that I would have adopted faced with that Speech from the Throne and faced with saying anything very appropriate and very stimulating about it.

(1130)

I want to extend my best wishes to all the new members of the Assembly. Being a member of the Legislative Assembly is an honourable pursuit. It seems to be a current fad to suggest that politicians are not very honourable members of society, that politics is not a high calling, and that politicians are lacking in ability or probity or perhaps both. And I've always been puzzled by that because I've met people who said, "Boy, we've got the greatest institutions of government in the world, our parliamentary system and our democracy is as good as it comes and we here in Canada are smart. I'm smart; my neighbours are smart; we've got a good system of government." And then in the next breath they say that the people, all these smart people elected to serve in this excellent legislature are not good people. Now I don't believe that the electors are stupid, and I don't believe that the people they elect are stupid, and I don't think they're lacking in either ability or probity.

To the new members, may I say a few words. I don't want to sound like Father Time, but may I say a few words. The job of being an MLA can provide a good deal of satisfaction. Certainly there are frustrations. None of us can influence events as much as we would like to, but as MLAs we can influence them, and influence them more than most ordinary citizens. Few people have the opportunity shape their society in a way that an MLA does. It's said that first we, as citizens, shape our laws, and then they shape us. And in the shaping of those laws which set rules for the way our society operates, MLAs have a special role to play - influential role to play.

I suggest that you take satisfaction in doing a good job and in your own knowledge that you're doing a good job. You will know whether you're doing all you can, and that knowledge is your satisfaction. Don't wait for public recognition. Don't expect it. Most of the public feel that you spend all your day sitting in these seats listening to stimulating speeches and doing nothing else - and that's a pretty soft touch the way they look at it - nothing but bask in the glory of being an MLA. They think we're on the gravy train. You may be able to convince them that you work hard, but I wouldn't count on it.

Having said that, don't succumb to the temptation of thinking that the public are sometimes ungrateful, they're just not knowledgeable. Serve them. Your reward is in serving them and not in having your service recognized. Some may be fortunate enough to get recognition and to get from the public an acknowledgement of just how many hours you put into your job. But for many that will not come, and your satisfaction will be in knowing that you've done the job for your people.

I noted the member for Pelly had pointed out that he entered public life in order to serve the constituents that he believed needed a voice for them, and that is the basis upon which one should conduct one's public life. If you approach your job in that way, you can get some real satisfaction.

One other point. Don't expect you're going to be here indefinitely. As the poet says:

Dame Fortune is a fickle gypsy,
Always blind and sometimes tipsy.

I don't know whether Dame Fortune is fickle, but I can tell you the voters are. I can tell you the voters are.

I looked at the last House. Sixty-four people were elected in 1982, and during the course of the period from '82 to '86 three of them left and three more came. So between that period of '82 to '86, 67 people served in this House. Of that 67, by my count, 33 of them are back; 34 are not. Some of that number of 34 left voluntarily; a large number did not; and for some it's a little difficult to tell just how voluntary it was. But at least 34 of them are gone - a big 50 per cent turnover at a time when a government is being returned to office. I can tell you when a government is being defeated, the carnage is even greater. I could offer that prospect to members opposite, but I don't want to be controversial at this point.

An Hon. Member: - Or wrong!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: - Well I have a much greater hazard of being controversial than being wrong on that one, I'll tell you.

Thirty-one members were elected in October who didn't sit in the last House. Of this number, five served in previous legislatures and 26 are new to this Chamber. Two of the 26 new to this Chamber served in the House of Commons - the member for The Battleford and the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. And that leaves us with 24 people elected this time - as I say, when a government was being returned - who have never sat in this Chamber before or never sat in the parliament before. Somewhere between one-third and one-half of this Chamber changed in a total way in a sense that the people who were elected had not sat in a Chamber before at a time when a government was being re-elected. And that's fairly typical. So whatever the joys of being an MLA are, security and tenure is not one of them.

You may find that the debates in this House are a little stylized and fall into predictable moulds. That's

true, but it's not always true. Not all issues are approached in a partisan way, nor is the debate in this Chamber the only way that you can affect the outcome of decisions of this legislature. Frequently arguments in caucus can influence the ultimate decisions made in the House. Sometimes arguments in committee will do that. So to members of both parties, I urge you to participate fully in your caucus deliberations. The independent member will find that easier. But certainly that is the way to make your influence felt. And I think if you approach your period in this legislature, however long or short it may be, in that light, you will get a good deal of satisfaction in serving as a member of the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Premier, as I did on election night, on the re-election of his government. The PCs won the election, and we did not. I do however want to comment on some of the results briefly. It will be known that the New Democrats gained more votes than the PCs, but plurality of votes didn't translate into a plurality of seats.

One reason was that, on the average, the seats which were won by the New Democratic candidates had more voters than those won by the Progressive Conservative candidates. That stems from the population movement since the last redistribution, and it no doubt will be addressed in the upcoming redistribution.

Our established system will deal with this anomaly in due course. We are not crying foul. We just say that that's what happened last time, and we expect that the system will deal with it unless it's prevented from doing so by some arbitrary action by this legislature, which I really don't anticipate.

The topic I wanted to touch on, however, was not the one I just alluded to, but on the conclusions drawn by some of the media from the election results, particularly some conclusions drawn about what had happened in rural Saskatchewan. I've read some stories to the effect that, compared with the PC support, New Democratic support had dropped in rural Saskatchewan. And that's just not so. The figures will not support it, and it simply isn't the fact.

Now if we define rural seats as those excluding the 10 seats in Regina and the 10 in Saskatoon and the two in Moose Jaw and the two in Prince Albert and those seats which have significant city votes — Estevan and Weyburn and Yorkton and Melville and Melfort and Swift Current and The Battlefords and Cut Knife-Lloydminster - and if we exclude Cumberland and Athabasca, which are not rural in the sense that I'm now using the terms, we're left with 30 seats.

And in these 30 seats, compared with 1982, New Democrats improved their position, vis-a-vis the PCs, in 22 of them, and we didn't improve our position in eight of them. And in these same 30 seats, we improved our percentage vote over 1982 in 22 of the seats. Indeed, in four of them we improved our percentage vote over 1978, which was a high year for New Democrats.

The figures do not support the conclusion that the New Democrats lost voter support in rural Saskatchewan - certainly not compared with 1982 - and that simply isn't true.

I refer to these comparisons not to rehash the last election but to refute the view that there has somehow been a large realignment of voters in rural Saskatchewan. Certainly there has been some. But what took place, took place prior to 1982 and partly reversed itself, both rural and urban, in 1986. All that can be said with certainty is that the reversal in the urban areas in 1986 was high greater than that in the rural areas, but that the trend was the same in both. That's the only appropriate conclusion that can be drawn from the figures while, as I say, the examination of the entrails of elections is something which really interests, by and large, only politicians. The broad conclusions drawn that somehow there was a sharper division between rural and urban Saskatchewan in that the New Democrats did much better in the cities and lost a great deal of support in rural Saskatchewan, isn't the case. In fact, New Democrats did better

both rurally and urban, but made more progress in urban Saskatchewan than in rural Saskatchewan. And that, I think, is simply one of the ebbs and flows of the electoral system and does not indicate any fundamental change in voting patterns by the people of Saskatchewan - rural or urban.

Now Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on a couple of other things before I beg leave to adjourn the debate. I think the Speech from the Throne is indicative of where the government stands, not only because of what they put in the Speech from the Throne, but because of what they didn't put in the Speech from the Throne.

You can tell where a government stands, partly by what it says and does, and partly by what it does not say and does not do. And accordingly, some of the absences from the Speech from the Throne speak loudly - indeed more loudly than the speech itself.

The speech didn't touch on northern Saskatchewan with its unique people, its unique opportunities, and its unique traditional values - no mention of the thousands of families in that part of Saskatchewan who are probably undergoing more stress than any other comparable group in Saskatchewan. And so we had a government which did not wish to address the north half of the province.

There was no significant focus on jobs or job creation. One time I heard a reference in the address - I think of the mover? - talking about the jobs creation minister, the minister who was given the opportunity to be the minister in charge of the employment development agency. And I remember when that was announced, and the Premier said that we were going to have a minister whose sole responsibility was going to operate the employment development agency - I believe was the name given to it - and his job was to see that we had just as many jobs in this province for our people as possible.

(1145)

When that minister was appointed, we found that he did not have exclusive responsibility for employment; in fact, he had a half a dozen other serious and major responsibilities in government.

Now in this Speech from the Throne we have a reorganization, and what does it propose? It proposes that the jobs minister, the minister in charge of the Employment Development Agency, shouldn't have half a dozen major responsibilities apart from that, but about a dozen. I don't know whether you've added up the responsibilities heaped upon the member for Melville but you will find way down at the bottom, the Employment Development Agency, and that indicates the focus and priority which this government is going to job creation.

And I say that the results are already showing in the numbers which came down this morning. The level of employment in Saskatchewan in November of this year is found to be lower than it was last year - 2,000 fewer jobs in this province in 1986 than in 1985. No other province in Canada has seen a loss of jobs; number one in the lack of opportunity for our people looking for jobs.

That may be something of which the government is proud, but I doubt it. They are taking solace in the fact that because so many people are leaving this province the unemployment figures are not rising as sharply as they might. It's no good denying that. The figures that were put out by the Department of Health, the department of the member for Meadow Lake, will show that. There is no doubt that the people are leaving rapidly. And there is no doubt that in this province we have 2,000 fewer jobs than we had last year. And in no other province has there been a decrease.

It's not only a matter of numbers, because the job creation efforts, or the lack of job creation efforts by

the government opposite has meant deep hardship for many people in this province, many in my constituency, but many in the constituencies of members on both sides of the House. And that wasn't mentioned in the Speech from the Throne.

Nor was there any mention about revising our tax system, which is acknowledged to be unfair. We simply are not going to address the question of making our tax system fairer. There was some suggestion that there might be tax breaks for major corporations. That was in the Speech from the Throne. But as for any fairer system for ordinary people — no mention of that. And I think it's pretty important that we have a fair tax system because I expect that taxpayers are going to have to pay more money, either federally or provincially or both, over the next several years. Looking at the sad record of financial mismanagement which both Conservative governments have engaged in, I see no alternative to further taxes. And it is important that the system be fair, and be seen to be fair; and it is not now seen to be fair. And there is no addressing of that in the Speech from the Throne.

There was some talk about farm chemicals but no mention of generic chemicals, no mention of pressing the federal government to move in this area so that our farmers could make major savings. Everybody acknowledges that the savings could be made. Everybody acknowledges that if we had generic chemicals our farmers would have very substantially less to pay in providing agricultural chemicals - and no mention of that.

There's another point that I was disappointed in - there was no mention of human rights. I thought there would be because in a few days, December 10th, we're going to celebrate Human Rights Day, an occasion to remind us of the human rights we enjoy in Saskatchewan and the fact that many people throughout the world do not enjoy those human rights. I think Saskatchewan people would have appreciated an indication in the Speech from the Throne that their government shared the view that Saskatchewan people do, that human rights are important and their protection is important here in Saskatchewan and beyond our borders. And as I say, we're going to celebrate Human Rights Day in four or five days and it would have, I think, been highly appropriate in the Speech from the Throne.

Those are a few of the glaring omissions that were in the Speech from the Throne or were not in the Speech from the Throne, depending on how you wish to phrase that. We could have replaced paragraph after paragraph of self-congratulatory purple prose with which that speech was filled, with some succinct comments on what the government proposed to do about some of those pressing problems that are being faced by Saskatchewan people. But they were not there and I was disappointed that they were not there.

One final comment, Mr. Speaker, before I beg leave to adjourn the debate. I've indicated that there were many items of importance that were not referred to in the Speech from the Throne. There were many things which ought to have been mentioned but instead we had talk and more talk about government reorganization.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read something about government reorganization. I want to quote:

I am happy today to announce a major reorganization of government departments and agencies . . . It is designed to meet three key objectives: one, to improve government productivity, overall effectiveness, efficiency and economy by co-ordinating similar programs; two, to consolidate related functions under single departments to ensure greater accountability; three, to improve public access to government by simplifying communication and reducing confusion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you may have thought I was quoting from the Speech from the Throne. I was not. I

was quoting from the speech of the Premier in this House on March 25, 1983. At that time we were promised effectiveness, efficiency, economy. Have you heard those words lately? All the same words as were in the Speech from the Throne on Wednesday.

Three years ago they proudly announced a major reorganization of their government and they were going to get effectiveness, efficiency, economy, greater productivity . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well that seems to me they have fallen short. It's disturbing that a government which is recently re-elected has to indulge in a regurgitation of reorganization - a kind of saga of scramble in lieu of putting forward any positive programs in its Speech from the Throne.

They're busy rearranging the deck chairs as they did three or four years ago. We heard it all. And all I can say is, after the reorganization of three years ago - and that wasn't the first one that they have indulged in since they were in government - they have clearly adopted the principle that when they have nothing that they know what to do, that they can do, they announce a reorganization. And they have done it over and over again. And in 1983 we were promised efficiency and effectiveness if we had a reorganization. And if what we've had in the last three years is an efficient government, then spare us from any more reorganization. Spare us from any more reorganization.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Blakeney: - I will have an opportunity as I extend my remarks on Monday, Mr. Speaker, to deal with some of the efficiency and effectiveness of this government. I'll have an opportunity to point out what they've done to our budgetary system; point out the deficits; point out their record of borrowing. We'll have an opportunity deal more effectively on other occasions, with the efficiency represented by appointing the past president of the Progressive Conservative Party as the chief executive officer of the power corporation when he has no related experience, either in administering any large organization or in the energy field in a technical sense.

We'll have an opportunity to deal with just how efficient this sort of thing is. I'm sure it's efficient for the Progressive Conservative Party. But we'll have an opportunity to address the matter of whether it is sound business on the part of the people of Saskatchewan.

So we look forward to having an opportunity to have a full and free debate in this Chamber on what is in the Speech from the Throne and what is not in the Speech from the Throne. In order that I may extend my remarks at a more appropriate time, Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

Mr. Speaker: - Before adjourning this House, I would just like to take this opportunity to compliment all the hon. members for the professional behaviour they have displayed in the first two days of this Assembly. I'm sure the people of Saskatchewan are pleased, and it is no less than they expect from members of your stature. And I trust that the trend you have established will continue in the coming weeks.

The Assembly adjourned at 11:58 a.m.