

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fifth Session — Sixteenth Legislature
23rd Day

Thursday, March 18, 1971

The Assembly met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. Speaker: — Before the Orders of the Day I wish to introduce to all Members of the Legislature the following groups of students situated in the galleries: from the constituency of Saskatoon Mayfair represented by Mr. Brockelbank, 34 students from St. Edwards School under the direction of their principal Mr. Mansfield and their teacher Mr. Hudy; from the constituency of Saskatoon Nutana Centre represented by Mr. Estey, 43 students from Buena Vista under the direction of their school teacher Mr. Gary Loy; from the constituency of Elrose represented by Mr. Leith, 43 students from the Eston-Elrose School Unit under the direction of their school teacher, Mr. W. H. Hanson; from the constituency of Rosthern represented by the Hon. Mr. Boldt, 67 students from the Rosthern Junior College under the direction of their teacher Mr. Thiessen; from the constituency of Saskatoon Nutana South represented by Mr. Forsyth, 43 students from the Churchill School under the direction of their teacher Mr. Gogal; from the constituency of Swift Current represented by Mr. Wood, 34 students from the Cabri School.

I am sure all Members will wish to join with me in extending an extremely warm welcome and to all the visitors in the gallery, to express the very sincere wish that they will find their stay here educational, informative and to wish each and every one of them a safe trip home.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Unemployment Figures Dominion Bureau Of Statistics

Hon. D. G. MacLennan: (Minister of Labour) — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to draw the attention of Hon. Members to the unemployment statistics as released today by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

I am pleased to report that once again Saskatchewan has the lowest unemployment rate in Canada . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. D. G. MacLennan: (Minister of Labour) — . . . of 4.6 per cent. This compares to the national rate of 8.1 per cent. Saskatchewan's rate dropped from 6.2 last month to the present rate of 4.6. This compares, Mr. Speaker, most favorably to the other Western provinces. British Columbia has an unemployment rate of 8.7 per cent; Alberta a rate of 6 per cent; Socialist Manitoba 6 per cent. I might also point out that the labor force in Saskatchewan in February 1971 was 327,000. This figure shows a growth of 3,000 people as compared

to February 1970.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. D. G. MacLennan: (Minister of Labour) — Mr. Speaker, it appears that Saskatchewan is leading the country in economic recovery.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. W. G. Davies: (Moose Jaw South) — Just a small comment, Mr. Speaker, on the remarks of the Minister of Labour, a very brief one indeed, really in the way of a question. I should like to ask the Hon. Minister what our unemployment rate would be if we hadn't had 25,000 workers flee the province for other provinces?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. D. G. MacLennan: (Minister of Labour) — Mr. Speaker, the facts remain that there were 21,000 unemployed in Saskatchewan last month and there are only 15,000 unemployed this month. This is still regrettable.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. W. E. Smishek: (Regina North East) — Mr. Speaker, in view of the comment of the Minister of Labour, I wonder whether he can tell us about the work force population drop from the previous month from 338,000 to 326,000 — the 12,000 labor force drop. Does he have any idea whether they left for Manitoba, Alberta, or what provinces?

Hon. D. G. MacLennan: (Minister of Labour) — Mr. Speaker, we can go into it in further detail in the Labour Estimates and I shall be delighted to do so then. But we are comparing February 1970, as I said, to February 1971.

Mr. E. Kramer: (The Battlefords) — Mr. Speaker, I have said this before, but the Minister reminds me . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! It seems to me that we are getting an oral question period and the statement period mixed up together. Does the Member rise to ask a question?

Mr. Kramer: — Is the Minister the man who is bragging about having no hunger in his house after his family is starving to death?

Hon. D. G. MacLennan: (Minister of Labour) — Mr. Speaker, I will not even bother replying to that.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Appendix “B” On Back Of Blue Paper

Mr. Speaker: — Before the Orders of the Day I want to draw the attention of all Hon. Members to an addition to our Blue Paper which you will find as Appendix “B” on the very back. We thought in view of the fact the House had decided at the last session to

establish a Non-controversial Bills Committee, that it would be a good idea if we put an appendix on the back of the Blue Paper which would show the progress of all Bills that had been referred to that or to any other committee either to Non-controversial, Private Bills, or any other Committee of the Legislature. I just wanted to draw your attention to this innovation. I hope that it will further streamline the procedure in the Legislature.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Steuart that **Bill No. 36 — An Act to assist Athabasca Forest Industries Ltd in establishing a Pulp mill in Saskatchewan** be now read a second time.

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, I think the Bill which is before us today is certainly one of the most important that has ever come to the floor of this Legislature. It will provide for the largest single industrial economic complex ever to be established in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — The new Athabasca pulp mill. I might say that this legislation marks the culmination of more than a year's negotiation between the Provincial Government and Parsons and Whittemore of New York.

Mr. Speaker, initially I think I can say that Members on both sides of this House would agree that diversification of the Saskatchewan economy is urgently needed, because for too many years our people have been dependent upon the wheat crop. If there was adequate rainfall, if markets were good, then our people would prosper. However, if there was a drought or if export markets disappeared, our province invariably faced economic difficulties. Thus I say again, we must reduce our dependence upon wheat and agriculture. That is why this Government some time ago sought out the Prince Albert pulp mill. That is one of the reasons why we are bringing this Bill before the Legislature today. The Athabasca mill will provide major diversification for our economy.

In order to obtain the new mill, the Government of Saskatchewan has made major and far-reaching financial guarantees. The new project is extremely vast and complicated. Members on this side of the House are very much aware that there are considerable risks involved. But we shall contend in the days and the weeks and the months ahead that the advantages to be derived from the mill far outweigh the disadvantages. Let me tell Hon. Members, let me tell the people of Saskatchewan, that the Government has weighed and analyzed the risks involved in this mill. We have taken every conceivable step to minimize those risks. Long ago we appointed independent consultants, the best we could find in the world, to analyze all the facts involved in minute detail. Those independent consultants informed us that a 1,400 ton pulp mill is a viable project.

Yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Blakeney) spoke in this debate. I regret that I was out of the House and

I have to take newspaper reports of his speech as authoritative. If I understood it correctly the Leader of the Opposition said that his party is going to oppose this pulp mill. Why? Because, he says, "This is a bad financial deal for the people of Saskatchewan."

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, what is the Leader of the Opposition really saying then? What are my Socialist friends saying? In essence they are saying that the NDP put dollars ahead of the well-being of thousands of northern citizens.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — In other words what he said yesterday was that the NDP put dollars before people. Well, what will the people of northern Saskatchewan think? What will the people to whom this pulp mill offers such an opportunity for decent livelihood think of the Socialist rejection? What is our friend the Member for Shellbrook (Mr. Bowerman) going to tell his people when he goes back home? What is he going to tell all those disadvantaged people who have been on social welfare for years? What is the Hon. Member for Turtleford (Mr. Wooff) going to tell his people, because there are many people up in his area who would like jobs? What is the MLA for Redberry (Mr. Michayluk) going to say? He always tells us that there are many poverty stricken people up in Redberry. I say that if this attitude of NDP Northern Members is persisted in, every Socialist candidate in the northwest area will be defeated in the next election on this issue.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, that Liberals as always put people ahead of dollars.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Now the Leader of the Opposition said yesterday, and again I quote:

The deal offered Parsons and Whittemore the opportunity to get 70 per cent of the equity in the largest kraft mill in Canada with little or no cash outlet. The firm would take little or no risk for a 70 per cent equity.

Mr. Speaker, this is a gross distortion of the facts.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — First of all, Parsons and Whittemore will put up a cash contribution of \$16.8 million as equity capital; then they will put up money for project and equipment financing, amounting to another \$12 million. They are responsible for 50 per cent of the contingency loan, another \$3 million. The parent company has guaranteed the performance of the supply and service companies on the turnkey price for \$117.7 million. In other words, I tell Members of this Legislature, and I will certainly tell the people of Saskatchewan that Parsons and Whittemore exposure in this

venture is \$149.5 million.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — And if this mill did not by some chance succeed, the whole Parsons and Whittemore complex around the world would face bankruptcy. It would in all likelihood collapse. Yet my Socialist friends, who wouldn't know a balance sheet from a load of hay, tell us that Parsons and Whittemore is taking no risks.

Then the Leader of the Opposition claimed that Parsons and Whittemore will receive a marketing commission of 3 per cent. What a terrible thing, Mr. Speaker! How does he think pulp should be marketed? The way Mr. Schreyer sells it in Manitoba? Should the company establish its own marketing force, and pay substantially more than 3 per cent? Parsons and Whittemore, of course, have marketing agencies all over the world. They have markets, they have a sales force established, and at 3 per cent, they can do a very effective job for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Then the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, was also critical because he said, and I again quote:

The agreements would allow Parsons and Whittemore owned companies to construct the mill without calling for tenders.

Mr. Speaker, the reason for this procedure has already been explained to the Leader of the Opposition about five times this Session. However I shall explain it the sixth time, because obviously he doesn't understand. We were given a guaranteed turnkey price. We have been informed by our prime consultant, Mr. Walter Holzer, a man of international repute, that this turnkey price is fair and reasonable. Our officials, without exception, have compared the Athabasca mill price with mills of the same size in other parts of the world. They are convinced that the price is reasonable.

I am sure my hon. friends realize that very frequently when the complexes are so huge, that construction companies will not take them on a tender basis. They want to operate on a cost-plus basis. This was true with the Foundation Company when the Prince Albert mill was built. In this manner we know the price of the mill before it is started. We know it is a fair price, and we know if the cost is more than the turnkey price, Parsons and Whittemore will pick up the tab, not the Government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Then the Leader of the Opposition made his usual Socialist harangue about the company making some profits. Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, we hope they make some really good profits . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — . . . because we know that the taxpayers will receive 30

per cent of profits immediately, because of our equity. Then we know that on any profits Parsons and Whittemore make, they will pay a 51 per cent corporation tax. Again our taxpayers will benefit in a very major way. We shall use our profits to build new hospitals and new schools and new highways, and so on.

Yesterday, if I read the paper correctly, the Leader of the Opposition argues that this deal fails to provide minimum financial safeguards for the people of Saskatchewan.

Again, I say we have outlined the facts on numerous occasions this Session. but I shall summarize the matter once again. I hope the hon. friends opposite can understand. First of all we did employ independent consultants. They told us (1) that the markets were available; (2) that the mill was feasible and viable; (3) that the price was right. We have a first mortgage security on the new pulp mill.

An Hon. Member: — You didn't mention that!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — In order to obtain this mill we are making a guarantee of \$107 million which is not a direct commitment, but only a contingent liability. The Province is undertaking this guarantee as an ultimate safeguard against these circumstances which the Socialist Leader yesterday predicted, and the prospects over which he seemed to relish. If Parsons and Whittemore fail to meet their commitments, the guarantee enables us to bring in new ownership and to operate the mill ourselves.

Now many of the concerns voiced by the Socialist Leader would have been overcome had he read the agreements. Perhaps he lacked sufficient time, I don't know. I want Hon. Members opposite and I want the people of Saskatchewan to know that; (1) we have an advance payment bond of \$20 million; (2) we have a performance bond of \$30 million; (3) we have a labor and material payment bond of \$19 million — total bonds of \$69 million, Mr. Speaker, to help protect the taxpayer of Saskatchewan against disaster.

In addition, progress payments will be made only on the basis of invoices, certified by the independent auditing firm of the supplier and the purchaser. Furthermore the whole corporate structure of Parsons and Whittemore, as I said a moment ago, is committed to the performance of the supply and service companies. If the turnkey price is exceeded, it is the Parsons and Whittemore company which picks up the difference.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Government has taken every possible step to provide maximum safeguards for the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — The most important point I wish to make this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I emphasize to the House and I emphasize to the people of Saskatchewan, is that without the guarantees we are giving the mill could not come into existence.

So far today I have been speaking about the risks. For a few moments this afternoon I want to talk about the many advantages which this great, new pulp mill can bring to the province.

First of all the project will employ 1,200 people in the construction phase. Once operations commence it will employ 1,600 people in the mill and in the woods. Indirectly it is estimated that there will be another 4,000 jobs created.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Annual direct wages will exceed \$15 million. As Hon. Members know this mill will be in the heart of an area inhabited by thousands of our Indian and Metis people. Many of them have been on social welfare most of their lives. Many of them have never had a job. This pulp mill agreement will require that a substantial percentage of those employed in the mill and in the woods must be people of native origin.

Mr. Blakeney: — It doesn't say so.

Mr. Thatcher: — Yes, it does say so. If you read the agreement it is right in the agreement.

Mr. Blakeney: — It is not!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Well if it isn't it will be. Mr. Speaker, I am informed by the Provincial Treasurer (Mr. Steuart) who drew up the agreements that it is in the agreements tabled, and if it isn't it will be tabled in an agreement before this Session ends.

Mr. Speaker, may I tell you that many of these workers will come from settlements such as Ile-a-la-Crosse, Buffalo Narrows, La Loche and many other native communities.

An Hon. Member: — Just like you did in . . .

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, some of those northern communities are little more than hell holes. Huge quantities of timber can be cut on and off their reserves. Jobs can be given to these natives for the first time. Hon. Members across the way say that they are going to oppose this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, the new mill will widen the tax base of our province in a major way. First of all the mill will pay local property taxes amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Is the Member for Shellbrook (Mr. Bowerman) against that fact? Is the Member for Redberry (Mr. Michayluk) against such provisions? Is the Member for Turtleford (Mr. Wooff) opposed? I hear that the candidate in the Meadow Lake area, who is a Socialist, isn't against the legislation.

The Province of Saskatchewan will receive more than \$2 million, Mr. Speaker, in sales tax on the construction materials. Are my friends opposite opposed to the Government obtaining \$2 million in sales tax?

As far as stumpage is concerned, every time a tree is cut the province receives revenue. I am not sure of the precise amount but I believe that stumpage fees could approach \$1 million annually.

Mr. Kramer: — We got \$280,000.

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Well we hope to get substantially more than \$280,000. Whatever the amount, we are pleased to have the revenue. Then in addition Athabasca mills will pay \$2 million to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation for gas. Also they will pay the usual electricity charges.

As I said a moment ago, if Parsons and Whittemore or Athabasca make any profit, the taxpayers get 51 per cent of that profit.

All these tax revenues and sources will ease the burden on the average citizen. The indirect benefits hardly have to be mentioned. Retailers, wholesalers and service industries will all reap great material advantages. For example, Athabasca will spend \$4 million on chemicals, most of them in the city of Saskatoon. Does my hon. friend, Mr. Brockelbank, oppose that \$4 million going to his chemical industry?

An Hon. Member: — He is leaving the House.

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — I don't blame him for leaving the House. Yet, Mr. Speaker, since the day that this great industrial project was announced, the Socialists have been critical. They know that for 20 long years they failed completely to get a new pulp mill. Oh, they announced a couple, but they failed to get them. They know that the Prince Albert and Athabasca mills are thorns in their political flesh. They are well aware that the pulp mills obtained by this Liberal Government are symbolic of Liberal industrial success, as compared to the abject and complete failure in this field by the NDP.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Thus they spread the wildest stories and rumors all over the North about this mill. In the process, if I may say so, Sir, they have displayed amazing inconsistency. First of all they criticize this Government for doing nothing about unemployment. This Session they have wept copious tears for those out of work. Yet when we create the greatest job creating complex ever to come to Saskatchewan, they say they are going to vote against it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — This Government, Mr. Speaker, believes in doing something about unemployment. That is why the Minister of Labour (Mr. MacLennan) was able to announce again today that Saskatchewan has by far the lowest unemployment of any province in Canada, far lower than Socialist Manitoba.

You know if the NDP across the way had all the answers to unemployment, I should like to know why their friend Schreyer isn't taking some of those suggestions.

What about natives? Our Socialist friends opposite claim that our Indian and Metis Branch isn't of much value. Time and again they have stated that we are doing too little to find jobs for our native people. Let me say again, at a time when we have the greatest complex ever to come to this province, one that will

employ hundreds of natives, then they are against it. What consistency!

A few weeks ago our Opposition MLAs criticized the Government for bringing some of our Indians from the North down to where there were some jobs. But now that we are going to take a great industry north to where the Indians are, the NDP are going to vote against it.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, I can only conclude that the attitude of the Socialists is motivated by pure and simple politics.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — They are willing to sacrifice the well-being of thousands of Saskatchewan citizens for the sake of political expediency.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — What about pollution? The NDP are running up and down the North and out to the universities and elsewhere saying, “Watch out for this pulp mill. It might pollute some of our waters in the North.” There are dangers, but the Government and the company are taking every conceivable step, Mr. Speaker, to make certain that pollution is kept at an absolute minimum. We have a Clean Air Environment Branch which will soon be set up and that Branch will have to approve the project. Before the Federal grant is made available the Federal authorities will have to approve the pollution control.

We expect Athabasca to put in the most modern anti-pollution devices available. My information is that they will cost in the neighborhood of \$7 million. I say to Hon. Members opposite, and I say to the people of Saskatchewan, that yesterday the Provincial Treasurer summed this matter up very, very well. He said, “The environment is important, but not as important as the needs of the people who live in the environment.” That statement sums up the attitude, Mr. Speaker, of the Liberal Party.

Then the Socialists claim that the mill will ruin our forests. They said there won’t be any trees left in the area. Mr. Speaker, growing timber is like growing wheat. If you don’t cut the trees down they will rot. The Government today runs a Silviculture Plant at Prince Albert. It is planning a second such establishment at Big River, if it isn’t already there. The seedlings are being produced from the best varieties of trees. Widespread reforestation is taking place in addition to natural growth in the Prince Albert area. With the new mill, these efforts will be expanded. It has been the experience in many parts of the nation that when the original slash is removed and new trees are planted, the new forest is two or three times more productive than the original one. These contracts that we are examining today, Sir, will provide for reforestation and re-growth on a perpetual yield basis.

The NDP are running around saying, “Why did the Government bring in another American company, why not a Canadian company?” I remind you, Sir, again I have this old clipping, that when the Socialists announced a pulp mill in 1956, they indicated that the main financing would be American capital. The only

trouble was that they couldn't find investors, so their mill didn't materialize. I want to assure this House again that we did our best to interest Canadian companies in that area. We invited numerous Canadian pulp and paper companies to build and operate a pulp mill, but we could hardly even get them interested in the sawmill which is going ahead in Meadow Lake. We were told that the risks were too great, the trees were too small, the freight rates were too high, markets were too far away and so on. Not one of them evidenced any willingness to proceed in the Doré Lake area. Parsons and Whittemore alone expressed a willingness to go ahead. We knew that they had built a mill in Prince Albert which is a magnificent success, employing a thousand people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Therefore we decided, despite the risks involved, to proceed with all possible speed.

Mr. Speaker, why did the Government itself not build the new plant? The Socialists across the way say that perhaps they would have built it as a government enterprise. They had 20 years and they didn't do anything about it when they were in office. In the first place, the Government lacks the know-how for such a vast enterprise. Far more important, it lacks the sales capacity to sell the pulp once it has been produced. The marketing of pulp in a world-wide market that is extremely competitive is very difficult, particularly when there is oversupply. Parsons and Whittemore have world-wide connections where they can market the product once it is manufactured.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, the risks involved in proceeding with the Athabasca mill admittedly are great. However, because of the unemployment situation, because of the economic plight of thousands of people in that northern area, the Government feels it cannot hesitate. For too many years, the huge part of the province has stagnated. For too many years the major portion of the population has been on social welfare. The Government is determined to find jobs for our people now. Once this Bill is passed we think we can get the mill started within two months. The longer our hon. friends hold this Bill up the longer the NDP are depriving people in the North of jobs.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — I say again, Mr. Speaker, that failure to proceed with this mill would sentence thousands of unemployed in the northwest part of the province, particularly Indians and Metis, to further decades on social welfare.

Mr. Speaker, as I said a moment ago, I didn't hear the Leader of the Opposition yesterday, but I read his remarks. The Leader of the Opposition is still using the tired old criticisms of the Athabasca pulp mill that he and his party did when the Prince Albert pulp mill was commenced. His criticisms are just as invalid today as they were five years ago. The Hon. Leader blithely ignores and attempts to belittle the tremendous economic impact of the Prince Albert mill in the Prince Albert area. His speech was at its anaemic best when he said, if I read the paper correctly, "Why, half of the pulp mill people at Prince Albert are from Quebec." Such parochialism, such nonsense! I would remind the Leader of the Opposition, as I am sure my colleagues did

yesterday, that he is a relative newcomer to this province, from Nova Scotia. Now we don't object to his immigration. As a matter of fact we kind of welcome him. Would he erect fences at our borders with signs to keep out other Canadians? That's what he said yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, the Socialist attitude of suspicion, mistrust and fear is alien to this province and to its people. This party opposite of negative thinkers, this party of rumor mongers, this party of gloom and doom boys will soon receive short shrift from the people of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — One thing the debate on this Bill will accomplish will be to clarify some of the issues in the next election. Mr. Speaker, do our electors want to hand the Province back to the negative thinkers, the anti-business members, the trade union bosses?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Do they want to throw this Province back to the Socialists, whose crowning industrial achievements through 20 years of office were a bankrupt tannery, a belly-up shoe factory, a woollen mill fiasco, a box factory disaster, a brick plant where day by day the taxpayer took a financial hiding? And I could mention the airline, the insurance company, and a few of the others.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Or, Mr. Speaker, far more sensibly, do they want to endorse a government that has shown by its policies and by its performance, that they get pulp mills and potash mines and so on . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — . . . and use the natural resources of Saskatchewan to provide jobs for people who need them.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, I predict that when historians 50 or 100 years from now chronicle the provincial events of Saskatchewan, they will single out the Athabasca pulp mill as one of the turning points in the economic progress of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — And they will indicate that this mill was the economic event which crowned our efforts to provide decent job opportunities for our native people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, those of us who

March 18, 1971

sit to your right believe in Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — We believe in its people and its resources. We believe that our province has a great economic future.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — We are convinced that the Athabasca mill will completely transform for the better the quality of life in northern Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Our Party, Sir, will most assuredly make this gigantic project one of the major issues in the next election campaign whenever it may come.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. W. R. Thatcher: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:30 o'clock p.m.