

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session — Seventeenth Legislature
48th Day

Wednesday, April 10, 1974

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. D. Boldt (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you a group of students from the community of Aberdeen in my constituency. There are 46 Grade Eight students, their teacher is Mr. Peters, a long time friend. I am sure that all Members of this Legislature will welcome them here and hope that they will have an enjoyable stay with us here this afternoon. I expect to meet them personally at 3:00 o'clock this afternoon.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. P. P. Mostoway (Hanley): — Mr. Speaker, I too should like to welcome the group of students from Aberdeen school and the two teachers who accompany them today, Mr. Peters and Mr. Faber. I want to point out that Aberdeen is roughly 20 miles northeast of Saskatoon. It is in the Saskatoon East School Unit and I understand that the Grade Eight students here are having a reasonably enjoyable day, and I hope that when they watch and listen to the proceedings in this House, they can go back and tell them that all is well at the Regina front. I too, look forward to meeting them with Mr. Boldt at about 3:30 o'clock.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. E. C. Whelan (Regina North West): — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Premier, I am pleased to introduce to you and through you to all Members of the Assembly 50 Grade Eight students from Regent Park School in the constituency of Regina Centre. These visitors are seated in the west gallery with their teachers, Lon Martinac and Bob Grocholski. I will have to do better on that pronunciation obviously. I asked one of the Ukrainian fellows in our group how to pronounce it. This school is located in the new North West constituency. On behalf of all Members I should like to welcome this group and express the wish that their stay here will be a satisfactory and educational introduction, Mr. Speaker, to our system and to the democratic form of government that we use to govern ourselves.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. C. P. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to join with the other Members in introducing a group of students from the community of Yellow Grass. Yellow Grass is located on the Soo Line and of course, is in a portion of the Milestone constituency. They are led here by their principal, Mr. Wagner. Thank goodness that it is a good German name and I don't have the problem with the Ukrainian pronunciation. I hope through you, Mr. Speaker,

to introduce them to all Members of the House and bid them welcome. I hope they have a very enjoyable and productive afternoon.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS

Mr. J. G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I think this is the appropriate time, I should like to inform the House that the Sergeant-at-Arms is going to be having his 70th birthday on Saturday. The Sergeant-at-Arms and I are desk mates, and we have got to know each other well. Given that I may be one of the more 'unruly' Members I may be rather well placed vis-à-vis the Sergeant-at-Arms. It is the appropriate occasion for the House to honor the Sergeant-at-Arms. He has been Sergeant-at-Arms for two periods, between 1963 and 1965, and since 1971. I should like personally to wish him many more years of service to this Legislature in his capacity of Sergeant-at-Arms.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Premier and the Government also to extend our best wishes and congratulations to the Sergeant-at-Arms. I should say that he is indeed very well placed, close to the colleague from Saskatoon University and close to the Opposition as well. We think that he does a good job for the Assembly and we wish him many happy returns.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Control of Food Prices in Saskatchewan

Mr. J. G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I should like to direct a question to the Hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Tchorzewski). In light of today's announcement of a dramatic increase in food costs, 1.5 per cent rise in the last month, 18.6 per cent in the last year, and since your admission of no action the other night to control food prices and escalating food prices to consumers in Saskatchewan, what action has the Government taken since Monday night to take positive action to control food prices in Saskatchewan?

Hon. E. L. Tchorzewski (Minister of Consumer Affairs): — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the many positive actions taken by this Government in the area of tax reductions on fuel and gasoline as well as removal of Medicare premiums and the recently announced increase in minimum wage are going to be of some significant assistance to those people who are most directly affected by this increase. We only hope and continue to urge that some concrete national effort be taken to regulate to some extent the spiraling increase in the cost of living.

Mr. Lane: — Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. We notice

speaking personally, what is an unfortunate practice that began in the House yesterday of Ministers being quoted publicly and not having spoken in the House and I would hope the Press takes my criticism in the intention that it is given that it is I think a rather unfair practice that when Members who say nothing in the House end up getting some press. And in light of the Ministers statement where he has just said nothing about what the Government opposite intends to do . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Would the Hon. Member ask his question.

Mr. Lane: — I would hope that the Government opposite would now start giving some concrete proposals.

I am going to ask the Minister again when the Government opposite is going to quit trying to abdicate its responsibility and take some positive action to reduce food prices to the consumers of the Province of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I am rather surprised to hear from the Member opposite that he thinks he can undertake for himself or maybe on behalf of the Members opposite to tell the Press whom they should interview or when they should interview. Whether it be a Minister or any Member of this House. I am really quite surprised at that kind of a stance taken by the Member representing the Liberal Party on the opposite side of this House.

I already indicated, and I think it is well understood, that there are certain limitations to what any one province can do in the area of cost of living. I think I have made that explicitly clear on a number of occasions and particularly during the time when the Estimates of the Department of Consumer Affairs were being considered.

I have outlined on many occasions the kinds of efforts that we have done provincially to alleviate the burden that is imposed on people on low and fixed incomes because of the increase in cost of living. I don't think that there is a province in Canada, Mr. Speaker, that can match the efforts that have been made by this Government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I will once again in closing my reply to the question from the Member opposite, issue my invitation to the Liberal Opposition to join with us, because I documented the other day the reasons why, join with us in saying to the Federal Government that they should get off their stance of doing nothing with the Prices Review Board that has no power to do anything and join with us in urging them to take that kind of action which will give to that Prices Review Board the power to control prices and to roll back prices that may be unjustified.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — I thank the Hon. Minister for the . . .

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Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! We can't permit a debate on this.

Mr. Lane: — He offered me the opportunity to join . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

Mr. K. R. MacLeod (Regina Albert Park): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the same Minister. I wonder if he could tell us whether his studies of the Intercontinental Packers reports and annual financial statements showed whether there is any gouging of consumers by the meat packing industry, and if so, to what extent?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what studies the Member opposite is talking about. There has been no study.

Mr. MacLeod: — Mr. Speaker, may I clarify my first question. I am assuming that the Minister has a copy of the financial statement and reports from Intercontinental Packers and my question was: Assuming that he had studied it does his study indicate the extent to which there is gouging by the meat packing industry and Intercontinental and the extent to which it is?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the Crown Corporations Committee and therefore I have received statements as every Member on the opposite side and on this side have who are members of that Crown Corporations Committee. Intercontinental Packers does not represent the total meat packing processing industry in this province or in this country.

Mr. MacLeod: — I wonder if I could ask the Minister if he could direct his attention to the question then, dealing only with the Intercontinental Packers, to what extent does Intercontinental Packers gouge the public? To what extent is there profiteering by Intercontinental Packers, because obviously the Minister has avoided answering the question?

Mr. Tchorzewski: — I am not aware that Intercontinental Packers is gouging the consumers of Saskatchewan. I said that Intercontinental Packers is one industry in many industries in the meat processing business in this country and I think that it is not our position to single out one particular industry because the Members opposite seem to have some kind of a hangup on it because this Government has made an effort to see to it that the meat processing industry remains in the Province of Saskatchewan, which is some effort that the Members opposite would not even consider when they were Members of the Government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacLeod: — Mr. Speaker, I beg your indulgence.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! I allowed you qualifications which gave you three kicks at the cat. You have had your two questions.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sod Turning of New Canada Packers Plant in Moose Jaw

Mr. D. F. MacDonald (Moose Jaw North): — I wonder if I might be permitted to make an announcement that is of great importance to the city of Moose Jaw.

The Premier and myself just participated in a sod turning of the new Canada Packers Plant in Moose Jaw. The Premier was undoubtedly delayed on his way back. He just finished at a quarter to two. I maybe drove a little faster than he did. But the plant in which the Premier participated in the sod turning is a Canada Packers Plant, a \$4.2 million beef killing plant. I should like to say that credit should be given where credit is due and that the Federal Government contributed \$828,000 in the way of a DREE grant.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald: — I think that credit should also be given to the fact that Canada Packers went ahead with this in spite of the fact that the Provincial Government has headed into competition.

I should like to say that this is a very important opening for Moose Jaw North. It recognizes Moose Jaw as the heart of the beef industry. And it recognizes that Canada Packers will be the heart of industry in Moose Jaw and the expansion of industry in Moose Jaw. I think it also recognizes that Canada Packers, although being a corporate giant, does have a heart and has confidence in our community in Moose Jaw and therefore I should like, at this time, to lay on the Table, evidence of this historic and momentous occasion in the city of Moose Jaw. I should therefore, like to present to this House a beef heart which was obtained from the killing floor of Canada Packers, the old and dilapidated plant this morning.

If the Clerk of the House feels that this would be rather difficult to preserve I would not be against him presenting it to the Minister of Industry and Commerce, I think he could use it.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to say that the Premier is not yet back from Moose Jaw, but in response and in comment to the Hon. Member that we are pleased to see that he announced the Canada Packers, I want to say that Canada Packers is in Saskatchewan notwithstanding the considered attacks from the Member for Moose Jaw and other Members opposite against the Hog Marketing Commission.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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Mr. Romanow: — Notwithstanding the statements made by the Members opposite that when we got into Intercontinental Packers that that would be the end of any other meat packing operation in Saskatchewan. But Canada Packers is in Saskatchewan because that business like every other business has confidence in the activities of Premier Blakeney and this Government.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

MOTIONS

Easter Recess

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Smishek):

That when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, April 11, 1974, it do stand adjourned until Monday, April 15, 1974.

Motion agreed to.

STATEMENTS

Hat – Named in Honour of Queen Victoria's Consort

Mr. M. Feschuk (Prince Albert East): — Mr. Speaker, among the many comments I have heard about my hat, Sir, I thought I should like to inform you and the House that there is a bit of a history to this hat. That in July of 1866 a Reverend James Nesbitt set up a mission for the Presbyterian Church at the foot of what is known as Central Avenue now in the city of Prince Albert. Reverend Mr. Nesbitt named the new settlement Prince Albert in honor of Albert, Queen Victoria's Prince Consort. The Queen's Consort had popularized this hat which he wore constantly at all official functions. This hat was adopted for all formal functions across Canada and was called the Prince Albert. The hat gained its popularity in photographs taken in all areas of Canada and the Territories in the earlier days, which indicate that it became a popular head dress of the day. In keeping with the early traditions of Prince Albert, and with its cultural and social background, the Prince Albert hat was adopted as a special symbol of the Prince Albert Chamber of Commerce. The hat was distinctly a representative of Prince Albert, specifically recalling the early days of settlement and its progress to a thriving city of over 30,000 inhabitants today.

I want to inform this House that this hat was given to me by the Chamber of Commerce.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: — I want to say we are getting a little irregular in our routine in making these statements but I hope the House will tolerate it today, but it is not going to be a precedent for future times.

GOVERNMENT MOTION

Final Report of Constituency Boundaries Commission

Hon. A. E. Blakeney (Premier) moved, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Romanow (Attorney General):

That the final report of the Constituency Boundaries Commission established pursuant to The Constituency Boundaries Commission Act, 1972, laid before this Assembly by the Hon. Mr. Speaker recommending that the area of the province

(i) lying south of the dividing line as defined in section 14 of the said Act, be divided into 59 constituencies, and

(ii) lying north of the dividing line as defined in section 14 of the said Act be divided into two constituencies,

be hereby approved and adopted by this Assembly; That the descriptions of each of the constituencies as recommended by the said final report, except the description of the boundaries of the constituency of Saskatoon-Mayfair, be approved and adopted by this Assembly; and

That the final report of the Commission be altered by deleting the description of the constituency of Saskatoon-Mayfair, and substituting therefore the description as set out in the schedule which was attached to the final report, and that the final report of the Commission as so altered be approved and adopted by this Assembly.

He said: Mr. Speaker, Members on this side of the House and Members opposite are, I am sure, interested in the subject of this Motion. And it is with a good deal of satisfaction that I speak to this Motion and ask the Legislature to accept the Report of the Constituency Boundaries Commission.

I like to see a job started and nearing its completion and as a member of the NDP I am happy to say that I have had that opportunity to see some programs started and nearing completion during the past two or three years and this will be another one if, as I confidently expect, we shall pass this Motion and pass the Bill which follows on it.

We have before us today for the first time in the history of Saskatchewan, a report from an Independent Boundaries Commission.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I, for one, consider that a cause for satisfaction because there was a time not very long ago when this day seemed a long way off.

A few short years ago, 1970 to be precise, Mr. Speaker, I sat in the Opposition and I watched, as did my colleagues, in

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disbelief and frankly, in disgust, as the Liberal Government, a few remnants of which are sitting on your left, Mr. Speaker, perpetrated on the people of Saskatchewan the most blatant and outrageous gerrymander in the history of Saskatchewan, and I suggest in the history of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — At that time, Mr. Speaker, we in the New Democratic Opposition appealed to the then Government to refer redistribution to an independent boundaries commission, as the records of this House will show. I need hardly add, because it is well known to Members opposite and to the people of Saskatchewan, that our proposal was received in a spirit of pure cynicism. Our proposal was voted down and in the back rooms of the Liberal planners plotted what they were convinced would be a sure future for the Liberal Party in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, they did this with no concern for the voters of this province. I note now that the Leader of the Opposition indicates that – if I may quote his words as I understood them – “Just as your boys did with respect to this redistribution.”

Mr. Steuart: — Right on!

Mr. Blakeney: — And the Member for Prince Albert West says, “Right on,” and I will have a word or two to comment on that in a moment.

Perhaps Members opposite in 1970 thought that the voters wouldn't care. May I assure them that the voters in my constituency did care. May I assure them that the people of Regina Centre didn't miss the fact that one vote in Regina Albert Park equaled four of their votes. I know that the Member for Albert Park (Mr. MacLeod) is well aware of these facts. In fact, if you lived in the ten block Montague Street in Regina, your vote was worth one, and if you lived in the 40 block Montague Street your vote was worth four.

The people in my constituency did not think that that was fair. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan found to their dismay that if the Liberal interests couldn't win the election by the ordinary methods, they were quite prepared to go outside the democratic process. I have no doubt, Mr. Speaker, that my friends opposite are thinking that I am going over old ground. And I, frankly, wouldn't blame them, I wouldn't blame them at all if they wished that I moved to newer material. If I belonged to the political party which attacked the basic structure of the electoral process in Saskatchewan, as they did, I wouldn't want to talk about it either. It brings back too many unpleasant memories of the anger of the Saskatchewan people, whose interests they were supposed to represent, but didn't represent.

That, Mr. Speaker, brings me to 1971. It was nothing short of amazing for those of us who came into office in 1971 to discover the abandoned report of the then Liberal brain trust – one might even say the Guys and Dolls, but perhaps I might call it the Guys and Daves, of the Liberal Party – the report which indicated just how they were going to use this process to win 40 seats, while getting no more votes than the New Democratic Party.

But that plan fell afoul of the people of Saskatchewan. The people of Saskatchewan decided emphatically that they had enough of this process and they voted overwhelmingly for a Party which included in its platform, a promise of representation by population.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — The first step towards fulfilling that election promise came with the introduction in this House, in 1972, of the Bill providing for the Constituency Boundaries Commission, The Constituency Boundaries Commission Act, 1972.

I commented on it at the time, Mr. Speaker, and I will comment on it again.

I was fascinated and I know Members on this side of the House were fascinated at the response of the Liberal Party to that Bill. They had, short months ago, totally rejected this idea and then around they came, at least nominally, to support the Bill in principle. I hope that we can continue to count on their support for the adoption of the Commission's Report.

I should like to say a few words about the Constituency Boundaries Commission. First, Mr. Speaker, I should like to thank the members of the Commission — Mr. Justice Maguire, Doctor Archer and Mr. Barnhart, who in their own words, as found in the interim report, were conscious of the importance of their task.

In the initial report the commissioners went on to say that the right to vote is a cherished right, hard-won in the past through resolute conviction. Stemming from this right to vote is the justifiable expectation that one elector's vote should, within reason, weigh equally with another elector's vote elsewhere in the province.

This, Mr. Speaker, was assuredly not the position in 1971 as I have attempted to illustrate by reference to the city of Regina. And this, Mr. Speaker, this idea concisely stated by the commissioners, is the reason why our Government wanted to ensure, once and for all, that the distribution of population on the electoral map would be reviewed on a regular basis and, in fact, the constituency boundaries would be reviewed on a regular basis and by a non-partisan group in the Province of Saskatchewan.

The Legislation which we introduced in 1972 requires that the machinery of this Commission come into operation following every ten-year census. True, things might not change perhaps all that much in ten years, but we want to provide that there must be a review every ten years. In fact it can be provided that there can be a review in a shorter time.

We hope that we have ensured that in the long-run there will be no more gerrymanders in Saskatchewan because I believe that once this system gets operating it would be a cavalier government perhaps even a foolhardy government, which would attempt to repeal The Constituency Boundaries Act.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, if this Resolution is passed and the legislation following it is passed, we will have accomplished what we set out to do and we will have enshrined in the legislation of this province one more democratic right — the right to a fair chance to express your voice more or less equally with that of your fellow citizens. That will be a right enshrined in the law of Saskatchewan, thanks to the New Democratic Party and no thanks to the Liberal Party.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — The commissioners tell us that they had a good response from people around the province. They held eight hearings before the preparation of the Interim Report and two further hearings prior to the preparation of the Final Report, which we have before us.

Many individuals and groups took advantage of these hearings to make their views known to the commissioners about the location of boundaries, the names of constituencies, the concentration of activities in individual areas, and so on. They knew, Mr. Speaker, that their submissions would be heard and the points which they raised would be weighed carefully by the commissioners.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we can see in reading the Final Report of the Constituency Boundaries Commission that our commissioners applied themselves to the task of drawing up the fairest and the most logical boundaries for constituencies in the province. No one is saying that the boundaries are completely fair. No one is saying the boundaries are completely logical. It is perhaps not possible to have totally logical boundaries from the point of view of community interest and at the same time have approximately equal constituencies in the number of electors they contain. But insofar as the matters must be weighed one against the other, it seems to me that the Constituency Boundaries Commission has done an admirable job.

We shall have, if we accept the report, 61 Members in the Legislative Assembly who will represent roughly an equal number of constituents each. I look at the populations of the Regina constituencies and I see that the smallest ones in numbers are Regina North West with 13,400 and Regina South at 14,000 and the largest one I think would be Victoria at 16,200.

We are well aware, I think, of why Regina North West and Regina South were given slightly smaller quotients because they are, in fact, fairly rapidly growing areas of the city and I would imagine that by now, and certainly by the time of the next election, these will be much more equal to the other constituencies. In fact, Regina North West and Regina South may exceed some of the other constituencies.

The legislation permitted a variation of 15 per cent above or below the average. Since the average computed by the Commission was 15,373, North West is 12.6 per cent below the average; Victoria is 6.2 above. I use this as a typical example of the job that the Commission has done in trying to draw constituency boundaries that give each voter an approximately equal voice.

There can be no possible justification for giving one citizen of Regina twice the voice of another citizen of Regina. Still less justification for three times or four times. We are hopeful that that day is over.

Realizing the concentrated attention which the commissioners must have given to their task in order to produce the necessary equality throughout our province, I think that this Legislature should commend them for the work they did.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, what better way could we commend them than by accepting their report as it stands, altered only for technical reasons with the consent of both Government and Opposition.

No Member sitting opposite can deny that the 1970 Liberal Government set out to make a complete and utter farce of the electoral process and I think they will not stand up and attempt to deny it. Even if they did attempt to deny it it wouldn't make any difference because the people of Saskatchewan know what the facts are.

Liberals fought the whole idea of an Independent Boundaries Commission in 1970. They gave lukewarm support to it in 1972. The Leader of the Opposition now indicates in his comments that they are no longer even giving the idea that much support. They rejected the idea, in fact, time after time. They perpetrated the gerrymander of 1970 and the only reason why they gave any support to the Commission idea in 1972 was that they didn't dare to do otherwise.

The Commission was in fact appointed as we know; Judge Maguire, Doctor Archer, Mr. Barnhart. I say that this Commission consisting as it did of a Court of Appeal Judge, the Principal of the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly is an excellent Commission and we could not have found a more competent or more fair-minded Commission.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Judge Maguire was absolutely scrupulous and absolutely fair, as it seems to me. After he was appointed he came and discussed with me the matter of a commission staff and I said that the Government, of course, would be happy to make available to him people who would be able to assist him. He said, "That is fine." He thought that under all the circumstances the best idea was to appoint a secretary to the Commission who was not a member of the Public Service, so that no one could even suggest obliquely that there was any pressure or any influence. And, in fact, he suggested that someone completely divorced from the Government be selected and he selected a Regina lawyer, Mr. Donald Dell, who acted as secretary of the Commission.

I think that it was good to have someone completely divorced from the Government. It may be that when the Member for Rosthern (Mr. Boldt) is Chairman of the next Commission appointed by the Liberal Party, he will select somebody who is perhaps a little less obviously impartial than the current secretary of the Commission.

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I wonder whether anyone could have done anything to make the Commission more independent? Quite frankly if it is possible I don't know how it could have been done. And the results show this. I am saying that with respect to some of the results I am not entirely happy. I suspect that Members opposite aren't entirely happy. But I don't believe there was any attempt to favor my Party by the Commission; I don't believe there was any attempt to favor the Liberal Party by the Commission. I simply don't believe that. I believe the Commission attempted as fairly as they could to draw boundaries without fear or favor, and I say they deserve our commendation and our attitude.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, other people don't say that. What can we make of the latest vicious attack by the Liberal Party on Judge Maguire and his Commission? In his news letter sent out in many thousands of copies, the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner) wrote as follows:

The Legislature is now open and this letter is to report to the people in the Moosomin constituency. The NDP have recently very greatly changed the boundaries of our constituency in the hope that it will help them in the next election.

Continuing, the Member for Moosomin said:

We have lost the Broadview-Oakshela-Grenfell area and have gained the Kipling-Wawota-Maryfield area. Moosomin and Cannington are the only two constituencies in the province that have never gone NDP so they are trying to make it as tough as possible for our people.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Note carefully, Mr. Speaker, what Members opposite are saying. The Member for Moosomin is saying this and other Members are commending him. He is saying, "The NDP have recently greatly changed the boundaries of our constituencies, in the hope that it will help them in the next election."

Now, as the House knows, the NDP has done nothing. The NDP Government with unanimous Liberal support appointed a Commission and nothing more. The only boundary changes that have been made have been made by the Commission. And we all know that. And to say that the NDP made the changes is to say that the Commission represents the NDP. And to say that the changes were to help the NDP at the next election is to say that the Commission made its recommendations to favor the NDP. To say that the authors of the boundary changes are trying to make it as tough as possible for our people, i.e. the Liberal Party, is to say that the Commission set out to load the dice against one Party.

Mr. Speaker, to say that the Commission tried to do anything to favor one Party, to say that they tried to load the dice is false! And everybody knows its false.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — These charges are an attack on the Commission which is totally unfair and totally irresponsible. They have been made with one purpose and one purpose only, to discredit the Commission and the whole idea of an independent boundaries commission; – to lay the groundwork for a return to the Liberal approach to boundaries changes, to another ‘Daveymander’. So intent is the Liberal Party on undermining the idea of an independent boundaries commission that they don’t care whose integrity is attacked, whose reputation is besmirched; an Appeal Court Judge, a university Principal, the Clerk of this Assembly.

This is yet another chapter in the story of the Liberal efforts to gerrymander. A story of cynicism and hypocrisy which regrettably still continues, as the evidence of this letter so abundantly proves.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — If we have to have fair electoral boundaries in this province then we need independent boundaries commissions and if we have independent boundaries commissions and have men of this calibre who serve on these commissions, they deserve something more than a vicious attack by Members of the Opposition.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — It is pretty clear, Mr. Speaker, that this wasn’t just an accidental attack. It is pretty clear from the comments they have made during the course of my remarks that Members opposite agree with this characterization of the Commission and they do it because they want to undermine the whole idea of an independent boundaries commission. And if we in this province want fair electoral boundaries it is pretty clear we have to do two things.

First we must pass this Resolution before us and the legislation which follows it. Second, we must see that the authors of the 1970 ‘Daveymander’ and the 1974 attack on the Maguire Commission never again attain political office in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask this House to adopt the Resolution before us. I understand that there are some minor amendments of a technical nature which we will propose with the consent of the official Opposition and if the official Opposition does not agree with them, we won’t proceed with them. Except with respect to amendments to correct purely technical errors, any resolution to amend the formal one will not be proceeded with without the support of the official Opposition. I am going to ask the House to support the Resolution, to support it and thereby do two things: To express its support for the Maguire Commission and its work and to repudiate the attack on the Maguire Commission by a Member of this House.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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Mr. Blakeney: — The House will thereby express its conviction that constituency boundaries shall now and hereafter be established by the Independent Boundaries Commission, dedicated not to serve any one political party, but to serve and uphold the traditions of representative parliamentary democracy of which traditions we are the beneficiaries and the stewards, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Romanow the Motion on the Boundaries Commission be adopted by this Assembly.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. E. F. Gardner (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, we have waited a long time for this speech from the Premier on redistribution. I am quite pleased to see that the letter I sent out to my constituents gets so much publicity. Someone came to me the other day and said, “You have got a bit of a bad press.” I was a bit concerned and I said, “Oh, that is unfortunate, where was it?” He said, “In the Commonwealth.” I said, “Well, if I get a bad press in the Commonwealth, I think that is a bit of a compliment.”

Mr. Speaker, I will have some comments on the Premier’s speech as I go along. I did write a speech on this about Christmas time which I should like to proceed with, with a few comments between. This is rather a historic occasion, of course. We are looking at the changes in all of the constituency boundaries. These are going to affect every person in the province, because every constituency has been changed.

It is very important that we look at these changes rather closely because we want to understand the effects that they are going to have. I am going to spend a few minutes on the redistribution.

One problem in our democratic system is that it is difficult ever to get true representation by population. Political scientists have studied this problem over the years and there is certainly no clear cut answer. Preferential ballots have been used in some areas and these have provided fair results. In this method you vote for candidates or parties by indicating a first, a second, perhaps a third or fourth choice. In some places you vote only for the party and seats are allotted to that party on the basis of the percentage of their total vote. Both of these methods have some advantages in giving more accurate representation by popular vote. But in spite of the advantages of these systems, most places still use the traditional system which gives us some rather strange results.

In the last election in British Columbia for example, the NDP got less than 40 per cent of the vote but received about 70 per cent of the seats in the Legislature, some 38 out of 55 seats. Federally the NDP suffers in reverse from a similar situation. If you look, Mr. Speaker, at the British election, you will see that we had a rather unusual situation there, in that it took about 39,000 votes to elect a Labor Member, about 40,000 votes to elect a Conservative Member and about 430,000

votes to elect a Liberal Member in Britain. Now I don't feel that much affinity politically for the British Liberal Party but it just shows this very unusual situation. The Liberals got about one half of the Conservative vote, but the Liberals got 14 seats, the Conservative Party got 300.

An equal population in constituencies is perhaps desirable but it doesn't, Mr. Speaker, solve the problem of equal or fair representation. I should like to point this out because there are many people who feel that simply by equalizing the population, you automatically give each party a fair share of seats in Parliament. This is just not so as the recent election in Britain indicates.

We must realize that in Britain and in Canada and in Saskatchewan we have a party system, now good or bad this is what we have. We may find fault with this but this is what we are using in this country. It is the number of Members of a party that gets elected that is significant. We have very few free votes as you people who are Members here will know. Since I have been in this House in ten years, very seldom have we ever had a free vote on anything. We simply vote as a party. But unfortunately our system doesn't provide seats to a party in the same proportion as the voters support that party.

This is hardly representation by popularity, but it is a situation that we seem attached to. We have noted what has happened in other places. I should like to get back and look at what has happened in Saskatchewan.

Here we have a similar situation. In the last Saskatchewan provincial election the Liberal Party received about 44 per cent of the popular vote, but got 15 out of 60, or 25 per cent of the seats in the Legislature. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to take note of the figures for a moment. The Liberals with 44 per cent of the vote got 25 per cent of the seats. If as the Premier says we had had some sort of a gerrymander before that by the Liberal Party, I think you will agree that they did a pretty poor job because when we get 44 per cent of the votes and get 25 per cent of the seats, something was wrong some place.

It is recognized that any fair and reasonable change in provincial boundaries could improve this unjust distribution of seats. We would probably never attain the democratic ideal of having a party receiving the same percentage of Legislature seats as its percentage of popular votes. But a good redistribution could perhaps bring us closer to this ideal situation. So let's look at which happens as a result of these boundary changes that we are examining today. And it is the results of course that we have to look at if we are going to see what happened with the boundary changes, we must look at the result.

Now, Mr. Speaker, using the same poll result as the 1971 provincial election but transposing them to the new boundaries, we find that as a result of the redistribution the Liberal Party – still remember with 44 per cent of the popular vote – would now only have 10 out of 61 or 16 per cent of the seats. Before we had 25 per cent of the seats, now that they have changed the boundaries in the province, we would have 16 per cent of the seats, still with 44 per cent, almost half of the vote.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

April 10, 1974

Mr. Gardner: — While the NDP, Mr. Speaker, with 55 per cent of the votes would now have 84 per cent of the seats after this boundary change.

Thus, we see that this particular redistribution, Mr. Speaker, has carried us much further away from representation by population that the Premier gets up and says is such a good idea. We are farther from it, much farther than we were before this redistribution.

You should note, Mr. Speaker, that this particular redistribution then has very greatly helped the NDP. I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, if this is coincidence and I would say, I think not. It might be well at this time to see what these boundary changes have done to the present Liberal Members of this Legislature. And again transposing the 1971 poll results to the new 1973 map, we get some rather astounding results. The Member for Rosetown, Mr. Loken, would have been defeated. The Member for Moose Jaw, Dr. MacDonald, would be defeated. The Member for Morse and the Member for Milestone who had their seats completely butchered would also be defeated. The Member for Moosomin, myself, would be defeated.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — The Member for Rosthern, Mr. Boldt would be defeated. My colleague, the Member for Wilkie, Mr. McIsaac would be defeated by the results of your redistribution.

In addition to this, Mr. Lane and Mr. MacLeod have seen their present seats completely disappear. So you can see that as a result of this particular redistribution you have almost eliminated the present Members of this House on the Liberal side.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — Obviously this redistribution has been disastrous for the Saskatchewan Liberal Party and the present Liberal Members of the Legislature. And keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, that this was done at a time when we had 44 per cent of the people in the province supporting us.

Mr. Speaker, you may well ask how the Commission could come up with such a result. How could it arrive at a map which so obviously and blatantly favors the Party in power, the NDP? A map which so obviously is a disaster for the Opposition Liberal Party.

To understand this, Mr. Speaker, we must take a look for a moment at the mechanics of a major boundary change. The Commission was asked to divide this province into about 60 seats of equal population. This of course, Mr. Speaker, was easy. They decided on 61 seats, a population of about 920,000, taking the new northern seats out, they decided seats should have about 15,400 people. This is not a very complicated bit of arithmetic. It was also suggested that natural geographic features should be used where possible. And again this is really no problem, we don't have many of these in the province, a couple of rivers mainly. With these criteria, two or three high school students could have done this part of the redistribution in two or three afternoons' work. It is no problem at all to take so many

people and divide them up into areas of 15,000 apiece.

But, keep in mind this very key point, equal numbers of people in constituencies is certainly desirable but in no way does it solve the unfair problem and representation in our present party system.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — Those who look, Mr. Speaker, at this particular aspect of redistribution, of the equal numbers of people in each seat, perhaps thought the Commission had done a good job. The Leader-Post for example can perhaps be forgiven for writing an editorial suggesting that the Commission had done a good job. But those who looked a little deeper would realize that it was a good job for the NDP, not a good job for the Liberal Party.

Mr. Speaker, about 100 years ago, census returns in Ontario indicated that the province was entitled to an additional four Members of Parliament. This gave Sir John A. MacDonald an excuse to distribute townships in such a way as to maximize Conservative strength. As many strong Liberal areas as possible were packed into a small number of seats. This would produce massive Liberal majorities in a few areas but, of course, thousands of votes would be wasted. This became known at that time as ‘hiving the Grits’ those of you who can remember this from your history. A gerrymander, Mr. Speaker, is a redistribution of seats and a change in constituency boundaries by the party in power in an attempt to gain political advantage.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — So let’s get back, Mr. Speaker, and take a look at what is happening in Saskatchewan.

In the 1973 NDP redistribution, a brand new seat was created in the middle of Saskatchewan and it was called Thunder Creek. Liberal areas were grouped together from a number of seats to produce this constituency. In 1971 when the Liberal vote was lower we would still have won Thunder Creek by over a thousand votes. In the process of course, surrounding seats such as Milestone, Morse and Qu’Appelle and others were made better for the New Democratic Party. This means, of course, that the NDP created a new seat with a large Liberal majority to give themselves political advantage in nearby seats.

On the new map the surrounding seats of Qu’Appelle, Arm River, Assiniboia-Gravelbourg and Rosetown-Elrose are all now NDP by very small majorities. A few hundred of the surplus Liberal votes that were put into Thunder Creek would have let the Liberals win all of these nearby seats and still have several hundred votes left over.

Mr. Speaker, I think you will agree that the grits were very well ‘hived’ in Thunder Creek by this redistribution. This is why the new map had the Liberals with only 16 per cent of the seats and 44 per cent of the popular vote.

Mr. Speaker, many governments over the years have dickered around with the odd constituency boundary in the hope of gaining political advantage, but the full scale and obvious gerrymander

was thought to be obsolete. This provides a bonanza now for political science students across Canada. Imagine a scientist finding some animal or bird he thought was extinct for years. This is how the political scientists will look at changes such as Thunder Creek here in Saskatchewan. Here is a real live gerrymander and I understand political scientists across Canada are already looking at this classic example of a modern-day gerrymander.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to look for one moment at our particular corner of the province. The Premier referred to this in his speech, in the letter that I sent out to my constituency. You know, Mr. Speaker, many of us were naïve enough to believe that perhaps there would be such a thing as a strictly non-political boundary change. I must admit that at first I was not too concerned. I was absolutely convinced that constituencies such as Moosomin and Cannington would not, and could not, be changed because there was absolutely no reason for it. We already had just about the right population, trading areas were well established, traditional connections and associations would surely not be tampered with, with any kind of a boundary change. And, of course, we have seen how wrong we were.

Moosomin constituency consisted of the Trans Canada Highway area from the Manitoba border to Grenfell. The Premier has already mentioned some of my remarks in his speech but I will repeat them anyway. It was a completely logical constituency from every aspect. There were mainline, hockey-baseball leagues, other close associations in the mainline from the Manitoba border to Grenfell. Cannington was a traditionally old constituency with well established connections. Incidentally, Moosomin and Cannington are, I believe, the only two constituencies in this province that have never been NDP.

So let's take a look at what they did to these two Liberal constituencies and why it was done. A glance at the map and the 1971 results show that the present Member for Estevan, Mr. Thorson, was elected in Estevan by a rather small majority. As an up-and-coming young Cabinet Minister it was reasonable to expect that Mr. Thorson should have his majority improved by this boundary change. But the line changers in this case, Mr. Speaker, had a bit of a problem. The troublesome Liberal areas were in the southeast corner of the seat, of the Estevan seat. And to get rid of them would mean that they would either have to go into North Dakota, into Manitoba or into Cannington, because there was no place else for them to go.

So what they did was to put them in Cannington and by this Estevan had its majority increased from about 225 to a little more comfortable 670. I don't know whether this is going to help him with the problems he faces now, but at any rate . . .

Mr. Thorson: — Mr. Speaker, on a Point of Privilege. I am sure that the Member doesn't want to deceive the House. I was elected with a majority of something like 700.

Mr. Gardner: — Mr. Speaker, I am talking about the '71 boundaries and the Member will have a chance to speak when his time comes.

This, of course, by putting the Liberal area into Cannington made Cannington more Liberal than ever, but, of course, it also

made it too large. So the traditional and historical seat of Cannington was completely butchered and parts were put into five different constituencies. Cannington, which has always been Liberal, one of the oldest seats in the province, is now part of five different seats. Pieces were put into Weyburn, Indian Head — Wolseley, Estevan, Souris-Cannington, in the Moosomin seat we got the Kipling-Wawota-Maryfield area, including the present Member for Cannington, Mr. Weatherald.

We are now both in the same seat and he is one of my constituents. But this domino effect in changing Estevan and changing Cannington was started in Estevan. Now, of course, it made Moosomin constituency too large, so the mainline towns of Broadview and Grenfell that fitted so well into our constituency were taken out.

Traditional trading areas in this old southeast corner of the province are disrupted. The Carnduff-Oxbow people who used to go to Estevan are now in Souris-Cannington and this carries on through other areas.

We had the ridiculous situation in the first map, Mr. Speaker, of the new boundary going between the Indian Reserve six miles north of Carlyle and the town of Carlyle. All medical and educational and other connections and services between the reserve and Carlyle and Arcola were severed by this change. The new constituency boundary simply went between them. I am not suggesting that this was a political change in this case, it was simply a matter of poor judgment. We were able to get this changed on the revised map.

Mr. Speaker, we could cover the province completely and show beyond any doubt how the boundary changes were carefully designed to accommodate the NDP. Months of careful work went into the preparation of this new map and there is no other way they could have gotten the results that they did. It would take a great deal of work to discover all of the ways the NDP were accommodated by this change.

On glancing at the Saskatoon City map, I was puzzled by a strange bulge in the boundary of the Mayfair constituency. I should like you to take a look at this, and I have several copies of this map, but I should like you to take a look at it. Thirty-third Street is a main artery in northern Saskatoon and a logical constituency boundary. And anybody who knows the city of Saskatoon is aware of this. But at Avenue F the boundary departs from Thirty-third Street and goes down about four blocks, west eight blocks and back north to Thirty-third Street. Now this leaves an unusual bulge in the Mayfair boundary.

Now I am sure that you are aware that the Member for Mayfair is the Hon. John Brockelbank. So on a hunch I acquired a street map of Saskatoon, which I have here, and an old telephone book and I have both of these here with me today. I took a look at them and sure enough this odd and explained bulge is the Hon. John Brockelbank's old neighborhood. From the number in the book it appears that this bulge actually brought in his old house and this rather odd dip in the boundary reaches down into the old area, the old neighborhood of the Hon. John Brockelbank.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — I have marked in red the little boundary change and I have marked with a red dot the Hon. Member's house and anybody who looks at this is surely not going to suggest that this little dodge down here was done for any other reason than to put the Hon. Member's house and local area into the present constituency. And if anyone is in doubt about the actual location, I have also duplicated the 1972 Saskatoon directory, which gives the address of this house in the Hon. Member's name and the location on this particular map.

Surely no one is going to get up and say that the Boundary Commission came along Thirty-third, a main artery, went down this little jog, across and back up and just accidentally happened to put the Hon. Member's house back into Mayfair constituency.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous changes in boundaries . . .

Mr. Brockelbank: — Did you check the Land Titles Office?

Mr. Gardner: — Mr. Speaker, if there is any doubt about it I do have here the telephone directory which gives J. A. Brockelbank, 901 McMillan Avenue and I am sure that he wouldn't disagree that this is that particular area. We realize that now that he is in the Cabinet he has probably moved down to Regina, but this is certainly his old area.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous changes in boundaries that we don't at the moment fully understand and I would be the first to admit this. We suspect they are politically motivated, but we are not sure of all of the reasons, as we are not aware of all of the inner workings of the NDP. No doubt they will be clarified in time but I should like to mention a few, and I am not suggesting that there is something sinister about all of these, but you will note from a number of them that these are rather unusual coincidences, to say the least.

We note, for example, that the present Member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley, Mr. Hanson, would probably have a great deal of difficulty running and winning in the new Indian Head-Wolseley seat and we are wondering why, the boundary changes then moved him into the Weyburn constituency where we have the present Member likely to retire. I notice the Education Minister (Mr. MacMurchy) is getting a little delight out of this and I should like to say that he has been suggested as a possible leadership candidate over there when Mr. Blakeney, the present Leader, takes over the federal leadership. I wonder if this is the reason that he was given a safe seat by having his 1971 based majority raised from under 200 to about 1,700 by this new distribution.

We note, Mr. Speaker, that certain NDP constituencies have disappeared and I am sure Members will get up and suggest that. But you will note, also, that they are mostly of Members who are likely to retire or have already announced that intention and I am thinking of the present Member for Touchwood (Mr. Meakes), the present Member for Melfort-Kinistino (Mr. Thibault) and perhaps the present Member for Elrose (Mr. Owens). There are some exceptions and we notice, for example, that the Member for Hanley (Mr. Mostoway) had his seat disappear and everybody knows

that he is looking for a seat. He went out and looked at the Rosthern constituency the other night, at the nominating convention and decided that he didn't like it. But when someone has his seat disappear you almost wonder if his party is trying to tell him something.

We noticed, Mr. Speaker, that every Cabinet Minister, who needed help at the polls seemed to be looked after and there is one exception, and I would like to mention this exception. It was and I am not sure of the reason for this exception because as I say again, we are not sure of the inner workings of the party, but it was just impossible to make a safe seat for the Minister of Social Services (Mr. Taylor) on the west side of the province. The voting pattern simply did not permit this on the west side. We can only assume that a comparatively safe seat will be found for him in Regina or elsewhere.

You will note also, Mr. Speaker, that it seems strange that the north-south boundary, between the new Canora and Pelly seats, runs perfectly straight for about 75 miles except for a small bulge, out east, at the present Member's home town to put that present NDP Member in the Canora seat. Stranger than that, I believe, Mr. Speaker, if you look at the southwest part of the province, the southwest corner of Saskatchewan, we do have a rather strange situation in there, with three present NDP Members who live in a little triangle about 20 miles apart. And this seems rather strange. We have the present Member for Shaunavon (Mr. Oliver) at Aneroid; the present Member for Gravelbourg (Mr. Gross) at Glen Bain; we have another Member, Mr. Engel, Notukeu-Willow Bunch at Woodrow.

At any rate these three Members live in a little area just 20 miles apart. We know, of course, with the limited population in western Saskatchewan, that constituencies in that area are tremendous in size. Shaunavon, for example, is about 150 miles from east to west. You would expect, therefore, that any redistribution might end up dumping this little group of NDP MLAs in the centre of some large constituency because they live right close together.

It is almost unbelievable, but nevertheless true, Mr. Speaker, that once again the boundary lines were very carefully drawn to benefit these three NDP Members. Even though they live right together, the present Member for Gravelbourg is put in the Norse constituency; the present Member for Shaunavon in Shaunavon and Mr. Engel almost on the border of Assiniboia-Gravelbourg. This very clever location of boundaries meant these three NDP MLAs were looked after. They had a new seat to run in by having the lines carefully drawn between them.

Of course, you may say what about Mr. Lange, the present Member for Assiniboia-Bengough, because it appears that Mr. Engel is about to run in his seat. So the NDP, the Commission, corrected this embarrassing situation when the map was revised. A six-mile strip, including the town of Bengough, was put into the Milestone seat. The name of Milestone was changed at that time to Bengough-Milestone so that it sounded at least, partly, like Mr. Lange's old seat and gave him a logical seat to run in. This was done between the time the first map was published and the final map, strictly to accommodate these NDP Members.

Now we can find many cases throughout the province where changes in boundaries were made merely to accommodate the NDP

or the individual NDP Members. For example, I have here an article from the North Battleford paper, at the time of the Committee hearings. The Committee when it met at North Battleford, according to this article, received only one formal brief and it was from the Redberry NDP, and I see that the Member has his hand up, he is apparently taking credit for this. Apparently the first map didn't suit the Redberry NDP politically, and they asked for a complete change in boundaries, which they got. These changes were made, and I would like to quote from the article so that you can see the reasons for these.

Mr. Dennis Banda of Marcelin, a member of the Redberry constituency NDP presented a well prepared and excellent brief to the Commission which would completely alter the proposed boundaries of the Turtleford-Redberry constituency.

If you want to look at the reasons why, it goes on in the article to say:

The reasons for changing the boundaries in his proposal were because of the existing highway system which would provide more convenience to the elected member.

Now, this seems rather strange, Mr. Speaker. I would personally suggest that boundaries should not be established to please certain MLAs, whether they are NDP or Liberal or whatever they are. No MLA should have a political advantage in an election because of a boundary location. But this has obviously been done as we can see by some of the boundary changes that we have been looking at.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that no one knows who is going to be either the MLA or the candidates in forthcoming elections and to have boundary changes made to accommodate particular MLAs or candidates is rather ridiculous. This is a pretty fickle reason for changing any boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned a few of the situations to indicate what is being done and I ask you to contrast this favorable treatment of the NDP Members with the shabby way that the present Liberal Members were handled.

Out of the 15 present Liberal Members, this NDP redistribution based on the 1971 poll results, would leave seven defeated, and I mentioned their names before, two where their constituencies have completely disappeared; in cases like Moosomin and Cannington where historical seats were chopped up and the present Liberal Members dumped in the same seat.

Now if you will contrast this, Mr. Speaker, with the accommodation that apparently was made for the NDP Members as a result of this redistribution.

Surely, Mr. Speaker, no reasonable person would suggest that these things are simply coincidence. Surely it is obvious that political considerations were paramount in the whole redistribution. This brief, but revealing look at the new Saskatchewan Constituencies map makes it perfectly obvious that the map was carefully drawn to benefit the NDP.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I come to a very important part of my speech and I hope you will listen carefully because in arriving at these obvious conclusions, it may appear that we are somehow casting a reflection on the three members of the Commission. And, Mr. Speaker, I want it to go on record and I want to make it perfectly clear that this is not my intention.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — The Commission members, Mr. Speaker, are all well known and respected gentlemen, but you know they are also busy men in their own right and I would personally doubt if they were involved in the actual drawing of lines on the map.

In this speech I have clearly pointed out the situation we now have as a result of the boundary changes and in making this presentation this is my only intention. I want to bring out clearly the situation that we have as a result of the boundary changes. I am not going to indulge in lengthy speculation as to how these particular changes were made. I will leave that up to individuals to do this themselves.

Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the redistribution was designed to assist the NDP and to hurt the Liberals as much as possible.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, you may think that we are discouraged when we look at the results. However, this is not the case. In fact the opposite is true and there are several good reasons for this.

First of all I should like to mention that recent events including the Lakeview by-election indicates that the people of this province are returning to the more traditional voting patterns of 1967. The NDP redrew this map on the basis of the 1971 poll results and I would suggest that they could be in for a great disappointment.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, I would say that people today object to being herded into pens like sheep to satisfy the political ambitions of the party in power. And I'm sure that the people will react to these present changes in that map.

The Lakeview by-election also indicated the futility of the NDP attempting to group polls for their own benefit. Polls in the north part of that seat voted Liberal to the great surprise of the NDP. Now I'm not suggesting of course, that the Lakeview polls were moved or the lines changed. My point is simply this, that voting patterns do change in the province and poll results can be rather unexpected and I would suggest that they are going to be unexpected for the NDP in the next election.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Gardner: — I wish to make it clear that I am not opposed to the idea of constituency boundaries being fixed by an independent commission. But could, Mr. Speaker, all of the situations I have mentioned above and these are only a few of them, could these situations, such as the Brockelbank bulge in Saskatoon, could these things have happened independently and coincidentally? I think the answer is obviously not. They couldn't have happened independently.

Some will perhaps say that we voted for the independent commission and I am sure someone will mention this and this is true. You know, Mr. Speaker, it's like voting for medicare and finding out a year later that you don't have medicare but you have hemorrhoids. You don't always get what you expect and you don't always get what you deserve and this is perhaps the case here.

Mr. Speaker, now that the political parties are reorganizing on the new boundaries, perhaps people are beginning to realize that their old associations have been destroyed. At first they didn't know this, they didn't realize last summer that these changes were being made. They heard about the Commission, the fact that they went to North Battleford, indicates that people didn't really realize what was going on. That their historic constituencies were being dismembered. Others will perhaps want to talk about the arbitrary way that boundaries were changed in northern Saskatchewan, or the fact that rural seats have been short-changed by this particular change. I suppose some may want to talk about the situation that occurred when we became the government in 1964, where if you lived in Regina you voted for one person under the NDP and now of course, at that particular time, Saskatoon was a multi-seat area and you voted for five. In other words the person in Saskatoon had a chance to vote for five MLAs, the person in Regina voted for one. And this was under the NDP before. This was only ten years ago and they talk about the great, fair redistributions of the past.

The Premier talked about the people's right to express themselves equally. I wonder if he thought that was a people's chance to express themselves equally, when some citizens in this province voted for one MLA, some citizens voted for five MLAs and this was done under the NDP for one purpose, to help them politically.

Mr. Speaker, I predict that the voters will react against this political manoeuvre by the NDP at the next election. The voters will indicate clearly to the NDP that actions such as this are simply not acceptable in a democratic society. May I say that I'm sure others and myself would like to take a look at the Premier's remarks and will have more to say on this. At this time I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Mr. H. Owens (Elrose): — Would the Member permit a question?

Mr. Gardner: — No!

SECOND READINGS

Hon. G. MacMurchy (Acting Minister of Northern Saskatchewan) moved second reading of **Bill No. 91 — An Act respecting the Economic Development of Northern Saskatchewan.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me today to have this opportunity on behalf of my colleague, the Member for Shellbrook (Mr. Bowerman) to launch debate on this important piece of Legislation, Bill 91 — an Act respecting the Economic Development of Northern Saskatchewan.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House have honored another pledge made to the people of this province during the last election. We committed our support to a new direction for northern Saskatchewan.

Over the past two years we have seen many significant changes develop in the North. Many of these changes are quite obvious. However, others are more subtle, but significant just the same. The vast majority of residents recognize and support the goals which have been set forth for the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. And they recognize the Department of Northern Saskatchewan as the first ever attempt by a provincial government to launch a comprehensive, economic and social approach and a social program in that part of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, members of the Liberal Party oppose our initiatives. The Leader of the Opposition says a government under his leadership would abolish this Department. He spreads this word quite freely when he is in the southern part of this province. However, I doubt very much if he would have the courage to tour the North with that same message. It is highly unfortunate that the Opposition should continue its petty politics in the North. However, when you study their track record it is understandable why they feel the way they do in light of the sharp contrast between their record and our level of achievement.

Mr. Speaker, the Legislation we have before us today is a further demonstration that this Government is determined to tackle, it is determined to resolve the long standing social and economic inequalities which northern people have faced for generations. Perhaps part of the reason for failure in the past has been the lack of understanding with respect to the overall question of life in the North. Past administrations failed to recognize the interdependence which exists between economic and social growth. Lack of economic opportunity in the past has led to an intensification of social problems and past programs failed to recognize this very fundamental reality.

Those who study this Bill carefully will recognize that this Legislation provides for the necessary flexibility which is necessary in order to successfully deal with the uniqueness and I say the uniqueness of Saskatchewan's north.

Mr. Speaker, with the advent of greater economic opportunity as reflected in this Bill, I am confident we are on the threshold of being able for the first time, to make an improved quality of life for northern people. Over the years we have heard a lot about welfare. Without a doubt it is a problem. However, I regret the fact that some political interests choose to put these people through the political wringer and that in my view this constitutes nothing more than rock bottom politics. I wish to make two points.

Firstly, since the Department of Northern Saskatchewan was established the number of unemployed employables has been reduced steadily, particularly on the last quarterly report which shows that the northern unemployment rate has been reduced by 19 per cent and the subsequent expenditures in northern assistance was reduced by two per cent.

The second point, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that 85 per cent of those on welfare are unemployables. Therefore any political

interest in attempting to score points at the expense of these unfortunate people doesn't even warrant debate.

Mr. Speaker, the single agency concept for the northern part of the province has completely revolutionized our traditional administration system. Under that system northern development programs, people's needs, citizens' rights were at the bottom of the budget priorities, because of the numerous southern departments with a southern orientation.

Let me make a case in point. In past years when the Department of Education was required to make budget cuts, when they were required to look at priorities, they regularly cut northern programs. And this is very obvious when one looks at any of our northern communities.

Mr. Speaker, show me any community in southern Saskatchewan which has a pupil enrolment of 650 to 700 students that has only the barest of classroom necessities, that is, without a library, without a home economic lab, without science laboratories, without a gymnasium and so on. In the South this situation simply does not exist. However, almost every northern community has been forced to accept this kind of situation for a very long time.

Mr. Speaker, these very same budgetary elimination techniques were used in almost every department. DNR, Municipal Affairs, yes, in Health, in Social Services and Highways, in Government Services. Mr. Speaker, the evidence is obvious in all northern communities. The 1970s were a living testimony that public servants, that governments made their budget cuts from the point of least resistance and that point was the North.

However, Mr. Speaker, thanks to this New Democratic Government, to its commitment to the North, we are for the first time ever identifying, we're considering northern needs in relationship to the total economic and social development of this province. Not only have departments and governments in the past been inconsiderate about the fair allocation of annual budgets in the North, but until the Independent Boundaries Commission, set up by this Government and we've just been talking about it — guaranteed two northern seats to be held by northern residents, northern people were never able to assure themselves of adequate representation in this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I challenge the Member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Coupland), I challenge the Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy) to name just one positive program that they've obtained, that they have developed for the northern part of this province during their terms of office. Whether that was when they were in Government or when they were in Opposition. Just name me one. Mr. Speaker, I know what they've done in Opposition and they opposed the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, they opposed the two northern constituencies.

Mr. Speaker, it is very easy to understand why Members to your left are against the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. In 1964 they virtually destroyed a northern development proposal which took six years to develop. And during the next four years of Liberal rule they had studies, and studies, but they did nothing. However, during their entire term of office, with two Members representing the North, they allowed their public service, their multiple departments to melt northern development budgets

in order to bolster budget cutbacks in the southern programming.

I say that much of the hostility, much of the restlessness we face today, occurs as a result of those seven years of Liberal government in this province. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, for the Liberals to support this program represents quite a dilemma, represents quite a dilemma because of their shocking northern track record, of their attitude toward the northern half of our province, their attitude towards its people.

What I intend to do this afternoon is to outline to this House the principles of this northern economic development program.

Mr. Guy: — I was wondering when you were going to get to it.

Mr. MacMurchy: — I'll get to it and get to some other things as well.

A commitment to expend large sums of public tax funds on programs that will place major emphasis on northern housing, municipal works, loans and grants for local business and employment opportunities, public works, resource development. Mr. Speaker, this is an ambitious program, it is a program that will enhance the social and economic developments of our northern communities. It will assist in eliminating many of the glaring inequalities which governments in the past have chosen to ignore. It will be interesting to witness the attitude of the Liberals opposite when we vote on this legislation at the conclusion of this debate.

A moment ago I touched on the dilemma of the Liberal caucus with respect to this Bill. However, the more I think of it, the Opposition Liberals will only have one alternative and that's to vote against it. And I say that because of their record as opposing the principle of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. But I warn them that the people of northern Saskatchewan are watching very carefully what is taking place in this Legislature. And if the Members opposite vote against the budget increases proposed in this Bill, there is no chance that northern people ever again will return a Liberal to this Assembly. Mind you based on the record of the two we have here at the present time I doubt whether or not either would have been returned had he chosen to test his political popularity at the polls in the North the next time around.

Mr. Speaker, for a moment, I should like to spend some time on background to some of the more obvious realities of life in the North. The facts of life, so to speak, are in sharp contrast to the conditions elsewhere in this province. Education standards, health conditions, employment opportunities, income levels housing conditions, transportation levels and the like, differ greatly between north and south. This disparity to a large degree is the result of government inaction in the past and past governments' reluctance to undertake any comprehensive northern programming.

For decades, Mr. Speaker, governments tended to rely on the administration of 'bandaid' government in the North. This New Democratic Government decided to tackle the task, they made a commitment for change in the North and they set out to effect change, fully aware of the many obstacles which were in the way.

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We did not permit political expediency to dictate our northern program, but chose rather to act positively for the people of the North. Great inroads have been made, many successes have been recorded and, yes, much yet remains to be done.

Critics of the Department belabor the fact that there is little or no attention paid to promoting economic development in the North. This Government fully recognizes not only the fact that more jobs are needed but also to our commitment to assist northern people who find themselves under employed. Political interest groups, including the Liberal Party opposite, were highly critical of the \$500,000 economic development fund which DNS administered during the last fiscal year. Many critics openly scoffed at it claiming it would create little or no improvement and would have no favorable impact on the North.

Mr. Speaker, I must again take these critics to task for their insincerity. It is perhaps not too surprising that it would be the northern critic, the Member for Athabasca (Mr. Guy), who would be the most noisy critic of this fund. But considering his record on behalf of northern people the Member for Athabasca should be the last person to pretend to be concerned. I challenge him to criticize that fund before a northern audience. I challenge him to tell any of the 177 people who found full time employment as a result of this fund that it is no good. Perhaps the Beauval operation with its 100 full time employees does not compete with a multimillion dollar program of pulp mills that the Liberals were going to plunk into the North. But we feel our approach is much more responsive to the needs and to the aspirations of northern people and we will defend our record any time, any day of the week. I would challenge the Liberal caucus to choose a new northern critic, one who has more credibility, one who has more intimate knowledge of the North and of its people.

For past decades it is obvious that the Member for Athabasca is simply out of touch with reality. A press release April 3rd, 1974, which appeared in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix from a story headlined, "Supporters of Government Thwart Liberal Critics." And the article quotes the Member for Athabasca and I quote:

The old Liberal Government built 30 to 40 homes in the North, which is more than the NDP have managed to do in their three years of power.

Well, he might be quite right. Surely he is not attempting to take us to task for not building more homes in two years than they managed in seven. I should say six, because nothing was done during their last year in office because the Cabinet insisted that all northern housing go to Ad Fab Construction on the invitational bid of a system which was rejected by the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Yes, Mr. Speaker, because the Liberal Government could not get Federal Government approval to let Ad Fab build all the homes, none were built. Some record indeed!

Last year the Department of Northern Saskatchewan built 99 homes. A late construction season, a shortage of certain building supplies resulted in only 99 homes being built. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, this year 151 new homes for northern people will be built so we maintain our five-year average of 125 units per year. This year's program will affect 22 northern communities, it represents the largest building program ever initiated

in northern Saskatchewan. In addition, the design and size of houses now being built is substantially improved over previous provincial programs in the North.

Applications from northern residents will be reviewed by local municipal councils which will in turn determine families having the greatest needs. The allocations of the homes by a community will then be determined by the Northern Municipal Council. A subsidized homeowner program provides guaranteed mortgages over 15 years with monthly payments based on applicant's ability to pay. Homeowners may choose from several basic designs with individual options available. Now this ambitious construction program is organized by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, Project Management Branch, as requested in this legislation.

Almost all the labor, Mr. Speaker, is hired locally in the communities where the houses are being built. We are proud of this start, we call it a start because we know that much more will need to be done in the future. Population projections indicate a doubling of the population by 1980. More homes will be needed. In our work to date we are proceeding at a pace we are able to deliver on and I have full confidence that our initiatives have widespread support in the North. Despite all this the Member for Athabasca thinks his government did a much better job during their seven years of office.

I can only say that his credibility is questionable and that his arithmetic is worse. Not only does our five-year program exceed efforts of any former government but our approach is accepted as well. Under this legislation a total of \$8 million provides for the northern housing advance account. As a result of this an additional 240 full-time jobs will be created, over double last year's total. We believe it makes more sense to involve northern residents in the actual construction as it not only generates employment but it also provides for a greater pride of ownership. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, we could have flooded the North with prefabricated units, we could have spent millions to satisfy the housing problem, however, we believe that this approach is wrong.

The moneys out of this advance account will also be available for the purchase of logging camps, sawmills, planing mills and the like. Again, not flashy multimillion dollar operations but locally owned, locally controlled enterprises which will generate employment and add to the social and economic fibre of the northern communities. Other moneys will be used to pay wages and other necessary expenditures in connection with these activities.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill also makes it possible for the Department to develop and maintain housing projects and the fund will lend money to any co-operative association for the purpose of building or improving existing homes. These provisions are worth repeating as a reflection on the total thrust of this program.

Mr. Speaker, another section of this legislation deals with a \$12 million appropriation for the Northern Construction Advance Account. Three hundred and ninety new full time jobs will be created, Mr. Speaker. Again not as many jobs as the thousands promised by the Pulp Mill boys to your left, but we feel the figure is significant. For decades the North has

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lagged far behind. New emphasis on capital construction, more roads, air strips, improving existing facilities, the promotion of local crews and equipment will ensure better service for these residents in the North.

I have mentioned briefly the positive employment potentials which will be generated as a result of the housing and construction aspects of the Bill.

Let me for a moment look at the 1,000 per cent increase we are proposing for economic development. This portion of the legislation must win the wholehearted support of any northerner concerned with economic development opportunity. I mentioned earlier that this Government was criticized last year for only making available \$500,000 for that development. Yes, it was only half a million but it did create 177 new jobs. The job creating potential of this expanded account is encouraging to say the least. That this expenditure will result in unparalleled economic growth in the northern part of the province I am fully confident. We believe northern people wish to work, we believe that northern people have the capability, that they have the resolution for self-improvement, and we believe our assistance will make it possible for many individuals, for many families, for the first time ever to be able to realize their goals. Patchwork programs in the past have failed to achieve this. Our approach might not grab that type of flashy headline which the Liberals used to go after for any price. But the pact we have chosen is truly indicative of our commitment to enable northern people to choose the type of program they want for their families in the future.

I only wish to comment on another very important aspect of this legislation. And that involves the confidence we are displaying in allowing northern people to exercise their decision-making rights. Too many governments in the past have been content to allow southern bureaucrats to make important decisions respecting the day to day lives of the northern people. I don't criticize these individuals for they were well meaning without a doubt, however, they were not for the most part in touch with the uniqueness of the North. Despite the fact that governments as early as 1958 were presented with the single agency alternative for the North nothing was done to significantly change the course of action the government would take. The decision by our party, the decision by this Government to establish the Department of Northern Saskatchewan to locate its base right in the North was the first major step in fulfilling this Government's commitment to the people of northern Saskatchewan. Further decentralization has taken place. For the first time in the province's history northern people have been given authority and decision-making power. We believe this is a much better way of doing things. Yes, there have been some problems. There have been some criticisms. There have been some controversies. We expected these obstacles and we accept them as part of the challenge for change.

Mr. Speaker, much of the reason for the success to date of the Department is the fact that northern people recognize the role they have to play in the future development of that part of the province. Earlier debates have covered our initiatives to improve local decision making and local autonomy. The commitment to transfer responsibility to people on the local level is again reflected in today's legislation. Local committees will be structured under regulations provided in the Act.

Northern communities wishing to establish committees which will have the responsibility of making decisions on loans up to \$4,000 will be encouraged. A district committee is also provided for in the Act and it will consist of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan, Director of Economic Development, a member of the Northern Municipal Council, a member of the Northern Development Advisory Council. This committee of three will have the power to approve loans up to \$25,000. Thus the legislation provides not only an increase in economic development funds but it also provides for an important increase in local decision making.

Also I want to add a word concerning the advisory and professional services provided by this Act. Since the beginning DNS has not had the capacity to offer economic advice and guidance to residents wishing to begin projects. For the first time this new Department is able to provide this service. It is important that economic development projects receive as much practical, as much professional advice as possible to ensure their success.

Let me summarize, Mr. Speaker. Last year's input of \$500,000 to economic development meant 177 new jobs. This year we are putting in ten times that amount, \$5 million. It is too early to predict the exact number of jobs this will create but one could well think of 800 to 900 new northern jobs. The stepped-up housing advance account will mean 240 new northern jobs for northern people. The northern construction advance account will generate 390 jobs. The total, Mr. Speaker, from this legislation will mean close to 1,500 new northern jobs. This, in addition to northern programs just recently announced. This year's fisheries' development program will provide full time employment for 29 people, 22 of whom will be natives. The prospectors' incentive program, the mineral development agreement, the mineral training program, the management support program, farm training and training on-the-job programs as well as the bursary program have already proven themselves. They are a response to northern needs, they are successful. An ambitious grant program has been added to guaranteed and low interest rate loans. Compare this to the Liberal approach to develop such schemes as the Doré Lake Pulp Mill, the Anglo-Rouyn mine.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Northern Saskatchewan was created in the spring of 1972. In two years it has dramatically changed the North. It has built 125 homes a year. It has cut the northern power rate to the same level as the south. The service has been extended to new areas. The microwave system costing several million dollars has provided telephone service across the North. Six new sawmills employing 200 northern people have been started. A community college has been established at La Ronge. Local committees to determine what courses they need. Five mobile units are being equipped to take those training facilities to other communities. Of the 250 DNS employees 170 live in the North. Nearly all of the remaining 80 will soon live there when their branches have been transferred. There are new sewer and water systems in northern towns. Under The Forest Act passed in 1973 giveaway timber leases signed by the Liberals are being renegotiated. At Beauval there is the post-cutting operation. For the first time in ten years a full time medical health officer is now at work; child care, dental programs are being developed. Sixty native people are working in the DNS prospectors' program exploring for minerals. The North's first Municipal Council was elected in 1973.

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Mr. Speaker, fundamental problems remain. We must continue to work on these. Transportation problems, communication problems, educational problems, social and economic, but northern Saskatchewan has natural resources that are the envy of the rest of Canada. Indeed its riches have been the reason for its exploitation. In forestry, trapping and fishing, benefits were reaped by outsiders, northern people found it necessary to turn to welfare assistance and the gap has widened. Socially and economically between the North and the South.

Mr. Speaker, it was not until the Department of Northern Saskatchewan was established that a positive change took place. During those first months of operation, northern people began to see evidence that the Government was going to deliver and the day of empty promises for the North was over. It has not been easy. There have been criticisms. Despite insincere attempts by some to disrupt our course, people working for the Department together with northern people are making advances. Mr. Speaker, I say in this House that the people of the North support the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. This legislation is an integral part of our initiative in the North and I am pleased to move second reading of this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. A. R. Guy (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, I suppose one can forgive the acting Minister for his enthusiasm particularly when one considers that he has been in the North probably once or twice during the period he has been a Minister of the Government and most of that was on a political campaign basis back in the by-election campaign. It is obvious that he hasn't faced the criticisms and complaints and the sit-ins and the restlessness and the hostility that the Minister of Northern Saskatchewan has faced or he wouldn't be making the comments that he is making here today. If one had not been in the House last year and heard the same Bill brought into this House under another heading, one would have thought that what he was talking about today was a brand new program. He talked about school facilities, he talked about health and child care. He even brought in the Boundaries Commission. He mentioned the Municipal Council, he mentioned mineral resources, fisheries, microwave, community colleges. There is not one thing in this Bill that refers to any one of those things. All he did was to use this Bill for a political speech which he didn't have the courage to give on the Resolution that I introduced a few weeks earlier, dealing with an inquiry into northern Saskatchewan. He didn't have the courage to stand up and make that speech when it meant something. He had an opportunity to present the policies, the positions, and relationships to the complaints and criticisms, the hostility and the sit-ins that were taking place at that time, but he refused to do so. Today he takes a Bill that's identical to a Bill that was introduced in the House last year and he tries to lead the people of Saskatchewan to read into it, health care, educational facilities, microwave and you name it.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation is identical to the piece of legislation that was introduced last year as Bill 112 — an Act to Amend the Department of Northern Saskatchewan Act.

I want to remind you, Mr. Speaker, that last year the Government set up the economic advance account, the housing advance account, and the construction advance account, and after

one year of operation all you're hearing from the North today is criticism and complaints. And if he thinks the answer is to change the name of the Bill to solve the problems, the people of northern Saskatchewan will soon show him whether he's got his head screwed on properly.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Guy: — There is nothing in this Bill, other than an increase in the amount of money that is being spent for exactly the same purposes which proved last year were not successful. Money is being spent for exactly the same purposes that are causing the complaints and criticisms and the hostility and the sit-ins that are occurring across the North continuously. There is nothing in this Bill to show that there is going to be any more success this year than there was last year. And he stands up there and he repeats the old record of what he claims his department has done. It is obvious by the actions of northern people, that they have to come to the South and hold meetings to show the complete failure of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. Then he stands up here today and tries to lead us to believe, that the old Bill from last year, all of a sudden is going to be a panacea to solve all the problems of northern Saskatchewan. Nothing but rubbish.

This is the same Bill that was presented last year which still gives the Minister absolute power over everything that happens in the North. And I was interested to hear the Minister say that it's the Northern Municipal Council that's going to allocate the houses. I say the houses should be allocated by the local people, not by some phony Municipal council controlled by the Government. This is what I'm saying, the Minister still has the power to say who gets the house, who gets the grants, in other words, he asks how do you vote and when they say, oh, I vote NDP all right, then we'll see that you get a house. How do you vote? Oh, I'm going to vote NDP this time. All right, we'll see you get a grant to start an economic development project. The control of the Minister and probably of the acting Minister now, is in absolute control over every aspect of the lives of people of northern Saskatchewan and that is what they don't want and what they don't like.

Now instead of \$6 million which he had in the legislation last year in which he could buy the votes of northerners, he's got \$25 million. And I suppose that's because there's an election coming up some time in the near future. He's got \$25 million completely under his control to hand out as he sees fit on a political basis. He has the power in this legislation, the same as he had last year, to put every private contractor, every private person in business, out of business, if he sees fit to do so. And over the past year nearly every contractor in northern Saskatchewan has pulled up stakes and moved out because they can't compete against the favoritism of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan.

It allows an increasing size of the construction division which will allow the Government to control even more, every aspect of the industrial and construction development in northern Saskatchewan. The Minister, as I say, has the power to say, who gets the grant, who gets the houses, who gets into business, who goes out of business, who starts an industry and whose industries are closed down.

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He mentioned The Forest Act, and I'm glad that he did. If there was ever a Bill of confiscation it was The Forest Act that he put into force in northern Saskatchewan.

It's natural, Mr. Speaker, that Members on this side of the House will hope that he will use this Bill for economic development. He's got the money, but he hasn't really provided the local people with the input to determine what the economic development should be. It's still the power from the top.

Mr. Speaker, I have quite a bit more that I would like to say on this piece of legislation and I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

Hon. G. MacMurchy (Minister of Education) moved second reading of **Bill No. 83 — An Act to amend The Teacher's Life Insurance (Government Contributory) Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, this Bill, amendments to The Teacher's Group Life Insurance Act is intended to achieve three goals; to extend group life insurance coverage to teachers working in our community colleges; to permit the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation to have a voice in awarding the insurance contract and to incorporate into the statute an increase in government paid coverage as negotiated in the 1974-75 provincial teachers' contract.

The extension of coverage to teachers employed in community college programs is a simple and straightforward measure. We feel community college teachers are entitled to the same fringe benefits comparable to teachers in the regular schools. They already have similar coverage under other Acts and this amendment simply includes them in the group life plan.

The amendments to sections 4 and 5 give the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation the right to approve the awarding of an insurance contract to a company. Up to the present the teachers have only had an informal voice in the award. The change grants their right to approve the insurer into law.

Teachers' group life insurance is now worth a basic \$10,000. for many years the Government paid the premium on the first \$2,000 and the teachers paid the premium on the remaining \$8,000.

Under our 1974-75 collective agreement the provincial share will increase to \$4,000. However, the teacher still pays the premium on the largest part of the insurance and he has had no say in whom he is insured with, so we believe this to be wrong.

I might just comment on some past history, Mr. Speaker. When the Liberal Party took office in 1964, they took the group insurance contract away from Co-op Insurance. They gave it to a private company and they gave it to a private company with its head office outside of Saskatchewan.

Now the Liberals might have saved, Mr. Speaker, a few nickels and a few dimes by doing this, but I suggest to the Members of this House, their move was really their hostility

and their fear of the co-operative movement, which they expressed by canceling the long standing contract with Co-op Insurance Services of Regina. I want to point out that the Liberals gave the contract away without the approval of those affected, the teachers. They placed the contract outside of Saskatchewan, even though a hundred per cent of the people covered lived in this province. In doing this, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me, the Liberals deliberately and spitefully ignored the only major insurance company that is based in this province, that has its head office here in Regina.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our NDP Government has changed that. We returned the teachers' group insurance to the Saskatchewan based company, Co-operative Insurance Services carries the contract today and it carries it at a smaller premium than the out-of-province private company. We have saved money and at the same time we are supporting the co-operative movement and our own Saskatchewan enterprise.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment is designed to give an equal voice to those who are paying premiums along with the province. It seems to me it will no longer be possible for a Liberal Government to hand over this deal to their private corporate pals without consulting anyone at least.

The third change, brings into law, the increase in the level of insurance paid by the province. We are doubling our share from \$2,000 to \$4,000 as agreed in the collective bargaining contract for 1974 and for 1975. This is one of the many fringe benefits negotiated for teachers for the first time this year. The first time Saskatchewan teachers have free bargaining rights. The first time Saskatchewan teachers were able to negotiate the terms of their employment.

I want to take this opportunity to remind this House of the success of The Teacher Collective Bargaining Act. Provincial and local bargaining works, and works for both parties to the agreement. The life insurance amendment is simply only one example. Under the 1974 contract Saskatchewan teachers in rural areas are among the best paid in Canada. They are better paid than their counterparts in Alberta and in Ontario. And our city teachers compare favorably with urban teachers in similar sized cities in other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, I say this is a major achievement for our province and for this Government.

Salaries are only one part of the terms of employment. Pensions, time off, the group insurance provision, leaves with pay, special allowances, are also part of a total compensation package. Here again our Saskatchewan collective agreement is a milestone in Canada. Cost of living factor is built into the contract, so any increase in costs beyond that covered by the contract will be paid out as an extra bonus.

Effective September, 1974, the group insurance coverage will be related to salary with the maximum basic insurance increasing to \$15,000 from \$10,000.

Mr. Speaker, these are tangible, down to earth benefits for the teachers of our province. They have not cost the province a great deal to implement. I would venture to say that by agreeing to negotiate a good fringe benefit package, we

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will buy far more than it costs in good will and good relations between the teachers and the public. A harmonious situation such as this can only be a benefit to education.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move that the said Bill be read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. C. P. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the Minister of Education (Mr. MacMurchy) has given me an opportunity to talk about the Collective Bargaining Agreement. And I've got a suggestion for him. To take that Bargaining Agreement and scrap it and then renegotiate it. The teachers in the Province of Saskatchewan have been led down the garden path, more than any other professional group in the history of the negotiations in 1974 and I should like to tell you why.

Mr. Speaker, teachers supported the principle of provincial bargaining. They supported the government involvement and taking over the Collective Bargaining Agreement and process in the Province of Saskatchewan. They also were convinced that the Government of Saskatchewan would give them fair play. They said they controlled the money, they controlled the finances, they'll give us fair play. But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, it was one of the first contracts that the Government negotiated.

Mr. MacMurchy: — The second contract.

Mr. MacDonald: — The second contract, but one of the first that the Government in 1974 negotiated. And you know, Mr. Speaker, the teachers negotiated it in good faith. There was no strike, no threat to withdraw services. But, Mr. Speaker, they have been led down the garden path. They are actually going to go backward, Mr. Speaker. The cost of living has gone up more than the agreement called for this year and, Mr. Speaker, already in 1974, in the last two months, the teachers are now going backward and going downhill rapidly. Yesterday, or last night indications came out from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics that the cost of living had gone up one per cent in the month of April. That's on top of more than one per cent in January and February. This contract calls for eight and nine per cent increases. There is a possibility that the cost of living will go up 12 per cent this year, Mr. Speaker. No group in this province was short-changed like the teachers in this province were in this particular Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Let's look at the power workers. The power workers were given 15 to 20 per cent including fringe benefits. The telephone workers, 13 or 14 per cent, 15 per cent. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder) has called upon the construction industry to give parity with Alberta that could be 60 per cent. Sixty per cent, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Labour has called upon the construction industry to give 60 per cent. Yet in the contract that the Minister of Education (Mr. MacMurchy) has negotiated with the teachers in the province, he gives them eight per cent.

Hon. G. T. Snyder (Minister of Labour): — On a Point of Personal Privilege, Mr. Chairman.

I would just like to point out to the Member who is speaking, that at no time am I on record as saying that I favored or encouraged parity. I said that this is a subject of collective bargaining, that the two opponents to this whole collective bargaining system would make the determination and I am not taking a position, nor am I establishing guidelines.

Mr. MacDonald: — Well, it's unfortunate you left it in Edmonton. You should have told your colleague the Minister of Finance (Mr. Robbins) because he made that statement last night on television.

Mr. Speaker, all I am saying is that here, not only have the teachers in the Province of Saskatchewan negotiated the poorest contract of any group of employees that are directly paid by the Government of Saskatchewan, I am talking about the telephone workers, the Crown corporations, the Government employees, the SGEA, and now of course, the professional group outside the civil service too. The nurses are now going to be subject to the same kind of treatment as the teachers. But what is really bad, Mr. Speaker, not only for the year 1974-75, but the Minister signed a two year contract. Not only will they go backwards in the year 1974-75, but they are going to go further backward in the year 1975-76. And the concept of a two year agreement was directly opposed to the wishes of the teaching profession in Saskatchewan. They said they couldn't tell what the escalation in inflation would be. They couldn't tell what the increases in cost of living would be. But the Government rammed through that Bill, The Teachers' Collective Bargaining Act, and forced the teachers to sign a two year contract, and they are going to regret the day that they ever put their ink to that two year agreement.

Now, I'm going to make a suggestion and a recommendation to the Minister of Education, that he reopen that contract. Tear up that, show your fairness, show the sense of responsibility to the teachers in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I read in the newspaper report yesterday, that STELCO, a private company, a private corporation in Canada, was going to advance by something like four months in order to provide for the tremendous increase in the cost of living that's happened, and they are not only going to reopen the contract, they are going to start it four years early.

I recommend the Minister of Education go to the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, go to his bargaining crew, which is completely government controlled and recommend that they go back to the teachers, open the contract, and at least consider the year '75-76 so that they will not be strangled by a tremendous increase in the cost of living, not only in the year '74-75, but in the year '75-76.

I have one other suggestion. I suggest to the Minister that he quit wasting the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan's time by bringing in this kind of amendment. If you are going to negotiate that and if you're going to put the group insurance on the negotiating table, don't make a farce out of MLAs by forcing them to come in and approve, rubber stamp, an agreement that has already been signed by the Government of Saskatchewan and the teachers, because everybody in this House is going to be duty bound and honor bound to honor that particular contract.

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I suggest you scrap that piece of legislation, withdraw it and put it on the regulations that the agreement signed by the Teacher's Federation and the Government bargaining crew be considered law of the Province of Saskatchewan, instead of wasting our time to come in and give that flowery speech.

Mr. Speaker, I have a few more things to say on this Bill. I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. K. Thorson (Minister of Industry and Commerce) moved second reading of **Bill No. 75 — An Act to amend The Power Corporation Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure you that it is not my intention to waste the time of the Legislature. I know there are Members who like to take a lot of time, sometimes spend hours reading things, sometimes spend time repeating themselves, and take up the time of the Legislature, but I want to assure you, Mr. Speaker, that is not my intention in rising to move second reading to Bill 75.

Bill 75 will amend The Power Corporation Act. It is quite straightforward. There is nothing unusual about it and it seeks first of all to make one change and secondly to make abundantly clear that the Power Corporation has the legal power to do what it has been doing almost from the beginning of its existence.

Members will see that the second section of the proposed Bill will remove from Section 12 of the Act the proviso in subsection (1). The effect of that will be to make it clear that the Saskatchewan Power Corporation has the legal authority to acquire shares in other companies without having to have in view the taking over of that other company.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Bill makes it clear that the Power Corporation has the capacity to carry on extra-provincial activities by incorporating companies outside of the Province of Saskatchewan.

This power, Mr. Speaker, as Members will well know, has been exercised for many, many years. Saskatchewan Power Corporation has a wholly owned subsidiary in the Province of Alberta, called Many Islands Pipelines Limited. The Saskatchewan Power Corporation has a federally chartered wholly owned subsidiary called Many Island Pipelines Canada Limited. These two companies carry on activities outside of the Province of Saskatchewan.

It was always thought by the Saskatchewan Power Corporation that it clearly had the authority to do that under existing legislation. However, some lawyers have raised the question as to whether or not the Act is sufficiently clear that the Corporation has those powers.

So the new section 12 A which is proposed in Bill 75 when passed into law will make that abundantly clear.

Mr. Speaker, with that explanation, I move second reading of Bill 75.

Mr. G. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park): — Mr. Speaker, I agree with some of the observations of the Minister but I am afraid this amendment is not quite as simple and straightforward and as noncontroversial as he would like us to believe.

It is true that the Corporation in the past has had authority to buy shares in such companies that he made reference to, but only on the basis of them acquiring a controlling interest. And the amendment to section 12, the new 12 A gives considerably more authority to the Corporation than existed in the past, subject of course, to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

The experience in the past has been that this has not been exercised to too great an extent; there certainly are examples of where they have purchased controlling interest in other companies. But now this opens it up so that the Corporation could buy one share or 50 per cent of the shares or 100 per cent of the shares of another corporation.

I think the Members of the House should be aware of the type of activities that is referred to. They have to be related somewhat to the purpose of the Power Corporation but section 8 of The Power Corporation Act sets forth the areas in which they can make these purchases. I should like to cite them for the information of the House.

The purposes and powers of the corporation shall be: And then there are several paragraphs and a share purchase in these other private corporations has to be related to this. First of all:

The generation, transmission, etc. of electrical energy.

I don't think there is too much of a problem here because there are not too many private companies in the electrical generation business, but there might be the odd one.

The production, transmission, etc. of steam. The production and purchase, etc. of gas. The production of coal and the processing of oil. The manufacture of poles, cross arms and other articles used in the transmission and distribution of electrical energy. The purchase for resale of apparatus and equipment used or suitable for use in generation and distribution of electrical energy. The purchase for resale of natural gas incinerators for domestic, commercial and industrial use and the sale of such natural gas incinerators. The construction, maintenance and operation of communications systems in rural and remote areas for the purpose of transmitting telephonic messages. Any other purposes and powers connected with or incidental to the purposes and powers herein mentioned.

So really what this Bill is doing is opening up the scope of the operation of the Power Corporation to buy one share or more in any private company that is operating in the areas which I have cited. This to me is quite a departure and one that could involve a lot more activity than the outright purchase of controlling interests in such companies.

Mr. Speaker, as the official critic of the Power Corporation

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is not in the House and I am sure he has something he would like to add to it, I ask leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. E. L. Tchorzewski (Minister of Consumer Affairs) moved second reading of **Bill No. 74 — An Act to amend The Cemeteries Act**.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this Bill amends The Cemeteries Act. And its purpose is to strengthen the Act in several areas where deficiencies have been found since the Act was last revised in 1965. The Bill before the House proposes a number of important changes which I should like to comment on very briefly.

In the case of commercial cemetery companies, funds for the perpetual care of the cemetery must be paid over to a trust company and held by the trust company in an irrevocable trust. The trust company invests the funds and pays over to the commercial cemetery company, the income therefrom.

An increasing number of municipalities and nonprofit organizations are now setting up funds for the perpetual care of cemeteries and there are at the present time no statutory regulations over such funds. This has been a matter of concern to the next of kin who have contributed money to these funds. And in section 2 this Bill contains a provision to ensure that any funds collected for the perpetual care of a cemetery will be held as trust funds and be kept separate and apart from other funds. It stipulates the manner in which funds may be invested and provides that the income may be used only for the care of the cemetery.

Mr. Speaker, a number of organizations have been contacted on this and they agree with this amendment including SUMA and SARM.

At present the sale of prearranged contracts by commercial cemetery owners is regulated under the Act. But there is no regulation under the Act over the sale of 'at need' services or supplies. Persons who own lots in commercially operated cemeteries often require services or supplies, not previously acquired under a prearranged contract. And hence, the Bill extends the regulations to include the sale of 'at need' items as well.

Section 4 contains details as to the method of serving notice, the date on which service is deemed to be affected and the time within which an owner must give notice of change of address. It is an outline of procedure previously lacking and simply brings it into uniformity with similar sections in other licensing Acts.

The bylaws, rules or regulations of owners of commercially operated cemeteries have always had to be filed under the Act in order to be valid. However, this provision is being reinforced by transferring from the regulations to the Act the requirement that the price or charges for lots, cemetery services and supplies must also be filed as part of the bylaws. The Bill then provides that any previous filing may be revoked but where there is refusal to file the decision of the registrar is subject to the appeal to a Judge of the Court of Queen's Bench.

In the past, Mr. Speaker, problems have arisen through the transfer of commercially operated cemeteries from one owner to another. In these circumstances if the new owner or management is not suitable the refusal, suspension, or cancellation of the owner's licence does not provide suitable revenue because the lot owners would suffer if the cemetery were closed down. The 1965 Act, therefore, prohibited such transfers and in the case of corporations, prohibited the transfer of shares except with the consent of the registrar. However, the Act overlooked the possibility of a transfer of control through the allotment of additional shares. The Bill now extends the section to include allotments under the prohibition and also to give the registrar some direction where he receives an application for consent under the section.

Another problem encountered has been the late filing of annual financial statements. Unless statements are filed properly they lose much of their value. And accordingly the Act is amended to impose an automatic penalty for late filing of \$25 for the first ten days and \$5 per day thereafter on the owner of a commercially operated cemetery.

Another amendment requires the owner of a commercially operated cemetery to pay the costs of an inspection where his office is situated outside of Saskatchewan. Three companies operating cemeteries in Regina, Saskatoon and Prince Albert keep their accounting records in Toronto. Although these companies maintain trust funds in accordance with the requirements of the Act, inspections are made to verify the accuracy of the reports which are submitted. The companies would rather pay the costs of the inspection than maintain their records in the province.

Another amendment affects the penalty clause. And the maximum penalties under the section are increased from \$50 to \$100 for a first offence and \$200 for a second offence.

A further amendment requires a commercial cemetery company to provide care of the entire cemetery. The income from the perpetual trust fund should benefit the entire cemetery.

Mr. Speaker, these are in very brief summary, the major changes in the Bill. There will no doubt be detailed consideration of this Bill in Committee.

With this brief explanation I would move second reading of this Bill to amend The Cemeteries Act.

Mr. J. C. McIsaac (Wilkie): — Mr. Speaker, on the surface The Cemeteries Act looks like a dead issue but perhaps in light of the remarks that the Hon. Minister made, there are quite a number of changes proposed in this Bill. And as he mentioned I am sure they can be discussed more fully in Committee. It is good Liberal legislation but from what we have seen from this Government before, it doesn't mean that when they are through with it that it still will be. So in light of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the critic for the Opposition is not able to be here today, I would ask leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

Second Readings

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kowalchuk that **Bill No. 72 — An Act respecting the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources** be now read a second time.

Mr. T. M. Weatherald (Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, I wish to make relatively short comments on this Bill. It is a reorganization Bill largely to do with the title of the Department. I might say that I personally think and having spoken to a few other people they seem to share the view, that the title Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources is a pretty lacklustre title, if you are going to be into the tourism business. I think the Department of Tourism aspect, that portion of the title is fine but Renewable Resources sounds like a meeting of economists in Ottawa. It doesn't really sound very glamorous as far as a department is concerned. I think of having to put this on the outside of all of the cars involved of which there are a number for such a department because of its outdoor nature of the job. And all of the stationery that I personally think that it is an extremely poor change, in changing the Department of Natural Resources to Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. In that respect it is the Renewable Resources section of the name that I would oppose.

I should like to make some suggestions because I think from an administrative point of view which presumably the Government should be more concerned about than the Opposition, from a purely administrative point of view, it does not appear that this Bill would do much to improve the situation. In fact, I think in many respects it would worsen it.

I just want to offer a few suggestions. Some of them based on my own practical experience in having considerable dealings with these departments over various problems.

First of all I would suggest to the Government that they would be much wiser if they would amalgamate the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment into one department. The two of them are dealing very largely with the same type of problems. The Department of the Environment is not a large department, it is a relatively low budget department. The Department of Natural Resources of course deals very closely with our forests, water resources, game resources and so forth. Both of these departments are very closely aligned. It would seem that one department combined of Natural Resources and the Environment with one Minister would be sufficient.

I would also suggest that a Department of Parks and Tourism would be much more appealing as a department as far as people outside our province whom we are attempting to attract through literature etc. to our province. This would be a much more attractive name. Much more glamorous, I think from the point of view of promotion.

Promotion is an important aspect of any Department of Tourism and I think the name is part of that promotion. This is where I would seriously object to Renewable Resources as a name. I don't think it is very glamorous if you are going to promote the tourist business.

I would suggest that this department is logical. Because certainly a Parks and Tourism Department go together.

The present Department of Tourism is located largely in the Department of Industry. Of course, by combining the tourist promotion industry closely with our Parks Department I think there are logical administrative procedures that could be combined together with and under one Minister.

This of course results in the removal of the tourism portion from the Department of Industry and Commerce and would leave that Department somewhat smaller than it is. I think that in itself is also logical.

I want to also suggest that I think there is one addition that should be added to a Department of Parks and Tourism and that is some of the functions that are in the Department of Culture and Youth and Consumer Affairs.

I have found through considerable personal experience in dealing with various youth groups and various athletic associations, baseball associations, hockey association and so forth, that the Department of Youth in the last number of years has been getting quite involved in grants to various national play-offs for young people 14 and under, 16 and under, various age groups in hockey, but particularly in the field of baseball because there are a number of not only national playoffs taking place every year in the country but there are a number of regional playoffs. By regional playoffs I mean playoffs that involve teams from western Canada, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta and sometimes British Columbia. This is particularly true of 14 and under groups and 16 and under groups.

I would think that if this aspect of the Youth Department which is becoming a very large and complicated section because of grants to a very great number of groups, should be combined into the Parks and Tourism section of that Department. It would give people an opportunity to deal largely with one department at the time.

Presently it is a bureaucratic nightmare. You first of all deal with the Parks Department if you are involved with the putting on of a playoff or use of facilities in a park which frequently these groups are. Then you have to see the Department of Youth which is another separate department about grants or financial assistance. Then if it is allied at all to the Department of Tourism and you want publicity you have got to see the Department of Industry and Commerce. Really all three functions are closely aligned and I think should be in one department.

Increasingly I hear criticism from sporting groups, or groups who are promoting minor league sports that are getting assistance from the Government that they are dealing with far too many departments and having to arrange far too many interviews, whereas it isn't really necessary.

So, essentially, Mr. Speaker, what I would suggest is that I think that if we take the youth section out of the Culture and Consumer Affairs Department it should go into our present new Department of Parks and tourism and have the youth section added. I don't really think then that a Department of Culture and Consumer Affairs would be required and that both these

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sections, while I wouldn't think they should be eliminated, they could be attached to presently existing departments.

Mr. Speaker, just in summary, I suggest that the name is a very poor one. I think that if we want to glamorise our tourism business, glamorise our parks, the name Renewable Resources I think is a very poor one. It is quite meaningful, but I think it is not very glamorous. Therefore, just in summary, it would be much more desirable to combine Natural Resources and the Environment, and combine Parks and Tourism with the section of Youth and leave the Department of Industry and Commerce as it is.

I just offer these suggestions to the Minister because I rather think that in this Bill he has complicated what was already a growing bureaucracy into a much more complicated one.

Mr. D. F. MacDonald (Moose Jaw North): — Mr. Speaker, when I spoke the other day I see by the Leader-Post that what I said may have been a little confused and I should just like to reiterate it again today and I may have confused the House also.

I want to make clear that at present we have the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Industry and Commerce with responsibilities for tourism. The Bill before us today suggests that the Department of natural Resources and Tourism be amalgamated, leaving Industry and Commerce with no responsibility for tourism.

I suggested that the Parks Division should be taken away from the Department of natural Resources and that this Parks and Recreation portion should then be combined with Tourism. And this could then be called Tourism and Parks and Recreation or whatever. And that then the Department of Natural Resources which would not have the responsibility of parks could then be combined with the Department of the Environment.

I think this has many advantages as the Department of the Environment has no staff or power and no goals and so on and this would give the Department of the Environment some power to deal with . . .

Mr. Cowley: — On a Point of Order, Mr. Speaker. The Member has already spoken once on this Bill.

Mr. Speaker: — He spoke on April 8th, but he adjourned debate but did not pick up when next called so he is not barred from coming in again because he had an adjournment.

Mr. MacDonald: — It sure helps to know the rules when you are trying to get your point across.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, today we have three departments — DNR, Environment, Industry and Commerce with responsibility for Tourism. I am suggesting that we should still have three departments, the Department of Natural Resources, which would have Environment incorporated with it, and that would eliminate one department; that the new department would then be Tourism

and Parks and the third one would be Industry and Commerce, with no responsibility for Tourism.

Now, it could very well be that two of these could be amalgamated — Tourism and Industry and Commerce, and therefore we could get by with one less Cabinet post and this certainly wouldn't hurt my feelings at all, especially since the Department of Industry and Commerce now has no responsibility for mineral resources. It seems there are a good many Cabinet posts with very little responsibility left.

I just say that what is incorporated in this Bill and suggested by the Minister, in fact, is a bad marriage and I think it is against the best interests of two things: the protection of our natural resources and the encouraging of tourism.

These two very honest objectives will at times conflict. There is no question and therefore they should be separated and not combined.

I think that this Bill does not set up the machinery that will meet the objectives of our province in the administration of our resources and our recreational facilities and for that reason I am not prepared to support the Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. J. R. Kowalchuk (Minister of Natural Resources): — Mr. Speaker, I want again to apologize that I wasn't here when the Member for Cannington (Mr. Weatherald) made his few, but brief, remarks this afternoon and whatever I did hear, I want to say that I concur with what he has said. The parts that I didn't hear of course I cannot answer to them.

In regard to the Member for Moose Jaw North (Mr. MacDonald) I do have some answers which I should like to bring to the attention of this House.

Mr. Speaker, as usual some of the Members opposite are failing to grasp the aims and the objectives of the Act, in establishing the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. In my opinion this is normal for them.

In adjourning debate on the Bill the other day, the Member for Moose Jaw North and he reiterated it again today, showed a complete lack of understanding of what the new legislation is all about. The Member for Moose Jaw North said that he wanted Tourism as a separate division of the Department of Industry and Commerce or to set up a separate Department of Tourism. He feared that there would be a conflict of interest between the objectives of tourism and the objectives of resource management in the conservation and the protection of the resources.

My friend opposite, that is exactly why this Government is establishing the new department. By this new department we are bringing together the resource management with the tourist people so that they can work together to resolve any conflicts which may exist. This is exactly what the new department is all about, Mr. Speaker. And the Member for Moose Jaw North, once again, has missed the boat completely.

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The whole objective, Mr. Speaker, behind the combination of the people who conserve and preserve our natural resources with the tourist people who plan the use of these resources is paramount to the total success of this new department. You don't isolate people in their little spheres of influence, telling the people of Renewable Resources, quote: "Your job is to zealously preserve and conserve the lakes, the trees and the forest and the fish. Never mind telling us what should be done with it. We will find people in other departments who are past masters at the usage of these resources," to the point sometimes, Mr. Speaker, that it becomes almost a license to destroy or sell or use at any cost.

That, Mr. Speaker, seems to be the kind of road the Member for Moose Jaw North wants the Renewable Resources to travel. The free enterprise philosophy of the Liberals shows itself clearly, Mr. Speaker. He seems to be saying, once again, "You people in Natural Resources do a good job of conserving and protecting! When it comes to the disposal of these resources, we have our friends who are ready to flock in from wherever, New York or Seattle, to get at these natural resources."

No, Mr. Speaker, you don't isolate the people who operate Natural Resources and Recreation from Tourism. Mr. Speaker, you combine them as we have done. Any one person involved in the tourist section of the department should be fully knowledgeable of the operation of our provincial parks; of what is being done to keep our forests green and alive; how our lakes and rivers are kept clean and free of pollution. By the same token, Mr. Speaker, a conservation officer will have to have the full knowledge of the problems that originate because of the tourists who want to use these renewable resources. As a result he must get to know these people and the tourist problems.

Therefore, he, the conservation officer, will have to have total knowledge of what involves the Tourist Department and Tourism. I don't believe in that philosophy of isolation, Mr. Speaker. I believe in full integration and association of the Renewable Resources people and the Tourist people together. Only by that kind of integrated and co-ordinated association of all people concerned with Renewable Resources and Tourism, will we be able to get a viable, a workable and a durable approach to our resources, with the maximum amount of protection necessary to be able to offer the types of these resources in perpetuity, Mr. Speaker.

That is why we have these resources — the lakes, the rivers, the forests, the flora and the fauna, for man's intelligent use and wholesome recreation. Otherwise, Mr. Speaker, what is it all for? These resources are not here in Saskatchewan to benefit any one particular group of people. These resources of Saskatchewan should, in one way or another, benefit all the people of Saskatchewan first, and then the people of Canada next.

In spite of the narrow-minded attitude of some of the Liberal Members, I am certain that the people of Saskatchewan favor the route that we are taking; the route of people who are responsible for the preservation of these renewable resources, working together and being part of the whole tourist sector. You don't solve any problem in this world by dividing and isolating people. You solve them by getting people to work out their problems together, in joint persuasion and discussion and thus arriving at well thought out and acceptable solutions, Mr. Speaker.

The Member for Moose Jaw North doesn't seem aware of the serious challenges that are facing us in the management of our renewable resources today, not only in this province, but in all parts of this continent and, indeed, the whole world. He doesn't seem aware of the planning and the organization that is so necessary to guide the utilization of these resources so that they will be conserved and protected for generations to come. He doesn't seem aware that if we go his route there will be no resources for tourists to see or use, Mr. Speaker.

This is what the legislation establishing this new department is all about. These are the issues that the people of this province and their Government is working to solve. To ensure the proper management and utilization of our renewable resources, changes in our management structure are required and our Liberal friends opposite are opposed to the change. Indeed, they fight it.

This Government, however, has the foresight and the determination to proceed with the changes as they are needed. At this time when we are all concerned about the protection of the heritage that nature has given us, I am sure that the objectives of this new Department will be readily endorsed by the people of this province.

Tourism now, and for the foreseeable future in Saskatchewan, is largely based on our renewable resources of the forests, the lakes, the fish, the wildlife, the parks and the wilderness areas. If we let these resources be destroyed, if our lakes and streams become fished out or polluted, if our wildlife decreases because of overhunting or the destruction of their habitat; if we fail to protect our parks and wilderness areas then there will indeed be little left for tourism in Saskatchewan.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, we are bringing together the functions of resource management with the important tourist promotion and information activities so that the proper utilization of these resources can be guided so that there will be resources available for our generation and for other generations to come. It is our intention to promote the use of these resources when the resource base permits, with more of them and bigger than ever before, Mr. Speaker.

I want to make this commitment to this House and to the people of Saskatchewan that we will never permit the destruction of these resources for the sake of a fast buck. Let there be no misunderstanding about that.

The Member for Moose Jaw North also says that Tourism should be allowed to go its separate way because of the great number of private businesses involved in tourism, with considerable amounts of investment and capital required. Well, a government recognizes that the tourist industry is made up of the largest collection of businesses, some large and more small, of any industry in Saskatchewan with the exception of agriculture. That is another key factor why this Department is being set up, so that all the many businesses and people employed in tourism can thrive and prosper; that they can have the positive support and aggressive leadership that tourism in Saskatchewan needs, instead of what I consider, weak-kneed support that they received from the Liberals during their term of office.

How does the Saskatchewan tourist industry feel about the new Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources? The Saskatchewan tourist Association, which represents a wide section of the private sector of the tourist industry, held their annual meeting in Regina just this past weekend. What did they have to say about the establishment of the new Department? On the very day that the Member for Moose Jaw North spoke in this House, expressing his opposition of the new Department, the Saskatchewan Tourist Association made their feelings known about the new Department and by the Resolution passed at that convention. Let me read you that Resolution:

Resolution No. 3 says:

Whereas it has been announced by the Provincial Government of Saskatchewan that a Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources is being formed, and whereas the Saskatchewan Tourist Association has for several years, advocated the formation of a Department of Tourism, therefore, be it resolved that this annual meeting of the Saskatchewan Tourist Association commend the Provincial Government for taking this step towards the further development of the tourist industry.

Mr. Speaker, that is the commendation that this Government has received from the Saskatchewan Tourist Association, representing the private sector of tourism in the establishment of this new Department. Yet, the Member for Moose Jaw North tries to say that Tourism should go its separate way because of the interest of the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, not only the many businesses, large and small, engaged in tourism will endorse this new thrust which the Government is giving to tourism in this Department, but the people of Saskatchewan generally will endorse the aims and the objectives of this legislation. Mr. Speaker, let me briefly repeat what this legislation is going to do.

The new concept of the Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources is to integrate and co-ordinate the very vital base of tourism, the many diverse and available and beautiful natural resources of our province — the lakes, the rivers, the deep forested regions, the grassy plains, with a sensible and realistic approach for usage through dynamic, sensible and future tourist programs.

This total and full integration can only be achieved, Mr. Speaker, if all the forces and personnel in each area of concern are brought together, to work together, to share their knowledge in building a viable whole interwoven Department of Tourism and Renewable Resources. The ingredients, Mr. Speaker, are homogeneous. Our natural beautiful components of Saskatchewan geography complement the idea to the fullest that people want to see and use these beautiful Saskatchewan natural resources.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion it is the most natural combination, the work of conservation, preservation and recreation with tourism and people who want to see and play within this type of clean and natural environment.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to close this debate on this Bill. I predict that great things will

happen with the sound combination of personnel of Natural Resources and of Tourism together. This Act of bringing together the responsibilities of tourist development and promotion and the functions of recreation and resource management is all important, Mr. Speaker. This is a sensible and rational solution to a very important area of government responsibility that will in my opinion result in maximum use of our resources by our people, yet with proper and orderly supervision and control of these as well. I am very proud of this Bill, Mr. Speaker. I sincerely hope that all Members of this House give it unanimous support.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cody that **Bill No. 81 — An Act to amend The Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development** be now read a second time.

He said: Mr. Speaker, the other day when I gave second reading to this Bill there were two people in the Opposition who made some brief criticisms and I just want to make a few comments in this regard.

First of all the Member for Rosetown (Mr. Loken) said that the Government is now interfering and probably would interfere more so after this Bill becomes law. Well, I want to assure the Member for Rosetown that we have never interfered in any workings of the co-operatives and we have no intentions to start now. If the Member had taken a close look he would have found that we are not going to interfere in anyone's day to day operations or anything like it. All we are going to do is give some of the co-operatives some help as indicated in these amendments.

The Member also said that the Rosetown Co-op was doing a good job and has been doing a good job. Well, for a good number of years, Mr. Speaker, we have been looking at the Rosetown Co-op in its annual reports and we say it is doing a good job, however, certainly that's not interference. It is just one of the things that the Department of Co-operation does for people in the co-operatives.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Meadow Lake (Mr. Coupland) made a long speech with regard to the firing that took place at Meadow Lake. Well, I want to assure this Member that if he knows anything about a credit union, which I know he doesn't, he would know that the Government of Saskatchewan at no time fires anybody and has no right to fire anybody. In this particular case it didn't fire anybody either. He just doesn't know the facts. I just resent the fact that the Member for Meadow Lake comes into this House and says that someone has been fired by the Government of Saskatchewan when it is not true. The truth of the matter, Mr. Speaker, is that the Department of Co-operation went in and did an audit on the books and found them not in order. And as a result, the Board of Directors did the firing — we had nothing to do with it whatsoever. It is a locally elected board and they went and did what they had to do. And let me tell you, Mr. Speaker, as well, if you think that we are so hard on the individual who was fired, I wonder why it would be that the Government of Saskatchewan hired him right after that. Why?

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Mr. Coupland: — You felt bad.

Mr. Cody: — We didn't feel bad at all. The Department of Co-operations did the job that was necessary. We found out that the loan exposure was far greater than it was supposed to be and as a result, the Board of Directors took the appropriate action. Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, this individual was hired by the Department of Northern Saskatchewan and it is my understanding he has done and is doing a tremendous job.

Another thing I want to bring to the attention of the Member for Meadow Lake and it's in a clipping from the Leader-Post where he says and quote:

The manager was fired because he was lending too much money to Indians and Metis in the area.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that kind of attitude from the Member opposite is just completely out of order. I am sure that he wouldn't want consciously to tell this House and the people of Saskatchewan, that we as a Government would have anything to say about loans made to the Indian and Metis by that credit union.

Mr. McIsaac: — That's the reason your Department gave.

Mr. Cody: — I will tell the Member for Wilkie that that is not the reason the Department gave and you know it. If you read any of the reports which I am sure you don't, but if you know the facts which I know you people don't and you never bother to get the facts, you'd find out that that is not the case.

Mr. Speaker, I see the time is up and it is Wednesday evening, so with those few comments it is my pleasure to move second reading of this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:30 o'clock p.m.