

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session - Seventeenth Legislature
54th Day

Friday, April 19, 1974.

The Assembly met at 2:20 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. E.F. GARDNER (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to welcome a group of about 40 Grade Eleven and Grade Twelve students from Rocanville who are visiting us today. They are in the east gallery. I understand they have a rather tight schedule but I hope that I can meet with them briefly before they leave this afternoon.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. D. BOLDT (Rosthern): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce a group of 27 students who are here with their principal, Mr. Herman Berg from Hepburn, Saskatchewan. I am sure that all Members will wish them a happy and a pleasant stay in this Legislature and a good visit of many areas in the city of Regina. I will meet with them later on this afternoon and we wish them a safe trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. A. THIBAUT (Melfort-Kinistino): — Mr. Speaker, I should like you and Members of the Legislature to join with me to welcome a fine group of students from St. Louis High School. They are from Grade Eleven and Twelve, 28 of them. They are brought here by their teacher, Mr. Harder, and their bus driver, Mr. Edgar Topping. They are in the gallery to your left, Mr. Speaker. They have visited the city this morning and this afternoon they are going to see parliament in action and later on I will be able to have a few words with them. I hope that this day will be a very educational one for them and I also want to wish them a safe journey home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. K. THORSON (Souris-Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and to the Assembly some young ladies who are students, some of them from Estevan and some of them from North Dakota and some of them from South America.

In the Speaker's Gallery there are five young ladies who are students at the Estevan Comprehensive School and they have as their guests, staying with them in their homes for several days and today visiting in Regina, Miss Cindy Grindberg and Miss Valerie Regstad from North Dakota. With them are two young ladies, Miss Monica Huskes whose home is in Brazil and Miss Mabel Bertullia whose home is in Argentina.

These international visitors I know are very welcome to Saskatchewan. I had the opportunity of meeting them Tuesday night in Estevan when they and I were guests at a dinner of the Chamber of Commerce there. I am sure that all Members of the Assembly join with me in extending a warm welcome to them.

April 19, 1974

They are accompanied today by their driver, Mr. Wilson; by their teacher from the Estevan Comprehensive School, Mrs. Wilson, and by the vice principal, Mr. Ted Jankoski. I hope they will take to their homes the warm good wishes of all of the Members of the Legislature.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

FLOOD SITUATION IN REGINA

MR. E.C. MALONE (Regina Lakeview): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I had a series of questions that I intended on asking of the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Byers) but I see he is not in his chair today. I find this rather unusual because I am sure that all Members opposite were expecting a number of questions about the current flood situation. I see the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) is not here either, presumably the Premier or some other Minister has some knowledge of the events, so he can answer questions.

I should like to direct a series of questions to whatever Minister is appropriate, if it is the Premier, about the current flood situation in Regina. Could the Premier or whatever Minister is concerned answer these following questions? Are you able at this time to say what the water flow or levels will be in Regina? Will it be the same as in 1971 or higher? If so, are the existing dyking provisions sufficient to hold back a flood? If not, are arrangements being made to have those dykes raised by additional sandbags? What is the estimated time of the crest of the flood or the waters? Are sufficient sand and sandbags available?

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, this is a substantial series of questions. I will attempt to answer them.

I suppose none of the information that one can state is necessarily precisely accurate but the best information available is as follows: That the 1971 flood peak was running at say 3,100 cubic feet a second. The latest estimate today is for a peak of probably 3,500 cubic feet a second. The crest is anticipated to be sometime on Sunday. The dykes are thought to be capable of taking 4,000 cubic feet a second. They are thought to be able to stand a flood crest of 4,000 cubic feet a second, or one foot in depth, greater than the 1971 flood level. There are sandbags and sand around to meet further threatened situations, if the situation appears to be getting worse. I do not have here the number which are about. I can tell you, for what it may be worth, how many sandbags are located at various places in the province but I am not sure that I would give the correct impression if I did that.

May I say that while it is thought by the Provincial Government officials and the city officials that the preparations are such as will be able to handle the likely flow of water, I don't think that anyone can be confident of this.

The situation in Moose Jaw is that the current anticipated flow and virtually the current flow is 50 per cent higher than

the previous peak of 1969. It is not anticipated that we will face that situation in Regina and all the current measurements suggest otherwise. However, there are circumstances which could worsen the situation. Shortly put, the Kronau marsh is now holding a fairly large body of water and it is assumed that it will hold it until after Sunday, or let me put it this way, it will hold it so that it does not come through Regina until after Sunday. If this does not prove to be the case there could be other problems.

I am advised that there is a meeting going on, probably now, between civic officials and provincial officials to firm up fail-safe plans for evacuation of houses in Regina. There are now some preliminary plans, the meeting is to refine them still further in the event that these various calculations prove to be unreliable.

MR. MALONE: — By way of supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, I would thank the Premier for that information. Is it safe to say that the 3,500 level which you referred to is just speculation now, that you can't say that with any degree of being positive? I understand that the danger level is at 4,000 and when it once reaches that, there is very little that can be done. But is the 3,500 level realistic and secondly, are any steps being taken at this time to increase the dyke levels today, this evening and tomorrow by using volunteer help and other help that may be available?

MR. BLAKENEY: — On the first question, with respect to whether or not they are realistic, the forecast which was made at 2:00 o'clock today by the Department of the Environment, they believe them to be realistic. I am not going to say that I think they are realistic since I simply don't know enough about whether or not the information on which they are making their forecast is reliable.

With respect to whether or not sandbagging is proceeding at the moment, I'm unable to tell the Member. I have seen some crews along the creek but I don't know whether they are actually applying sandbags or not.

MR. MALONE: — Mr. Speaker, may I bend the rules a little bit and ask the Premier a further question along these lines? Are there sufficient bodies of volunteer help available at this time should the city and the Department of the Environment and whatever other officials are concerned decide to have sort of a mass run at it today or tomorrow? Do you have sufficient men and material ready?

MR. BLAKENEY: — My information is that the answer is, yes, that there are tentative arrangements made for students and for other groups to be available in the event that this decision is made to make that move.

COMPENSATION FOR FLOOD VICTIMS

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I should like also to follow up my colleague from Regina Lakeview on a question.

I am sure that the Premier is aware that certainly the more sensational aspects of flooding usually occur in the urban centres such as Moose Jaw, Regina and Lumsden. However, I did have the opportunity of going out to my own constituency which is made up mostly of the Regina plains and the flooding there is more serious than at any time at least in my experience of 25 years. I am sure the Premier from what I understand flew over to Moose Jaw this morning and he probably had an opportunity to examine the Rouleau flats. For miles and miles and miles it is just a huge mass of lake. The Gray-Riceton area is another very serious flood threat area and, of course, as the Premier is also aware from the air, he knows that there is still a great deal of snow still on the ground which could join the flow of water which is already in a very serious flood condition. I know that the Kronau flats are almost now filled to capacity, and if they can retain the amount of water that they have until Sunday we may very well be fortunate. I am wondering at this time if you have any idea or has the Department of Agriculture done any evaluation or estimate of the amount of farm land that will be flooded this spring and perhaps will be unable to be seeded? And secondly, are there any plans of the Government to proceed or to consider, and I know that this is of an early date, but I am sure that the Government and the Cabinet have considered, of providing some kind of flood assistance to those persons who have serious flood damage not only to their homes but also, I am thinking of farmers throughout Saskatchewan, who may not be able to seed their crops this spring and may have long-term damage not only to their homes but also to their livelihood?

MR. BLAKENEY: — The Member is correct in his description of the situation as it in fact exists. In the course of returning from Moose Jaw, the Minister of the Environment and I and an official of the Department of the Environment took the opportunity to fly over the Rouleau flats and over to Kronau to get some assessment of the situation. And certainly in this area Moose Jaw River or Moose Jaw Creek is very, very high. At the places where it is measured it appears to be the highest since records have been kept and the official of the Department of the Environment who was with us indicated that, while his experience doesn't go back that far, the river is higher than anything that he has seen or anything that he has heard anyone relate to him.

There is clearly going to be a problem and I am going to bend the rules a little, Mr. Speaker, and make one digression when I am finished replying to the Member for Milestone. There is going to be a problem. Clearly there is the possibility of substantial areas of farm land not being able to be seeded. There is a possibility, I think probability is a better word, that there will be substantial damage to municipal roads because there must be strings of bridges there which are under water — and all the approaches. Then there are possibilities of problems, urban problems even in that area. There is water close to residences in Drinkwater and we cannot be assured that that won't be true in other areas. We are attempting to assess these. If I am to be frank with the Member I must say that we have not arrived at any proposal for compensation. We are aware of the possibility that such consideration will be necessary and that is really all I can say at this point.

With respect to Moose Jaw, there is clearly a situation of substantial flooding in Moose Jaw, substantial losses are going to be suffered and unless we are fortunate the water that is

flowing down the Moose Jaw River and the Wascana Creek, is going to come to Lumsden at approximately the same time, and if that happens then our advice is that there is no way that we can stop Lumsden from being flooded. No amount of dyking or sandbagging or anything that we have started a very long time ago would have been effective. At that level of water all we can talk about is evacuation and mitigation. I must say to people in Regina that they must prepare for the possibility of flooding in certain flood plains in Regina and I must say to the people in Lumsden that they must prepare for what I think I must call the probability of flooding. I know that both the civic and municipal officials, both in Regina and in Lumsden are preparing plans and indeed in Lumsden I think are fairly far advanced. I must say this because the situation, particularly in respect of Lumsden, is taking on the air of inevitability which is not true in Regina. Our officials tell us we are just going to have to be lucky to avoid major flooding in Lumsden.

MR. MacDONALD: — Just a brief supplementary question. I appreciate the Premier's comments particularly in relation to rural municipalities because from what I understand in talking to municipal people, it is not only the bridges along the Moose Jaw Creek and the approaches, but grid roads and main access roads to grid roads throughout the entire area have been cut in order to let water flow. They have been bulldozed and so forth. I am also pleased to hear that the Government is considering and I am sure that the Members of the Opposition, and I know I speak for our Leader, in indicating that we recognize this is a Saskatchewan crisis and it may well be a very, very serious crisis in southern Saskatchewan and that any kind of movement and plans in relation to assessing it, if the damage does become that critical, in relation to the Federal Government will certainly have our support. I do think that some kind of a committee set up of the urban communities such as Regina, Moose Jaw, Lumsden, as well as the rural municipalities and the Government of Saskatchewan to assess the damage and get an accurate appraisal of just exactly what is going to happen in the South and get its long-range impact, should be established at the earliest opportunity. I do appreciate the Premier's comments and I am not really asking a question.

MR. BLAKENEY: — I will take the suggestion and it is clear that we would anticipate seeking Federal assistance if the situation merits it. I know that neither Members opposite or us would want to make a premature application. We will wait and see whether very substantial losses have been suffered. If there are, we will have to assess it and, I hope, assume our responsibilities.

PERSONAL SAFETY IN FLOOD AREAS

MR. J.G. LANE (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, a third question before the Orders of the Day, directed to the Premier and in particular with regard to Lumsden. The Premier has said there may be an inevitability — an air of inevitability about the flood problems in Lumsden. I wonder if the Premier or any Government officials have any concern about the personal safety of individuals in the area as the result of flood problems. Have any concerns been raised to the Premier or the Ministers of Cabinet?

MR. BLAKENEY: — We have not had any personal concerns raised to us in respect of Lumsden. I am advised that with respect to Lumsden something over 100,000 extra sandbags were going to Lumsden today, in the event that the situation does not reach the inevitability point to which I was referring, but something less which could be defended against. Residents there are busy dealing with sandbags and other people are there now. In the event of flooding the EMO people think that they can give two days warning. Late Tuesday or Wednesday is thought to be the earliest peak in Lumsden. They think they will be able to give 48 hours if they are sure they have to evacuate. We are advised that there is an evacuation plan, involving the use of buses, trucks and cars, also that the provincial welfare services are there to see that nothing goes wrong with respect to that. The possibility of some personal danger cannot be overlooked. I can only now ask people to act in a rational manner in their own best interests. I say this because His Worship Mayor Taylor of Moose Jaw was relating stories — and they have had to evacuate some hundreds of families there — of people who simply would not evacuate because they did not believe there was a problem. Notwithstanding all of the advice, just as I was leaving they were saying that there was a couple who were now trapped on the top floor of their house and officials were trying to devise a plan of getting them out. This is an elderly couple. These are the sort of unfortunate events that happen if people are unprepared to accept the advice of officials who are doing their best to tender advice. We are hopeful that that situation will not arise in Lumsden and that there will be no reasonable likelihood of any personal danger to anyone.

MR. LANE: — Just a supplementary. I should like to join with the Premier in making it quite clear to the people in the flood areas that there is a possibility I think of crisis proportions if the worst came to worst. Again I would join with the Premier in making clear to the people involved in the flood areas to not take the danger lightly because it could be very, very serious and that the people, as the Premier said, would hopefully act rationally. But I think that all Government agencies and all people concerned should make it very, very clear to the people involved in the flood areas that this could be an extremely serious problem, it could be of crisis proportions and that hopefully everyone would act responsibly and I am sure they will.

TABLING OF RESEARCH ON FISHING INDUSTRY

MR. J.G. RICHARDS (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day, I have a very brief personal announcement, if I could make it before the Orders of the Day.

MR. SPEAKER: — I don't think we have the rule of private Members making an announcement. We can't really permit that.

MR. RICHARDS: — Well, with leave, I merely wanted to present a copy to both the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier on a piece of research done by my assistant, Mr. Piper on the state of the fishing industry and hope that at some further time on a private Members' day, there can be a seconder to a motion so that this material can be discussed in the House.

MOTION

HOUSE RECESS

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to move, seconded by the Premier:

That by leave of the Assembly that on Monday, April 22, 1974, this Assembly shall recess shortly before 3:00 o'clock p.m. in order that His Excellency Governor General Leger may address this Assembly.

If I just might say a word, Mr. Speaker. The Governor General, I gather will be addressing the Assembly and after the address is over, we propose in due course to revert back to the usual business of the House and deal with Estimates.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 13 — NATIONALIZATION OF PROVINCIAL OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. J.G. Richards (Saskatoon University):

That this Assembly urgently calls upon the Saskatchewan Government to consider nationalization of the provincial oil and gas industry.

HON. E.L. COWLEY (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Mr. Speaker, before dealing with the subject matter of the Resolution itself, I should like to address myself to a couple of comments which the Hon. Member for Saskatoon University made in moving this motion.

Mr. Speaker, the Member suggested that there was some reluctance on the part of the Government to undertake this particular debate. The Member asked why he had to introduce this particular debate into the House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the Member that this Government placed its policy before this House in the form of Bill 42 last fall. At that time we indicated how we proposed to deal with the question of the petroleum resources of this province at that time and in the future, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at that time the Member for Saskatoon University put forward his proposals which were, as I think you will remember, similar to the proposal which he is making in this particular Resolution. There was an ample opportunity for all Members on both sides of the House to discuss Bill 42 on second reading and to discuss the Member for Saskatoon University's position in second reading. And indeed to discuss the position of the official Opposition in second reading.

There was a discussion in this House and there was a decision made.

The Member for Saskatoon University obviously disagreed with that decision. Now he is, in the form of a motion, putting forward his particular proposal separately. Mr. Speaker, I maintain we have already provided the forum for the discussion of this topic as a government. However, I still intend to make a few rather brief comments on this particular Resolution.

The other comment the Member for Saskatoon University made in his introductory remarks that I wish to comment on was with respect to his difficulty in finding someone to second his motions.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to this House that the Member chose to become a Member of the Opposition. As a Member of the Opposition he has the right to move motions. But there is no reason why any Member on this side of the House should feel bound to second any of his motions. The Member for Saskatoon University opposes the Government by sitting in the Opposition, and I might say he does it rather ably from his point of view, but he can hardly expect Members from this side of the House to assist him in opposing the Government.

Historically when this situation has existed in the House, where there has been a lone Member of a particular party sitting in the Opposition, other Members of the Opposition have provided him with a seconder in the case of a motion which he wished to place before the House. For example, from 1964 - 1967, Members of the CCF seconded motions of the Member for Arm River, Mr. Pederson, who was then leader of the Progressive Conservative Party. I doubt whether there was any less philosophical difference between the CCF and the Conservatives than there is between the Liberals sitting opposite and Mr. Richards now.

Mr. Speaker, returning to the direct matter which is put forward in this Resolution, I think we need to take a look at what we feel are the objectives which the Government of Saskatchewan should have with respect to the petroleum industry.

Mr. Speaker, the first objective is to obtain for the people of Saskatchewan a fair return for this non-renewable resource. It's a return which you can measure in terms of dollars and also in economic activity. Obviously another consideration is the question of conservation and supply in the future for Saskatchewan.

With respect to the question of economic rent, this Government passed Bill 42. It's based on the premise that there will continue to be a significant role for the private sector in this province. I know that differs from the approach of the Member for Saskatoon University. The objective was, and is, to provide for the private sector a reasonable return and to capture the additional revenues over and above that for the people of this province.

The Member for Saskatoon University quotes statistics which he says show a return to date to the industry of 11 per cent and a return of 15 per cent when current reserves are exhausted. He states that these figures are based on figures of the Canadian Petroleum Association. The figures that I have heard the Canadian Petroleum Association quoting are figures of nine per cent to date and 11.7 per cent projected into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I don't want to get into an argument on these figures, because they are very much dependent upon how you calculate them. They are very much dependent upon what you calculate the return on, and what you calculate the return as being, before and after taxes including investments and so on.

I can only say to the Members opposite, to the Member for Saskatoon University in particular, that the Government made a decision with respect to a fair return in Bill 42. The industry claims it is too little and the Member for Saskatoon University claims it is too much. We think it is in the right ball park.

The Government accepts neither the reasoning of the Liberals, who suggested in effect that we should do nothing; nor the suggestion of the Member for Saskatoon University who claims that his answer is the only one that the Government should have pursued.

Mr. Speaker, this Resolution suggests a simplistic policy which recognizes none of the problems associated with it. The Member suggests that no compensation for example should be paid in spite of the fact that it is highly unlikely that this would legally be possible.

The question must be asked that if expropriation took place on the grounds that the Member for Saskatoon University suggests, and if fair compensation was paid, what would be, in strictly financial terms, the benefits to the people of this province? I would suggest in having perused the remarks of the Member for Saskatoon University that he has in no way shown that there would be any significant financial benefits that are immediately self-evident.

Mr. Speaker, the Member went on to deal with the rates of production and a comment made by myself with respect to the increased level of production in the month of February. He again suggested a simplistic solution. He suggested we should look immediately to reducing the amount of oil that is being produced in Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I agree that we need to be concerned about the rates of production in Saskatchewan in relation to the future supplies of petroleum that will be available to the residents of Saskatchewan.

There are many ways in which we can do this. I think at all times we have to take into account the effects that any such decisions would have on the provincial economy, on the people producing the oil and those who are associated with it. We need to take into account what the effects would be on the nation as a whole and its relationship with other countries, particularly the United States of America. I am not saying that we shouldn't in a national context arrive at a national energy policy for Canada which indeed might include over a period of some time — because I don't think it is realistic nor fair to consider the kinds of immediate action that the Member was suggesting — look at decreasing our exports of crude oil. That might be a period of two or three years or ten years. I don't want to suggest to the Members that I have a simplistic solution to this, but it should be in the context of a national energy policy. That is what we in Saskatchewan must first work towards, a national energy policy which will provide for all Canadians, not just Saskatchewan people, an assured supply of crude petroleum in the future.

April 19, 1974

And indeed, if we have a national policy, it might be, that as a part of that national policy, Saskatchewan reserves would be produced at close to or at capacity in the future, while other reserves were being developed. It might also be of course that the Saskatchewan reserves would be conserved. But I submit that that should be our first objective, a national energy policy.

If a national energy policy is not forthcoming, if we as a Provincial Government do not see a national energy policy forthcoming in time to take care of our future needs, then we need to look at our position on a solely provincial basis.

I think there are three or four ways in which the life of Saskatchewan reserves can be prolonged significantly.

The first one obviously is to decrease production. I think the preferable routes of increasing the life of Saskatchewan reserves would be first of all to increase our known reserves. That can only be accomplished of course by discovering more oil.

The second one would be to increase the recoverability of already proven reserves. Here, Mr. Speaker, I think we have some real significant opportunities before us. The heavy oils of which Saskatchewan has very large amounts are being recovered now at a rate of five to six per cent of the known reserves. The estimated potential reserves of heavy oil vary from six to ten million barrels. Some people suggest that the recovery of heavy oil can be increased from five to six percent to 30 to 40 per cent. But let's assume that our potential reserves are eight billion barrels and let's assume that we can increase the recoverability by ten per cent. The effect of that doubles our known current reserves.

I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that is any cause for complacency on the part of the Saskatchewan Government, but I think it certainly indicates direction that Government policy and Government activities should be going. That is to encourage the private sector and to work with the private sector and indeed if necessary to work on our own, to study and develop methods of enhancing the recovery of those heavy oils. And, of course, at the same time, we need to continue to explore for oil, for new oil in Saskatchewan, particularly in the deeper horizons and we'll do this with Saskoil, which, I admit, has had some difficulties getting started but which I am hopeful will be quite active this summer, with the private sector and with the private sector in conjunction with the public sector.

Mr. Speaker, I said at the beginning that we had had a debate on this particular topic under Bill 42. The Government made its position known with respect to the question which the Member for Saskatoon University is posing. I know that the "Party" which he represents, the Waffle, said that Bill 42 was only a negotiating tool. I don't think that many people in Saskatchewan, and I certainly don't think that the Liberal official Opposition would suggest that Bill 42 was solely a negotiating tool.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Government did make the opportunity available for the debate of the question of what our petroleum policy should be in this province. I think for the Member for Saskatoon University to suggest that that debate was not made possible is really his way of saying that he wasn't satisfied with the outcome of the debate, which indeed I suspect he wasn't.

Mr. Speaker, I think I have attempted, in this short address, to outline what I feel the Government's policy is and how we have made an attempt to have the debate which the Member for Saskatoon University spoke about in his opening remarks. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

RESOLUTION NO. 17 — PROBLEMS OF NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. M. Feschuk (Prince Albert East):

That this Assembly commends the Provincial Government for its determined efforts to positively direct the energies of Saskatchewan in resolving the deeply rooted social and economic problems of Northern Saskatchewan by having taken the following steps: (a) the establishment of five year northern housing program; (b) the completion of plans for sewer and water in four northern communities; (c) the successful election of Northern Saskatchewan's first civic Northern Municipal Council; (d) the provision of economic opportunity for northern people, resulting in increased employment; and (e) the establishment of a single Department of Northern Saskatchewan to implement and monitor the continued transfer to northern people of programs, opportunities and decision making powers not previously offered to them by any former Government.

And the proposed amendment thereto moved by Mr. Guy:

That all the words after the word "Assembly" in the first line be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

Expresses its regret at the failure of the Provincial Government through its Department of Northern Saskatchewan to: (a) encourage economic development in Northern Saskatchewan; (b) provide sufficient housing to meet the needs of the people; (c) provide a Northern Municipal Council free of political interference; and (d) to transfer to the northern people the programs, opportunities and decision making powers necessary to run their own affairs.

MR. H.E. COUPLAND (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, when I entered this debate the other day I recall some of the stuff that had come from the Member for Hanley (Mr. Mostoway), garbage, but on hearing that word that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kowalchuk) used in the House, gibberish, I think that was more the word I should have used. The Member for Hanley talked about goons and referred to innuendoes and so on, Mr. Speaker. I have to say that the Member for Hanley is a master at innuendoes and half-truths and I won't even bother to comment on the goons part. I could show him where the goons are if he wanted me to.

Mr. Speaker, at one point in his speech he mentioned the new emphasis on development in the North and he was very proud of this. And I have to agree with him, up to a point. There has been a great increase in development in the North but only on bureaucracy. When one goes into the settlements in any of these northern points and sees all the trailers being set up

April 19, 1974

there and hooked up to sewer and water for this DNS bureaucracy they are building, one wonders what the Government is trying to do. Are they really trying to help the people in the North or are they trying to move some NDP votes in there for the next election, because they don't seem to be doing anything for the people?

Mr. Speaker, I should like to read a little portion of what a Judge has to say about what is going on in the North. This is from the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix of November 7, 1973, that's not very long ago. But the Judge says and I quote:

There are a lot of unemployed people in the North who are on welfare and many who tend to have a drinking problem. Unemployment, combined with poor housing and much idle time can lead people to tangling with the law. There are many economic opportunities in the North that are not being developed.

And I agree with him. This is what we as a Liberal government were doing.

And the developments that have taken place have overlooked natives as workers. These people want the opportunity to work.

And I have said this many times in this House and I agree with the Judge on that point. He went on to say that he:

Wished that the white employers would hire more native workers and be patient with them. Judge Francis said there are many native people holding down skilled jobs in the North and that native people can certainly do the work if they are given the opportunity.

And I wholeheartedly agree on that point. But he criticized the housing conditions, and, Mr. Speaker, I want again to refer to November 7 when the Members over there seemed to be bragging about the wonderful housing that they are putting in there and here is the Judge, whom they hired, condemning them for their housing situation in the North. And here is another thing he goes on to say:

Nobody consults the native people about what houses they want and what is best for their needs.

Now, this is a Judge, he has been in that area there for a year.

Mr. Speaker, the Liberal government did have a program in the North and especially in my area. You go up and ask a few of those fellows who have been set up in business, in places like Beauval, Ile-a-La-Crosse, Turner Lake and so on. We helped these fellows set up their business and then we provided help to go along and see that their business was running and giving them advice and helping them with their books. That program has all been dropped since the DNS took over and lot of these fellows are in trouble today. I should just like to mention one in Ile-a-La-Crosse, a Mr. Nap Johnson, whom we helped get set up in a tourist operation up there. I think he has twelve or fourteen cabins. He has around a \$22,000 investment. When we were the government, we had placement officers and so on that were going around helping him in his business, giving him advice and helping him to get loans and grants and

so on, to keep this business going. I was talking to him not too long ago and he is very badly in need of two motors and about \$400 to buy some lumber to make a couple of skiffs so that he can keep his operation going. And I would hope that the DNS would help Mr. Johnson in this program, and not let him lose what he has gained under the Liberal government.

Then, of course, there is that farm at Ile-a-La-Crosse. It was an experiment, a thing I think if they keep on going that they can develop and so that there will be work for some of the younger people up there, and training so that they can come out and take their place in jobs in the South looking after cattle.

Then, of course, Mr. Speaker, there was the pulp mill at Beauval, which was going to be a tremendous boost to those people and of course went down the drain.

There is another thing that concerns me, Mr. Speaker, about the DNS and I had a case just lately where the DNS gave a couple from Dillon two \$500 cheques, supposedly for home improvement. Now, this couple came into Meadow Lake and they bought \$1,000 worth of furniture. They decided that that was the type of home improvement they wanted. The merchant in Meadow Lake sold them this furniture and lo and behold when he deposited the cheques in the bank, DNS stopped payment on them. The merchant got in touch with me and with the co-operation of the DNS officials we got the money released for them. There was nothing to say on those cheques what they were for and this couple came in and bought this furniture. The merchant sold them the furniture in good faith. Now just imagine the embarrassment to that couple when they found that the cheques, the Government or DNS gave them had put stop payment on them and what it is going to do in the future when these native people come in with cheques and a merchant will wonder whether they should sell or cash the cheque because they may have payment stopped on them.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Hanley talked about making one trip into the North and knowing everything that went on up there and that some of the Liberal Members had made one trip in there and didn't know too much about what they were talking about, but I just want to inform the Member that when we were the government, that we used to go up and I have spent, on several occasions, days at trapper schools, where we lived with the natives in the tents and these were trappers from all across the North. We sat down with them and we listened to them plan their programs and offer advice or ask questions and it was a real education. Even the former Minister of Natural Resources, Ross Barrie went up and we went across the lake, five miles, where we were isolated, and sat down with the native trappers by themselves and entered into their discussion. And don't think they didn't appreciate it.

While I appreciate the money that is being spent on such things as water and sewer in La Loche, which incidentally was started under the Liberal government, and in housing which also was a program started by the Liberal government, but I still believe there is not enough consultation, as that Judge mentioned, with the native people. There is a lot more that can be done in the North, in housing and especially in development and providing jobs for these people and give them a chance to go out and earn a living and not live on welfare.

April 19, 1974

I just noticed another little article in this piece by the Judge where he said:

It stands to reason, if a person can make \$300 a month from laying a trap line in sub-zero temperature and receive the same or more from welfare, of course, most will prefer the welfare.

MR. LANE: — That is not what they say.

MR. COUPLAND: — But no, that's not what they say.

But with the buoyant economy and the money that you people opposite have fallen into and then we look at the budget here for the DNS where the 90 per cent of it or maybe 95 per cent of it is going for bureaucracy and not going for programs for the people in the North, it is pretty ridiculous. It's things like I mentioned, these cheques that have been stopped and so on that I think that this is a good amendment and that we should, the Government should set up a deal and go up and check into what is going on. So I will certainly support the amendment but I will vote against the main motion.

Amendment lost.

Motion agreed to.

RESOLUTION NO. 19 — SASKATCHEWAN LAND BANK TRANSACTIONS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. E.F. Gardner (Moosomin):

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to consider the desirability of immediately providing to Members of the Legislature, full details of all Saskatchewan Land Bank transactions that have occurred to date.

And the proposed amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Messer:

That all the words after the word "Assembly" in the first line be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

congratulate the Government of Saskatchewan for providing full details of transactions of the Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission in the Commission's Annual Report; and further, that this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to continue in this present manner to disclose the details of all Saskatchewan Land Bank Commission transactions in the Annual Report.

Amendment agreed to.

The debate continued on the motion as amended.

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General): — Mr. Speaker, I want to just say a few words, if I can, about the matter of the main motion. I'll be very brief in my remarks. I am persuaded to the point of view which was enunciated by my colleague the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) respecting the full revelation of Land Bank operations.

The point that I want to make, Mr. Speaker, is that I notice in the document which the Opposition is circulating throughout the Province of Saskatchewan, The Legislative Report, dated April, 1974, on page three, there is a continuation of a story with respect to "Land Bank Refuses". It's an article written by the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner) and the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) constituency. There is one interesting point which I think the farmers of Saskatchewan will be interested in paying a little more attention to because it does reveal the stated position of the Liberal Party with respect to the Land Bank and Land Bank leases, in particular, if the Members opposite should gain the government of the day.

I think it represents an ominous threat to all people who have up-to-date dealt with the Land Bank openly and honestly, and who have been, I think, by and large dealt with as fairly as possible by the Land Bank. It is an ominous threat indeed to the farmers of this province.

It says in the second last paragraph on page three, this pamphlet does, as follows:

When we become the government we will examine each Land Bank transaction carefully. Where a farmer was granted a legitimate lease, we will give him the opportunity to purchase the land at a reasonable price and on reasonable terms.

Mr. Speaker, what that statement by the Liberal Party is really saying to the farmers of Saskatchewan is that if the Liberals should be elected, each and every lease, each and every Land Bank transaction will be scrutinized by the Liberal Government, the Liberal Party of the day. It also says, Mr. Speaker, that not only will it be examined but where, quote, 'legitimate lease', whatever the words 'legitimate lease' means in the minds of the Liberal Party opposite — an opportunity will be given to purchase. But does this mean that where in the judgment of the Liberal politicians there is not a legitimate lease that opportunities will be denied?

Mr. Speaker, I say that this is indeed an ominous threat to the farmers of Saskatchewan. I say that, indeed, we have here a statement that if the Liberals should be elected to power every Land Bank transaction will be carefully scrutinized by the Liberal Party. I say that no farmer in Saskatchewan who has been dealt with fairly and legitimately by the Land Bank can be safe with the Liberal Party opposite. I say this principle of examination of leases by the Liberals opposite, with a view to determining what is legitimate in the eyes of the Liberal Party, represents a potential danger for flagrant violations of certain civil liberties of the farmers. I say that this statement by the Liberals, that they will examine all of these transactions, raises the spectre that farmers will have their leases cancelled for the first time on the basis of political determinations, if the Liberals opposite are elected.

Mr. Speaker, I tell the Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) that that is exactly what this statement says. It says that we will examine each Land Bank transaction. To the hundreds of farmers who have been involved with the Land Bank, this is a threat. Make no mistake about it. The farmers of Saskatchewan should be alerted that if the Liberals will be elected they will go on a

witch hunt with respect to Land Bank leases and I predict that all farm leases of the Department of Agriculture because once the principle is established, why should it stop at the Land Bank only.

The people of Saskatchewan are not used to that type of dealing with respect to their lands. I don't think they were used to that under the former Liberals. I don't think they are used to that under this Government. What the Liberals are saying in this document is that they are introducing a new principle whereby there is going to be an examination.

Mr. Speaker, I repeat, the people of Saskatchewan know whether the Land Bank has dealt as fairly as possible with them. I repeat, Mr. Speaker, those who have obtained leases will have everything to fear if ever the day should come that the Liberal Party opposite should be elected to examine the Land Bank leases.

Mr. Speaker, I can't accept that this is really what the Leader of the Opposition meant. I can't accept that the Liberal Party opposite have posed this type of a threat to the farmers of Saskatchewan. I don't believe that the Member for Moosomin (Mr. Gardner) who is a farmer himself, is a party to that kind of an open threat to the farmers of our province. I can't believe that he would allow the civil rights and liberties of individuals to be subject to that type of blatant accusation and threat.

Mr. Speaker, I am not even talking in terms of the Human Rights Commission in that context, I am just talking in a broad sense of human rights. I simply say, Mr. Speaker, no farmer in Saskatchewan will accept this type of an operation, I am convinced, by the Liberal Party opposite.

I regret very much that they have put out this position. I think we shall have to tell the farmers about it until such time as there is a change by the Liberals in their position ..

MR. WEATHERALD: — People won't believe you.

MR. ROMANOW: — I am tempted . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order!

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, that is all right.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! Will the Member for Cannington stand up if he wishes to speak.

MR. ROMANOW: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the Member for Cannington that when he talks of credibility, the Member and the Liberal Party in the Province of Saskatchewan are the last people who should be talking about credibility in this province. When you come down to the question of credibility, the people of Saskatchewan don't know where the Liberals stand, I tell the Member for Cannington, on any issue.

One day you say, on Bill 42 for example, you are all opposed to it and then on the other hand you say that we should have negotiated a better deal than Bill 42 allowed us to do in the

negotiating. You can't have it both ways. And with respect to the Land Bank when you argue, as the Liberal Party does, that it has to be Steuart or Slavery and you tell me that there is no credibility I tell you, you don't know what is going on in the Province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — When the Liberal Opposition says that this is an attempt to land grab by the socialists of Saskatchewan, you tell me that that is credible? You tell me that the Province of Saskatchewan believes that there is a dark conspiracy for Land Bank acquisitions.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — I am telling the Member for Cannington that he hasn't learned his lesson from 1971 and unless he does there is going to be a rude awakening for him in 1975 when it comes to credibility.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. ROMANOW: — I say, Mr. Speaker, I say to the Leader of the Opposition, I say to the Member for Morse, this is indeed a very ominous threat to the farmers of Saskatchewan. It is a threat that will come back to haunt the Member for Morse; it will come back to haunt the Member for Moosomin as well when he puts any kind of transactions — land transactions — on that basis of the Government of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think that the Liberals truly mean that and I am going to give them a chance to retract that statement and I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. P.P. Mostoway (Hanley) that **the Final Report of the Special Committee on Welfare be now concurred in.**

MR. H.E. COUPLAND (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, I want to say how much I appreciated the opportunity to act on this Committee. I am happy that the Committee saw fit to take time to go into the northern part of the Meadow Lake seat as well as other parts of the North, to see and understand what welfare conditions are up there, living conditions and so on. I think, Mr. Speaker, the Members of the Committee who came from the southern part of the province did get an eye opener and did learn that there was an area in Saskatchewan that was a lot different to what we are used to in the South, and I hope that some good will come of it.

April 19, 1974

Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the staff that worked with the Committee. They did a tremendous job in providing material and working papers for the Committee. And if it hadn't been for them I don't think that the Committee could have operated nearly as well as it did.

Mr. Speaker, I have a lot more to say and I had thought that the Member for Saskatoon was going to carry on this afternoon, so I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

FINAL REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BUSINESS FIRMS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. A.W. Engel (Notukeu-Willow Bunch) that **the Final Report of the Special Committee on Business Firms be now concurred in.**

MR. H.H.P. BAKER (Regina Wascana): — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to speak on this in regard to the Special Committee on Business and I appreciated being a member on this important Committee. I want to compliment the chairman who showed real dedication in piloting the activities of the Committee and the contents to a successful conclusion. I do that with all sincerity and the Member is a real credit to his constituency.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — In the main, each Member made his own contribution in the way they saw fit. At times one or two members appeared to be very obstructive. While there was disagreement on issues the results of this report, in most instances, deserve support.

It was nice to hear from Mr. Thibault, the Member for Kinistino, tell about the fine co-operation between Government Members and Opposition Members during their Safety Committee hearings. I wish I could say the same about our Committee.

There were some things that I wanted in the Report which I shall relate to later in my remarks. Since the inception of our Committee, and once meetings got under way and publicity was getting about, it seemed to put many departments of Government into action with resulting benefits to the Saskatchewan people. Such were longer periods of amortization on industrial loans; greater activity commenced in the field of smaller businesses; field business or regional representatives came out of our earlier meetings. Firm interest was shown and direction given in the matter of tourism and new Saskatchewan highway signs which I know will be beneficial.

Other decisions were made right along as information was gathered by our Committee. I could include the matter of selling licences in our northern districts. We advocated earlier about accelerating the building of all-weather roads into the North as stimulant for greater tourist activity. I was pleased that we created action and spurred on in many areas new innovations.

I am one who believes in the principle of don't leave things until tomorrow if they can be done today. This is what took place over the past 18 months.

Some of our thunder or the effectiveness of the Report has been taken away because of the recommendations already carried out, and this is good. SEDCO made major changes; the Department of Industry and Commerce has progressed both with marked speed in promoting industrial growth.

As our Report states from the many briefs and public meetings held throughout the province, it was evident that the level of activity and prosperity of the business community is directly related to the activity in the agricultural sector. Anyone who has lived in Saskatchewan is very much aware of the dependence of the business community on a vigorous agricultural industry.

The economic review of 1973 showed sustained expansion of the Saskatchewan economy, however, high transportation costs affect all the aspects of the economy of this province. Transportation is a significant part of the cost of moving Saskatchewan products to market as well as a major factor in the higher prices that Saskatchewan people pay for goods brought into the province. However, regulation of transport is divided. Inter-provincial and international movements by all modes as well as provincial rail traffic, is regulated by the Federal Government.

The Provincial Government regulates truck transportation within Saskatchewan. There is a need to provide improved truck services especially to those communities where rail service has been reduced or withdrawn. We know that the bulk of goods moving in and out of Saskatchewan are moved by the railway system. Therefore, we in Saskatchewan, cannot unilaterally effect changes in the most basic problems facing businessmen and the people of this province, namely, high transportation costs.

We found that the kinds of problems resulting from the decline in local rural business were evident in many briefs presented to this Committee. It is recognized that businessmen in cities also have problems. However, businessmen in the small centres are concerned with their very survival. Some included the trend to larger farms as reasons for deterioration. Financing seemed to be a main factor; housing for local residents in many areas was the cause of not attracting or holding tradesmen or even holding semi-skilled and skilled laborers.

Yes, obtaining financing was the problem voiced most frequently. The smaller firms stated that they have more difficulty obtaining both working capital and fixed capital financing than the larger firms. Other presentations requested assistance with inventory financing; establishing group purchasing or bulk buying operations, also for increased promotion of products made in Saskatchewan and obtaining timely information and statistics on which to base the results or decisions.

The Government was urged to provide better access to business; advisory and financial assistance services by establishing a regional office. It was discovered that the traditional financing institutions located in smaller centres, do not appear to be meeting the need for the more specialized financial requirements of small business, such as risk equity, working capital and inventory financing.

In the area of term loans for purchase of land, buildings and equipment, better services are available, especially in larger centres. But many businessmen felt that interest rates run reasonably high. Businessmen in smaller centres complained

April 19, 1974

that they had little information on the services offered by the Saskatchewan Economic Development operation and the Industrial Development Bank.

Our Committee views were that Government programs should be designed with greater emphasis on the provision of wider ranges of financial services to small business generally, but especially those located in smaller centres. More risk equity capital for new and expanding businesses should be made available and that more start-up capital for new business, particularly risk capital, be made available in greater abundance.

A number of presentations criticized the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation. The Committee considered the criticisms and found that they could be grouped into two general areas, the length of time to process loan applications and give advice to the applicants whether the decision is negative or affirmative; and access to its personnel and offices being inconvenient for people outside of this city.

In other words it boils down to indecision and procrastination on behalf of SEDCO. In other words, let's build a fire under them. I think we have done that already. Our Committee is of the opinion that the best way of ensuring that small loan applications are processed promptly is to make a specific group responsible for these types of loans.

The Department of Industry and Commerce should be in complete charge so that the small business assistance program administration provides for more prompt processing of small loan applications. The Department is to determine whether a separate small business loan agency is required or whether this activity could be performed within an existing agency. However, I advocate complete control by the Department of Industry, of all small loans and the small business agency.

We were told, based on the loan applications submitted to the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation or SEDCO and the Industrial Development Bank a ceiling of approximately \$60,000 would be satisfactory. If this is true it would direct approximately 55 per cent of all loan applications to the small business program.

I agree that the small business program should provide for decentralization, decentralized operations, including decentralization of small loans administration. The regional offices should have the authority to approve loans up to a specified ceiling, say, \$20,000. I agree that the regional small business offices should be located in the same building as the Department of Industry and Commerce, a business advisory service. Regionalizing services makes it easier for people to obtain information and counselling. Courses should also be provided for people who want to take over business operations, as owners or as managers.

The Committee considers that small businesses should be eligible for a graduated interest rate for loans. The lowest rate would apply to loans up to a certain level, perhaps \$60,000. The reduction in the interest rate results in a subsidy that is equal to the cost of administering these loans. I agree that the small business program should provide up to 90 per cent of financing from provincial sources. The 90 per cent should include both equity and working capital requirements. It is worth

repeating a portion that is in the report on finances for business:

As an alternative to Provincial Government Agencies providing the financing directly the area of Government guarantees for loans should be explored. It has been brought to the Committee's attention that obtaining financing — both fixed and working capital — is the greatest problem faced by smaller businesses. When the loans are made it is desirable that the loaning agency be able to review the day to day transactions of the borrower. The agencies in the best position to do this are credit unions, banks and similar financial agencies. Because credit unions and banks often are in the same community they are better able to assess the ability of the business management. To encourage these agencies to provide more of the fixed and working capital loans the Provincial Government should guarantee up to 90 per cent of the amount of the loan. The loan institution administering the loan would be expected to assume a good part of the risk. Requiring the local firm to assume part of the risk should help to ensure that the operations of the borrowers are continually monitored to keep the loan in good standing.

I agree totally to the underwriting of loans by the Government to private and public lending institutions. I agree fully with the recommendations such as, that the Government actively promote a road assistance program for existing tourist establishments and the development of new facilities in areas having tourist potential by means of loans for expansion and upgrading of existing facilities or construction of new ones; and in providing working capital loan guarantees in providing direct grants for forgivable loans to encourage development of tourist facilities in areas with relatively few other job opportunities. I agree with the Committee recommendations for the establishment of a central registry for all major events in the province. This could avoid a lot of duplication and error if this was done on a provincial basis. The Committee also recommends greater promotion of tourist facilities by means of highway signs which indicate the facilities available.

I agree fully with the Committee's recommendation on highway relocation. Where possible highways should not bypass towns. Whenever towns are bypassed convenient turn offs and good access roads should be provided and consideration be given to contributing to the relocation expenses of business where severe financial distress results from the relocation of a highway.

I agree with the Committee's recommendation that priority be given to the improvement of the major tourist roads into the North. We should borrow money now to accelerate the program and build these roads to encourage and facilitate tourists and tourists coming in.

The Committee recommends that outfitters be assured of a reasonable share of hunting licences. This should be followed up with dispatch. The Committee considered it desirable to have Saskatchewan hunting and fishing licences as sold only in Saskatchewan by Saskatchewan businessmen. The exception to the practice presently occurs only in communities straddling a provincial border. A number of these types of communities are

April 19, 1974

small but even so the Committee considered the subject worthy of comment and corrective action.

I support this program most vehemently. This promotes business locally. The same principle applies to preferences in contract letting and even in the slogan of 'Buy Saskatchewan'. I agree in the Committee's recommendation that Saskatchewan hunting licences, as I said earlier, fishing licences, to be sold only in Saskatchewan.

The Committee's recommendation on government purchases must be carried out. Let it be the policy of the Provincial Government to purchase Saskatchewan manufactured products. This is a must. Government departments should be required to justify before the Public Accounts Committee making purchases outside the province where the same product or products of an equivalent nature are made in Saskatchewan. In other words let's live up to the slogan of 'Buy Saskatchewan'. Let preference be given to Saskatchewan manufacturers for those products for which neighboring provinces give a preference to their manufacturers.

The manner in which wholesalers operate should also be checked and reviewed. It appears that some wholesale firms are selling directly to the public. The Committee's recommendation is a good one, that firms which sell directly to the general public be prohibited from calling themselves wholesalers or factory representatives. This causes a great deal of trouble. It is unfair to retailers who do not have wholesale facilities. There must be some demarcation regulations divorcing one from the other.

Referring to store hours which I am very keenly interested. There are legislative provisions for regulating hours of work and payment of overtime. However, it was considered desirable also to recommend that the Government introduce a compulsory two-day closing period for all retail stores in this province. Two consecutive days off would allow retailers and management the opportunity to enjoy a weekend in a manner comparable to that enjoyed by most other employees. Some types of business such as restaurants, service stations and confectionery stores, as we all know would no doubt have to stay open if they choose to do so. Regina likes its Monday closing. The brief from the city of Saskatoon from the retailers is really begging for the same thing. They are begging and asking for the same thing. They presented some excellent briefs to support their request. Monday closing does away with staggering of staff; it gives more permanent employment; it gives better services to the public with trained permanent people; it gives management a break too. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that a Bill will have to be brought to accommodate our urban centres. When I speak of a two-day weekend, we had requests from smaller centres. Some wanted Saturday off, many of them have Wednesday or half-day Wednesdays now. I would say give them a choice. The Bill should be so worded that they either have Sunday, Monday or Saturday, Sunday. The city of Regina is very pleased with its Monday closing and I want to say that I share it with them and I had a great deal to do with it.

We also agreed to monitor the construction industry to ensure that projects receiving provincial assistance are tendered in a manner that ensures Saskatchewan contractors have the opportunity to bid. This is one of the points that I wanted

included in this report. I was voted down. I believe in local preference for local contractors and the other related industries. These should be put on a sliding scale, a percentage sliding scale, depending on the size of the contract. Where the spread is too wide then of course you have to look at it. We have practised this policy for years and in the city of Regina it has worked. Why should our people locally be put out of work if we are dealing with contracts that may be in some other province and the spread be so slight? If it's a wide spread you can't say that it is the right thing to do, but if there is a slight spread, a percentage spread that you could set up as a scale to be used in all communities, this is what would help create work in our local communities.

I support wholeheartedly the Committee's recommendation on innovation. That a development agency be created for the purpose of searching out and developing products, processes and servicing. That the development agency be a funding agency with a number of permanent staff. The criteria to be used for determining which development projects are to be supported should include overall viability, markets, job creation in Saskatchewan and use of Saskatchewan material. The development agency should be responsible not only for development of ideas but also to ensuring that the ideas go into commercial production. In other words here we are speaking of patents. I think our patent plans in Canada, the way it is operated through the federal agencies is a poor one. We've got to get into it on a provincial basis. Yes, work with the federal office, but we've got to be prepared to back the inventors and the patent people with some financial assistance, with some real bucks in other words to promote things that our people invent and that come up with new ideas that are just as good as in any part of this country or the world. Here the Department of Industry and Commerce should develop an organization capable of carrying out the above recommendation.

Our Committee recommended that consultation be initiated with trucking firms serving rural areas to determine ways of improving the level of service. And that the Provincial Government consider extending the services of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company to include trucking services as well to rural areas if adequate services are not presently available. Smaller passenger buses should be looked into also for passenger transportation.

I strongly recommend that greater emphasis be placed on all types of job training programs and smaller centres in rural areas be provided with more subsidies for on-the-job training programs. We must provide courses in our schools for those who want to take a business training for ownership or managers for business enterprise.

MR. STEUART: — Hear, hear!

MR. BAKER: — I'm glad that you support this, Mr. Leader of the Opposition. I presume you will support the complete report too.

Our universities, of course, should also be called upon to fill this need as well.

Mr. Speaker, our Report is one of which, if carried out, will give Saskatchewan the impetus to move ahead in the

industrial and business field. In all communities, particularly with emphasis on smaller communities which means their survival. Again I am pleased to have been part of this outstanding Committee and to be a part of pulling together one of the finest Reports that has ever come out for small businesses, for the survival of our communities, whether they be small or large. I am sure the results are already being felt for the Department of Industry has already been carrying out great expansion.

And I hope that SEDCO gets on the move and wherever we went we had tremendous complaints against SEDCO and I have complained myself. So I hope that we have built a fire under them to do things too and become active. I think the small business field should be left in the hands of the Department of Industry and Commerce, separate and apart from SEDCO, dealing with loans up to a certain figure. I think it will work and I think it will be a great inspiration to business generally and will do much for the Province of Saskatchewan from the economic standpoint.

I am pleased to support this Report. While there were one or two things I wanted in, in the main it is a good one and again I commend the Committee members. As I say although we didn't agree all the time on every issue, each one did contribute something, and again I compliment the Chairman for doing a fine job.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. J.G. LANE (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, it is with some pleasure I join the debate on this particular Report of the Intersessional Committee on Business. It is unfortunate that some of the Members opposite and in particular the Chairman insisted on his usual approach of getting personal about the particular matter because we will prove to this House and to the people of Saskatchewan that this was strictly a political operation on the part of the Government, there was partisan politics played right through it and that certain Members of the Government abused their privileges as Members of the Legislature.

I would think, Mr. Speaker, that if we were able to find a list of the dates of the NDP caucus meetings for the duration of the Business Committee that we would find a very strong correlation between dates that meetings of the Business Committee were held. And it is probably the only Intersessional Committee that was based, not on the convenience of the members as a committee and what the goals of the committee should be, but in reality paying the expenses of some of the Government members so that they could come in to NDP caucus meetings which happened to be scheduled on the same day. Probably the highest percentage of any intersessional committee with two hour meetings, whereby members would come in and a meeting would be scheduled and all of a sudden at 12 or a quarter after 12, "Well we've got to finish up today because we've got a caucus this afternoon." I am willing to venture that a look at this Return No. 129 as tabled listing the expenses submitted by members of the Committee would prove once and for all that there were an awful lot of abuses by Government members. I'm just going to take a run through of some of the individual expense cheques that were submitted and again this is Return No. 129.

The total amount expended directly on members themselves was \$42,000. This is for the Intersessional Committee on

Business, a very substantial sum, and nobody on that side of the House understands business, if their costs are accepted. It would be the biggest waste of money in the history of the Province of Saskatchewan.

I am going to start with the most reasonable member on the Government side and that is H.H.P. Baker, who took a very rational approach, a reasonable approach, and his record of attendance I understand was excellent, I'm not being critical in any way ..

MR. STEUART: — He didn't have anything else to do.

MR. LANE: — It is very interesting, Mr. Baker's account was \$2,087.53. Then we get into the Member for Saskatoon City Park, Mr. Dyke, \$3,186.46. Now we get to the Chairman, who did very well on this really intersessional committee of the NDP caucus, whose account came in at \$4,453.26. The Member for Gravelbourg (Mr. Gross) is next on the list and he came in slightly under the Chairman, he came in at only \$4,283.33. There was some criticism of the Liberal members and perhaps it would be the proper time to say what the Liberal members' accounts were. One J.G. Lane - \$1,520.63. One D.F. MacDonald - \$1,767.71. We then take the interesting increase of one W.A. Robbins - \$2,285.24. He obviously had to be appointed to the Cabinet to recover his losses that he didn't keep up with the other Members of the caucus.

Members opposite can criticize us as individuals but our contribution on that Business Committee was at least as great as any individual Member on the other side of the House and probably, if this was not a political Committee as it was made by the Chairman and some of the other Members opposite, our contribution would have been considerably greater.

AN HON. MEMBER: — The greatest waste of time in the history of the province.

MR. LANE: — It is very, very interesting that the number of ideas that were presented in the final report came not from the public but from the Industry and Commerce Department or the political arm of the New Democratic Party itself as they were presented to some of the Members opposite.

Business reps. Business reps didn't come up once in the Committee at the request of the public, but Members opposite were told to get some party hacks scattered around the country and so they had to do it through Industry and Commerce. That was one department where there were no party hacks out carrying the party program to the public, so they had to have a business rep program. Not requested by the public, not requested by any of the people that presented briefs, it was strictly a recommendation of Committee members and in fact was rushed through so quickly by the interim report that there was no question but the suggestion for business reps came from the Cabinet itself, through the Chairman of the Business Committee. It is very interesting about the political appointments of the business reps, a Waffler appointed a business rep at Weyburn through the

April 19, 1974

approval of the Members opposite. It was very unfortunate that that approach was taken by some of the Members opposite on the Business Committee.

The Chairman of the Committee has criticized the Liberal Members for saying we were playing politics and we didn't want the Report tabled until after the Lakeview by-election. I think if television would have been covering the meetings the utter panic of the Chairman that he had to go through when he found out two days before the Lakeview by-election, that in fact there was no Business Start program even in the recommendations. And it wasn't the Government Members who brought that to the attention, it was the Liberal Members who made it clear that in spite of the fact of what they had been saying about a Business Start program, one didn't exist until it was called to the attention by the Liberal Members and in fact, the Business Start program was brought to the Committee at the very end of the Committee itself.

It is very unfortunate. We talked about Business Start right from the word go because somebody in the Committee, I believe the Member for Gravelbourg wanted to have something catchy like FarmStart. But there was no program and the Members opposite know full well that there was no practical Business Start program until the last two days when it was brought to the attention that there was no program and it merely had some suggestions under an umbrella name.

It was very interesting on the BisStart or BusStart, whatever we call this thing, that we just somehow after all the money we spent on the Committee used the same criterion of money as FarmStart. There wasn't one input into how we got that figure and what the ramifications of the use of the FarmStart criterion for the Business Committee in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Where did they get that figure? It was asked time and time again, no answer was given, it was purely used to integrate the name with that of FarmStart and probably it may have no relevance to the business community of the Province of Saskatchewan.

There was no study on the ramifications of the use of those figures by the Members opposite. It is very unfortunate as I say, that the Members opposite accuse the Liberal Opposition of playing politics, as I say there was probably no more political committee paid for by the taxpayers in the Province of Saskatchewan than this particular Committee.

I will have more to say on this debate, we will have the evidence to show the attendance, the fact that there was no Business Start program until it was brought to the attention of the Members opposite. They were in such a hurry to get this printed before the Lakeview by-election that they forgot the details and didn't look seriously into what they had proposed. I will have some more comments and beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AND SAFETY

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Thibault (Melfort-Kinistino) **that the Progress Report of the Special Committee on Highway Traffic and Safety** be now concurred in.

MR. F. MEAKES (Touchwood): — Mr. Speaker, last day when I adjourned debate all I really had done was to say that I was happy to support this motion. I talked about what I thought was a good job done by the Chairman. I thanked the staff and I had complimented the members of the Committee and I want to reiterate that it has been an excellent Committee to work with, our relationships on both sides of the House were the very best. I certainly have enjoyed working with them. I also want to give credit to the news media for the coverage that they gave of all the public hearings that we had, the briefs. I believe because of the fact that there has been a special committee sitting because of the good work of the media, the people of this province are more aware of the very complex problems of traffic safety.

Mr. Speaker, when we began our studies it didn't take us very long to find out how complex the problems of traffic safety are, and that answers are not easy to find. We agreed to have the three E committees, that is Education, Engineering and Enforcement. These committees were set up, but up to now we have operated as one committee.

I want to point out also, Mr. Speaker, that in our Committee Report there are definite recommendations. I think it was agreed by all of us that we shouldn't do that, that we shouldn't tie ourselves down, although all of us had some things in mind that we are fairly sure that we shall recommend, we thought we shouldn't tie ourselves down until the final report.

As the Chairman said we had 71 briefs presented to us, plus hundreds of letters from organizations and individuals. I am inclined to agree with my hon. friend from Whitmore Park (Mr. Grant) when he says that the great majority of people in Saskatchewan are not basically excited about traffic accidents. If it hits close to home, if it is in your family, or a close friend, or if it is in your community, we feel bad about it for a few days and we forget about it. But I do think that we must as legislators have a responsibility, and as legislators we cannot and must not stand by, we must do something to try to stop this slaughter on the highways.

Our staff has been gathering data from around the world. We travelled to Phoenix, Arizona to study their Alcohol Safety Aid Plan, dealing with driving while intoxicated, which I hope to talk about later on. All in all we have gathered a lot of information and data. This information we believe will be useful to us in drawing up a final report. A report that must be meaningful and useful in bringing about more peace on our highways.

I admit, Mr. Speaker, that I had many preconceived ideas, when we started. Many of those ideas have already gone by the board. I believe that most other Committee members were the same.

But there is one thing that I have always believed and I still believe, I don't think anything will ever change it. That I am convinced that a driver's licence is a privilege and not a right. I think that we must face this and I don't know how we are to get our society to accept that. It is a privilege that I enjoy to drive a vehicle on a highway and that it is not my right. I know that when we were in Phoenix, they told us that that was a problem with so many of their people; they felt it was a right and not a privilege.

Early on it was suggested by our Chairman that each one of the Committee might attend a session of the traffic court. I am going to have quite a bit to say about this and I want to start off by saying that I believe all our judges are dedicated, all of them are overloaded with work, and under the circumstances they are doing as capable a job as society can expect. Yet having said that I cannot help but feel that the traffic court is in many ways inadequate. I would like to quote, Mr. Speaker, from 17 of our new document. These are some of the suggestions, some of the thoughts that we got from different people.

10. Revisions in Court Procedures

10.1 The Traffic Court system is an important and integral element of any comprehensive, total approach to engendering traffic safety. It must serve to strengthen and reinforce responsible conduct, to correct and modify irresponsible behaviour, and to provide a clear guide to all citizens.

10.2 The Committee is of the opinion that, despite the highest commitment and the most earnest efforts from our judiciary, the courts are not functioning as they should be. There exists a system of procedures and penalties that neither persuades change by educating, nor compels change by means of effective penalties. Instead there is a system of "supermarket justice" which, as the Members of the Committee have observed at first hand, processes the average case through the court in a matter of seconds.

May I stop at this point to talk about what I saw in court. Thirty-four cases, two of them pleaded not guilty. Thirty-two cases processed in 31 minutes. I don't think that in light of that first paragraph that I just read that this kind of a court system will serve to strengthen and reinforce responsible conduct. Quoting again:

10.3 The Committee is examining a number of measures which would be designed to utilize our courts in persuading people and in educating them to better govern their own actions or to more strongly compel that undesirable and irresponsible conduct be modified.

(i) Recommendations have been received urging that the Committee recommend upward revision of the schedule of fines and penalties, and that the presiding judge be given a greater power in suiting the magnitude of the penalty to the circumstances and severity of the offence.

(ii) It would appear that the system of voluntary payments for moving violations contributes to a feeling by the offender that this offence is merely a nuisance matter, and that this consideration outweighs the possible benefits of streamlining the court system and speeding up the payment of fines. The voluntary payment system may have to be abolished.

(iii) The Committee has received representations that fines be done away with entirely and that there be substituted a system of points for each offence as is the present practice in British Columbia. Jail sentences and licence suspension would be penalties for persistent and intractable offenders.

(iv) The Committee is, in particular, considering how the courts may be employed to educate those passing through them, so that the experiences of a person in court would be positive, useful and persuasive rather than a mere unpleasantness to be gone through and forgotten as soon as possible.

We have had many suggestions on what to do with those people who got involved in another accident while already suspended. I want to quote again from page 16:

9.2 There is no doubt that the suspended driver is involved in accidents, and particularly in fatal accidents at a disproportionate rate. One out of every 15 drivers involved in a fatal accident was under suspension but far fewer than one in 15 drivers are suspended.

These people are an increasing problem, according to the statistics and to the evidence that we have placed before us. In one three car accident last summer, in which eleven young folks were either killed, or seriously hurt, two out of the three drivers were already suspended from driving. Although the Committee has made no clear recommendations yet on this, I, speaking for myself only, say that we must take these murderers off the road.

Mr. Speaker, I come back to the traffic court. In my opinion the traffic court should be a special court, separated from the other courts. If our courts are to be meaningful weapons to rehabilitate those of our society, then I suggest that the voluntary payments for moving violations may have to be done away with.

Will Rogers, the great American humorist, one whom I quote very often, once said, "One way to solve the traffic problem would be to keep all the cars that are not paid for off the streets. Children could then use the streets for playgrounds."

It seems to me that our courts are overloaded. Our judges are dedicated people, who endeavor to judge each as charged, according to the law of the land and in the light of the evidence, with the crush of the traffic court being associated with other court duties in many areas of the province, I am of the belief that it will be necessary to have separate courts especially for traffic, and judges especially trained to deal with traffic violators. I want to re-state that this is not criticism of our present judges, but rather a criticism of the system under which they must operate.

April 19, 1974

It is clear to me that our present Vehicles Act must be completely revised. Presently it is a hodgepodge which when the Committee commenced, there did not exist any guide to the intricacies of the Act. Our staff compiled an index which has helped us. Various agencies, professionals and experts who appeared before us all expressed the same view.

Very early in our studies the statistics brought to our attention showed very clearly that a large percentage of accidents and deaths were caused either directly or indirectly by alcohol. Death and accident rates are now steadily rising. In my opinion, Mr. Speaker, this murder on the highways and byways of our province is outrageous. In my opinion, shooting someone is no worse than killing someone with a car, through drunkenness or careless driving.

Our studies of the ASA Plan operating in Phoenix, Arizona, were worthwhile. They are attempting to catch the drunken driver before he is involved in an accident. If found guilty of having over .1 of alcohol in his or her system then they must take a four week course which endeavors to change the attitude of the driver to drinking while intoxicated. I am hopeful that in our final report we may be able to propose a program that might be appropriate to Saskatchewan and its citizens.

I was impressed with the program carried on in Phoenix. It is an experimental program, being one of nine in the whole United States which cost has been partly paid for by the United States Government. One of the other experimental areas is the State of South Dakota and presently the Committee has asked our staff to gather information on their program.

We as a Committee witnessed a demonstration that proved to me, beyond doubt, that the .08 law is too high. I'm convinced that anyone at .06 is not safe behind the wheel of any motor driven vehicle.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not saying that I'm in favor of lowering .08 to .06 unless we are able to completely control the .08 before we lower it. Court figures show that after the so-called .08 law, there was an immediate decline in the number of fatalities. Gradually the effect of that law seemed to have less effect. Breath testing readings of drivers appearing in the courts are averaging .15 and individual cases as high as .27. Obviously, the initial effects of the .08 law is wearing off and an immunity has developed.

Each member of the Committee early last summer took a defensive driving course. I leave it to other members to express their views, but I believe all will agree with me that it was a good experience. I know that it did and continues to have a good effect on my driving. I have driven somewhere over a million and a quarter miles without an accident, without being ordered into traffic court and have considered myself a good driver, until I took the course. Now I find myself checking myself and finding myself doing wrong things. I am a better driver and I hope that all Members of this Legislature as a start will take the course as well.

I am convinced that traffic safety must be taught in our schools from kindergarten to Grade Twelve. I believe that every person obtaining a driver's license for the first time should be issued only a temporary license. After two years,

before obtaining a permanent driver's license, everyone should have to take the defensive driving course.

I agree with our interim report in regard to the suggestion made to us that seat belts be made compulsory. All statistics point to the use of them, to the advantage of using them and I agree. Australia, has had it now for a couple of years. As in Australia, there would have to be a good job of publicizing, to get our citizens in the mood. I believe it can and should be done.

Let me turn to the problem of involving and activating a comprehensive traffic safety program. The most important thing will be co-ordination. It is necessary because there are many agencies of government, as well as private institutions and organizations working separately on various parts of the program. I am glad to see this interest, however, co-ordination I believe, will be absolutely necessary to avoid duplication, to provide the greatest possible cost benefit, to minimize fragmentation and to make all programs comprehensive.

It is natural and even desirable, for enthusiastic and concerned agencies and people to drive towards an expansion of their own spheres of influence, but people who work in separation have the tendency often towards empire building and a multiplicity and scattering of effort. I am reminded of the duck hunters phrase 'flock shooting'.

It is easy already to see that various departments and agencies are endeavoring to stake out their areas, and claim some new areas. While I am happy to see their interest, I emphasize to the Government that there will be a real need to set up a co-ordinating agency which will have the power to sort out conflicts of interest, recognize the legitimate areas of interest and enterprise, and make sure to have a rational, co-operative and 'non pre-emphative' (sic) approach.

This Committee could and should provide for continued participation and input from the public. This co-ordinating committee must be at a high level, with power to have the final say. Otherwise we will find everyone going off in different directions, each doing, duplicating and each missing. I personally cannot over emphasize the importance of this committee, otherwise the murder will continue on our roads, and bodies will be scattered all over.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I emphasize the use of the word murder. And I have used it deliberately and I know that some people may object to the use of this, that I should use the word manslaughter or something else, but when I use that word, murder, I mean it, where in cases it was careless driving or drunken driving, I really feel that that person's taking of human life is murder.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing may I say, I look forward to the coming summer and the work with all of our Committee finalizing our report, so that the Government can forthwith act on making Saskatchewan roads and streets a safer place to travel on. It is a real pleasure for me, Mr. Speaker, to support this interim report.

MR. E.C. WHELAN (Regina North West): — Mr. Speaker, this Committee is a working committee because the Chairman insists on driving us pretty hard. Members of the Committee have become absorbed in the problem and, eventually, when the final report is written, I predict it will be complete, thorough and objective.

The secretary of the Committee, Merry Harbottle, the research assistants, Zenon Topuschuk and Merrilee Charowsky, have been working hard and co-operating fully with the members, above all, are thoroughly interested in the material and the representations that have been made to the Committee.

There are many areas the Committee is still studying and that are as yet unresolved. The interim report, we hope, will serve as a study document to excite the interest of those who are engrossed in traffic safety.

Thus far, many different organizations have appeared before us and many individuals have made representations. Without exception the representations have been sincere, sometimes motivated by the death of someone close to them in a traffic accident. This reminder, I suggest, serves as a challenge to the Committee members to present to the Legislature in the final report some very new and different approaches. Our one study outside the province in another jurisdiction where they are practising some techniques that are valuable was very worthwhile, but I am sure the intensive study we made of this project, — incidentally it is now continent-wide — changed the thinking of Committee members. Speaking of my own experience in this respect, I can say as a Committee member that some of the confirmed conclusions that I had regarding traffic safety, when the first Legislative Committee met, in '65 and '66, and as a result of sitting on that committee, some of the conclusions that I had developed were shattered after the visit we made to a jurisdiction in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, there is a federal act which provides that the Federal Government enforce safety standards for vehicles manufactured after January 31, 1971, which requires manufacturers to issue notices of defects in vehicles in a prescribed manner. The safety standards which have been issued for automobiles, buses, trucks, trailers, motor cycles and snowmobiles include those related to crash worthiness and environmental protection. Crash avoidance standards include those related to steering, braking, vision and tires. Crash worthiness standards include those related to glass, interior padding, bumpers, panels, side doors, roof crushing, seat belts and flammability of material used in upholstery, as well as exhaust emission and noise from the exhaust.

The Committee has met with the Federal Department of Transport which administers this legislation. There is a clear-cut indication that some of their research, some of the research incidentally which was done in the province of Saskatchewan and paid for by the Department of Transport, discovered defects. For instance, the university group under their jurisdiction discovered that a stone wedged in a steering mechanism of a certain make of vehicle locked the mechanism, prevented it from turning, and this resulted in death, and the recall of thousands of these vehicles.

Among the improvements suggested to the Committee by several groups is the use of new type lights which are many times more effective than the standard headlights on the present Canadian automobiles.

The need for a vehicle check regularly to spot mechanical defects is evident, as a defect when found, will, I am sure, prevent thousands of accidents.

In addition, we should have young engineers in university classes looking at new techniques that will develop every aspect of safety for the vehicle on the road. We are told, for instance, that the cost of a vehicle that would be protected in the side doors, and the bumpers, and in the roof in case of a roll-over, would be excessive and the car would be too heavy. Very recently, according to a news report, a Japanese company has produced a safety vehicle with these features that weighs approximately 2,500 pounds.

The whole area of recalls was reviewed by the Department of Transport representatives when they appeared before the Committee. One aspect of the procedure of recall by larger motor companies surprised us, jolted us; a recall notice is mailed only to the original owner. The Department of Transport advised us that more than one-third of the notices never reached the owner of the vehicle with the defect because the vehicle has changed hands. Meanwhile, the driver may be driving a vehicle that is hazardous, has a defective steering mechanism, defective brakes or defective exhaust system. It was suggested to the Committee by the Department of Transport representatives that the serial number on the vehicles that were defective, are registered on the vehicle registration form in each province. By holding up the relicensing every year until the defect is corrected by the company, we would be sure at least that the defect in the motor vehicle had been corrected.

The Committee has not yet talked to the motor companies, and we are hoping to call before us a representative of Ralph Nader's group to discuss approaches that we might take and recommendations that we might make to provide a vehicle that is less liable to get into an accident, and in which passengers are less liable to be injured if an accident occurs.

Since 1972 any vehicle in Saskatchewan manufactured after November 11, 1963 must be equipped with two seat belts in the front seat, and the Motor Vehicle Safety Act of Canada requires a seat belt in each passenger car, designated seating position, and the 1972 regulations require a warning system for every front seating position. This indicates in both federal and provincial governments a strong endorsement of the seat belt.

Mr. Speaker, last year, according to the information we have been given, in the Province of Ontario a private member introduced a bill urging that seat belts be compulsory for those occupying the front seats of automobiles. When the Speech from the Throne came down in the Ontario Legislature recently, it contained a prediction that legislation would be introduced in that province making the wearing of seat belts compulsory.

Recently, when the Ministers of Health for this country met, they indicated that seat belts would reduce injuries and save lives, and urged legislation for compulsory seat belts.

Over the whole North American continent there is legislation of one kind or another regarding seat belts. In a very recent issue of the Regina Leader-Post, March 28, 1974 to be exact, under a headline from Miami, Florida, the University of Miami researchers said that of 600 persons killed in automobile accidents in the past three years, one in nine were wearing seat belts. None of the 600 were wearing both belt and shoulder harness. Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, I have asked the secretary of the Committee to write the University of Miami to obtain complete details regarding their research project.

Slides presented to the Committee showing the shape of a man's head in a windshield, when he hadn't worn a seat belt, and been in a collision, together with the photograph of the injuries, shook the Committee, particularly when these were faces of people whose addresses were in the Saskatoon area.

In spite of the statement that people have been known to hang themselves in their seat belts, no one has yet been able to pin-point or present any evidence to substantiate what we believe this to be, a rumour and nothing more.

Mr. Speaker, the seat belt does two things, according to photographs and statistics presented to the Committee. It keeps the driver from being thrown about in the car on impact and, second, if the car moves off the road, it keeps him or her fixed behind the wheel so that he or she has a chance to steer the vehicle and perhaps prevent it from turning over.

One of the most pertinent arguments made for seat belts is the story of the bus driver who was going over the San Francisco bridge, following a truck loaded with large timbers. One of the timbers fell off the truck and caught the front wheel of the bus. This twisted the steering wheel quickly and flipped the driver out of his seat, and the bus plunged over the rail and everyone on board the bus, including the driver, was drowned.

In a study of 28,000 accidents in Canada it was revealed that none of the people in accidents wearing both lap and shoulder belts were injured at speeds up to 60 miles an hour, whereas without belts there were fatalities at speeds as low as 12 miles per hour.

Discussion of the risk of greater injuries without seat belts rests on the issue of their effectiveness. There are many studies to show a reduction of major and fatal injuries, but a recent study in Melbourne, Australia, where because of legislation, 75 per cent of the people wear seat belts all the time, shows that there has been a significant reduction in injuries. For instance their studies show and I quote:

- 300 per cent reduction in eye injuries
- 50 per cent reduction in chest injuries
- 40 per cent reduction in knee and hip injuries
- 30 per cent reduction in head injuries
- 33 per cent reduction in spinal injuries
- 50 per cent reduction in facial injuries.

Mr. Speaker, there is a feeling of fear when wearing a seat belt in case of fire or immersion in water. The record shows that fire occurs in two per cent and immersion in water in three per cent of all injuries in automobile accidents.

In 1972 Australia became the first nation to bring in mandatory seat belt legislation. In June, 1973 New Zealand followed her example. I am told that Great Britain is considering compulsory legislation if the present educational campaign fails. Compulsory seat belts are under consideration as well in at least 16 States of the United States. In five States there is mandatory use in certain vehicles such as school buses.

Although the use of seat belts has saved lives in Australia and New Zealand and reduced the severity of accidents, we shall have complete statistics, I hope, when the Committee makes its report as to this mandatory legislation in practice and as this experience continues.

It is our understanding that introduction of seat belt legislation in those countries was over a long-term period and there were many roadside checks before the legislation was introduced. The fines were light and now most of the people wear seat belts automatically.

Our Committee looks with interest on the profitable experience of Australia and New Zealand. Discussion with people from these countries leads one to believe that they fully appreciate the value and the need for legislation. However, there is a need for more simple and better designed seat belts. There is a need for a better designed and more realistic seat belt arrangement for children. The Committee will continue to study in the areas of motor vehicle design and compulsory seat belts. The need to take some action to improve the situation that exists in order that we may save lives, presents a challenge that, I am sure, every Member of the Legislative Committee is prepared to meet.

From information at hand, the presentations made by groups, what are some of the points that we can make regarding seat belts? What are some of the approaches that we might take? Well, we can insist by law that there will be a buzzer system that makes a terrible racket until the seat belt is buckled, and that the ignition will not operate until seat belts are fastened, and make it compulsory that the occupants in the front seat wear regulation seat belts.

These recommendations could be introduced after a full educational program, over a period of time, emphasizing the fact, the undisputable fact, that the program is introduced to save the life of the seat belt wearer. In respect to defects in motor vehicle design the Committee, again, has information at its disposal; recommendations and information that suggest as vehicle are made by human beings, there can be and there are sometimes errors in design and construction.

When identified and called back the vehicle with the defective part or defective construction would be unable to obtain a licence until the company had corrected the mechanical shortcomings. The possibility that engineering students would take as a special course in their studies, designed safety features in the construction of motor vehicles. Bursaries would be awarded to those making practical suggestions. Safety equipment would be ordered too, or could be ordered, or might be ordered for all publicly-owned vehicles, features such as the new type headlights. There would be compulsory mechanical checks of the vehicles; research of motor vehicle accidents to ascertain whether the assembly and manufacturing and engineering

April 19, 1974

of the vehicle was in any way responsible for the accident.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the areas where the Committee — and there are many areas and I have only touched on a couple of them — will make definite and specific recommendations. Whatever the recommendations, their acceptance will require public education. Public education will be provided, I am sure, by expenditure of public money. And we will need too, as we have had up until now, the co-operation of the media. To date they have worked well and effectively with the Committee.

In closing, let me say that this is the second Traffic and Safety Committee to which I have been named by this Legislature. The earlier Committee took some good, progressive steps in the safety field. This Committee, I predict, will be more direct and more precise and will make some recommendations that will be drastically different, because there seems to be a feeling among all members of the Committee that the deaths on our highways demand drastic action.

With this motivation and with this objective the Committee is working to develop a safety program that will reduce accidents and save lives. There are also some further points that I would like to raise to emphasize the need for this drastic action, Mr. Speaker, and therefore I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 24 — NATIONAL GRASSLANDS PARK IN SOUTHWESTERN SASKATCHEWAN

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. T.M. Weatherald (Cannington):

That this Assembly urge the Government of Saskatchewan to enter into negotiations with the Government of Canada and reach an agreement for the establishment of a national grasslands park in southwestern Saskatchewan.

And the proposed amendment thereto moved by the Hon. Mr. Kowalchuk:

That all the words after the word "Assembly" in the first line be deleted and the following substituted therefor:

commend the Provincial Government for continuing discussions with the Government of Canada respecting a grasslands park and for insisting upon recognition of the interests of the local people, including the farmers and ranchers directly involved, and of the people of Saskatchewan during the course of discussions and negotiations to transfer lands to the Federal Crown for the purposes of establishing the grasslands park.

Amendment agreed to.

The debate continued on the motion as amended.

MR. T.M. WEATHERALD (Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, I think that in speaking to this Resolution I just want to say that it is an extreme disappointment to find that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Kowalchuk) found it necessary to move an amendment. The Resolution, which was obvious to all Members, was quite a straightforward resolution just asking that negotiations on the grassland park be carried through.

I think what was of exceptional disappointment was the fact that the Minister attempted to put forward some extremely weak arguments which I would suggest to the Assembly, only proved that he is not very much really in support of the concept at all. I say this because he stood in his place and he told us that one of the great problems was negotiation of the mineral rights.

The Opposition suggested at the time that, in moving the Resolution, that we believe, and still believe, that the province should give up their rights to any minerals which are on that land and that if sometime in the future that negotiations or mineral development is necessary, that once more could the mineral rights revert to the province.

I fail to see any valid reason, Mr. Speaker, why this is not an acceptable compromise to go about establishing a grassland park. I think that the Minister, by indicating that the mineral rights question was a holdup, is indicating the dragging foot attitude of the Government opposite.

What was also quite surprising, I believe, to all of us in the Assembly was the apparent sensitivity of the Members that come from that area. All of a sudden they leaped to their feet saying that it was just an attempt to embarrass the Government, this idea of a grassland park. Well, it wasn't any such thing, Mr. Speaker. All it is is an attempt to get a discussion going because the Government has been dragging its feet for a long time on the national grassland park. I want to suggest to the Minister of Natural Resources and Members who come from that area, that they would be remiss not to call a public meeting in that area with federal officials present, and discuss the possibility of a grassland park.

The Member for Morse (Mr. Wiebe) made a very good presentation on what is of very extreme concern in that area today. He said that the farmers in that area simply have no concept whatsoever of what the Government opposite intends. It is largely a provincial responsibility. The province has the responsibility for that area currently and, of course, the Federal Government can do nothing without the acceptance of the province.

As it stands the responsibility for the grassland park, today, rests with the Province of Saskatchewan. But the Province of Saskatchewan has not been living up to its responsibilities. The Province of Saskatchewan simply wants to dilly dally around and do nothing and this is what the whole problem is with the people who live in the area today. The Member for Morse mentioned it very well in his presentation that the people living in that area simply don't know what the Province of Saskatchewan intends.

From this debate it appears to all of us, in listening to the Members who live in that area, and the Minister of Natural

April 19, 1974

Resources, that the Province of Saskatchewan doesn't intend very much except to wander around in the wilderness and wait for somebody else to do something.

What we want to suggest, and I say again that it is of extreme disappointment to see that the Government opposite has decided to move an amendment. All that we wanted was an indication from the Government that they are going to move ahead in the next months to come to some type of a decision to either proceed or not to proceed. That is quite a simple thing to be able to decide, that we should proceed or we shouldn't proceed. And since the responsibility largely rests with the Province of Saskatchewan there is no reason that we can't do that.

But the Minister tells us that the province has to negotiate for mineral rights. Well, the province doesn't have to negotiate for mineral rights. It wouldn't be very bad for the province to decide to let the mineral rights, on 360 square miles go, and to allow the mineral rights to go to the Federal Government and if there is mineral development some day in the future, well we could retrieve it.

We can't have all the best of all possible worlds of having mineral development and a grassland park, too. I am very suspicious that the Province of Saskatchewan is more interested in developing minerals than they are in the grassland park.

I think that this is the core of the disagreement that the Province of Saskatchewan is a lot more interested in the minerals out there than they are in making a park. We suggest, and we hope that now they will have an opportunity after some discussion in the Session here, to see that a decision and some programs should be made. Hopefully, a decision can be arrived at to either proceed or not proceed in the next few months.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great disappointment and I think all the people of the province want to see a grassland park, to see such an amendment moved. It was not intended to be an embarrassing resolution for the Government, it was simply intended to try to get some progress made in the right direction. I think what the discussion proved once and beyond all doubt, that the Government is not really interested at this particular time in a grassland park, but are mostly interested in wasting a lot of time.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the motion as it is now presented or amended by the Government.

Motion as amended agreed to.

RESOLUTION NO. 26 — GUARANTEED MONTHLY INCOME FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed Resolution by Mr. J.G. Richards (Saskatoon University):

That this Assembly calls for immediate government consideration of guaranteeing minimum monthly income levels for senior citizens of \$350 per individual and \$500 per couple; as recommended in the Report for the Senior Citizens' Commission.

MR. P.P. MOSTOWAY (Hanley): — Mr. Speaker, I am very interested in this Resolution moved and seconded by two Opposition Members. I am very interested because in a way this Resolution is similar to a resolution that I moved in this House last year.

You may recall that that particular resolution asked the Government of Canada, the Federal Government, to increase the old age security pension to \$125 monthly. It also called on the Federal Government to boost the guaranteed income supplement to \$325 for a single senior citizen and to \$375 for a married couple.

Mr. Speaker, the reasoning behind such a request was absolutely sound. It was sound because it can be easily proved that the citizens of western Canada and the Atlantic Provinces pay dearly to central Canada and the Federal Government because of their geographic location. They paid dearly through stifled economic development; freight rates that are too high and a host of other things. That these two geographic areas in reality subsidize central Canada can very clearly be shown. Then surely one way to help right this situation is for the Federal Government to give adequate purchasing power to our citizens and in particular, our senior citizens.

I say this because generally speaking Federal Government money is money collected or given it by those most able to pay whether they be individuals, business enterprises or provinces taken as a whole. At any rate, Mr. Speaker, an Opposition amendment to my resolution was introduced last year. The Opposition amendment asked that the Federal Government should not to asked to live up to its responsibilities to help our senior citizens. Needless to say this amendment was negated on an oral vote.

However, Mr. Speaker, then the vote on my resolution took place it was recorded. On looking through the record I find that last year the Hon. Opposition Member for Saskatoon University (Mr. Richards) voted in favor of my resolution calling on the Federal Government to live up to its obligations to our senior citizens. The vote was recorded on April 6, 1973.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what I should like to know is this: why did that Hon. Member, the Member of the Opposition from Saskatoon University — and I am sorry to see that he is not in the House at this time — why, did he last year call on the Federal Government to give more assistance to senior citizens?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Why don't you ask him?

MR. MOSTOWAY: — I guess we will have to if we can find him. Why does he now as an Opposition Member ask for the same assistance to come from the Provincial Government? Was he misguided last year, or is he misguided this year? Mr. Speaker, I don't know, but I do know there is inconsistency somewhere along the line.

Are you implying that he might be playing politics? I don't know. Mr. Speaker, surely last year's factors demanding more Federal Government assistance to our senior citizens have not changed. I believe the Member for Saskatoon University, one of the Opposition Members, has changed his position and this he has a perfect right to do. No one would deny him this right.

April 19, 1974

No one will deny him the right to change his voting pattern this year.

Mr. Speaker, I hope I have been able to refresh the memories of Members of this House. I am a firm believer in the refreshing of memories. I am a firm believer in bringing forth information that will be of value to Members of this House.

Mr. Speaker, as you can well see I am in favor of the Federal Government increasing old age security pensions to our senior citizens. I am also in favor of the Federal Government increasing the guaranteed income supplement to these same senior citizens. I am in favor of these increases because I feel that our senior citizens richly deserve them.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I just want to add a few words. The other day I read a little notice in the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, and it indicated that the Member for Hanley had decided that he was going to run in Saskatoon Centre. A few weeks prior to that I read an indication that the Member for Saskatoon University was going to run in Saskatoon Centre. Since that time on two occasions in the last three days, immediately following that particular news item the Member for Hanley has stood up and launched a personal attack against the Member for Saskatoon University. All I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether this is the proper place, the proper forum to launch a personal campaign for the next election by the Member for Hanley against the Member for Saskatoon University. I would suggest that if the Member for Hanley is interested in winning Saskatoon Centre, that he post a public meeting notice and he go up to Saskatoon and invite the Member for Saskatoon University to be present — and I am sure that the people of Saskatoon will be very interested in assessing the merits and demerits of either one of these two candidates.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that despite the efforts of the Member for Hanley and Saskatoon University that it will be the Liberal candidate that will win and I guarantee that he will win if the Member for Hanley continues a personal attack on this House to launch his election campaign in this particular form.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! I don't see anything on this Resolution pertaining to election of candidates. I would ask the Member to come back to the Resolution.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MacDONALD: — Mr. Speaker, I couldn't help but do it because it was the Member for Hanley and I was only responding to the original words in the debate and of course he was talking about the credibility of the Member for Saskatoon University and his changing his mind, and for somebody that is talking about changing his mind, I find that a very difficult comparison to make between him and the Member for Saskatoon University.

I have only one point to add on the Resolution. I think it is a good Resolution and what really disturbs me and must

disturb the people of Saskatchewan, is the complete denial by the Government of assuming or accepting any responsibility whatsoever for the old age or the senior citizens of Saskatchewan. The Attorney General got up the other night for 20 minutes on this Resolution and gave us a tirade about the fact that the Provincial Government of the NDP had absolutely no responsibility for senior citizens and the pensions of the aged.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed, I know that the Senior Citizens' Association is going to be disappointed. I should like to ask the Members opposite if they would like to return to Ottawa all the money that Ottawa gives to them for their responsibilities? Or perhaps just return a small portion, for example, in the field of welfare, in fact that is a provincial responsibility. Yet about five years ago the Federal Government passed what was called the Canada Assistance Act. They now provide something like \$40 to \$50 million each year for provincial government responsibility to look after the weak and the handicapped and the old and the aged in this province.

Medicare is another provincial responsibility. The Federal Government probably allocates to the people of Saskatchewan something in the neighborhood of over \$100 million for hospitalization and medicare that is completely a provincial responsibility.

But what is even more disturbing is that other provincial governments in the Dominion of Canada have accepted that the senior citizens in their provinces are their responsibility. I think of the NDP Government in the Province of British Columbia, in the Province of Manitoba, their own neighbors and their own kissing cousins. They don't say that this is a federal responsibility and that we will have absolutely nothing to do with the old people in the Province of British Columbia or the Province of Manitoba. In fact, Premier Barrett got up and he said, why spend your savings and your nest egg, we are going to look after you. Not the Federal Government in Ottawa but the NDP Government in the Province of British Columbia.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General and the Government of the NDP in Saskatchewan turn around and say that we don't want anything to do with the senior citizens in Saskatchewan, that is strictly a federal responsibility.

I want to say I am very disappointed. I should like very much to have the Premier listen to the debate and prior to the conclusion of this debate on this Resolution, stand up and express the desire to indicate to the people of the province and particularly the senior citizens, whether this is the attitude of his Government, as indicated by the Attorney General and the Member for Hanley and every speaker on that side of the House. Because I think that's a very serious policy statement that the NDP in the Province of Saskatchewan will have nothing to do with pensions for senior citizens because that is a federal responsibility. And that is what every Member of the NDP have stood on their feet and said about this particular Resolution. I think it is a shame because I do think that a provincial government has a responsibility and everybody on that side of the House knows that welfare, health are a provincial responsibility, not a federal responsibility.

April 19, 1974

So the Federal Government moved into these fields because of the inability of the provinces to finance these programs on their own. They accepted a portion of the responsibility. They accepted a large portion of the responsibility of financing these programs. That is the same with the pensions. Because the pension by constitution is a provincial responsibility and not a federal responsibility. And to have Members of that Government stand up and say, we deny it, it is a federal responsibility is a tragedy. I certainly hope that the expression of the Attorney General about the denial of responsibility will certainly be repudiated by the Premier. I am going to give the Premier an opportunity to sit and think about this Resolution. Therefore, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

SECOND READINGS

MR. E. WHELAN (Regina North West) moved second reading of Bill No. 70 — **An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Land Surveyors Act.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am advised that this Bill contains some routine but very necessary changes that are sought by the land surveyors and they can best be dealt with, I would think, by the Law Amendments Committee and therefore I move that Bill No. 70 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Land Surveyors Act be now read a second time and be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Law Amendments and Delegated Powers.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:12 o'clock p.m.