

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

November 27, 1980

This being the day appointed by proclamation of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated the seventeenth day of November 1980, for the meeting of the third session of the nineteenth Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan and the Assembly having met:

The Clerk informed the Assembly that he had received a communication, over the signature of his private secretary of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, stating I am advised by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to inform you that at 3 o'clock p.m. on Thursday, the twenty-seventh day of November he will open the third session of the nineteenth Legislative Assembly of this province.

3:01 p.m.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor was then pleased to open the session with the following speech:

MR. SPEAKER:

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

It is my privilege to welcome you to the third session of the nineteenth legislature of Saskatchewan.

On November 22, 1980, the people of Canada were saddened by the death of the former governor general of Canada, the Rt. Hon. Jules Leger. My government deeply regrets his death, but we remember with warmth and respect his courageous and dedicated life in the service of his country. We extend our sincere sympathy to Madame Leger.

In this Celebrate Saskatchewan year, my government looks back on a decade of sustained growth and prosperity for this province. As we enter the new decade, we find ourselves in the grip of national economic recession. We are faced with the need to devise new constitutional relationships to govern our country. We are faced with continuing social change and new social challenges. Saskatchewan's positive response to these realities reflects the developing strength and resilience of your economy, and the co-operative and progressive spirit of our people.

CELEBRATE SASKATCHEWAN

Two years ago, my government established a program called Celebrate Saskatchewan to co-ordinate and promote the activities marking our 75th anniversary as the province of Saskatchewan. Local governments, individuals, organizations, businesses, and Saskatchewan people throughout the province enthusiastically adopted the program.

We were honoured to have Her Royal Highness, the Princess Margaret, tour our province, and to have both the Governor General of Canada and the Prime Minister of Canada take part in our official ceremonies in September.

During 1980, over 870 communities held special events recognizing our heritage,

celebrating our present, and reflecting on our future. In total, some 3,100 Celebrate Saskatchewan events have taken place.

Our 75th year as a member of confederation has been memorable. My government is pleased with the renewed sense of pride our people have acquired – as Saskatchewanians and as Canadians. In recognition of this anniversary and as a tribute to our pioneers, we will construct a new provincial archives building in Regina. This building will be an important addition to Saskatchewan's cultural and educational scene.

RENEWED CANADIAN FEDERALISM

Our constitution has been the centre of attention and debate by Canadians and their representatives during 1980. Early this year, the people of Canada decided to change their federal government after a short term in office. The historic Quebec referendum following in May, and the people of Quebec decisively demonstrated their desire to remain Canadians. My government participated in the efforts of the ministerial committee and the first ministers toward a renewed Canadian federation.

We believed this national debate should centre on what it means to be a Canadian. We participated in this debate in the traditional Saskatchewan spirit of co-operation. My government put forth its view that changes to the British North America Act and any new constitution must reflect both national and regional interests and concerns.

It was with deep regret that my government noted the action of the federal government toward unilateral changes to the British North America Act. Our position has been consistent. Constitutional change should be the product of consensus among governments in Canada. We have no doubts about the vitality of Canada. We have no doubts about the ultimate strength of the ties which bind us together as Canadians. The positive response to our approach from people in Saskatchewan and across our nation confirms our optimism about our future.

The federal government's unilateral action further divides rather than unites Canadians. It causes more discord, not less. Rigid opposition to the unilateral action holds no promise for the consensus Canadians are seeking. In view of these facts my government chose to work for real changes in the federal resolution.

My government must report that not all the essential changes we have sought have been forthcoming. While the federal government has shown some flexibility we do not have agreement on the specific wording of essential changes respecting ownership and control of resources, equalization, and an amending formula.

My government pledges itself to continue to press for needed changes in the federal resolution. The cost of failure is too great to abandon negotiation without exploring every avenue, without seeking every solution, in the quest for consensus. Should our efforts fail to achieve essential changes, my government will have no option but to oppose the federal resolution.

THE ECONOMY

Canada is currently undergoing a period of serious economic recession. In 1980, our nation will experience the first absolute fall in real gross domestic product in a quarter of a century. The national economy has failed to provide jobs for the 765,000

unemployed in Canada.

In contrast to the national scene, Saskatchewan's economy will show modest real economic growth in 1980. Saskatchewan's unemployment rates remains among the lowest in the country. Saskatchewan's population reached an estimate 970,000 person on July 1, 1980, its highest level ever.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL AFFAIRS

In response to serious drought conditions experienced in the spring and early summer, my government implemented a major drought relief program to assist in the movement of fodder and the development of water resources.

My government received excellent co-operation from municipal reeves and councils. The reeves became the drought chairmen for each municipality, supplying information on fodder deficiencies and surpluses throughout the province. The reeves brought buyers and sellers in each municipality together while the Department of Agriculture co-ordinated such contacts between municipalities.

The success of this program was a convincing demonstration of the co-operative spirit and tradition at work in Saskatchewan, joint local community and provincial action to solve problems.

With the help of July and August rains, grain crop production in 1980 will exceed last year's level in volume with some reduction in quality.

We have witnessed this past year the continuation of the attack begun several years ago on western agriculture's deal with confederation – the crowrate.

My government believes that there are constructive ways to cover the legitimate costs of the railways while still preserving the crowrate for western farmers. We will continue to put forward proposals which can accomplish both objectives.

Saskatchewan's farmers did receive encouraging news this summer with the announcement that Canada attained record grain exports in the 1979-80 crop year. My government's 1,000 grain hopper cars are expected to come on stream over the coming months, and we will continue our efforts to increase the level of exports.

It was also gratifying to note that, through the continued efforts of my ministers and community groups throughout Saskatchewan, more than 1,000 kilometres of prairie railway branch lines were placed under protected status, making these lines eligible for upgrading.

Following federal-provincial discussions over the past year, the national government has moved closer to an effective hog stabilization plan for Canada. Efforts will be intensified in this coming year to achieve effective national plans for both hogs and beef.

You will be asked to consider amendments to The Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Act, The Farm Security Act, The Stray Animals Act, and the Rural Municipality Act.

QUALITY OF LIFE

My government has received a comprehensive report on the state of cultural activities in the province. Building on the success of Celebrate Saskatchewan and the obvious interest of Saskatchewan citizens in enriching their culture, my government is reviewing the document and moving toward implementation of some of the recommendations.

Saskatchewan people will continue to enjoy greater participation in leisure activities. My government is taking action which will help our provincial parks respond to the emerging interest in fitness and healthy lifestyles. To meet a growing demand, my government will develop new year-round facilities in these parks.

Many of these new developments have been funded by the Saskatchewan Heritage fund – an excellent example of resource revenues being used to improve the quality of life for Saskatchewan people.

This year my government will begin action to preserve unique wilderness areas for the benefit of future generations. A major initiative to preserve heritage resources in this province. The Heritage Property Act, will be proclaimed tomorrow. The act provides for the sharing of responsibility for heritage conservation between the province and municipalities. Government House, a restored provincial heritage property in Regina, will be open to the public in 1981.

EDUCATION

My government will take a number of new initiatives this year to improve our educational system by making it more flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the communities it serves.

One of my government's urban native initiatives, the community schools program was successfully introduced this year in Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Regina. This program will be expanded for the next school year.

With native people, educational institutions, unions and employers, the Department of Continuing Education will start a native career development program. You will be asked to consider amendment to The Education Act to strengthen the right of all children, regardless of circumstance, to a tuition – free education. Provision will be made for the introduction of the division system for the election of school boards in Regina and Saskatoon.

One of every five adults in Saskatchewan has enrolled in some form of adult education. My government will continue the development of an integrated system of accessible adult education.

To meet the challenges of rapid scientific and technological changes in our society, my government will undertake a major study to develop policies incorporating new developments in these fields in our educational and research programs.

Amendments will be introduced at this session to The Association of School Business Officials of Saskatchewan Act, The Community Colleges Act and The Student Assistance and Student Aid Fund Act.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES

1981 has been designated as the International Year of the Disabled. Saskatchewan is a leader in services to the handicapped and in preparation for this important year, my government established a task force to collect broadly – based advice on future needs in the field. This report will be made available to the public for review and comment.

In day care and the care of elderly citizens, attention will be given both to new and improved delivery services.

You will be asked to pass a new dental therapists act replacing the existing Dental Nurses Act.

Amendments to The Department of Health Act, The Change of Name Act and The Registered Nurses Act will also be placed before you.

THE NORTH

During the last season, my government introduced The Environmental Assessment Act to formalize one of the most rigorous review processes utilized in North America. This symbolized my government's strong commitment to the need for reviewing both the environmental and socio-economic impacts of new developments in any area of Saskatchewan, a tradition well established with the Churchill River, the Poplar River, the Nipawin and Cluff Lake boards of inquiry. We will continue to implement measures to ensure local participation in the opportunities arising from approved development projects. My government has completed initial consultations with northern local governments in order to create a regional government structure with greater local autonomy.

A northern municipalities act is being prepared. A detailed proposal for reorganization of municipal government in northern Saskatchewan will be available soon for public review.

The Department of Northern Saskatchewan recently opened a large repair depot and will be developing a training centre complex in Buffalo Narrows. Northerners will use this complex to develop equipment repair, mining and industrial skills.

The Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development and the Department of Northern Saskatchewan will enhance the role of co-operatives in northern Saskatchewan. You will be asked to consider amendments to the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development Act and The Credit Union Act.

RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION

My government has overseen an extremely successful period in the mineral resource field through 1980. We are committed to the orderly development of our valuable resource base in keeping our objectives of new economic opportunities and a fair return to the people of the province.

Major growth is slated for the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan facilities in Allan, Lanigan, and Rocanville. Recently, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan announced the preliminary stages of the development of a new mine at Bredenbury, east of Melville. Such expansions will employ local residents and provide large

economic opportunities for Saskatchewan business.

The outlook for the development of our energy resources has been severely clouded by the recently announced national energy program of the federal government.

The federal budget included severe taxes, an oil pricing policy which will inhibit oil drilling activity, and few specific measures to achieve Canadianization of the oil industry. We regret the approach taken by the federal government on these matters. My government, through its Crown corporation, SaskOil, will increase its level of activity. We will press hard for renewed negotiations to arrive at an energy program that will better serve the national interest.

My government intends to introduce certain changes to The Oil Well Income Tax Act which will clarify and streamline the tax system.

Conservation and related research are priority topics with the government. Saskatchewan is leading Canada in home insulation programs and in solar and passive-solar projects.

To encourage energy conservation and technological advancement in the area of renewable energy, the governments of Saskatchewan and Canada signed an \$18 million agreement for renewable energy and energy conservation demonstration. Several projects have received approval for funding under this agreement. The energy show in Saskatoon was an unqualified success.

JUSTICE

Last year, the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan brought down its final report on proposals for reform of The Jury Act. the commission recommended sweeping changes to the method of selecting and compensating jurors in Saskatchewan. This session my government will bring forward a new jury act.

Amendments to The Police Act will be placed before you which will permit a municipality to increase the number of members on the board of police commissioners from three to five.

The Department of Northern Saskatchewan will undertake new programs for corrections in the North. As an alternative to sending northern offenders south to the Prince Albert Correctional Centre, the department has developed a northern corrections program. Two community residential centres and a bush camp will be built to accommodate northern offenders. These centres will be staffed mainly by Northerners trained through a DNS program.

Amendments will be sought to The Land Titles Act and The Provincial Court Act.

TRANSPORTATION

My government recognizes that urban transit in major cities is a basic service. Transit will become more essential to our urban transportation systems with rising energy costs. We are considering additional ways to encourage the use of these systems.

My government will keep its emphasis on highway construction to serve the North in the coming year.

In the South, my government will continue to upgrade the rural highway system and to provide assistance for the rural road system through revenue sharing. These roads are essential parts of the social, recreational and marketing activities in Saskatchewan's rural communities. In this fiscal year, rural municipalities will receive over \$34 million under my government's revenue-sharing program.

During this session, my government will be proposing amendments and regulations which will reaffirm the philosophy of The Automobile Accident Insurance Act – that all citizens involved in an automobile accident will be given protection against loss. To maintain the emphasis on people, we are proposing to increase third party liability and weekly income benefits.

INDUSTRY, TOURISM AND CONSUMER RIGHTS

Saskatchewan businesses continue to enjoy a favourable economic climate, based on successful diversification of the economy in a broad range of primary, manufacturing and service industries.

My government will be examining opportunities to enhance the contribution of tourism by developing a wider variety of vacation experiences in Saskatchewan for residents and visitors. Saskatchewan business will be encouraged to take advantage of the economic opportunities afforded by this strategy and the development of our primary resources.

Rejuvenation of small Saskatchewan communities is continuing through the main street developmental program. More than one-quarter of the eligible communities in the province have created business improvement districts boards and received grants to improve their business districts.

We will continue our efforts to provide better service to the buyers and sellers of goods and services. To maintain the integrity of the market place, my government plans to combine a number of separate agencies into a new Department of Consumer and Commercial Affairs.

You will be asked to consider amendments to The Business Corporations Act, The Non-Profit Corporations Act, and The Real Estate Brokers Act.

WORKERS AND PENSIONS

In the last session, important improvements were made in labour legislation. Other improvements will be made to preserve a sound industrial relations environment in Saskatchewan, and to provide adequate minimal employment conditions for working people in this regard, the provincial minimum wage is again to be raised to \$3.85 on January 1, 1981, and to \$4 on July 1, 1981.

In this session, you will be asked to consider amendments to The Trade Union Act, which will clarify procedures to be followed in conducting strike votes.

The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act will be amended to supplement the pensions received by persons under public service superannuation plans.

REPRESENTATION

The final report of the constituency boundaries commission has been received. Legislation in the form of The Representation Act will be introduced to implement the recommendations of this commission. You will be asked to consider amendments to The Election Act and The Members of the Legislative Assembly Conflict of Interests Act.

The public accounts for the last fiscal year, together with estimates for the year beginning April 1, 1981, will be submitted to you.

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

May Divine Providence continue to bless our province and guide this legislature in all its deliberations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacancies in Representation

MR. SPEAKER: – I beg to inform the Assembly the following vacancies in representation; namely:

In the constituency of The Battlefords due to the resignation of Eiling Kramer, Esq.

In the constituency of Estevan due to the resignation of Robert A. Larter, Esq.

In the constituency of Kelsey-Tisdale due to the resignation of John R. Messer, Esq.

I do hereby table the letters of resignation.

Introduction of Guest Clerk

MR. SPEAKER: – I beg to inform the Assembly that Patrick Michael, Esq., Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Yukon, will be guest Clerk at the Table for the duration of this portion of the session. Mr. Michael has been a guest at the Saskatchewan Table on a previous occasion. I am sure all members will welcome him back once more.

HON. MEMBERS: – Hear, hear!

Birth Announcement

MR. SPEAKER: – All members will be aware that Mrs. Gwenn Ronyk, First Assistant Clerk, is not present at the Table due to the birth of her first child, a boy, born today.

HON. MEMBERS: – Hear, hear!

MR. SPEAKER: – I am sure we all wish her, Mr. Ronyk, and their son, well.

Introduction of Pages

MR. SPEAKER: – I beg to inform the Assembly that Lynn Betker, Terry Fowler, Tamara Froh, Brenda Getz and Heather Ross will be the pages during the present session.

HON. MEMBERS: – Hear, hear!

Tabling the Speech from the Throne

MR. SPEAKER: – I beg to inform the Assembly that in order to prevent mistakes I have obtained a copy of the speech of His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor, which I now lay on the Table.

MOTIONS

Speech from the Throne

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: – Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Romanow:

That the speech of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor be taken into consideration on Friday, tomorrow.

Motion agreed.

Printing of *Votes and Proceedings* of the Assembly

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: – Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Smishek:

That the *Votes and Proceedings* of this Assembly be printed after first having been perused by Mr. Speaker, that he do appoint the printing thereof and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

Motion agreed.

Members to Compose Lists for Select Standing Committees

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: – Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Snyder:

That Messrs. Dyck, Pepper, Birkbeck, McLeod and Mostoway be constituted a select special committee to prepare and report with all convenient speed, lists of members to compose the select standing committees of this Assembly, provided under rule no. 86:

That the said select standing committees be severally empowered to examine and inquire into all such matters and things as may be referred to them by this Assembly and to report from time to time their observations thereon with power to send for persons, papers and records, and to examine witnesses under oath.

Motion agreed.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: – Mr. Speaker, I move this House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed.

The Assembly adjourned at 3:32 p.m.