

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
December 2, 1983

The Assembly met at 10 a.m.

Prayers

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

NOTICE OF MOTION

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I give notice that I shall, on Monday next, move first reading of a bill respecting accessibility standards in public buildings.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is with pleasure that I introduce to you, and through you to the Assembly, a group whose visit to the Assembly has become an annual one. It is the Regina Plains Community College, independent living for the handicapped. They have been here several years in a row — there are 13 in number — and for at least one year, and I think more, they've also been accompanied by Deb Thomas, so she's been here before too. I hope they find their visit today interesting, and I look forward to meeting them at 10:30 in the rotunda.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DIRKS: — Mr. Speaker, as Minister of Social Services I, too, would like to join with the member opposite, and give a hearty welcome to the 13 students and to their teacher Deb Thomas from the independent living for the handicapped organization at the Regina Plains Community College. At this, your annual visit, we wish you well here and hope that your stay will be informative and educational. Thank you for coming.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SVEINSON: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to the Assembly and welcome this morning Mr. Harry Berezny, Jim Hudson, Conrad Ripplinger, and 103 students in grade 12 from O'Neill High School, who are in the west gallery, and the overflow is in the Speaker's gallery. I expect you'll have a very informative stay in the Assembly in the buildings today, and I expect to meet you after the question period for pictures out in the rotunda. Thank you very much.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. KLEIN: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, join with my colleague in welcoming these students, Mr. Speaker. We share this high school. I happen to pass it several times a day on my way to and from the office, and I would, in particular, like to welcome those students that enjoy living in my constituency of Regina North and welcome you here this morning as well.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MARTENS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with a good deal of pleasure that I want to have you join with me in welcoming to the Legislative Assembly this morning some students from Wymark, Saskatchewan. Wymark got its name from the railroad track; it makes a Y in the junction there. I want you to join with me in welcoming their principal, J. Knelson, teacher, John Wall, and the bus drivers, Ed and Joyce Froese. I'll be meeting with them later on to visit with them, and I hope they find this morning and the discussion that we have here in the question period interesting, enjoyable, and educational.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. MORIN: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of my colleague, the member for Cut Knife-Lloydminster, I'd like to welcome a group of students from the Sweet Grass School in the Cut Knife-Lloydminster riding. They are accompanied by their principal, Mr. Ronald Zoller. I'd like to ask that all members join with me in welcoming them, and advise them that I'll meet with them after question period in the rotunda.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Increased Unemployment in Saskatchewan

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Premier, and it has to do with this morning's rather startling figures on unemployment for November — the figures coming from Statistics Canada, the agency of which he approves. This report shows that over the past 12 months the number of unemployed people across Canada has dropped 11 per cent, but here in Saskatchewan the number of unemployed has increased approximately 10 per cent. Elsewhere in Canada, down 11; in Saskatchewan, up 10 — one of the only three provinces to have its unemployment rate increasing. So we're bucking the trend.

My question to the Premier is this: what new programs does your government propose to introduce in the next short number of days to deal with the unemployment situation which is clearly rising as a problem in Saskatchewan?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, as the hon. members knows, the November information coming from Statistics Canada represents a seasonal change which is particularly relevant in a resource-based economy. As he probably knows from watching the national news last night, the recovery we see in Canada is picking up largely in the manufacturing sectors, because the inventories are being built. The consumers are leading this recovery because they're starting to buy, and people are manufacturing more, and they're building inventories.

Well, as the hon. member knows, the recession hit provinces that had a large manufacturing have much harder than they hit ours that is in a resource based economy. At the same time, when we see some recovery in manufacturing, we expect to see unemployment go from 14 per cent, or 13 per cent, in some of those provinces that were hit very, very hard, down to maybe 13, or down to 12. In ours, every year when you finish harvest, when you look at the resource base in this province, you see some cyclical changes.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that I don't think that I would trade the opportunities, or the problems, in other provinces with the province of Saskatchewan. We have, over the past 18 months, Mr. Speaker, led the nation in the creation of jobs, and we will continue to carry on those programs. And I am quite prepared to delineate the programs that are in existence today, and those that are carrying on in the energy business, and in the job creation business, and in several of the sectors.

But I might point out that we are still the lowest in the country. We are 3.4 per cent below the national average, Mr. Speaker. We do have some cyclical changes that we understand, and we recognize. I would rather not have the cyclical changes, but we are doing whatever we can, on the export market and the international markets, to overcome some of those by opening new offices and expanding our trading opportunities.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that it's not the Premier who is being asked to trade places in order to find a job, but rather the 34,000 people who Statistics Canada say are unemployed, who are asked to consider their position, and if job creation is your number one priority, would you, as announced just last week, would you be good enough to tell this House what you are doing, since the Speech from the Throne, to create jobs for the 34,000 people who Statistics Canada say are unemployed in our province?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the changes in employment from province to province, I think to address the hon. member's question, I believe there are a couple of things that we should point out. People are interested in getting jobs in the province of Saskatchewan, and the growth rate is here to reflect that. And Statistics Canada points out, Mr. Speaker, that the employment participation rate is three times higher in the province of Saskatchewan than it is across all of Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — The employment participation rate — three times higher. The growth rate and the employment and participation are just three times higher here than it is all across Canada.

Mr. Speaker, what that means, Mr. Speaker, is that people are coming here to look for jobs, because they are optimistic about the province of Saskatchewan. We lead the nation in the creation of jobs. Mr. Speaker, I understand (and I appreciate the hon. member's question) that it is difficult to keep up, often, with the interest in Saskatchewan — those that want to stay here and work and be employed, and the new people that want to come into this province and be employed. We are changing and breaking all records, in the past 10 years, and probably the past 30 years, in creating new opportunities for people in Saskatchewan. If, from time to time, we can't keep up with the interest, we'll have to . . . It's good news and it's bad news. The good news is that there's a lot of interest in Saskatchewan; the bad news is that there is so much interest, from time to time, it's difficult to keep up.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — New question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier. In this throne speech he announced that between April, 1982 and October, 1983 there has been an increase of 25,000 jobs. In that, he, of course, included the seasonal increase. Now, in view of the fact that between October of this year and November of this year, if he created 25,000 before he has now destroyed 11,000 jobs, in view of the fact that there are 11,000 fewer people working in Saskatchewan in November than there were in October, so that your figure should not be 25,000 now, but 14,000. Would you agree that it is high time that your government began to take some action to create some employment this winter, and will you now announce some programs immediately to provide employment for that extra 11,000 people who are not working in November, but who were working in October?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not so sure the hon. member understands what a seasonal economy is, and a resource-based economy is. If you have people working on a seasonal basis, for example in agriculture, in grain drying and grain cleaning, and in deep banding, and in fertilizer and so forth, the employment is up. Now I don't expect people to go into the deep banding business in the middle of December. I don't expect to see that kind of activity in an agricultural community, Mr. Speaker, nor has there ever been, when you come off the harvest season and go into Christmas. When we go into Christmas, you're going to see increase in economic activity, you're going to see increase in employment, you're going to see increases in sales, because it's cyclical. When you come off harvest into the Christmas season, you see those.

And there is not much that you can do, or that he has done in the past, to change the cyclical nature of agriculture in terms of employment. It will increase, and then it will decrease, and it will increase again as we approach spring, and the hon. member knows that.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Short question: at any time during the period of the previous government, was the unemployment rate seasonally adjusted, or otherwise, ever as high as it was in November of 1983 under your government — ever?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, the question is job creation. Let's look at the last 11 years versus the last year in the province of Saskatchewan, okay? . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . All right, unemployment. It's job creation. Can you create jobs as fast as anybody else? From November, 1971 to November, 1982, the previous administration created about 9,250 jobs per year. From November, '82 to November, '83, we created over 11,000 new jobs, for an improvement of 20 per cent over the previous administration.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, that is during a recession, during the worst recession since the great depression. When we go back and look at the 1970s and 1980s, that was one of the greatest boom times of our period, Mr. Speaker; that's one of the greatest. Oil prices were the highest, potash prices were very, very high and, Mr. Speaker, they didn't set any records in terms of job creation. The population didn't grow, and they say the unemployment . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Mr. Speaker, the unemployment, they said, was low — was 3 to 4 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, if the birth rate was high, and we know that it was, and we had great boom times, and we didn't increase in population, then obviously people left, and that's the reason there was low unemployment.

I reiterate, Mr. Speaker: we have improved the record by 20 per cent over the past 11 years, during a recession, and it's the best record in Canada.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would remind the Premier that we are not just participating in the recession. At this point in time we seem to be leading it. I would remind the Premier that . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — If the member has a question, then I'd be glad to hear it, but this is not a time for speech making or reminding anyone.

Delay of Public Works Projects

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Premier, in light of the fact that you have canned the renovations to the hospital; canned the renovations to the provincial lab; canned the multimodal station, with no apparent intention of proceeding with a bus station; slow-walking the archives building to the point where it's proceeding at a glacial pace (and that's rapid compared with the progress you're making on the water pipeline): when will this government admit that your deep-freeze on public works has been a major contributing factor to the unemployment figures, and that you could, if you so wished, make a major contribution to alleviating the problem by proceeding with some of these public works?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I have a lengthy answer, but maybe I could premise it by saying, if the members opposite cared so much about the unemployed and seniors and so forth, perhaps they could return the \$600 million to the heritage fund so that we could build some of these things . . . (inaudible) . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — When we look at economic activity, Mr. Speaker, we have hundreds of millions of dollars to be spent in the city of Regina alone, and the hon. member knows that. We've got the new McCallum-Hill Building, we've got the new Pioneer Building, we've got the co-op upgrader. We have got those kinds of projects in the province of Saskatchewan and the city of Regina because people want to invest here for the first time in years.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — In light of the fact, Mr. Premier, that the 34,000 unemployed are having some difficulty turning the cheerleading of the members opposite and the platitudes which you substitute for action into meat and drink — they haven't yet found a formula for turning that into meat and drink — when will this government introduce some new programs and provide some employment for these people, who are going to face a very difficult winter under a Tory administration?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we have initiated an awful lot of new economic activity in the province of Saskatchewan, and it's still going on. If I could remind the member, there's roughly 4,000 people more working in the manufacturing sector in the province of Saskatchewan now than there was a year ago — 4,000 people. Mr. Speaker, there are now hundreds and hundreds of people working in the construction industry now that weren't working last year. There's over 1,000 people making their living in trade in Saskatchewan this year that wasn't last year. There are more than 4,000 people working in finance, and insurance, and in real estate than there was a year ago, and that's 1,000 more than in the month of September this year.

In the past year, more than 4,000 jobs have been created in the service industry. Mr. Speaker, we have outlined that we now have 11,000 people working now versus a year ago, which is a 37 per cent increase over a year before that. We have increased the number of jobs by something like 22,000 over the last 18 months, which breaks all records, Mr. Speaker.

If we want to look at the specific programs, we have created hundreds and hundreds of jobs because of our natural gas distribution system, which carries on, and the hon. member knows that. We carried that on month after month after month.

We have created 3,800 new jobs because of the tax credit system we've introduced. We've created over 4,200 jobs through Opportunities '83. Because we've created over a thousand new jobs in the drilling business alone, we're finding increased economic activity in hotels, restaurants, barber shops, and so forth, because of the tax changes.

We're looking at 2,500 new jobs as the result of a co-op upgrader announcement. We're looking at buildings, such as the cancer clinic, a new geological sciences building, a new Wascana institute, and a technical school, Mr. Speaker, which are brand-new. We're looking at the construction of new high schools, Mr. Speaker, which are a public expense.

Because we have a Build-A-Home program, Mr. Speaker, we created thousands of jobs in that sector. Mr. Speaker, because we removed the tax on gasoline we've had \$125 million discretionary income every single solitary year, and that goes on year after year — Mr. Speaker, year after year — to provide economic opportunities and jobs for people in the province of Saskatchewan. We are also, Mr. Speaker, proceeding with the Nipawin power project. The cost is \$10 million less.

Mr. Speaker, our programs are numerous and many. We created a nine-point program in the budget. We are leading the nation in the creation of jobs.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Premier, in light of the fact that you have not built a park bench in this city since you took office, and in light of the fact that that has been a serious contributing factor to this city's unemployment, will the Premier answer the question and tell this House when you intend to recognize your contribution to the problem, and when you intend to recognize that you could, in fact, be part of the solution if you so wished?

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I don't really believe the hon. member thinks that we should create jobs by building a park bench to an upgrader, or to the fact that he was responsible for losing \$600 million in uranium mines. I mean, we are talking hundreds and hundreds of million of dollars, Mr. Speaker, that are being invested today in the province of Saskatchewan and it's a little bit bigger than park benches.

But I might add, Mr. Speaker, I find it a little interesting that the Leader of the Opposition would initiate this discussion when not more than about a week ago — Mr. Speaker, this is very relevant — a week ago, before the Macdonald Commission in this province, the Leader of the Opposition said that he thought full employment was 6 per cent; 6 per cent is the goal for full employment. Now, Mr. Speaker, if that's his goal, it means that he has given up. Well, Mr. Speaker, we haven't given up on unemployment; we're going to keep creating jobs, and our goal is not 6 per cent, whether it's his or somebody else's.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is replying to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — The member knows that you cannot raise points of order during question period, but I'd be glad to listen to them later. The member from Melville was on his feet twice and was not recognized, so I recognize him now.

MR. SCHMIDT: — Mr. Speaker, I thought it was time when I'd be given an opportunity to ask an important question. I heard the member opposite . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please! Order please! The member for Melville has the floor, and I would like to give him the opportunity to be heard. Order please. The member for Melville.

Multimodal Terminal

MR. SCHMIDT: — Mr. Speaker, I heard the question raised of the multimodal terminal in . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Have you got a question? Have you got a question?

MR. SCHMIDT: — Mr. Speaker, I assure the members opposite I can shout louder than they can. Mr. Speaker, my question is on the multimodal terminal, to the Minister of Transport: the city of Melville has been considering a request for a similar type of facility, and I want to know why he did not proceed in Regina, and what implications there are for Melville?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, two points to the member's question. First of all, the reason why the Government of Saskatchewan did not proceed with the multimodal station in the city of Regina is because there were not enough players in the game. It was going to be an investment of over \$6 million of the taxpayers' money, which we didn't feel would be an economical unit or a wise business venture to enter into, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please! It's impossible for the members to hear the answer to the question that was asked. I can't hear it, and I would ask for some decorum in the Chamber . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm going to caution the member for Assiniboia-Gravelbourg that when I'm still on my feet and he's still shouting that he's looking for trouble.

HON. MR. GARNER: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be as brief as possible. I would just like to point out to all members of the Assembly . . . I will just read one brief paragraph of a board minute of April 6, 1981, that will point out that the previous administration had no intentions of building and going into an agreement with VIA Rail to purchase the CPR station. If you'll give me that time, I will read you by verbatim. April 6, 1981:

In view of the greater costs associated with multimodal, and the ongoing delays, the board agreed that STC not proceed any further with the multimodal terminal option and recommends that the province proceed as quickly as possible with redevelopment of a new bus terminal on the current site. The board further agreed that its position on the matter be forwarded to Crown Investments Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I have many other pieces of information, but the members opposite would remember this. Mr. Speaker, what the members opposite are trying to tell me here today, they are trying to tell me here today, Mr. Speaker, is that when they were government, they didn't want to build the multimodal, but now that they're not government, we should go ahead and build it. Mr. Speaker, we would create nothing more than another executive bus service — prairie shuttle service that lost the taxpayers of Saskatchewan \$500,000.

MR. SCHMIDT: — Mr. Speaker, supplementary. With respect to the constituency of Melville, can you give me any implications for the constituency of Melville?

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, we are looking at not only Melville, but also at Moose Jaw on a multimodal facility. And the president of STC is meeting with both of those groups to find out if it can be an economic and viable enterprise for STC and the Government of Saskatchewan to enter into.

Regeneration of Regina General Hospital

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I direct a question to the Premier, and I ask the Premier to try to answer the question with some degree of truthfulness, and not the contemptible misrepresentation of our position before the MacDonald Commission which you perpetrated in this House.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — A contemptible misrepresentation . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — Does the member have a question?

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I am going to ask a question in the same way that he replied to us.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please. The member full well knows the rules of question period, and I would ask you to get on with your question . . . (inaudible) . . .

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — I direct a question to the Premier. And I say, again, I hope he brings to the answer some degree of truthfulness, and not the contemptible misrepresentation he laid before this House. Now, the question I ask you is this, very simply: you have stopped the construction of the Regina General Hospital, thereby depriving my constituents of hospital care in the future and depriving my constituents of jobs this winter. Will you reverse that decision, given the word to go ahead with the regeneration of the Regina General Hospital, provide my constituents with hospital care in the future, and my constituents with jobs very soon?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, in direct response to the hon. member's question, we are not only concerned about his constituency with respect to job creation; we are concerned about the entire province. And that's why we lead the nation in job creation. If he wants to feel that my comments with respect to his representation on unemployment to the royal commission are out of contest, I can only reiterate what I have before me. Mr. Mantyka, I think, can attest to this. But he says this, quote:

I think we probably should look at something of the order of 6 per cent as a target for full employment in the short run. But I hope that we can continue to lower that by moving industries into area of high unemployment. I'm inducing people to move others off unemployment.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, order, please. If the members asks a question he should given an opportunity for an answer.

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that anybody, with respect to unemployment, can review the record, and they can review it verbatim, Mr. Speaker. And Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is part of Canada. We all know that.

Again I'll refer, Mr. Speaker. If the hon. members are concerned about employment, if they're actually concerned about taking public funds and spending them on public institutions like hospitals, and like roads, and so forth, then, Mr. Speaker, I don't . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. DEVINE: — Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear, very clear that I am very serious. I am very serious in my condemnation of them losing \$600 million of public funds — very serious . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . And I'm not going to stand here . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Not one cent for sure, Mr. Speaker. Now they want to close it.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order, please! I believe that this has been about as rowdy a question period as we've had this time. And I believe that if the members want to carry on that type of question period, then the time is just going to elapse, and nothing is going to happen.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I listened . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — I believe normally that you raise your points of order under orders of the day. If the member would wait for that I'll give him full opportunity.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 13 — An Act respecting Planning and Development in Urban, Rural and Northern Municipalities

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill respecting planning and development in urban, rural and northern municipalities.

Motion agreed to and the bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 14 — An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Assessment Act

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to amend the Saskatchewan Assessment Act.

Motion agreed to and the bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

Bill No. 15 — An Act to amend The Local Improvements Act

HON. MR. EMBURY: — Mr. Speaker, I move first reading of a bill to amend The Local Improvements Act

Motion agreed to and the bill ordered to be read a second time at the next sitting.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. I listened closely and watched the clock on the length of questions and the length of answers, and in watching I find very little to compare, because I find that the answers being given by the ministers are running in the area of two, three, and sometimes as much as five minutes. I would like you, Mr. Speaker, to review the record and the transcripts from Hansard over the past 11 days of this Session to find out whether or not, in fact, that observation that members on this side of the House have noticed is not accurate, and in fact if we cannot have equal length questions and answers in the Assembly.

MR. SPEAKER: — I will review the . . . I recognize the . . .

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, speaking to the point of order. I would simply request if the Speaker sees fit to investigate the point of order by my learned friend, the opposition House Leader, that we bear in mind the tradition of this Assembly where question period started. I think back in the . . . really the '75 to '78 term in earnest, and I think the way question period works is, in fact, a product of tradition, and I would simply have a look at that to see whether or not the tradition is, in fact, being upheld.

MR. SPEAKER: — I take the comments of both members under advisement, and I'll take a look at the record, and bring in my ruling on Monday.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 7 — An Act to repeal The Transportation Act

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, I rise before the Assembly to begin second reading of legislation that will entrench the new franchise that this government has bestowed upon transportation in the province.

In many ways, Mr. Speaker, the nature of this legislation and legislative process can be termed house cleaning. But I do not look at this legislative exercise with legislative blinders on only. The four acts that we must deal with determinate the reorganization and upgrading of transportation leadership this province has needed so badly for so many years. And before, Mr. Speaker, before we ask the people of Saskatchewan to have the reins of power, what some may term as housekeeping duty I look upon today, today's second reading, as symbolic confirmation of this government's belief that transportation in this province can only be guided with central authority accepting accountability. The scattered, haphazard approach of the past shall ever be wiped off the books, Mr. Speaker, and Saskatchewan can begin its march to the year 2000 confident that transportation has finally found its rightful place in government administration.

Mr. Speaker, my preliminary remarks direct through you to the people of Saskatchewan, I hope will not fall on deaf ears across the floor. The wisdom of this government's reorganization last spring is self-evident even to those members opposite, whose lack of imagination and vision for this province left the transportation leadership of this province in a scattered, brain-fashioned

idea. Thanks to the astute leadership of Premier Grant Devine, we now have a co-ordinated approach, not only to transportation, but for all of government, and ultimately, Mr. Speaker, for all of the people of this great province of ours.

Mr. Speaker, I will close this portion of my remarks by saying that transportation in this province can best be described as the wheel on which our economy turns. It is absolutely essential that we, as government, have all of the spokes on that wheel going in the same direction. Transportation is to the industrial age what computers are becoming for the information age. Mr. Speaker, we know from history that the foundation of an industrial economy is a sound agriculture base. As we sit in this House today, we know this government has recognized each and every potential this province contains. Our agriculture base is solid with prospects for the future — unlimited thanks to the policies of this government.

Today, as I speak, the success of Agribition is testimony to the firm foundation agriculture has laid for the future of this province. Again in this sitting, Mr. Speaker, this government has commenced with the new Department of Science and Technology. The fact that this government has had the courage to look ahead, and the vision, the place Saskatchewan will be tomorrow is proof that efforts of today will not be wasted on the spoils of the past. This province's new Department of Science and Technology is proof that this government is acting today on the promise of tomorrow. I congratulate, Mr. Speaker, my colleague, the Hon. Gordon Currie, and wish him well as he pioneers this province towards this new frontier.

Mr. Speaker, as I said from the outset, I do not look upon the second reading of this legislation as housekeeping only. In the context of my remarks, I have demonstrated the role transportation must play if we are to ensure success of our agricultural sector and assist with cementing the leadership role the new Department of Science and Technology will play in shaping the promise of tomorrow into the reality of government policy today. Transportation, Mr. Speaker, is the link that binds us economically, socially, culturally, and politically with our neighbours, our country, and the western world. Referring again to the symbolic nature that the democratic tradition binds us to, what I present to this House, the transportation leadership I trust will meet with everyone's approval.

Mr. Speaker, in giving second reading to The Department of Highways and Transportation Act, I would remind you again of the realignment and reorganization that took place in the transportation leadership this spring.

Mr. Speaker, the highway traffic board was incorporated into the Department of Highways and Transportation. The highway traffic board retained its mandate and authority, and it administers The Vehicles Act. As this House is aware, this government has completed revised and upgraded The Vehicles Act, whereby I can confidently say the people of Saskatchewan now have the most up-to-date, modern piece of legislation of its kind in Canada. But this was just one part of the government's efforts to co-ordinate transportation policy.

We also incorporated the Transportation Agency of Saskatchewan with Highways and Transportation effective April 1, 1983. The result is the need to co-ordinate and amalgamate legislation to avoid gaps and eliminate overlaps in the statutory provisions.

Mr. Speaker, now that I have made reference to The Department of Highways and Transportation Act, but to round out the legislative picture, there are three other acts that will assist in this process, and I will deal with them as they come up for reading. So at this time, I move second reading of Bill No. 7, An Act to repeal The Transportation Act.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm somewhat disappointed in repealing bill No. 7 . . . or the repeal of The Transportation Act, as the minister has stated. I think the transportation

agency, when it was set up, was a very important agency, and it was useful to this province. It dealt with special problems that existed within the transportation system of this province. Moving that into the Department of Highways, I think, is going to create some problems, and it's not necessarily going to address itself to all of the problems that the transportation agency dealt with. I will have a lot more to say on the issue, Mr. Speaker, and I would therefore beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 8 — An Act to amend The Highways Act

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, when speaking to second reading of this act, I would like to say that this act includes the normal housekeeping amendments to The Highways Act, as well as repealing certain provisions that are being incorporated into the new Department of Highways and Transportation Act. The short title of this act has been changed from The Highways Act to The Highways and Transportation Act. This will recognize the expanded scope of transportation duties and responsibilities administered under this act.

Other provisions resulting from these amendments include the authority to lease department-owned property before it is needed for public improvement. The present provision only allows for leasing after the land or property is no longer needed for public improvement. I'm sure that the agriculture sector will welcome this change, as it will allow the department to lease land, if it still has crop or grazing potential, before it is utilized for public improvement. Another provision will allow a land-owner or realtor to erect signs on land adjacent to a provincial highway when the land is for sale. I think the success of the farm purchase program, and the value of Saskatchewan property these days, justifies the relaxing of this signing policy.

In keeping with the same approach, Mr. Speaker, the department will have the authority to issue a permit allowing non-profit organizations to advertise their one-time or annual event. The winter and summer games are a good example of a one-time event. Fairs, rodeos, or sports days are examples of annual events that will enlighten this policy and will have a positive effect concerning signs along our provincial highways.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, there a number of administrative functions under The Highways Act that require an order in council. In this act, we will amend those sections and subsections that are administered in nature to permit the minister to authorize responsibility, rather than by order in council. As reorganization has demonstrated to us, titles and positions change, and this amendment would dispense with the need to authorize by order in council when the delegation deals with an item that is administrative in nature only. With that, I move second reading of An Act to amend The Highways Act.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't see too many problems in Bill No. 8, the Act to amend The Highways Act. However, there are some small concerns that I have, and I would look to look at the bill a little further. I will have more comments to make on it, so I therefore beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 9 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from certain changes in the name and functions of the Department of Highways and Transportation

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, this is just simply a housekeeping bill and the consequential amendments and that with regard to the Department of Highways and Transportation — basically just a housekeeping nature. I would just like to point out that I

believe, since our reorganization that has brought about these bills and the relaxing of our signing policy is a positive and forward step for the Department of Highways and Transportation in the province of Saskatchewan to enable, and to assist, the people of Saskatchewan that when they have a transportation problem they can come to one shop, one minister responsible for it, one department. It is going to ease, I believe, many of the problems that people have had in the past with going from one minister to another and looking all around. It's basically going to give us one-stop shopping for transportation needs and problems in the province of Saskatchewan. With that, I move second reading of An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from certain changes in the name and functions of the Department of Highways and Transportation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I don't see very many problems in Bill No. 9. All it does is change the name of the department. The act is just simply, I believe, a consequential amendment, but there are just a couple of points that I would be liking to make on that bill, as the other bills when we deal with them, Mr. Speaker. I would therefore beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 10 — An Act respecting the Department of Highways and Transportation

HON. MR. GARNER: — . . . (inaudible) . . . the Department of Highways and Transportation act. It has to do once again with our realignment and reorganization that took place last spring.

As I'd stated previously in my earlier remarks, the highway traffic board was incorporated into the Department of Highways and Transportation. The highway traffic board has also retained its mandate and authority and it administers The Vehicles Act. As this House is aware, the government, with completely revising and upgrading The Vehicles Act last spring, Mr. Speaker, we brought about a new act that was drawn up by the people of Saskatchewan, with input from the people of Saskatchewan. It received proclamation on November 1 and the final section received proclamation yesterday, that being section 168.

It's an act, Mr. Speaker, that is going to meet the transportation needs of the people of Saskatchewan from now, I believe, into the year 2000. It also ties in, Mr. Speaker, with increased fines for any infraction of The Vehicles Act. It standardizes the school bus lighting problem that was there before. We are also dealing with the problems, Mr. Speaker, of the drinking driver, and I believe that section 168 will address that.

I think basically, Mr. Speaker, we should touch on it again, since we have some young people in the gallery, and that I would like to share with them today because the age group that does concern me a lot . . . I only have a thirteen-year-old son but he's going to be as big as some of those big fellows up there in the gallery some day, I hope, and most likely a football player.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why we did this is that the stats that cross my desk, you know, and it's not a very nice story. And we have 100-and-some students up there. It's a startling fact, Mr. Speaker, but the stats do indicate that you can line me up 100 men and women — we have them right up here in the gallery and I'd like them to look around at their friends — one of them, one of them, Mr. Speaker, because of the old, worn-out legislation, one of them, Mr. Speaker, could be dead because of an alcohol-related accident before they reach their 20th birthday. I don't want to see that. I don't want to see that at all, Mr. Speaker.

Those are the stats. That's why we've moved ahead on this new Vehicles Act. Young people can have a good time. I'd like to see them in the Chamber here. I don't want to see their picture crossing my desk, or a coroner's report indicating that they are no longer able to work and live in society.

So, Mr. Speaker, to this Assembly, to the people of Saskatchewan, the reorganization, the new Vehicles Act . . . Saskatchewan now has a transportation act that will serve it for the future, instead of the worn-out — out-dated, we'll call it — the tired old NDP act of the past, Mr. Speaker.

With that, I move second reading of an Act respecting the Department of Highways and Transportation.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MR. LUSNEY: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few concerns on this bill, Mr. Speaker. The minister talks about what it's going to do for the people of Saskatchewan. I think when you see the repeal of three other bills and those departments being brought into the Department of Highways and Transportation, it is going to significantly change the duties and responsibilities of the department of highways, as it was known before.

I would have some questions on just how they are going to deal with some of the problems that are very likely to arise by bringing the other three departments into the department of highways. The minister talks about all the good things that it's going to do, and the lives that it is going to save, and how they are going to deal with it. Well, I see very little in there that is going to indicate that it is going to really help the public of Saskatchewan that much.

When we see he talked about the holiday season and the things, the drinking driving that it was going to help, when we see the kind of advertising that has been going on in liquor advertising, and the minister now saying that somehow in this bill he is going to deal with that problem. I think it is definitely, as my colleague says, a double standard there, and we have to look very closely at this bill.

I would like a little more time to look at that bill and see the inequities and the problems that are going to arise out of the amalgamation of all the departments within the one bill. I would, therefore, beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 5 — An Act to Provide for the Taxation of Minerals

MR. SCHOENHALS: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today in introduce the mineral taxation tax, 1983, for second reading. Excluding the petroleum and uranium sectors, this taxing statute will provide a production tax framework for all minerals produced in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, while it is not totally irrelevant, having mentioned the petroleum sector, we have taken some moves in this government to clean up and provide some incentives for that industry, and I might just update the Assembly on the results in the province. During the week ended November 25, 1982, there were 50 wells drilled in the province, which brings out record total now to 1,587 wells. And a note of special interest, I think, relative to what is happening in the industry: during that week there were 65 active rigs working the in province. That again is another record, Mr. Speaker. The last highest rig count was 55 and was set in September of 1980, once again indicating the success of the program that we have instituted in the petroleum sector.

In replacing the existing Mineral Taxation Act, this new act will continue to provide for a mineral acreage or rights tax, but will dispense with the producing tract tax which is no longer used. The primary impact of this bill will be to simplify the taxation and administration requirements for industry and government. This is made possible through the incorporation of two key concepts, indirect taxation and scheduled minerals. As with the Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, The Mineral Taxation Act 1983 takes advantage of the new powers of indirect taxation under

section 92(a) of the amended constitution. Now, indirect taxes can be structured in the same way as traditional Crown royalties. This permits Crown and freehold mineral production to be treated the same way, rather than in different ways as under the old act. This allows for simplified administration of the royalty tax system, thus reducing the administrative burden on both the government and the taxpayers.

Utilization of the scheduled mineral concept is a relatively new taxation technique in Saskatchewan. Use of this technique permits different tax structures to be developed in a manner which is sensitive to the unique situation of a particular mineral sector, while ensuring an optimum return to the people of Saskatchewan for use of the natural resource. At the same time, the general umbrella framework provides for a common set of administrative procedures for all industry sectors. This simplification will assist industry in gaining a thorough knowledge of the rules for resource extraction. This in turn should provide a more attractive investment climate in the province.

Overall, the combined impact of these two techniques will be to reduce the red tape associated with previous legislation, and is one more example of our efforts to reform the regulatory environment in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, before describing other key elements of the bill, I would like to acknowledge the input of the mining industry in Saskatchewan. As you know, last spring we distributed a white paper on The Mineral Taxation Act, 1983, to solicit input from interested parties. We have found this process to be constructive in designing the final draft of this act. Overall, the response to the bill was quite positive, particularly with regard to the schedule concept.

Some concern was registered regarding the toughness of the administration and enforcement section of the draft act. Accordingly, as a result of our consultation process, you will find a number of minor changes have been made. However, we have not diluted our ability to collect taxes payable and, while it is a fair tax structure for industry, it is a strong tax structure for the protection of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, let me now describe some of the key elements of this act. As I noted initially, the mineral rights tax, previously the mineral acreage tax, remains virtually unchanged. It includes the same rate of tax, the same mineral rights to be taxed, and the same taxpayers. We have raised the exemption level from \$1 to \$50. This provides a break for the very small mineral holders while doing away with the administrative requirement of collecting those small amounts of taxation.

As referred to previously, the structure of the mineral production taxes will vary from one type of scheduled mineral to another, depending on the policy of the government regarding each mineral.

The administration and enforcement provisions regarding mineral production taxes are different from those in the old act because of the different nature of mineral production taxes. This includes a lien for unpaid taxes on the mineral-producing and processing assets of the taxpayer rather than the mineral rights alone. As well, the penalty and offence provision are geared to a system based on taxpayer self-assessment, where the taxpayer has the duty to assess his own taxes.

In addition to the main body of this act, I am pleased to point out that the first schedule, the freehold coal tax, is attached. This replaces the old freehold coal tax which was a complex and cumbersome tax, but a much simpler and predictable tax.

The purpose of a freehold coal tax is to tax freehold coal production so that in the after-tax position coal producers are left indifferent as to whether they produce from Crown or from freehold coal tracts. This was the objective of the old act and remains the objective of the new tax.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, to explain why the old tax needed to be replaced. The old freehold coal tax system was a property tax. The assessment of the property value was based on a 10-year forecast of net revenues expected from production from a freehold coal tract. Given the imprecise nature of most economic forecasts — and, Mr. Speaker, I think that “imprecise nature” is being kind — this is hardly a sound basis for a fair and accurate tax collection.

This means that when a producer begins production in a new freehold tract, the assessment in tax would be high. By contrast, a producer near the end of production in a freehold tract would have a smaller assessment and pay much less tax on the same volume of production, Mr. Speaker. For example, in one year, one company paid less than 10 cents per tonne on freehold production, while another paid almost \$3 per tonne. The objective of the tax required that each company should pay the same tax per tonne. Thus the old tax was inequitable and tended to distort the real economics of coal production.

Further, tax liability under the old system was impossible to predict at the beginning of a year because the property assessment process was not completed until June of each year, and the mill rate applies to the assessment was not set until December. In the coal industry, producers normally pass on the tax to their customers as part of a sales contract. Because they could not know their liability in advance, they had to make retroactive adjustments in the contracts up to one year after the tax. The complex administration of the tax led to strained producer-customer relations.

Several rounds of discussion with Saskatchewan's coal producers — that's SPC, Manalta Coal Ltd., and Luscar Ltd. — have been held over the last eight months. The discussions have led to a proposal for a new, uncomplicated tax based on a simple percentage of the value of freehold coal production. The level of the new tax will be set at 7 per cent of the value of freehold coal production. This is the rate which will equate after tax returns from production from Crown lands and freehold, whether the producer owns the coal or pays a royalty to a third party.

The present level of the Crown coal royalty, which is 15 per cent of the value of production, will remain unchanged. It is because royalties paid to freehold coal owners are deductible from corporate income tax purposes while coal royalties are not. With the new tax at 7 per cent, makes a producer in different between producing from Crown lands and freehold lands. The new tax eliminates much of the administrative burden of the old tax. It is fairer to all companies and has been designed to raise on average, comparable revenues to the old tax.

From year to year, revenues will be directly related to production and prices in that year. A comparison with revenues collected since 1979 indicates that the revenue collected under our new proposal would have been greater than under the old system in two of the four years, and less than the old system in the other two. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, our tax is very comparable and will result in a return to the province that can be equated to the previous structure.

In order to respond in a timely fashion to the administrative and economic difficulties encountered by the industry as a result of the complexity and uncertainty of the property tax, we agreed to move to the new system for 1983 by way of an agreement for that year. The new freehold coal tax will be introduced as the first schedule to the new Mineral Taxation Act, to become effective on January 1, 1984.

As indicated previously in the white paper, our intention is to follow this bill up with a new potash schedule in the spring to replace the existing potash resource payments agreement. It is my belief that the framework provided in this legislation will endure for a long time to come, because it provides the flexibility to deal with each industry sector in a unique way, yet maintaining a common set of rules which assures the interests of both the taxpayer and the people of the province.

With these words, Mr. Speaker, I conclude my remarks on the proposed Mineral Taxation Act, 1983.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of this bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the explanation of the contents of the bill by the minister and the principles which it incorporates, and we on this side of the House will be supporting the bill on second reading.

I believe that this is a considerable step forward in the taxation of minerals. I have not had an opportunity yet to study details with respect to the impact of the tax on classes of producers but there is no question, from a reading of the bill and from the comments made by the minister, that this will make it much easier for taxpayers and easier for the Crown to collect the sums which are appropriate to be collected when minerals are produced in this province.

All hon. members will know of the great complexity of the existing tax structures, a great complexity brought about by the constitutional provision which prohibited the Government of Saskatchewan from levying on freehold minerals any tax of the ordinary kind — of so much a tonne, or so much a barrel, or so much a pound. These were adjudged to be indirect taxes by the Supreme Court of Canada and were thus beyond the constitutional powers of the province of Saskatchewan.

The desire to collect some money from this economic activity was met by taxes which could be argued to be, and I think successfully argued to be, direct taxes. And mention has been made of the coal tax and the fact that it was a tax, not on the coal produced, but a tax on the coal in the ground. And it has been long held by the supreme Court of Canada that provinces can tax property — land or coal — but they cannot tax the production of it, because that becomes an indirect tax.

And so a very, very complicated tax was structured, and efforts were made to make it fair. And every effort, I think, within the constitutional jurisdiction of the province to make it fair was made. The same was true with respect to oil and we remedied that, if I may put it that way, by the legislation introduced last year by the then minister of mineral resources.

The situation continues with respect to potash, and that was assisted somewhat by a contractual agreement made between the Crown and potash producers which reduced some of these complexities. In fact about the only thoroughly reasonable, in an administrative sense, set of mineral taxation and royalty which was able to be introduced for the major minerals was for hard rock minerals in the North where they're all Crown minerals, and you can make an arrangement that produces some reasonable administrative arrangements.

I think that the Government of Saskatchewan and the producers, both of them, would be free to admit that the administrative arrangements with respect to oil — as they then were, now corrected — coal, and potash are excessively complicated and can be now, because of the changes made in the constitution of Canada in 1982 to permit provinces to levy indirect taxes, can now be corrected. And we are pleased that the government is proceeding in what appears to be a reasonable and rational way to assist the industry in the payment of taxes.

We all want the money. We all want to collect money from the mineral companies, but equally well, no government wants to harass mineral companies with excessively complicated regulations. That is true of this government and is true of every preceding government. Governments are interested in money. They are not interested in administrative complexity. And I'm pleased that the act has been brought in.

These same sentiments were expressed when the tax with respect to oil was brought in by the previous minister of mineral resources, and I express these sentiments with respect to this bill.

There are a number of points that I would like to consider in somewhat more detail and I may have further remarks to address to the House in this regard, and accordingly I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Bill No. 6 — An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Mineral Taxation Act, 1983

HON. MR. SCHOENHALS: — Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief on this one. There are various housekeeping amendments required as a consequence of the introduction of The Mineral Taxation Act of 1983. These amendments are consolidated within an act that has been aptly entitled The Mineral Taxation Consequential Amendment Act.

The consequential amendments include, and I'll just list them: (1) Reference to The Mineral Taxation Act, 1983, within The Heritage Fund (Saskatchewan) Act; Reference to the same act within The Land Titles Act; Provisions to the same act within The Oil and Gas Conservation, Stabilization and Development Act; (4) Reference to the same act within The Rural Municipality Act; (5) Reference to the same act within The Tax Enforcement Act; and finally, (6) Reference to the same act within The Urban Municipality Act.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated these are simply housekeeping, consequentially arising from the previous act, and with these brief remarks I move second reading of this bill.

HON. MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, any points that might be wished to be raised by the opposition on this bill are more appropriately raised in committee, and accordingly I will be supporting the bill.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Currie that Bill No. 2 — **An Act respecting the Department of Science and Technology** be now read a second time.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. When the minister addressed himself to these three bills on Wednesday, he addressed himself to all three at the same time: Bill 2, establishing a department of science and technology; Bill 3, consequential amendments pursuant to the new agency; and Bill 4, repealing the science act. Unless, Mr. Speaker, some members of the House have some objections, I propose to do likewise.

I think this House should note that this province has a pretty impressive record. As all members will know, the people of Saskatchewan have a long and distinguished record of technological advance, innovation, and achievement. No one has been more sensitive than the farmers of Saskatchewan to the many challenges, potentials, and opportunities afforded by technological change, and no one has been more creative than the Saskatchewan farmers.

Saskatchewan farm implement firms and Saskatchewan scientists have worked together in developing and applying technological advances in such a way that has made this province and this part of the world . . . has earned it the title of breadbasket of the world.

I am told, Mr. Speaker, that the historical record of successful patent applications in western Canada demonstrates Saskatchewan's historical technological leadership very clearly. Mr. Speaker, there are many areas of the world which could produce . . . which have the climate and the environment to produce far more food than western Canada and the western United States. We succeed in producing as much as we do because of the technology which we use and because of the efficiency of the industry. It is interesting to think, Mr. speaker, what countries like India, which have a far better climate and a far better environment, what countries like India could produce if they had our technology and the efficiency and industry of our agricultural industry.

Over the years, on a per capita basis, the Saskatchewan residents have been twice as successful in introducing patent applications as those in Alberta and Manitoba. Moreover, Mr. Speaker, nowhere else in the world have ordinary rural and urban people had the opportunity to experience the many positive and major social changes which new technology, combined with sensitive public policy, can produce.

One only needs to mention, Mr. Speaker, rural electrification, or air ambulances, or the many ways that the appropriate transportation and communication technology has been deployed in northern Saskatchewan, to break down the isolation of remote communities.

And there are more recent examples, Mr. Speaker, examples which illustrate how the creativity of Saskatchewan people, their co-operation, and the support of a sensitive, positive, supportive government have made high technology develop in Saskatchewan. Take the wise decision made by Sask Tel, under the NDP administration, to encourage Northern Telecom to open a new plant in Saskatchewan. That plant was opened in March, 1982, with some 250 workers. Today, Mr. Speaker, it employs more than 400.

Or take other examples like SED Systems (SED being an acronym for S.E.D. — SED Systems). Begun as a tiny firm based at the University of Saskatchewan, it flourished because of the creativity and energy of those few university scientists and their colleagues and because of the continuous positive support it received from the NDP administration. Or take Innovative Place, Sedco's top quality industrial research park developed by a New Democratic Party administration in Saskatchewan.

I know that conservative members opposite have expressed their opposition to Sedco and to Innovative Place in particular. I know, however, that the minister did not express such opposition in his remarks. Or we could take other examples of creative, dynamic, and vigorous high tech firms which were well under way in Saskatchewan long before this government took office, Mr. Speaker — Develcon, Microtek, and there are others. So many examples, Mr. Speaker, of that distinguished record of achievement of the Saskatchewan people in creating, developing, and applying high technology.

And I add as a footnote, Mr. Speaker, that virtually all of the success stories in Saskatchewan, in high technology, were developed and well under way during the administration of the NDP government. And this government has yet to develop, and has yet to spawn, anything like the record of success which began in this province in the '70s.

Indeed, I think that is unlikely to happen. This government's policy has been a major disappointment. Its record in science and technology is no exception to its disappointing record elsewhere. It is a familiar pattern to members of this House — all promises, no action; all talk, no concrete action.

I recall last spring's throne speech, Mr. Speaker, more than six months ago — more like nine months ago. At that time we were promised that the Conservatives would soon — soon, which has a new meaning; this government has given new meaning to the word "soon" — would soon announce their long-awaited high technology development strategy.

That promise of an early announcement of a strategy was just a bit premature, it seems, for on October 1, the *Financial Post* reported that three times since last winter the Conservative government has said that an announcement is imminent, but the matter still isn't even on the cabinet table and there appears to be considerable disagreement on the subject among cabinet ministers.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're still waiting on the high tech policy, as we are waiting on virtually every other major development from this government. In his remarks on Wednesday, Mr. Speaker, the minister said that we would still have to wait for the substance behind these bills. We'd still have to wait to find out what, just what their technological development strategy is.

We would have thought they would have had that thought out, but apparently not. Just how do they propose to secure venture capital for small developing firms? You would have thought that profligate spenders like members opposite would have at least managed to wrestle with that one, but apparently not.

We have to wait, apparently, to find out just exactly what the programs, the priorities, and the policies are of this Conservative government. After a year and a half of their promises, and their talk, they should be embarrassed to have nothing concrete to propose, Mr. Speaker, no concrete measures to announce except the creation of new government agencies. No developments in science and technology, in the private world, of major significance under this government. No policy announced by this government. Here, as elsewhere, platitudes are thought to be a substitute for policy.

I note with great interest, Mr. Speaker, the minister grudgingly acknowledged the crucial role played by Saskatchewan's fine universities in technological innovation. Their distinguished record of achievement, the dedication and creativity of their research facility, should be a source of pride to all of us. But unfortunately his colleague, the Conservative minister responsible for universities, does not seem to agree, for he has engaged in an offensive and open confrontation with the university communities. He has attempted to relegate their research efforts and their need for resources to the irrelevant. This government has quite simply been totally insensitive to the critical role played by our universities. This government delayed action for more than a year on the development of a new geological science facility. They failed to proceed with urgently needed major renovations to the chemistry facility at the University of Saskatchewan. They have not proceeded with the badly needed facility expansion for the College of Agriculture.

Worst of all, Mr. Speaker, this Conservative government has totally failed to respond to the severe enrolment and financial pressures on our universities — pressures which seriously hinder their ability and capacity to play a proper leadership role in technological and scientific advance. Indeed, our universities are so crowded the students have a major problem in getting from one class to another because the hallways are jam-packed. One must wonder what they get out of lab facilities and other sorts of programs which depend upon facilities at the university.

I want to mention a word about the abolition of the science council. Part of the theme that has become clear and recurring under this Conservative government is the abolition of citizens' advisory groups such as the science council. It is the abolition of citizens' advisory councils, the abolition of citizens' input, centralization under the tight and rigid control of the Conservative government's bureaucracy . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

The science council was abolished. The member from Regina Rosemont might recall that local legal aid boards, which provide citizen input into the delivery of legal aid services, were abolished. The member from Yorkton might recall that the work environment board at the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was abolished. The senior citizens' advisory council was abolished, and so on and so forth. This government has rigidly established and centralized and, in effect, abolished these independent boards which provided citizen input.

I'd like, Mr. Speaker, to make a brief comment on the employment consequences of technology. First, let us be clear that high technology may be a source of employment for our people but it is not likely to become a major employer. Second, this government's record on employment, particularly in the vital manufacturing sector, is not very good, Mr. Speaker. I have the latest employment figures for Saskatchewan, the subject of a rather quiet, orderly debate this morning . . .

MR. SPEAKER: — I think the member is straying a bit away from the bill and I would ask him to return to the subject we're discussing.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I perhaps may have been getting into the question period. I was discussing the effect that high technology may have on employment, and I think that's a proper subject to discuss under the bill itself.

The figures show that in October 1983 Saskatchewan had 25,000 persons employed in our manufacturing sector, exactly the same number as two years ago — exactly the same number as October '81. So it is clear, I think, that the government's science and technology policy, if we ever see it, will not likely have a deep effect on that level of unemployment. I would like to, Mr. Speaker, express my surprise and dismay that this government, which preaches the gospel of high technology, which is rushing to embrace the microchip, robotics world of 1984, is so completely insensitive to the concerns and needs of workers, for it is these working people, Mr. Speaker, who often become the victims of rapid technological change. It is these working people who concerns about video display terminals, concerns about job security, concerns about health and safety, that this government has chosen to ignore. I am therefore fearful, Mr. Speaker, that the new department of science and technology will become just another bureaucratic symbol of this government's ardent embrace of the robotics future as they turn their back on the real men and women of Saskatchewan, the real workers.

My position with respect to this bill is somewhat the same as the women's secretariat. To coin a phrase, we could have been so much more. There is so much more we could have been, and we would have wished that you would have reached forth and grabbed the opportunities which were available to you. You haven't done that. But perhaps, Mr. Speaker, a half-measure may be better than no measure at all, and we will not be opposing these bills in principle at this time.

HON. MR. ANDREW: — Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the hon. minister of science and technology — soon to be — I would like to make a response to a couple of the points raised by the hon. member from Regina Centre. It would appear that the hon. member from Regina Centre would like to have it two ways. What he is saying is that you as a government are not increasing science and technology near enough or that you should be doing more, and on the other hand, he's saying maybe you should slow down with this science and technology because of the impact it will have on displacement of jobs. He wants to talk to the ear of one people and they would like to hear his message, and the completely contrary message he would like to give out the other side of his mouth to the other ear that he wants to hear. And I think that tends to be a thrust that we see coming from the members opposite, that they will say one thing to one person and one thing to another person.

With regards to the allegation of lack of action, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the members of this House in the last budget that we allocated 50 million of the remaining 100 million that . . . There was \$100 million, Mr. Speaker, in the heritage fund. It wasn't quite there; that's how much there was. 50 of that we allocated, Mr. Speaker, to science and technology, and to research and development. We put that money into the fund, a soon to be developed policy to encourage research and development, to encourage science and technology. And I dare say that that's a better way of spending 50 million — there is going to be more return; there's going to be more activity — than there will be spending 600 million, Mr. Speaker, to buy uranium mines, to build uranium mines that they now wish to close down. So I think that they have to be looked at with regard to the inconsistency. We have done a major move by creating a research and

development fund as part of the heritage fund.

One of the problems that we have experienced, Mr. Speaker, is that most will remember that the Lalonde budget of last April in fact moved, I think, in a very positive way — in fairness to the federal government, the federal minister of finance — to recognize the fact that Canada in a per capita spending on research and development lagged far behind most of the other developed countries of the world, and have in fact moved, or suggested, to put in place a research and development element in the taxing policy of the income tax. The problem we face and the problem many provinces face, quite frankly now, is that that program has not yet seen the light of day in the House of Commons, is not yet established and ruled into law.

It will have a significant impact on other policies. The reason being is that the advice coming out of the federal government is that once that policy is in place, it superimposes, from a tax point of view, over and above that of the provinces, meaning that many of the provincial programs now in place are going to be basically out of order, basically completely distorted so it can no longer be used. We are working, through the minister's office, to try to encourage that, to try to dovetail that so that in fact the dollars being spent in Canada for research and development are in fact going the proper way.

One large thrust that this government has brought in the last 18 months, clearly, is the whole area of biotechnology, and the hon. member referred to that in his seconding speech. We see biotechnology and the thrust of that at the University of Saskatchewan as a very positive move that we're going to be doing.

The hon. member, Minister of Energy and Mines, is in the process of working an agreement with the federal government to develop research and development capacities in the EOR (enhanced oil recovery) area of heavy oil and in the whole area of heavy oil upgrading. We believe a significant contribution, not only to Saskatchewan — the resource industry in Saskatchewan — but quite frankly, to the refinement of that heavy oil that is situated in many other countries of the world, and we believe that we are in the leading edge of technology in the area of both EOR and in upgrading, and we are very proud of that commitment.

Recently we announced the extension in the building of a linear accelerator in conjunction with the federal government at the University of Saskatchewan, again a new project, Mr. Speaker.

In the area of potash . . . And we believe that the research and development must be tied to the basic or staple industries of our provincial economy.

The hon. member referred to agriculture. We agree with that, and will extend the area of research in agriculture. But, as well, in the area of resources and resource development, we are moving in the heavy oil area. We are doing a pilot project through the potash corporation and in conjunction with other potash producers to further refine the product to widen our market, and particularly to try to address the California market for fertilizer that Saskatchewan potash has never been able to serve because of the nature of the product we produce. We're moving in that direction.

The hon. minister of science and technology, when he was the minister of advanced education and manpower, I believe instigated a new program in the technical schools, particularly Kelsey Institute in Saskatoon, where he reallocated the curriculum — new policies in Kelsey to deal with the moving field of high technology. And we believe that Kelsey Institute will, in fact, become a major part of our plan to deal with science and technology as we bring our own home-grown students through that process so that they can qualify for many of these high technology jobs and we don't have to go begging to the Ontarios or the British Columbias of the world to find people to fill the jobs once an industry is created. It's a hand-in-glove exercise.

Clearly this government has made a strong commitment, a stronger commitment than ever

before, to the whole area of technical institutions. In the technical institutions the thrust of that is, number one, obviously, to create many more new spaces — a very ambitious program to expand the technical schools, and we believe is really the main area to deal with the moving area of science and technology. We have committed to that. We have expanded the spaces, and we've brought in new curriculum and continue to develop new curriculum in the area of science and technology.

The minister is also working in areas with regard to venture capital and how we develop venture capital — that type of operations. I was amused by the views of the hon. member with regard to SED Systems. In fact SED Systems is on the strongest financial footing now over the last 18 months that it's ever been on before. And one of the main reasons for that strong footing, Mr. Speaker, is that SED Systems, over a number of years, has been able, because of, quite frankly, the intelligence of the people working with that particular company, to develop many good products. But very often in the past they were developed and unable to be marketed, and they fell to no place. Somebody else simply came along and picked up the invention, took it out and marketed it, and made the money from it.

That SED Systems, since this government has come to office, is in fact strengthened, has developed far more aggressive management, far more aggressive sales techniques, and in fact you're starting to see the fruits of that decision, Mr. Speaker, when you see many of the contracts now that SED Systems are landing — very good contracts, military contracts, satellite contracts. The Premier was in Brazil last year and in fact made a significant contribution in sale, assisting very much SED Systems in being able to market some of that product into the Brazil market.

Mr. Speaker, I think that with the bringing in of this new department that that thrust of this government will be even more focused. It will be even more focused, Mr. Speaker, so that collectively, we're going to get the best bang for the dollars that we are spending the area of research and development, in the area of high technology.

Number one, Mr. Speaker, we're going to be spending more dollars than ever has been spent before in that area — science and technology, research and development — and we want to get the best bang for that dollar. We apologize to no one for that approach. We are very proud of our minister of science and technology, and we're very proud of the direction that he's taken this province into the future, and we believe that we are going to be on the leading edge of science and technology in this country.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this bill.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Currie that Bill No. 3 — **An Act respecting the Consequential Amendments resulting from the enactment of The Department of Science and Technology Act** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Currie that Bill No. 4 — **An Act to repeal The Science Council Act** be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, bill read a second time and referred to a committee of the whole at the next sitting.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 1 — An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat

Clause 1

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The question before the committee is An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat. Would the minister introduce her officials?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right I would like to introduce Mr. Dale Botting out of our planning bureau.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, are you going to admit that you were routed on this issue and that you made a mistake in abolishing the women's division, or are you going to continue with the unbelievable charade that this is somehow rather an improvement over the women's division which you abolished?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, if you think this is a charade, why did you vote for it?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I gather you are going to continue the charade which no one believes — which no one believes, I'm sure least of all your own members. Madam Minister, will you inform the House, if you will not admit the mistake made by the present Minister of Labour, will you inform the House why this was a free-standing secretariat rather than being a part of a department, one or other department?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I would be glad to inform the hon. member from Regina Centre once again. Obviously it takes more than once. A branch, and he well knows because he was at one time a minister of education, a minister of culture and youth, he should know how a department works. A free-standing agency has authority and legislation, and a direct reporting line to the minister. A branch within a department, regardless of what department it is, does not have that kind of authority. It does not report to the minister. It reports to the deputy minister. It also has to compete with the other branches within a department when it comes to budget priorities and policies. It's that simple. This has greater authority than any branch in any department.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I was surprised to hear, Madam Minister, that the deputy minister of labour, who would have been speaking on behalf of the women's secretariat, has no right to meet with other departmental heads to co-ordinate their activities. I'm surprised to hear that that right is now denied to the deputy minister of labour.

Madam Minister, the concern which has been expressed to me is that if this secretariat is going to develop policy and programs, it could do so more effectively within a department where it would have access to the resources that a department has, rather than being free-standing where, I assume, it will not duplicate all of the resources and facilities and the mechanisms which a department has. If it were to co-ordinate, I would have thought it would have been a part of Executive Council. Virtually the only agencies which have any success in co-ordinating government action are those attached to Executive Council, and therefore report to the Premier.

Agencies which are supposed to develop policy and programs are normally part of a department, where they have the resources available in a department. There are examples of isolated agencies, that are rapidly disappearing under this administration, but there are examples of agencies who have, as a narrow function, to develop positions and publicize positions on certain issues.

An example is the transportation agency whose primary role was to publicize this province's opposition to rail line abandonment and change in the Crow rate. Madam Minister, your bird

seems to be neither fish nor fowl. It seems neither fish nor fowl. It is not attached to the Executive Council and therefore, I think, will not co-ordinate anything. It is not part of a department, and therefore is going to have some difficulty in developing new programs and policies. And since it does not have any authority to speak and make its reports public, it is not going to publicize any concerns of this government.

So I say, Madam Minister, what you have is neither fish nor fowl. What you have is clearly an attempt to pacify the women of the province who were outraged with the abolition of the women's division, without admitting you made the mistake. Madam Minister, may I have your comments on that dissertation?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, the first thing that crosses my mind is that he can't have it both ways. First, he criticizes the Premier and this government for the size of its Executive Council. Then he suggests that's where this should have been, in creasing the size of the council. I begin to wonder where he's coming from, and I'm sure a lot of others do too.

I would suggest to the hon. member from Regina Central that women do not need pacifying. In second reading we talked about some attitudes, and he's one of the greatest offenders of these attitudes. And another comment today that women need pacifying is just an indication that he really does need a greater understanding when it comes to the women's concerns and the role of women in government.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I'm quite prepared to let the record speak for itself. I do not think I am going to be particularly bothered by the minister's misinterpretation of the record.

Madam Minister, let us deal then, if you refuse to discuss the form that the agency should take . . . And I would have thought that's relevant, but apparently not. Apparently this government feels that to be not a proper subject for discussion in the House. I would have thought, Madam Minister, that whether this was in a department or in Executive Council or a free-standing agency, it would have been a legitimate subject of discussion in the committee of the whole.

I'm surprised to see the minister treats that subject with such disdain. I say, Madam Minister, that this bill shows the disdain which you've just exhibited for matters relating to public administration. This is neither fish nor fowl. It isn't going to do the job which was being done by the Department of Labour, and it is anything but clear what job you envisioned for this women's secretariat.

Mr. Minister, let us then try to get on to a more specific aspect of this == the matter of making its reports public. I have suggested in the second reading speech, and I'm about to introduce an amendment — I assume the Clerk has given you a copy of it — which would have this agency make its report public.

That isn't a startling . . . That isn't a startlingly new principle. It exists in other governments. Indeed, it is common in some other governments, but it is certainly not common with this government which came into office on a program of open government. It's been about as open as a bank vault.

But I say to you, Madam Minister, that you would do the public of Saskatchewan a service if you'd practice a bit of what you preach, and give this agency the authority and the responsibility to make its work and its reports public. And I would ask you to comment on that amendment.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, perhaps, Mr. Chairman, a brief comment to his preamble. This secretariat was never intended, nor has it been stated that it was intended, to do the job that the women's branch within the Department of Labour or in the Department of Advanced Education . . . Do you want to discuss it or not? Don't tell me I'm refusing to discuss it, and you won't listen.

It was never intended . . . Mr. Chairman, it was never intended to do the job of the women's branch when it was in the Department of Labour, or now that it's in the Department of Advanced Education. The women's branch had a specific mandate that fell within the purview of the particular department that it was in. They did not have the authority, nor the mandate, to co-ordinate overall government policy that affected more than one department. They simply didn't have that authority, nor did they have the authority or the responsibility to be reporting directly to the minister responsible. It went through the deputy. That's very clear, and it's very simple and easily understood.

A comment on the member's amendment, and what he says that this secretariat should be doing but it won't, I would refer him to section 7, clause c). And it simply says:

The minister has the responsibility for matters related to the status of women and may: c) make recommendations with respect to matters affecting the status of women.

It's a very powerful clause. It's not an unusual clause. Public reports often come out of departments with the same kind of clauses in legislation. I think you are looking for a worm within a can that isn't even there.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Perhaps the minister will help me. I don't have the minister's breadth of understanding of this subject. Would you, Madam Minister, outline for me what violence would be done to the public good by having this agency make its reports public? I understand what violence will be done to the Conservative government if its reports and publications are made public. I just don't understand what violence would be done to public good if my amendment is adopted. And I would ask the minister to deal with the issue, which the amendment addresses, of making reports and publications public, as distinct from being censored and laundered through the ministers' office.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I find your concern really contradictory in terms, of what you have done, what you do, and what you say. If my memory serves me right, last year in this Assembly, for the first time, there was a report tabled from the Attorney General on the Attorney General's Department — for the first time, the first time. Now you are saying, "public reports." I suggest that an annual report is a public report and I maintain, and I will stand by it, that the legislation before you allow the secretariat and the minister to publish public reports.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — But my amendment requires it as distinct from allowing it. What's wrong with that? My amendment requires it as distinct from allowing it, and what is wrong with that?

Why don't you have the honesty of the member from Regina North and admit that the reason why you're not adopting the amendment is because it emanates from the opposition?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, let me say I really appreciate your amendment, considering the fact that you stand up here and say you really don't understand it. You've done very well. That's very brave of you.

The advisory council to the status of women has the freedom to publish reports, do research, etc., I would guess that when it comes to what the public would like to see in reports — and when I say, "would like to see," I mean feeling easy with, that it has been done by an unbiased source — that is probably the route to go when you're talking about research projects and if they're going to be released to the public.

The fact that you have presented an amendment has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that I don't think it is required, that the bill stands on its own, it has addressed the concerns, and that you are probably setting up a smoke-screen for political expediency.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I am sure, Mr. Chairman, that the fact that it emanates from the opposition never entered the Minister's considerations. I take your word for it. I take your word for it.

Madam Minister, do you think the secretariat has a role to play in commenting on times such as minimum wage freeze, level of funding by the Department of Social Services and Health to non-government agencies, liquor advertising? Do you think the secretariat has a role to play in commenting on issue such as that?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I've already stated that the secretariat is basically a government agency to be pro-active, and develop and co-ordinate policies and bring to the attention of cabinet. That's what I have stated. If the issue is one of minimum wage, if it is one of community agencies, etc., where it does indeed affect the status of women then, yes, we will be bringing that to the attention of cabinet when it comes to the planning of priorities within government. That is the intention and the role of it.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — And if its comments are unfavourable to the government and critical of the government's actions, will those unfavourable and critical comments be freely published?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I really do think the member from Regina Centre really has a misunderstanding of what a secretariat, as a co-ordinating function within a government, is intended to do. I would suggest that you and I sit down and go over several things very thoroughly, and I will save you the embarrassment of doing it here.

The women's branch, when it was in the Department of Labour and particularly when Mr. Gordon Snyder, I believe, was the minister at the time . . . He had stated that one of the roles of the women's branch was to be this watch-dog of government. I find that very negative. I don't know how many groups within society, when they are trying to have input into government, have been put in such a negative confrontation role. I can't think of one other than that women's branch in the Department of Labour.

Just imagine yourself if we were to say to you, Mr. Member from Regina Centre: you're going to be the watch-dog. You are immediately in a position of nothing but confrontation — nothing but confrontation. You get no opportunity for positive input; you don't even get an opportunity to play a leadership role in it, by being in that position.

That was the position that they were in. We don't want that anymore. There has been enough confrontation. And I would suggest that there was perhaps a thought in somebody's mind that it was maybe even good for the government if the confrontation was there and the splits were there, because then the government can say, "Oh, they're undecided. One group's going this way, another one that way, and one over here. They can't even make up their own minds, so the government's not going to do anything." And that's precisely what you did. You didn't do anything, because of the adversarial role that it was put in as a watch-dog position — a monitoring.

There is nothing, nothing in the written mandate, when that branch was in the Department of Labour, to suggest that it should be developing and co-ordinating and communicating and getting people onside in order to understand the issues before the government of the day. It simply wasn't there.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Madam Minister, I may say that if the public were dissatisfied with the women's division, the problem was very effectively disguised because the women's division received nothing but accolades for its work. It enjoyed a national reputation for the quality of its work. So if there was a problem with its structure, you should congratulate us on disguising it very effectively.

Madam Minister, I want to know if you're going to try something new and different for this government. I want to find out how much imagination you've got. I want to know if you . . . And I want to remind the minister of your dismal record in appointing women to senior positions in government. And please do not repeat the speech of the Minister of Finance when he outlined all of the women you've appointed to all the boards. That's cheap and that's easy. It is a good deal more difficult, and a good deal more troublesome, to advance women within the public service generally. It is a good deal more difficult to advance the welfare of women within the public service, and you have a dismal record in that regard.

You came into office with what was admittedly not a satisfactory situation — three women who were permanent heads. Within six weeks to two months you didn't have any. You canned them all. Within three or four months you scarcely had any permanent heads left because you fired most of them, and that gave you an unparalleled opportunity to promote women to senior positions. You had an opportunity which we didn't, because we never had them all vacant all at the same time. You didn't make use of the opportunity. You didn't appoint anyone as a permanent head, with the exception of the Minister of International Trade and Economic Development or some such handle, who appointed his ministerial assistant as deputy provincial secretary. I do not know Miss Jermyn, if that's the way you pronounce her name. I do know that promoting a ministerial assistant as a permanent head is not what I had thought of when we talked about advancing women through the public service. She didn't advance through the public service at all. She came from a ministerial office to being deputy provincial secretary.

So, you have a complete and utter failure, Madam Minister — a complete and utter failure to appoint women to senior positions with government. I want to know if you're going to break with that sordid past and appoint a woman to this position who is both independent and credible. Really, the question, Madam Minister, is whether or not you have anyone in mind for this position. If you don't have anybody specifically in mind . . . Ah, there's the Minister of Consumer Affairs giving you some assistance. I will no doubt be of endless assistance to the minister. Madam Minister, do you have anyone in mind? If you don't, will you tell us who . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . She would have a good deal of credibility. The Minister of Justice mentions Louise Simard. She'd have a lot more credibility than some of the names I have heard bandied about. Madam Minister, do you have anyone in mind and if you don't, do you have any qualifications in mind? Can you tell us what sort of person you're looking for?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, you know, surely to goodness . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I use the phrase lightly. We've heard it so often enough in this House that it becomes rather ingrained on one's mind.

The member from Regina Centre uses this milestone with the NDP government about three women as permanent heads. I've never heard him go any further than that — just these three positions as permanent heads. I would suggest that he go back and he take a look at a few other positions. They were mentioned in this House yesterday. I talked about a female in the top position for the Teachers' Superannuation commission — first time that it's ever happened. I would suggest that that's a permanent head. I talked about the Provincial Librarian — that's a permanent head — executive director of it.

I think you have to look at a few other areas also, and where some of the biggest gains are to be made in the shortest of time lines. That's through the middle management series and through the executive development program. There are more women in the executive development program than what there has been in the past. I take a look at the percentages and the gain since before 1982 and after April of 1982, and we have doubled the percentage of women in middle management positions.

Now, I think you should take a look at those. You ask me to be honest. I'm asking you to be honest. You look at something more than three deputy minister positions. You are also forgetting the deputy for the Provincial Secretary; it's a woman . . . (inaudible interjection) . . .

Well, what is it you want? Are you telling me that if women — very capable, qualified women — are appointed that that doesn't count? That doesn't make sense. Of course, it counts, whether she's appointed or not.

Let's go one step further. Let's look at a few of the boards and commissions, again . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Oh, those don't count. Is that what you're saying — they don't count? My guess is they don't count with the NDP. But if you truly want to take your advice from the grass roots and from the expertise that's out there, outside of government, then you'd better be listening to the boards, and the commissions. They do count, regardless of what you say.

The gains have been substantial. Yesterday I mentioned the fact that the Saskatchewan Transportation Corporation (STC) for the first time — and I would suspect it's the first time out of all the corporations except for Sask Minerals when the minister of consumer affairs was chairman — we have a chairman for STC, female.

I take a look at one more step that is fundamental in getting women into the mainstream. While you like to ignore it, it is the fact of the elected people. I go back and I take a look at where female candidates were running, particularly with your party, and I would suggest that you were extremely adept at putting them into non-viable, non-winning constituencies.

The head position of the secretariat. I can only tell you I have no intentions of hiring the five Koskies that used to work for government when you were in power. I really don't have any intent of hiring your leaders' daughter or niece. I do suspect they're probably still working for government, but won't be in this position. And other than that I know who are not going to encourage to apply for the position. No, I really don't have anybody in mind yet, but I can assure you that if you were interested and it is advertised, then please send your resume in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The member for The Battlefords. Order, order. The member for The Battlefords.

MR. MORIN: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like to beg leave of this Assembly to introduce some guests to it, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: — The member from Battleford has asked leave to introduce some guests. Is leave granted?

Leave granted.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. MORIN: — Mr. Chairman, I'd like at this time to introduce some visitors to our Chamber who I took liberty of introducing earlier, and unfortunately they were a little late getting here. So again, on behalf of my colleague, the member from Cut Knife-Lloydminster who is unable to be here today, I'd like to introduce a group of students from Sweet Grass School in the Cut Knife-Lloydminster riding — quite new to the Battlefords, I might add. And they are accompanied by Ron Zoller; their teacher, Jean Zoller; and Mr. Rod Albert. And I would ask that all members join with me in welcoming them to this House. I understand they've had the opportunity of meeting with the Premier already, and some pictures with him, and I'm sure that you have enjoyed the thrust of the debate you've seen in the House so far today.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 1 — An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat (continued)

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Those guests are fortunate, indeed, to witness a more civilized portion of today's proceedings than the question period. They are fortunate, indeed.

Madam Minister, I was kind of hoping that you might avoid appointing a person such as myself, whose primary qualifications have been a good deal of activity in the political field. That's really what I was hoping you'd avoid. I was rather you would find someone of some independent stature. That's really what I was urging upon the minister.

Madam Minister, I have a question arising out of your comments. Do I understand from what the minister stated a moment ago, several moments ago, that this secretariat will not have as a primary function the development of policy and programs. Its primary function is one of co-ordinating government activities. Did I understand the minister correctly in an earlier comment?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — No, no, you didn't. I said it will be pro-active, and it will have the function of co-ordination. I also said that, in terms of the development of policy, that it would be playing a role in the co-ordination, but that doesn't exempt it from bringing forth its own piece of policy or legislation for cabinet consideration.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Would you be specific, Madam Minister? I grant you it will have a role to play of some degree. I'm trying to find out what degree. Does this have primary responsibility for developing policies and programs to advance women, or does it have a secondary role which would be commenting upon and working with other departments? What is its role? Does it have a primary role for developing these programs, or merely a secondary role of commenting upon and co-ordinating?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, let me lay out four roles. Okay, starting with number one. The first very important function of the secretariat, after January 1, is going to be to develop formal and informal mechanisms for the integration of women's concerns into government's decision-making processes. That's going to be the first thing we are going to have to start working on.

Number two, to co-ordinate provincial legislation, policies, and programs as required, to ensure that the concerns of women are taken into consideration.

Number three, to support government departments and agencies in their efforts to address the needs and concerns that women may have or the programs that they may be developing in order to look at this.

And, fourthly, to act as a central point of contact for women's groups, and also with a federal and provincial communication on status of women matters.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I take it then, from the minister's comments, that it will not have a primary role in developing policies and programs, but has a secondary role pursuing the objectives the minister just outlined.

I want to pursue this because I'm wondering what sort of a budget the minister would expect. Would the minister expect there to be research staff, by way of example, attached to the department? If it's going to develop policies and program, I would have thought it would. Does the minister envision research staff? Without fine-tuning the figure, what staff do you expect to be attached to this secretariat?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I don't really have any numbers for you. I guess I'm taking it one step at a time, and after January 1 then we will be getting into the issue of staffing.

Yes, I do envision some research in it and that would mean a research staff, or person, or persons.

Other than that, I just can't give you any more information. I think you've got the cart before the horse.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — How many staff would you envision the secretariat having, in round figures, by the end of its first year of operation?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Did you say, "by the end of the first year"?

AN HON. MEMBER: — Pick any reasonable time that you want.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, okay, let's pick the end of the first year. I guess I would see anything like 5, 6, 7, in that range, at the end of the first year.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — And do I take it that the secretariat will not be administering any programs, such as the affirmative action program of the public service? Do I take it that they will not be administering any programs, but merely pursuing the functions which you outlined?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — I have stated very clearly and emphasize in any public statements that we would not be dealing with, or administering, specific program areas, that this function was one of development and co-ordination.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 6

MR. SHILLINGTON: — I have a question on that clause. Does the minister have something specific in mind with respect to an advisory committee? Does the minister intend to set up such a body, or is that nothing more than enabling legislation in case the minister should be moved, at some future time, to seek the opinions of a representative of the public?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, I'm glad you have a concern on the advisory council, considering your actions in 1979. If the member does not know by now, I will inform him that there were some new appointments to the advisory council on November 1. It was also expanded to include more rural people and greater representation when it came to the areas of the work-force. We have a total of 19 members now. Three of those are male, and the rest is divided between urban and rural. We also, for the first time, formally invited four or five women's organizations to submit names, and they took the opportunity to do so and were more than pleased that they had that particular opportunity. So we do have a council in place, appointed November 1 of 1983 for the year, and I have no intentions of doing away with the status advisory council.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — So do I understand the minister correctly that the purpose of this section as you now see it is to make appointments to bodies such as the council? You don't envision any new additional advisory committees with any more specific functions than the council? Do I understand you correctly?

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well no I don't, right at this point in time, but that's not to say somewhere down the road. As you well know, governments can often set up task force, commission, or advisory committee on either a very general area or a very specific area as the issues come up. That could very well be in the future, but at this point in time I don't see any.

Clause 6 agreed to.

Clause 7

MR. SHILLINGTON: — We've discussed this before, and I don't intend to dwell on it for an overly long period of time. I say that this government in the last week or so has raised the art of obfuscation to a new level. I have rarely seen a government which went to such lengths to avoid discussing some fairly straightforward subjects.

The question I'd like to address to Madam Minister is not whether or not they will make recommendations under section c). The question is not whether or not they might otherwise co-ordinate policies and programs. I grant that.

The narrow issue which I'd like you to address yourself to is a requirement that their reports, and their publications, and their work be made public, so that if they have a comment adverse to the interests of those in power on minimum wage, funding to non-government agencies, or pension plans, the public will have the benefit of those comments, and they will not be censored or suppressed by a government which doesn't want to encourage criticism of itself.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, I just find it extremely interesting that you are still going to be hung up on this "may" and this "shall". I recall some arguments of past governments for enabling legislation with any department or agency, and it was a "may". This is no different than any other legislation for government agencies or departments, this "may" clause.

We will be tabling an annual report in this House.

I think what you are asking for is for this secretariat to have special status. And all we are asking for, and all that women have ever asked for, is that we have equal status, not special status. And what your amendment is asking for is to once again set something out in isolation and put that special status on it, and not the equal status where you can integrate and work it into the mainstream. Therefore, I reject the "shall" that you were asking for.

I would also like to state: it is not our intention to duplicate what other departments are doing. And that's the area that you are getting into. You are asking for, once again, inefficiencies through duplication, and that is not our intent. Our intent is to work closely with a very high degree of understanding in getting some of those women's concerns into various departments.

You want to talk about the issues of concern to women, including minimum wage and labour standards. We have a department that does that now. I also want to remind you and emphasize that that is not a women's issue. It affects a fair number of women, but that is not an isolated of these women's issues, as they've been defined, indeed are not women's issues. They may have a high impact on women, and that's our concern, and we want to bring that to the attention of the department so that it does get some attention. I would recommend that we vote against your amendment.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Madam Minister, the problem with the minimum wage . . . the minimum wage illustrates the problem. The minister in charge of the minimum wage is a man who had the temerity to say in this House that he was in favour of women. After all, he was condescending enough to marry one. The minister's very words when we discussed this in estimates. Madam Minister, I repeat for your benefit, and for the benefit of the members of the House with respect to any special status for women, the words of Mr. Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, when speaking in the Supreme Court of the United States. He stated that:

Equal laws applied to unequal people is a kind of discrimination.

If you think about that for a moment, the truth of the statement is manifestly obvious. If people are not equal, it makes no sense to apply laws to them equally. I say, Madam Minister, we are in favour of special treatment for women. We have always been, and by suggesting that you just

want to treat women equally, you are doing them a great disservice.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Well, I really reject what you just said. And I'm going to contradict what you just said. That you have always, always been concerned and wanted special status for women. I go back to 1979, and you cut back that grant to the advisory council on the status of women, and you were going to phase it out in two years time. Now how does that stand with what you just said?

And I'm going to remind you of something else. In 1981 when the debate on the federal constitution was taking place, and that little guy that sits next to the member from Shaunavon, in trying to gain political points . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You're saying he was misunderstood, and he was misinterpreted. Well, you're going to have a fine time proving that to me, that supposedly a statesman of this country stands up, and he's willing to negotiate the equality of rights for the equality of rights for another group. Like, man, you are not only out in left field, you're over the fence on that issue. So you try and convince me further . . .

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Amendment negated on the following recorded division.

YEAS — 8

Blakeney
Thompson
Engel

Lingenfelter
Koskie
Lusney

Shillington
Yew

NAYS — 32

Birkbeck
Lane
Rousseau
Katzman
Pickering
McLaren
Garner
Smith (Swift Current)
Baker
Hepworth
Schoenhals

Duncan
Klein
Dutchak
Embury
Dirks
Domotor
Petersen
Bacon
Sveinson
Hodgins
Smith (Moose Jaw South)

Myers
Caswell
Gerich
Boutin
Schmidt
Meagher
Sauder
Zazelenchuk
Martens
Weiman

Clause 7 agreed to.

Clauses 8 to 12 inclusive agreed to.

Clause 13

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Mr. Chairman, I want to make a comment with respect to — maybe not with respect to this section, it just happens to be the last section in the bill. And I will say that we will be voting in favour of this with a good deal of disappointment — a good deal of disappointment.

To coin a phrase, there is so much more we could have been. So much more we could have

been. You abolished a division, which was the women's division, which was doing an excellent job. You replace it with this limp secretariat which doesn't have the mandate to do all that needs to be done. Nevertheless, as I have said with other bills, a half measure may prove to be better than no measure at all. It is not clear that you can make the situation worse. We are therefore going to, with considerable disappointment, vote in favour of this.

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Chairman, perhaps a brief remark. I find that the hon. member from Regina Centre is still using the word "abolished". I guess if there is one thing that women learn early in life, for whatever reason, it is that thou shalt listen when somebody else has the floor. The women's branch has not been abolished nor disbanded, and the hon. member from Regina Centre keeps referring to that.

And I'm going to issue a challenge to the hon. member from Regina Centre today and invite him down to Victoria and Broad to visit the women's resource centre — and perhaps within the next week, if he can find some time. And then I want him to come back in this House and tell this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan that there is no longer a women's branch and a resource centre — that it has been abolished. I put that challenge to him today in all great sincerity and honesty.

One further comment . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . You're right. There is so much more we can be as women, and that is the basic intent. We can be more than minimum wage. And we can be more than a lot of other things, and don't you ever forget that. There's more than minimum wage. There's a lot of job opportunities, and there's a great future for women if a few attitudes in this House changed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

Clause 13 agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the bill.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 1 — An Act to establish the Women's Secretariat

HON. MRS. SMITH: — Mr. Speaker, I move this bill be read a third time and passed under title.

Motion agreed to on the following recorded division and bill read a third time.

YEAS — 43

Muller	Embury	Meagher
Birkbeck	Dirks	Sauder
Lane	Domotor	Zazelenchuk
Rousseau	Muirhead	Martens
Katzman	Petersen	Weiman
Pickering	Bacon	Morin
McLaren	Sveinson	Blakeney
Garner	Hodgins	Thompson
Smith (Swift Current)	Smith (Moose Jaw South)	Engel
Baker	Myers	Lingenfelter
Hepworth	Caswell	Koskie
Schoenhals	Gerich	Lusney
Duncan	Boutin	Shillington
Klein	Schmidt	Yew
Dutchak		

NAYS — nil

HON. MR. GARNER: — Mr. Speaker, it now being 1 o'clock, and before I move that this House does now adjourn, I would like to wish everyone a very restful week-end, and please drive carefully. And, with that, I move that this House does now adjourn.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:49 p.m.