

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

December 11, 1984

EVENING SITTING

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 2 — An Act to establish the Employment Development Agency

HON. MR. LANE: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will be my pleasure at the end of my remarks to move second reading of Bill 2, an Act respecting The Employment Development Agency Act of 1984.

The establishment of the Saskatchewan Employment Development Agency is an indication of this government's faith in Saskatchewan residents. This government is committed to maximizing the growth and development of human resources. The agency we are establishing will maintain close contact with Saskatchewan residents at the community level, and the public will be encouraged to participate in discussions, and assist in creating employment development strategies that will show positive results in their communities and in their lives. The agency will ensure that employment development initiatives are consistent with the overall economic development policy of the province.

Saskatchewan's record of job creation is something that all of us can be proud of, but more can be accomplished. We will continue to create jobs, Mr. Speaker, and achieve even higher levels of employment. These goals, however, have more to do with the state of the economy than simply government action or reaction. That is why the Employment Development Agency is mandated not only to co-ordinate job creation, but to promote long-term development in the economy, and involves Saskatchewan people in developing our human resources.

The Employment Development Agency will be taking a look at the 26 existing programs which are designed to create jobs, provide work experiences, or provide skills training. New approaches will be examined and implemented where feasible. A greater role in education and training by the private sector is being assessed. In order to fulfil its mandate, the Employment Development Agency will maintain and update an inventory of employment development programs and policies offered by the various governments of Saskatchewan and Canada. It will promote the development of programs by individual departments and create a process so that departments can monitor and co-ordinate their employment development initiatives.

The agency will ensure that all sectors of the public at large have a share in the success of the employment development process, and will act as a catalyst for employment ideas inside and outside the government. It will pay special attention to the needs of groups such as the rural unemployed, youth, natives, women, and the handicapped. And the agency will inform the public of employment development opportunities offered by the government. The agency will set employment goals or targets, match employers with the unemployed, and will encourage more on-site technical training in the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, this government has already recorded a number of achievements with its employment policies. Saskatchewan was the only province in Canada to create new jobs in 1982. This was the only province to have more people employed in 1983 than 1981. The population growth of Saskatchewan has indicated the attractiveness of our economic vitality, as the population has passed the million mark for the first time. It now stands at over 1,028,000. In just two and a half years over 60,000 people have increased the population in Saskatchewan. the labour force is growing accordingly, reaching close to half a million people.

Mr. Speaker, some of the areas of job creation, of course, that many people in Saskatchewan look to, are some of the programs such as the Saskatchewan Employment Development Program, which has created approximately 1,500 new jobs; Opportunities '84, which was summer employment, 4,000 jobs last summer; Access Youth program, and there's a demand already for

an extension of that, for approximately 1,000; native career development; industrial incentive program — already created over 1,500 new jobs. Mr. Speaker, I could go on. Last year approximately 8,500 jobs were created through those programs.

Mr. Speaker, when we assumed office we moved quickly to fulfil a promise to expand the technical education opportunities in Saskatchewan. Already the impact of that commitment is being felt in our technical institutes, where almost 1,100 additional spaces were created in 1983 alone. With planned expansions, and the opening of a new technical school in Prince Albert, there will be 3,100 additional student spaces by 1987.

The technical schools are already feeling the impact of Saskatchewan Skills Development Program, announced in the budget of 1984. That program aims to provide educational opportunities to 3,500 welfare recipients through the technical schools and the community colleges. About 40 per cent of the training spaces have already been allocated for adult basic education and upgrading courses at the community colleges. Indeed, the province's 16 community colleges have responded to the challenges given them, increasing the hours of instruction by 25 per cent in 1983-84 over the previous years. These initiatives, long overdue, have proved their effectiveness. And we will continue to offer people opportunities to upgrade and expand their job skills.

Mr. Speaker, I have mentioned before, and other members have mentioned before, some of the exciting job creation projects that have begun or are planned in our province, attracted by government initiative and favourable economic conditions. In the Regina area alone, we have a \$600 million heavy oil upgrader at the co-op refinery. Kalium Chemicals is proceeding with a \$100 million expansion at its potash mine at Belle Plaine. Ipsco is working on a \$63 million modernization project, which will keep the steel mill world-competitive. Three major office towers are under construction in downtown Regina.

Saskatchewan's oil industry has rebounded from several disastrous years under the previous administration to boast record drilling totals, record drilling totals over the past two years. The government's oil and gas royalty policy is a winner to the point where the Alberta NDP, Mr. Speaker, have adopted the Conservative policy of Saskatchewan, because they realize that Alberta must compete with Saskatchewan, whereas previously it was the other way around, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, new jobs have been created in the oil patch, as the industry invests approximately 4 to \$600 million annually in Saskatchewan. Further spin-off benefits are felt in the service and supply sector, Mr. Speaker, especially in many of the smaller communities of our province. These benefits are achieved at a far lower cost than the old NDP incentive program, which was extremely difficult to administer, very costly, and did not get any results.

As a further example, I would point out that oil and natural gas rights sales this year have reached a new record of approximately \$124 million, surpassing last year's record of \$108 million. By contrast, under the NDP policy, sales totalled \$37 million in 1981, and \$34 million in 1982. We have every expectation that the momentum in the oil patch will continue with new upgraders, as I say, in Regina and Lloydminster.

The Husky Oil facility, with a cost of \$2.3 billion, will be the largest construction project of its kind of western Canada, and will demand hundreds of new wells for years to come as the upgrader comes on stream, with a total investment during the life of the project, Mr. Speaker, of approximately \$28 billion — Mr. Speaker, an astronomical sum, and a tremendous project for all people in Saskatchewan.

Investment is going ahead in other resources. Twenty million dollars is spent at the Rocanville potash mine to install new technology for the handling of potash brine and salt tailings. An ongoing expansion of the program at the Lanigan potash mine will invest \$436 million in the

expansion of mining and milling facilities. Amok is spending approximately \$100 million on phase 2 of its Cluff Lake uranium mine, while Eldorado Nuclear is investing \$100 million at Rabbit Lake to extend the production life of its mine and mill.

Mr. Speaker, the previous administration took \$600 million of the taxpayers' money to invest in uranium mines in the North. The people have not seen any pay-back from that massive investment, nor are they likely to in the foreseeable future. The previous administration, having made that major investment of \$600 million of taxpayers' money, say that they would now close those mines and walk away from an investment of \$600 million.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the government and the people involved together can make our economy work.

We do not look upon a \$6.50 per hour minimum wage as a job creating activity. In fact, Mr. Speaker, it would inhibit job creation in our province, which already has the highest minimum wage in the country, and we could estimate that we could lost at least 15,000 jobs with that type of change.

The NDP would create larger Crown corporations, would nationalize the resource industries, Mr. Speaker, the only proposal we've had from the government opposite, the members opposite, would be . . . (inaudible interjections) . . . Oh, don't get your hopes up. Mr. Speaker, Santa Claus may be coming, Mr. Speaker, but he's not coming for the members opposite. We can rest assure them of that, Mr. Speaker, and it would take a lot more than Santa Claus to have them have their wishes met. Mr. Speaker, they may be telling a few fairy tales to themselves; the people of Saskatchewan obviously are not listening to them.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated some earlier initiatives. We have, in the city of Saskatoon, \$30 million office tower. Obviously, many of these require government initiative or some government assistance, or government taking up space to cause that type of expansion. Residential commercial high-rise, 7 million; condominium, 15 million; geological sciences of 18.7 million. Mr. Speaker, there are projects going on in virtually every part of Saskatchewan because of the initiatives of this government, Mr. Speaker, initiatives which everyone but the opposition seems to agree with.

Mr. Speaker, the initiative coming from the opposition is simply that labour unions become more militant. This would, in our view — excuse me, Mr. Speaker — undermine the argument of the NDP that the union leaders become more militant, will undermine an important area of confidence in our economy. In short, Mr. Speaker, in order to create the demand in the economy, there must be an attitude far more positive than that exemplified by the members opposite. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, that negative approach can lessen demand and create unemployment.

Mr. Speaker, when we compare with the province of Manitoba, recent economists, economic studies, have indicated that the unemployment rate in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, will approximate 9.1 per cent in 1985, and that Manitoba in 1985-86 will have difficulty, Mr. Speaker, maintaining its unemployment level below the national average.

(1915)

Mr. Speaker, we know that positive policies and programs bring a positive response from Saskatchewan people. The Employment development Agency will draw that positive response from all organizations, community clubs, service clubs, municipal leaders of this province. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow I will be announcing, tomorrow I will be announcing some new initiatives, new initiatives which will, Mr. Speaker, result in additional employment of approximately 4,500.

On Thursday of this week, Mr. Speaker, I will be meeting with the federal minister responsible for

employment, and in a co-operative atmosphere, Mr. Speaker, we will be developing new initiatives, and pursuing new initiatives which will create further employment for the youth of the province of Saskatchewan.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

HON. MR. LANE: — The agency, then, will co-ordinate the employment development activities of all departments and agencies of the Government of Saskatchewan, including Crown corporations. The employment development agency will permit the minister responsible and the agency to begin to encourage and stimulate job creation, and to begin, Mr. Speaker, to listen to the people of Saskatchewan for their initiatives and their suggestions, something that previously was not done by the previous administration in this province.

Mr. Speaker, we intend to encourage and stimulate job creation, planning and research, and job development ideas, whether from the government or the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of an Act to establish the Employment Development Agency of 1984.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As is appropriate in second reading, I do not intend to deal with the detail of the Bill. What I do want to talk about is what this Bill says about this government, its energy, its breadth of vision, and its complete bankruptcy in terms of anything in the way of a meaningful program.

And I listened to the speech from the Minister of Justice. I listened to his speech, hoping that I would hear some vision of how they intend to deal with the most serious unemployment situation we have had since the 1930s. What we were treated to as a rendition, very little of it accurate, about how great things were in Saskatchewan, what a great job they'd done of job creation, what a great job this government had done of encouraging the economy.

The truth of the matter is well known to, I think, everyone — probably the members opposite — and that is that this government has an abysmal track record that was apparent during the federal election. That means there's a deep hole, in which nothing comes out and nothing can be seen . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Is that where your two seats fell into?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — That's where your seat's going after the next election. That's where yours is going.

What we got was some more of the inane cheer-leading to which we have been treated whenever the Premier is in the House for question period. We now have nothing more than a second cheer-leader, a second person, who along with the member from Last Mountain, the member from Estevan, is going to tell us how great things are. The truth of the matter is quite different from how it's described. One of the things that became clear during the federal election was that the folks out there felt that something more needed to be done about unemployment.

In November, the number . . . I may say that in November, the number of unemployed jumped by 6,000. And members opposite say, "Oh, that's just aberration. Blame that on the agricultural crisis." In November of 1983, there were 33,000 unemployed. In November of 1984, the rate was up to 8.3 from 7.1. That is almost a 20 per cent increase.

Over the past year . . . One year ago, Saskatchewan had the sixth worst job creation record in Canada. That has steadily deteriorated to the seventh in spring, the eighth by mid-summer, the

ninth by fall. And I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that by spring we will indeed be number one and world-class when it comes to unemployment.

In Saskatchewan, in Canada as a whole, new jobs have . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — Doom and gloom.

MR. SHILLINGTON: — Well, I'm afraid that's the fact. The members opposite say that's doom and gloom. To accurately describe the situation in Saskatchewan is to describe a very gloomy situation. And indeed I apologize to members opposite for telling the truth. I know members opposite don't want to hear it. But the fact is that this government's job creation record would embarrass any but a government this arrogant.

Two point four per cent more jobs were created in Canada. In Manitoba new jobs . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . No, most of the bumper stickers in my riding say, "Unemployment's Devine". They seem to have ascribed it to a different . . . I haven't seen any signs saying "Unemployment is Shillington"; they all seem to say, "Unemployment's Devine".

In Manitoba new jobs have been created at the rate of 1.7 per cent. Saskatchewan, with vastly more resources, vastly more to work with, has only created jobs at the rate of 0.9 per cent: one-half of the Manitoba rate; one-third of the Canadian rate.

Contrary to what the members opposite say and what the Minister of Justice just finished saying, Saskatchewan does not have a good . . . does not have a fast-growing labour force. Saskatchewan ranks number 7, and I may say that's down from number 5 last fall; the situation is steadily deteriorating. Six other provinces have a better . . . have a faster-growing labour force than Saskatchewan.

The youth unemployment. Both the member from the Battlefords and the Minister of Justice talked about the new jobs created for the youth. They might be interested in looking at some of the information from StatsCanada. The number of employed youth in Saskatchewan, the number of young people under 25 employed, has fallen by 2,000 since last year. There are 2,000 fewer people under 25 years of age in Saskatchewan with jobs this year than last year.

In the last budget, the Minister of Finance promised to make youth employment a priority. Well, all I can say is, I hope the minister doesn't make it a priority another year because I don't think this province can stand much more of his kindly attention. The number of unemployed youth in the province has gone up by 3 per cent, so the figures about match.

One of the signs of a tired government is a government that substitutes reorganization for programs, and this government has done nothing about unemployment except reorganize.

In a press release sent out by the Executive Council over the name of the Premier — the date is March 23rd, '83 — the Premier announced what? A winter works program? Not even by march of last year did they have a winter works program.

He announced in March of '83 a major reorganization of government departments and agencies. He was going to do an extensive review of government operations and he said —and you know what he promised last March — a new department. We'll have a new department to handle this problem.

The new department was the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower, which would, in addition to its responsibilities for adult education, provide the vehicle for meeting Saskatchewan's need, long-term need, for skilled labour, and be responsible for new employment initiatives for young people. That was what we were told last March would be the solution to what is evidently a very serious unemployment problem. What happened? Well

during the summer, I think members opposite heard the same rumblings from the federal election as members of this side of the House heard, because shortly after the federal election, there was a cabinet think-tank . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, I know my colleagues are critical of the amount of thinking that was done in this tank, but I say, be charitable. Keep in mind who was in the tank. you can only work with what you've got. But at any rate, for whatever ability was there, they announced that they were going to have: a new program? No. No programs for unemployment; no programs which would assist youth unemployment; nothing which would assist the skilled tradesmen in my riding and in yours, who cannot find jobs.

What did the Premier announce? yet another bureaucratic overlay. Yet another reorganization. This time they would be coordinating all government activities. How that differs from his announcement of last year, of March 25, which said that the Department of Advanced and Education and Manpower would co-ordinate similar programs, ensure accountability, simplify communication, and reduce confusion . . . I don't suppose members opposite are very anxious to hear what the premier indicated that the new department would do. Exactly the same things, exactly the same things. It is a sign of the bankruptcy of this government in terms of programs that they have not been able to come up with any programs to deal with unemployment. What we have instead is yet more bureaucracies. In deed, you know, the problem is not entirely a new one. The problem is not entirely a new one. I clipped a quotation, and the quotation's from someone who might have made a contribution to the cabinet think-tank, but unfortunately was not invited. He said . . .

AN HON. MEMBER: — What's your source?

MR. SHILLINGTON: — My source is Petronius Arbiter, who said it in 210 B.C. and he said the following. Well, you know, some comments are timeless. He said the following:

We trained hard, but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up into teams, we would be reorganized. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by reorganizing, and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency, and demoralization.

That, Mr. Speaker, is precisely what three consecutive reorganizations have done. They have produced confusion, inefficiency, and the demoralization of the Conservative Party is evident for all to see.

We had hoped that we might have from the Minister of Justice some indication of what a winter works program might look like. We were not promised a winter works program, and that indeed is all the more surprising when you consider that this is not a problem the government became aware of yesterday. The government's pollsters are fairly adept at pin-pointing problems. Unfortunately, the pollsters can't write programs. That's left to this hapless group, and this group has no programs.

It's the only explanation I could have for the fact that you have, on four consecutive occasions, pin-pointed Saskatchewan's number one problem. You said in November of '83 it was to be the number one priority. You said in the March budget . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . Well, in the throne speech in 1982, you were fortunate enough to have a job creation program left over from the former administration which was working, and which produced a level of employment which was considerably higher than what we have now. At that point in time, you were able to run on our record.

(1930)

The same priority was given to job creation in March of '84. Once again, in September of '84, the Premier announced that unemployment was the number one problem. What do we have? It is December 11th, and we have no job creation program, and excuses for that must be really hard

to come by, by a government that has been claiming it to be its number one priority for over a year.

It is apparent that this government has done nothing. It is apparent that the government is going to do nothing. Mr. Speaker, I and my colleagues are very disappointed. We are disappointed in the lack of vision, in the lack of anything in the way of meaningful assistance. We want an opportunity to review the Bill to see if there isn't some contribution which we could make, which would assist this government in meeting its responsibilities. Because we want an opportunity to review the Bill and attempt to make some improvements on it, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave of the House to move now to second reading of a Bill to amend The Legal Profession Act.

THE SPEAKER: — The House Leader has asked to leave. Is leave granted? Leave has not been granted.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think ask for leave to move to send reading of a Bill to amend The Forest Act.

THE SPEAKER: — The House Leader has asked to leave to move to second reading of a Bill to amend The Forest Act. Is leave granted? Leave has not been granted.

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, I would then ask for leave to move to Committee of the Whole. I don't need leave. Let's say, go to the Committee of the Whole.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Bill No. 6 — An Act to amend The public Health Act

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I'd like to introduce the legal counsel in my Department, Gerry Tagert, sitting beside me.

I do have a Hearing Aid Plan, but I will speak a little louder. He is a solicitor in the Department of Health. I called him legal counsel, but solicitor, if that's better, then we'll take that. And if anyone needs the Hearing Aid Plan, make an appointment.

Clause 1

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, as I pointed out in the second reading speech, that we don't have a lot of questions. Apparently, as I understand it, what you're doing is changing the penalty clause of the Act around, and I wonder if you could, here, just give us the amounts that were in the Act or in regulation, and what you're changing it to.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — Yes, I would be pleased to give you that information. The current Act, as I said in my second reading speech, but I'll go over that again for the members if that's okay. A maximum penalty it was of \$100 for first offence, and a maximum penalty of \$10 for each subsequent day until the necessary corrective action is taken. And there was no differentiation between individuals or corporations in the existing Act.

In the new Act, if you will notice on section 82(2):

An individual who commits an offence is liable: for a first offence, to a fine of not more than \$1,000 and to further fine of not more than \$50 for each day during which

the offence continues;

So that is up to that. The courts have the discretion. And:

for a second or subsequent offence, to a fine of not more than \$5,000 and to a further fine of not more than \$50 for each day during which the offence continues.

That's for an individual.

A corporation which commits an offence is liable: for a first offence, . . . of not more than \$5,000 and to a further fine of not more than \$500 for each day which the offence continues; (and) for a second or subsequent offence, to a fine of not more than \$10,000 and to a further fine of not more than \$500 for each day during which the offence continues.

So, just to recap: previously, it was \$110 a day, there was no difference between individuals and corporations, \$100 was the fine and \$10 for each subsequent day. We have raised that substantially. We've made a differentiation between an individual and a corporation.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you can explain the rationale for increasing it from \$10 a day, that's part of it, to \$50 a day. Was that based on some rationale, or was it just a number that somebody advised you to put in there, or what was the rationale for picking the \$50 a day and the \$1,000 for the first offence for an individual?

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — The reason for going to those figures is that it's pretty well in keeping with what other provinces do in regard to their public health acts, and also closer in keeping with the fines under the Department of Environment or the Department of Occupational Health and Safety. It's bringing it in line with those.

MR. LINGENFELTER: — Mr. Minister, I wonder if you could outline for us when you're referring to the individual who commits an offence, can you outline the offences that would fit into that and give us some examples — a broad set of examples that would fall into that group.

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — I suppose one that is probably the most easy to relate to would be a public eating establishment with contaminated food — things of this nature. That would be an example.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 5 inclusive agreed to.

The committee agreed to report the Bill.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 6 – An Act to amend The Public Health Act

HON. MR. TAYLOR: — With leave now, Mr. Speaker. I move that the Bill be read a third time and passed under its title.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time.

THE SPEAKER: — When shall the committee meet again?

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, since today is private members' day, and I notice on the order paper the Liberal member for the House doesn't have

one motion — not one item on the order paper. Not one, and, Mr. Speaker, because the opposition, because the opposition in their spirit of co-operation . . .

THE SPEAKER: — Order, please. There's no opportunity at this time for speeches. If the member has something . . .

HON. MR. BERNTSON: — Mr. Speaker, because of, because of the lack of Liberal co-operation, Mr. Speaker, and I, I hesitate . . . I know that the motion for adjournment, I know that the motion for adjournment is a non-debatable motion . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I don't know why you're such a fog horn tonight, you . . .

(1945)

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, if I could get the attention of the House I would like to move that this House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 7:46 p.m.