

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**February 25, 1993**

The Assembly met at 3 p.m.

**The Speaker:** — I beg to inform the Assembly that I have received a communication from the private secretary to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor stating that Her Honour will open the third session of the twenty-second legislature at 3 p.m. today, the 25th day of February, 1993.

3:03 p.m.

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

Mr. Speaker,

Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is my privilege to welcome you to the third session of the twenty-second legislature of Saskatchewan.

Today, as I speak, I invite you to pay honour to Madame Jeanne Sauvé, who died on January 26th. A native of Prud'homme, Madame Sauvé won our pride and respect as we watched her distinguished career and her courageous battle against illness. Her achievements will inspire the generations of women who follow.

When my government assumed office it urged the people of Saskatchewan to join in a journey of renewal — a journey to right the wrongs of the past and rebuild our economy and society together.

And when this Assembly convened in 1992, my government set forth its broad objectives for that journey: to restore common sense and competence to the management of the public treasury; to restore public faith in the ability of politicians to service the public interest; to give new hope to the less fortunate; and to bring people together.

Judge us, my government said, on our success in achieving these objectives. This government renews that invitation today.

The journey is not an easy one. But all the elements required to build a better future are here. To make sure that future is the one which Saskatchewan people want, my government has enlisted their partnership to renew the economy, to reinvest in people, to restore our sense of community. My government has asked the people to join in reinventing Saskatchewan's future.

### **Sound Financial Management**

Step one in that process is to begin living within our means — an issue confronting not only governments in Canada, but even in the United States. We have taken the first step. This year, Saskatchewan was the only province to reduce annual operating expenditures. Both the annual deficit and borrowing requirements were also sharply reduced.

Were there no interest to pay on our accumulated debt — the legacy of past deficits — the current year's accounts

would yield a surplus.

And when the government offered its first issue of Saskatchewan savings bonds, the people's response was overwhelming. Thirty-seven thousand Saskatchewan people purchased of \$550 million in bonds to help rebuild our finances. However modestly, Saskatchewan has begun to turn a most important corner. My government took the hard path toward deficit reduction — not because it believes in reducing government's role in society, but precisely because it is the only way to restore our capacity to meet people's needs.

It is no longer appropriate to measure success in meeting those needs solely by the level of government expenditures. Compassion is not lessened by improving efficiency. Equity and fairness are not constricted by rediscovering the important role the community can play in delivering services effectively.

Despite the financial restraints, my government has launched important new initiatives in health, in job creation and in education. As we reduce the deficit, Saskatchewan will thus be positioned in the forefront of development.

This way lies the direction for our journey of renewal. We must restore financial stability in Saskatchewan — not as an end in itself — but to gain our freedom to choose a better future for ourselves and our children.

### **Economic Renewal and Job Creation**

There is no more important dimension to that future than the creation of jobs, and no more important location for those jobs than Saskatchewan's smaller communities.

Of the hundreds of new, expanding and potential business projects in the province, more than half are outside Regina and Saskatoon. Those outside our two largest cities have the potential to create or maintain almost 8,000 jobs.

Community bond corporations continue to help local people spark needed development. Thirty have been incorporated since my government took office.

Hopeful things are happening in places like Esterhazy, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Kerrobert, Aylsham and Cut Knife.

The government has also concluded an agreement with Atomic Energy of Canada Limited to locate a share of its nuclear research facilities in Saskatoon. This will create high-quality jobs in research and development.

Several new uranium developments are currently proposed in northern Saskatchewan. All are being carefully reviewed with respect to environmental protection, occupational health and safety and northern socio-economic concerns.

Sears Canada, with modest assistance from the government is establishing a telemarketing centre in Regina. The centre is a major investment in

communications technology and will create up to 900 jobs.

To build on this developing momentum, my government in November launched Partnership for Renewal — A Strategy for the Saskatchewan Economy. The strategy, designed in partnership with a broad spectrum of Saskatchewan people, sets out to create a positive environment for economic renewal, to build on existing economic strengths and to seek full employment.

To guide the strategy and evaluate progress toward these goals, the government has named a broadly based Provincial Action Committee on the Economy.

In 1992, this government began the task of making its economic development programs more accessible. It undertook to establish a single window for the delivery of services. In time, this will mean a common location and name for all development services in each region. As a start, a new toll-free 800 number will put those seeking help in touch with the right person.

In addition, my government will empower communities to deal directly with their development opportunities by introducing regional economic development authorities.

To provide a sound statutory basis to coordinate the initiatives of the new economic strategy, my government will introduce The Economic Development Act. Currently the Department of Economic Development is responsible for legislation under 11 different acts. By ending this fragmentation, the new Act will strengthen coordination and improve accountability.

Tourism is a key part of Saskatchewan's economic future. A joint industry-government tourism task force will explore options for future partnerships in developing and marketing tourism opportunities.

Using existing resources, the government has established a new cooperatives directorate within the Department of Economic Development in recognition of the vital role that cooperatives play in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan is more dependent on international trade than any other province. Working in partnership with our exporters, the government will work toward establishing a new Saskatchewan trade and market development organization.

Benefits have already accrued to Saskatchewan's economy from a December European trade mission which produced over 100 jobs and many profitable future opportunities for Saskatchewan firms.

My government continues to develop a comprehensive energy strategy for Saskatchewan. It will cover all forms of energy production, the role of renewable and alternative energy sources and energy use. The strategy will identify economic opportunities in the production, processing and transportation of energy resources and ways to reduce our energy consumption.

## **Agriculture and Farm Income**

Mr. Speaker, in the crisis which faces our farmers, Saskatchewan should not stand alone. This crisis demands a national solution.

My government will do all within its power and capacity to rebuild the province's farm economy. But it will continue to insist that the federal government stand by its promises and fulfil its responsibilities.

The shortfall in farm income over the past several years has been devastating to Saskatchewan farmers and to rural and urban communities. Provincial net farm income in 1993 is projected to sink to \$241 million, the lowest level since 1970. My government stands firmly with the farmers in their demand that the federal government fulfil its promise to deliver a third line of defence.

The plight of farmers is made more critical by the serious flaws in the second-line support programs. Current farm income programs not only fail to meet the real needs of farmers, they cannot be modified to do so. This government has therefore appointed a new Farm Support Review Committee to guide it in developing new safety nets. The committee began its work in January and will be asking for public input over the next few months.

Saskatchewan's farm income is under further attack by the federal government's recent proposals to change the current method of paying grain transportation assistance and to speed up rail line abandonment. Changes must indeed be made to develop a transportation system which is effective, efficient and affordable. But my government firmly believes that this can be done while maintaining the current method of paying the Crow benefit.

How to achieve a commercially, viable, self-sufficient and sustainable agricultural industry is at the centre of my government's concerns. In the consultation paper — Forging Partnerships in Agriculture — my government seeks to engage farmers and their organizations in a positive dialogue leading to the adoption of a new agricultural strategy.

One crucial question to be examined is a strategic approach to modern global marketing. Historically, institutions like the Canadian Wheat Board have provided muscle to individual producers confronted by large international buyers. But if the federal government removes barley sales to the United States from the purview of the board, that strength will be eroded and — s farmers will suffer.

My government strongly believes that we must build on the success of the Canadian Wheat Board, not undermine its mandate.

To assist farm families in financial difficulties, the government in 1992 enacted the farm land leaseback program. Many banks and credit unions have been active in providing six-year leasebacks, and my ministers continue to encourage the federal government to direct the Farm Credit Corporation to cooperate.

Alarming to my government were recent attempts to assemble large tracts of farm land near Eston. At this session we will amend The Saskatchewan Farm Security

Act to broaden the investigative powers of the Farm Ownership Board and to strengthen enforcement provisions.

### **New National Goals**

This year Canadians will vote for a new national government. My ministers believe that we must set out new national goals which are practical, realistic and centred on critical economic issues.

All governments face fiscal problems. We cannot solve them by ourselves. We must cooperate to find solutions.

But such solutions cannot slow our economic recovery. We must work together creatively and quickly to make sure we do not repeat the mistakes which so aggravated the effects of the recent recession. Saskatchewan felt the burden of that recession acutely. We want to be part of the solution to the problem. We want a national economic strategy which will unite the provinces and the federal government in a common cause.

Of central interest to all Canadians is the future of our social programs. Despite its fiscal problems, the federal government still has more flexibility to act than the provinces. Now is not the time for Ottawa to withdraw further support from health, education, training and the many other areas so important to the future of Canada.

My government is committed to working with whomever forms the next federal government to build a realistic national strategy to create jobs, keep our social programs and regain fiscal stability.

### **Renewing Health Care**

Some thirty years ago, Mr. Speaker, the eyes of Canada were riveted on Saskatchewan as the Lloyd government struggled to launch North America's first public, prepaid medicare program. Today, those eyes are again on Saskatchewan as we engage our communities in moving to what Tommy Douglas described as the "second phase" of that struggle. He said, and I quote:

The first phase would be to remove the financial barrier between those giving the service and those receiving it. The second phase would be to reorganize and revamp the whole delivery system — and of course, that's the big item.

My government has begun to tackle this "big item", to rebuild our entire health care system.

Over the past months the Minister of Health has met with thousands of Saskatchewan people about wellness and health reform. My government is grateful for the participation of all those who shared their vision for health in Saskatchewan.

The wellness approach is a new way of looking at the province's health system to help achieve the highest possible level of health in all aspects of our lives. It encompasses physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Wellness means improving quality of life.

The reorganization of the health delivery system has already started with the creation of the Mid-West, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina health boards. In this session, the government will introduce legislation that will provide a foundation for increasing community control over the health system; encouraging the adoption of a wellness approach to health which emphasizes disease prevention, positive lifestyles and community-based health programs; and promoting the coordination and integration of health services to provide a more responsive and efficient health system.

The Assembly will also be asked to enact a new Public Health Act. This legislation will modernize public safety and security measures in such basic areas as the provision of water and food and the containment of communicable diseases.

While some other provinces are wringing their hands as they watch health care costs skyrocket, while our powerful neighbour to the south struggles with a system which leaves many without adequate health care, Saskatchewan people are moving forward toward a reformed health system which emphasizes community involvement and control. In partnership with the people, my government is determined to meet the health challenge which Tommy Douglas acknowledged is greater than the introduction of medicare itself.

### **Education and the Community**

One of the basic principles which my government seeks to apply in all the services it provides is that of dealing with the whole person. Thus, in economic development we have created the single window. In health, we have adopted the wellness concept which encompasses quality of life.

In education, as we have focused on the child, we have found that learning depends on much more than the provision of a schoolroom and a teacher. Some children and young people — too many — come to school hungry, abused or suffering from stress.

Currently being tested are school and community partnerships in which the school becomes the centre for a broad range of services focusing on the needs of the student and the family. This approach works. Learning is enhanced. As part of this children first: community action program, nearly 20 communities are involved in deciding the most effective ways of working together, using the school, as a base, to meet all the needs of children that affect their ability to learn.

My government is committed to building a high-quality education system that responds to the province's social and economic needs. One partnership set up to work toward that end is the Saskatchewan Education Council, made up of a broad range of community and education interests. It will recommend a vision for education and new approaches to the issues facing the province's education system.

Also, over the past year, the government commissioned reviews of the universities, the regional colleges, the Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and

Technology, the private vocational schools, and the high school program.

This government is determined to use the recommendations of these reviews and the Saskatchewan Education Council to build an integrated and comprehensive education system, one which will make possible lifelong learning and meet the expanding needs for training and retraining.

My government is committed to finding, in consultation with communities and our educational partners, affordable ways to deliver education. An advisory group is examining changes to the funding formula for school divisions that will provide equitable support in a time of change. This group will also work with school boards to develop new ways of doing business at the local level that will make best use of the resources available for student learning.

My government intends to introduce legislation to allow Saskatchewan francophones to control and manage their own schools. This Act will meet both the province's constitutional obligations and the needs of the francophone community.

### **Enhancing Social Justice**

My government is determined that our journey of renewal not bypass Saskatchewan's most vulnerable people. We will, in the year ahead, continue to build on such initiatives as the reform of the income support system.

Almost one in six Saskatchewan children lives in poverty, a rate which has doubled since 1980. To help meet the needs of children in the lowest income families, the government will introduce a new more broadly based children's benefit in the coming year.

My government will focus on the needs of children and families. We are initiating an action plan for children, a plan built on the belief that children have a right to adequate food, clothing, shelter, and a safe, nurturing environment. As part of the plan, we will undertake a review of the child care system and examine processes for advocacy on behalf of children.

Where family relationships are in conflict, additional supports will be provided to strengthen the family and protect children in their own homes. For families with children who have disabilities, several demonstration projects will offer enhanced respite and support services.

Through cooperative action with our communities, my government is determined to reclaim Saskatchewan's position as a leader in social reform.

One of Saskatchewan's greatest challenges in rebuilding a vital, full-employment economy is to meet the needs of the province's working men and women.

The government will strengthen legislation to assist workers and employers in working together to reduce workplace hazards and to prevent injuries through the introduction of The Occupational Health and Safety Act. The Act will further provide a framework for dealing with

sexual and other forms of harassment.

The Workers' Compensation Act will be amended to ensure that injured workers receive fair compensation and treatment.

The government will soon circulate a discussion paper to gather views on changes to The Labour Standards Act. To ensure decent working conditions in the face of a changing labour market, our minimum employment standards must be brought up to date.

My government will expand the employment equity program in the public service to make sure that fair employment opportunities are available to persons of Aboriginal ancestry, women in management and non-traditional roles, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

At this session, amendments to The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code will be introduced to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, family status or receipt of public assistance.

Amendments to The Limitations of Actions Act and The Fatal Accidents Act will remove certain restrictions which have been disadvantageous to women.

A new Correctional Services Act will be placed before you. It will provide for stronger and more efficient community-based corrections programs and permit greater participation by communities, including Aboriginal peoples, in the design and delivery of programs to help reintegrate offenders into society.

In 1992, the government was pleased to sign the historic Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement. During this session we will introduce an omnibus Bill to change a number of provincial laws and regulations to accommodate the agreement.

In recent days a Tripartite Process Framework Agreement was signed by the Metis Society of Saskatchewan and the governments of Canada and Saskatchewan. This agreement will enhance Metis administration and control over matters which affect their lives.

During the year ahead, my government will continue working with Indian and Metis people toward self-management of services in education, social development, justice and employment.

The year 1993 has been designated by the United Nations as the International Year of Indigenous Peoples. During this year my government will pursue new partnerships with our Indian and Metis communities, and we encourage others to join with us.

### **Building Communities**

Much of our quality of life depends on strong communities, strong local governments and access to quality services. Sustaining service delivery in today's circumstances is a major priority of my government.

We note that the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities

Association (SUMA) has begun a planning process among its members to seek thoughtful and orderly improvement of our local government system and methods of delivering services.

During the coming months, my government will expand discussions with SUMA, and potentially others, to pursue ways of achieving our common goal for the 1990s and beyond: strong and vibrant communities, places to work, places to grow with family and friends, places with access to the services we need.

The North is a unique part of the Saskatchewan community. My government is committed to working with the people of the North to help ensure that its destiny is fulfilled. This means an emphasis on developing adequate housing, water and sewer systems, community infrastructure and jobs.

My government will work with Northerners, their businesses, their organizations and their local governments, to promote northern economic and community development.

Recognizing that racial discrimination is a problem here and across Canada, the government will join in the worldwide observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racism on March 21, 1993.

### **Improving Environmental Management**

My government enthusiastically received the Saskatchewan Round Table's Conservation Strategy for Sustainable Development in Saskatchewan in June 1992. Our response and proposed implementation plan will soon be released in a document entitled: An Environmental Strategy: Partnerships to a Sustainable Future.

My government awaits the report of the Standing Committee of the Legislative Assembly on the Environment with respect to intersessional hearings held on the environmental charter of rights and responsibilities Act.

In the coming year, the province will hold consultations concerning designation of a third ecological reserve. The proposed site is near the Rafferty Dam, and covers 392 acres. The reserve will include an area which contains the now-rare prairie plant, buffalo grass.

In this session, the government proposes to establish a new Round Table on Sustainable Development. It will provide an effective link between government agencies and the public in forging policies which protect the environment and support a sustainable future.

### **Open and Accountable Government**

When this government took office, it acted quickly to restore open and accountable government. Most of the recommendations of the independent Financial Management Review Commission are now in place. As a result, the province's financial position is being reported on a more timely basis, the financial stability of the Crown corporations is being restored, and a commitment has

been made to disclose significant government transactions with minimum delay.

in this session, a new Crown Corporations Act will be introduced to ensure that Crown corporations are publicly accountable and will prohibit Crown corporations from creating subsidiary corporations without full public disclosure.

The government continues its commitment to reform the process for acquiring government goods and services. Open, fair and competitive contract tendering will be the rule rather than the exception for all government departments, Crown corporations and agencies.

Another recommendation of the Financial Management Review Commission will be implemented by adopting the principles of accrual accounting beginning with the 1993-94 fiscal year.

The government will act to eliminate political influence in setting polling boundaries. The Constituency Boundaries Act will put in place an independent boundaries commission.

The Members of the Legislative Assembly Conflict of Interest Act will set new rules for all members of the legislature. It will also introduce the concept of a Conflicts Commissioner to advise members and to rule on violations.

In addition, the government will introduce a code of ethical conduct which will set out a high standard of behaviour for all elected representatives.

### **A New Future**

Mr. Speaker, these are extraordinary times.

For some the depth of Saskatchewan's problems tempts despair.

But Saskatchewan people have always been optimists. What could be more optimistic than to call your province "next year country"?

That optimism is soundly based. Saskatchewan's land and the families who farm it will always be Canada's prime agricultural resource. The people in our communities, rural and urban, have the visions and the capacity to renew this province. True, our journey of renewal will encounter more change and face more hard choices before Saskatchewan fully regains its fiscal and economic health. The demands are daunting. But Saskatchewan people have adapted to change before, and done it with a flair.

The people whose ingenuity produced a Wheat Pool and medicare need not be daunted by change.

With change comes opportunity, and it is the opportunities which beckon us.

Together, on this journey of renewal, we will unlock opportunity and create a future where all can say "next year country is here".

I leave you now to the business of this session, with full confidence that you will favourably discharge your duties and responsibilities. May Divine Providence continue to bless our province and guide the legislature in all its deliberations.

God save the Queen.

Her Honour retired from the Chamber at 3:35 p.m.

Prayers

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Pro Forma Bill

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that a Bill respecting the administration of oaths of office be now introduced and read the first time.

Motion agreed to and the Bill read a first time.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Introduction of Pages

**The Speaker:** — I wish to inform the Assembly that the pages for this session will be: Surjit Basi, Larissa Fuhr, Lilia Kusiak, Michelle Oussoren, and Denise Psiurski.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## TABLING THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

**The Speaker:** — I beg to inform the Assembly that in order to prevent mistakes I have obtained a copy of the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor which I now lay on the Table.

## MOTIONS

### Speech from the Throne

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to move, seconded by my colleague the Deputy Premier:

That the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor be taken into consideration on Friday, February 26, 1993.

Motion agreed to.

### Printing of *Votes and Proceedings* of the Assembly

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by my colleague the House Leader:

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

Motion agreed to.

**Hon. Mr. Romanow:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that this House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — Before we put the question on the adjournment, there are a number of acknowledgements that I wish to make. The music that you have been listening to this afternoon is provided to us by the Regina Police Junior A Band. They are playing under the direction of Ms. Shelley Jagow. Our thanks to the band for a fine performance. You will have the opportunity to hear more from these young musicians later this afternoon.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I would like to thank all the guests and members of the public who have joined us today, and in particular, I want to acknowledge a group of students in the east gallery. They are 50 Grades 5 to 8 students from Thompson School. They are accompanied by Miss Dohlen, Miss Widdifield and Mrs. Reilly.

In the west gallery I want to welcome members of the Balfour Collegiate choir from Regina. I will be calling on them to sing for us immediately following the adjournment.

Following the choir selections, I would like to invite everyone to join Her Honour, the Lieutenant Governor, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and members of the Legislative Assembly at the Speaker's tea which will take place immediately following the Chamber ceremony. The tea will be in two locations — in room 218 in the west wing and in the Legislative Library in the east wing.

Motion agreed to.

**The Speaker:** — I now welcome the students of the Balfour Collegiate choir and invite them to perform under the direction of Mrs. Deidre Mallett.

(The choir sang.)

**The Speaker:** — On behalf of all here present, I want to thank the choir under the direction of Mrs. Mallett, for just an excellent performance. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 3:45 p.m.