

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session – Tenth Legislature
15th Day

Wednesday, February 19, 1947.

The Assembly met at 3:00 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

ANNOUNCEMENT

DEPOSIT OF POTASH

Hon. J.L. Phelps (Minister of Natural Resources and Industrial Development): — Before the Orders of the Day are proceeded with, I wish to bring to the attention of the House a matter that has received a good deal of publicity during the past 24 hours or so, a matter of considerable importance to the Province of Saskatchewan. I refer to the announcement regarding the deposit of potash in the vicinity of Unity, as well as other deposits in other parts of the province. I informed the House that these deposits have been known to the Government for quite some considerable time and for the purpose of carrying on further investigative work my Deputy Minister, who is in charge of that particular branch of our work, made a journey to Ottawa some three weeks ago to confer with other officials of the technical level with a view to carrying on further research work. I would like at this time, in order that the House may be fully informed, to read a formal statement. It had not been previously intended that a statement would be made at this time, but there is a reason for that statement I would explain.

A premature announcement in the House of Commons has acquainted you with the fact that large and valuable deposits of potash have been found in Saskatchewan. Your Government, aware of the existence of the mineral since early last July, had been taking the required steps necessary to compile data before making a public announcement. There was an agreement on the technical level between the two governments that a joint statement would be issued at the opportune time, but evidently a question asked in the House of Commons on Monday precipitated the announcement. An analysis taken upon the request of the Department of Natural Resources last July of salt core from the Verbatim No. 2 Well, Legal Subdivision No. 7, Section 24, Township 41, Range 24, showed an existence of 43.32 per cent potassium carbonate. Further detailed sampling disclosed an eleven foot bed in the salt core, one half mile southeast of Vera, showing a test of 23 per cent KTO at a depth of 3,475 feet. The vital significance of the discovery spurred us on to search and examine old records of wells drilled prior to the present Government assuming office. This investigation showed that potash occurred in association with six salt beds underlying the south section of the province at the following points: at Davidson, Ogema, Radville, Pennant and Wilcox. The Dominion Mines and Resources Department were informed throughout of the steps taken and the subsequent findings. Potash found within the salt beds now being mined by a private company in the province remains the property of the Crown according to

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a clause in the agreement entered into by the company and the Government. All associated minerals produced in the operation, other than salt, are Crown property.

I'd like to bring to the attention of the House, Mr. Speaker, at this point that that is very clearly set out in the agreement and we were very insistent on that particular point knowing that there were other associated minerals in that area. The law offices of the Crown and others, both reported since and have assured us that the interest of the province in this particular regard is amply safe-guarded in the clauses in that contract on that particular point. Commercial production of potash could revolutionize agriculture in this country. Used as a fertilizer it has been restricted owing to the high cost. At the present time the cost is \$73 per ton laid down at Saskatoon; approximately \$4 million worth of potash is imported into Canada annually. Potash is of practically the same relative international importance as uranium, therefore the possibility of development under some form of public control warrants early consideration. Conservation and maximum utilization of the deposits within our province will be the dominating principles in the development of this rich mineral find. I thought, Mr. Speaker, that the House being in Session, Members would be interested in knowing what the Government is doing to protect the public interest in this regard.

MOTIONS

PROFESSIONAL ACTS INQUIRY

Hon. T.C. Douglas (Premier) moved, seconded by Mr. Lloyd (Minister of Education):

Orders, That the Select Standing Committee on Law Amendments continue the inquiry into the Professional Acts of Saskatchewan commenced at the last Session, the reference to be:

- (1) The resolution of the Assembly of February 19, 1946 (see Journals, 1946, p. 25).
- (2) The evidence, submissions and material presented to or assembled by the 1946 Committee, and
- (3) The report of the Inter-Sessional Committee appointed pursuant to the recommendation of the 1946 Committee as concurred in by the Assembly on April 4, 1956 (See Journals, 1946, pp. 127-132).

He said: In moving the motion, Mr. Speaker, to have the Law Amendment Committee continue with its investigation into the matter of Professional Acts, it's probably just as well to remind Hon. Members that last year on a motion of the Member for Qu'Appelle-Wolseley and seconded by the Member for Gravelbourg it was agreed by this Assembly that the Law Amendments Committee should look into the question of Professional Acts, to see whether or not these Professional Acts could be co-ordinated, if some of the discrepancies could be removed and to make absolutely sure that, in the mind of the Committee, the public interest was completely safeguarded. That Committee carried on hearings throughout last session, a number of professions came before the Law Amendments Committee, made representations to it. Hon. Members will remember that when the House was ready to prorogue their work and so it was agreed that a sub-committee of the Law Amendments Committee, an intersessional committee, would have power to carry on between the two sessions of the Legislature.

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That sub-committee was made up of A.D. Connon (chairman), Hon. W.S. Lloyd, Warden Burgess, Frank Malcolm, W.J. Patterson and A.W. Embury. That committee, as far as I know has been continuing its work and I take it that, under the rules of this House, that sub-committee will now report to the Law Amendments Committee when it is set up. This motion will authorize the Law Amendments Committee, on the basis of the previous submissions and on the basis of any report which the sub-committee may have to continue to carry on their investigations and to prepare a report to be submitted to this Legislature and to make recommendations to the Legislature which the Legislature in turn may either accept or reject and if it so chooses pass those recommendations on to the Government for whatever action is thought proper and necessary.

Now, it is my painful duty, Mr. Speaker, in asking that this Law Amendments Committee be once more empowered to carry on with the investigation which it conducted, last year, to draw to the attention of the House something which has placed both the Government and the House in a most embarrassing position. As the leader of the Government it is my responsibility, as it is the responsibility of every Member of the House, to be constantly on guard in order to protect the rights and privileges of the Members, both individually and collectively. I was surprised and I'm sure most Members must have been surprised, when there suddenly appeared statements in the press and a Member of Parliament representing a constituency in Saskatchewan, went on the radio to announce to the public that an Act was being prepared regarding the professions in the Province of Saskatchewan. I'd probably better draw the matter to the attention of the House by quoting from some of the papers. Here is the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, a newspaper item dated Prince Albert, December 13th in which it says:

John G. Diefenbaker, Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Lake Centre, on Thursday attacked a Bill to regulate professional societies in Saskatchewan which the CCF Provincial Government is reported to be planning to introduce at the next session of the Legislature. The kid glove no longer conceals the steel fist, Mr. Diefenbaker said in his statement. This Bill is designed to regiment the professions of Saskatchewan of the protensive control, it means that professions will be collectivized, it is designed to secure political result.

In the statement which I made to the press I pointed out, and I quote:

If the newspapers know what is in this report they know more than I do – and that goes for Mr. Diefenbaker too.

I pointed out that the committee was a sub-committee of the Law Amendments Committee; that it was preparing a report for the Select Standing Committee on Law Amendments; that I had never made it my business at any time, nor do I intend to make it my business, to poke into the workings of any of these committees. I take it that these Committees are set up by this House. Sub-committees may be set up by the Select Committees and that their duty is to report back to the Committee and the Select Committee report back to this Assembly; and that as far as the Government is concerned we become aware of any business that transpired only when that Committee makes its report to this House and the House in turn makes recommendations to the Government. But

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Mr. Diefenbaker wasn't satisfied with that. This was the reply in the next day's paper:

John G. Diefenbaker, Progressive Conservative Member of Parliament for Lake Centre said Friday, he is deeply concerned at the implications of a statement by Premier Douglas who denied knowledge of the contents of a report being prepared on the province's professional societies. The CCF Premier's statement follows a charge by Mr. Diefenbaker that a Bill designed to regiment doctors, lawyers, engineers and other professional men, had been prepared by a special committee of the Legislature.

This is the point which I draw to the attention of the Hon. Members:

The statement of Premier Douglas corroborates a suspicion many people in the province have that socialistic innovations and experiments being introduced in Saskatchewan are the product of some socialist departmental bureaucrats who in drafting plans and projects to control the lives and destinies of our people do so without reference to the Government, Mr. Diefenbaker said.

Here is a report which was not the property of the Government at all. A report which had come from a sub-committee and when the Government denies any knowledge of it the only reply is that the Bill must have been drawn up by some socialistic bureaucrats and as a matter of fact the report in question was the property of a private committee. Now I am not going to labor all that has happened. I have made it my business to make some inquiries. I think I know a good deal of what has happened but it is not my business to report that to the House at this time. I do know that a copy was procured in the city of Regina. I know that mimeograph copies were made from this draft Bill. I know that these mimeograph copies were sent to practically all of the professions and a good many individuals in this province. As I understand it from some of the members of this Committee this draft Bill which had been drawn up by some of the members of the sub-committee, had never been approved by the sub-committee, there was no decision to submit this Bill to the Law Amendments Committee when it met. This was simply something which was the basis of discussion and was the property of the members of that Committee. There should be a discussion as to whether or not a member has the right to hand out documents which are in the state of preparation by a committee. I refer to the May's Parliamentary Practice the 14th Edition, page 118, it says very clearly that:

By the ancient custom of Parliament no act done at any committee should be divulged before the same be reported to the House. Upon this principle the Commons, on April 21, 1837, resolved, that the evidence taken by any select committee of this House and the documents presented to such committee, and which have not been reported to the House, ought not to be published by any member of such committee or by any other person.

Again on page 596 of May's, it says:

By the custom of Parliament no act done at any committee of either House should be divulged before the same be reported to the House. It is consequently, a breach of privilege for any person to publish any portion of the

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evidence given before, or any document presented to, a select committee before such evidence or document has been reported to the House.

Again in May's Parliamentary Practice on page 609, it says:

Any publication of a draft report which has been submitted to a committee before such report has been agreed to by the committee and presented to the House or of the report of the committee before it has been presented to the House is treated as a breach of privilege and when the report of the committee which had been presented to the House that was not yet available to Members in printed form, was communicated to the press, the Speaker stated that the more regular practice was that the Members of the House should be the first to be put in possession of the results of the deliberations of a select committee.

I draw this to the attention of the House, Mr. Speaker, not because I like doing it but because I feel that we should be perfectly clear about these matters. First of all that the Government's position be made clear. The Government has been placed in a most embarrassing position because while we were able to correct the impression which was given by Mr. Diefenbaker and to assure the public that this was not a Government Bill, we are not able to correct that sort of impression outside the province. The Financial Post of December the 21st carried an article, "CCF Iron Curtain for Saskatchewan". It says:

A party state within a state seems to be the plan of the CCF Government in Saskatchewan. Premier Douglas has now admitted that his Government is preparing a Bill to control the professions. John G. Diefenbaker, MP, who says he has seen a draft of the Bill claims that it would result in every professional man and woman coming under government direction and subject to penalty if he or she acts contrary to the will of the Government in any way.

Now, the statement is quite untrue that I had admitted anything of the sort. As a matter of fact, I denied any knowledge of the Bill but when I wired this paper and asked them to make a correction they simply wrote back and said that they were sorry that they had made a slight error in terminology. Well it's a new word for a deliberate lie, "because of a slight error in terminology" and the Members of the House have been put in an awkward spot.

Here is an editorial from the Saskatoon Phoenix dated December 14th which after discussing what has now come to be called the Draft Bill, says this:

This plainly suggests (talking about the Bill) a form of political control over the professional societies in Saskatchewan and it should be rejected by the Legislature if the Bill ever gets that far. The Bill should be quietly killed in the Law Amendments Committee most of whose members will be surprised to learn about.

Now, that is a serious reflection on the Members of this House, Mr. Speaker, that a Bill discussed over the radio, discussed in the press, finding its way into other provinces – but a paper in this province is able to say quite truthfully that the Members will be surprised to find out about it. That a

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matter which is a matter concerning the Member of this House should be a subject for discussion elsewhere before the Members of this House have had an opportunity even to examine it.

Now, as I say, I raised this matter because I think we ought to govern ourselves accordingly in the future. I think that the Committee in question when they meet owe it to this House to look into this matter and certainly to save both the House and the Government any further embarrassment in matters of this sort. I am quite prepared to concede, I will say this, Mr. Speaker, that when this thing first happened I was pretty angry. I don't mind being blamed for things we do. I don't like being blamed for things we don't do but a month or two has passed and I have had a lot of time to cool off and I am quite willing to concede that a Member could out of probably inexperience or lack of familiarity with the Parliamentary procedure hand out a document, although it is most unusual. In the few years that I've seen government Bills; I have seen private Members Bills; I have seen draft forms of legislation which never got to the House of Commons and which no Member would have thought for a moment of using in a political or in any other way. And the only man that I have known in the parliamentary life of Canada who has ever broken confidence in that regard was Mr. Fred Rose, the Labour Progressive Member for Cartier who is now serving a jail term for treason, and who among other things was accused of divulging information given at a secret session, but it is a serious thing and I certainly hope that we will all be warned by it. I do want to say this also, that while there might be some excuse for any Member here, Mr. John Diefenbaker, the Federal Member for Lake Centre who is an able and an experienced parliamentarian knows better than to take a document given to him clandestinely and knows better than to use such a document for political purposes. And who when he is told publicly by myself that that document is not a Government Bill then tries to take refuge behind the fact that that just proves that the Government doesn't prepare its own legislation, that its legislation is prepared by socialistic bureaucrats. I cannot begin in this Legislature to express my regard for any public man who will take a document of that nature and seek to misrepresent the Government's position and seek to fool the public by a piece of political chicanery, the equal of which I haven't seen in this province in a good many years. I would move this motion.

Mr. J. Benson (Last Mountain): — Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that I was very much surprised when I saw the statements in the press in regard to the report of this Committee. I want to say too that it's my opinion that several of the members of this particular Committee were not familiar with the rules governing that Committee and being new Members to the Legislature I can't blame them in any way because I know that while I have been here several years myself I don't know all the rules yet. I believe that when a committee of that nature meets that it should be the duty of someone to definitely read the rules governing that particular committee so that the members will know under what rules of the Legislature they are operating. Now no doubt the public were invited to give evidence before that Committee and no doubt the members of that Committee thought that when the public were invited to give evidence that there was nothing secret in connection with the operations of that particular Committee. I understand the rules to be that after all evidence has been taken that the Committee will consider the evidence in camera when the

public is included and then the Committee will make its report back to the committee that set it up. I asked one of the members of the Committee what document had been made public and if the Committee sat in camera at all to consider the evidence and to consider its report and he was quite perturbed that I thought that that Committee should even sit in camera at all. So I am quite sure, so far as that individual member of the Committee was concerned, that member was not aware of the rules that governed the operation of that particular Committee. So I think that this House should deal very leniently with this particular Committee even though we do think it has made a mistake.

Mr. W.J. Patterson (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I find myself very much in agreement with the Hon. Member for Last Mountain but I think that maybe I might go a little bit farther than he did. The Premier has read to us from May's Parliamentary Practice the rules applying to the conduct of committees and that is probably very correct in its proper ruling. But over a long period of years a practice has been followed in this House in connection with our committees that no doubt most of the Members felt was in accordance with May's Parliamentary Practice and all the other authorities and that was that all of the deliberations of any committee should be carried on in public unless there was a specific and definite motion for the committee to meet in camera. I would say over the years that probably 90 or 95 per cent of our committee deliberations are carried on in public with everybody having the right to be there. I am not certain as to this but I am under the impression that the rules that apply to a committee equally apply to a sub-committee. I was absent from one meeting of the sub-committee and it is possible that a resolution or motion that the proceedings should be carried on in camera was passed at that particular meeting. But no such resolutions was adopted at any of the meetings that I attended and I think that any member who attended the meeting of the sub-committee would consider himself, maybe not properly, but with some justification at least, consider himself in exactly the same position as if he were attending a meeting of the main Committee where a resolution to meet in camera had not been passed or adopted. Now, that is just a general observation, those were the circumstances as I understand them. That's the practice that has been followed in this House for many, many years.

Mr. A.T. Procter (Moosomin): — Mr. Speaker, being one of the older Members of this House, as I mentioned the other day, I would just like to join in what the Leader of the Opposition has said. Now, distinctly on many occasions, to my knowledge, when any committee of this House has been meeting it has been the custom for the meeting to be held as indicated by the authority, read by the Premier, in camera. If there was a motion for the exclusion of the press, on the contrary, I think that practically in every committee of this House, Members will realize and remember, that members of the press are present and can sit through the deliberations.

I don't happen to be a member of this sub-committee that apparently carried on through the summer. I don't happen to know anything at all about this Bill. I happen to be one of those unfortunate gentlemen who has never seen the Bill, but I have seen the controversy carried on in the paper. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if there is to be a change in the

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practice that has been carried out then the committee having to do the rules of this House should make it known that that practice is going to be amended in future.

For instance, last night we organized the Public Accounts Committee and I presume the same rules will apply to the Public Accounts Committee. I am perfectly sure from the practice that I have had for many years in this House that that is the first regular sitting of the Public Accounts Committee. There will be representatives of two or three Members sitting there and the proceedings of that Committee will be published in the press and that has been the practice, as you are very well aware, Mr. Speaker, for many years.

Similarly with the Law Amendment Committees and so forth. At all of these committees there have at certain times been resolutions introduced, while I've been a member of these committees, that the press be excluded and that the Committee proceed in camera. There have at times been filed with committees of which I am a member, documents which were ordered by a special motion of the committee to be filed with the Secretary of the committee and not to be disclosed when for sufficient reasons it was made to so appear to the committee that it should be done. On the other hand to accept in total the authority as read by the Premier from May's Parliamentary Practice I personally have to say to you, Sir, that however binding that may be in the Federal House it has not been the practice of this province, of the parliament of this province, and if that practice is to be adopted Members should be advised.

I say this in a perfectly independent spirit because none of the matters referred to concern me in any way but I do think that as one having had wide experience on these committees and having sat on a great many of them, that information should be given to the House. True, as said by the Member for Last Mountain after all evidence has been taken by the committee, the committee usually sits in camera (that is correct). But there has always been (you yourself who have sat on these committees know) a resolution that the evidence, generally a question to the committee as to whether they are satisfied as to the evidence produced then a resolution from some member of the committee, that the committee meet in camera to discuss proceedings have been treated as confidential. Again let me repeat I know of no rule applying differently to a sub-committee than to the main committee and I know of no rule or practice of this Legislature in our main committees where any proceedings have been held to be secret and confidential until such a time as such a motion has been passed. Let me urge the House, Mr. Speaker, that if some different rule is now going to be adopted in this House that the Members of this House be fully made aware of the new rule suggested.

Hon. O.W. Valleau (Minister of Social Welfare): — Mr. Speaker, I have been a member of this Legislature for eight or nine years as against the many years that the Hon. Member has had but I am a little concerned lest the suggestions that have been made by the Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Member for Moosomin, should lead the Members of the House to regard the work in the committee as being at all times public property unless specifically provided the committees should be otherwise. It is quite true that in the conduct of the work

of our committees during the years that I have been here that a great deal of that work has been done with the press present but not all of it. I can recall at the moment, Mr. Speaker, at least two occasions at which I sat in a committee and which I do not recall, (I'm not going to say there was no motion passed) but I certainly do not recall having a motion, yet when the committee proceeded with its deliberations to make its report, that then, all witnesses and the press left the committee rooms in order that the committee might consider its report. That was not true while they were taking evidence. Evidence was taken and while none of the committee members reported on it, the press certainly did. But when the committee commenced to consider its report, automatically it seemed that the committee rooms were cleared of all excepting Members of the House or members of the committee.

On two occasions, one was the occasion on which we had a labor Bill which was introduced by the Member for Moose Jaw as a private Bill. I remember that very distinctly, the final ending of that committee work. Another one which I might draw to my Hon. Member's attention is the committee work that we had on the architects, the Bill setting up the architects as a professional society. In both of those cases, no one was present in the committee room at the time that the committee was preparing its report for the House, a report which belongs to this House, does not belong to the individual Member.

I may also say, Mr. Speaker, that I had the privilege of serving on the only other continuing committee that has been set up in this House since I have been a Member of it, that was the Committee on Social Welfare. Certainly we regarded definitely that we were under an obligation to retain our report. We didn't need a motion. We regarded personally, as an obligation, to keep that report entirely to ourselves until we had an opportunity of reporting to the House.

I am not going to raise the question further which was raised by the Premier, but I simply wish to say that I dislike it. I would be very much concerned if the remarks made by the Hon. Leader of the Opposition, the Hon. Member for Moosomin, would incline the Members to believe that they are at liberty at all times to discuss the matters which do come before the committee.

Mr. J. Wellbelove (Kerrobot-Kindersley): — To some of us Members, Mr. Speaker, with not a very lengthy experience in this House, it is a little baffling. I would like to ask the Member for Moosomin when a continuing committee finalizes its opinions in a draft report, would he not consider that that is a private document by virtue of the fact that the deliberations are finalized in the draft report, or would he consider that a public document?

Mr. Procter: — May I have your permission to answer the question, Mr. Speaker? Certainly I would consider that but the Hon. Member has not got the point I am raising. The sub-committee cannot finalize a report at all. The sub-committee simply makes its report to the main committee and the sub-committee has no authority whatsoever to do anything but to report back to the main committee and the main committee in its turn reports back to this House. Now the practice has always been that if the sub-committee takes evidence and we have had hundreds of these

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committees, there was the Implements Committee, there was the Gasoline Committee, a great number of committees of that kind and the press and the witnesses have always been allowed to be present until such time as the particular committee, whether it be sub-committee or the main committee, has decided that they have obtained their evidence. Then, sometimes on a formal motion, sometimes the chairman gets up and directs the committee that the witnesses and their counsel and so forth will retire from the committee, and that the committee will consider the findings and I am sure my hon. friend who has just asked me this question has been present when the chairman has done that.

Hon. T.C. Douglas (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I don't wish to labor the point any more. I merely want to bring it to the attention of the House that I do not want an erroneous impression to be left by some of the things that have been said.

I think my friend, the Member for Moosomin, is trying to beg the question when he talks about a new procedure. No one here is suggesting a new procedure. Every Member of this House is aware of this fact, that when a sub-committee, whether a special committee or a select standing committee, is set up and carried on certain investigations, as my hon. friend has said, carried on with the press there, it is open to the public. But when a steering committee, which is what it is usually called, a sub-committee or steering committee is appointed to prepare a report, which is usually to summarize the points of view of the various witnesses and to compare a draft report for basis of discussion for the main committee, that steering committee meets without the public present. And when they have prepared their report that steering committee is bound to report to the main committee, not to the press, not to the Conservative Member for Lake Centre, but supposed to report to the committee.

I repeat what I read before from May's Parliamentary Practice, page 609, any publication of a draft report, I'm not talking now about shutting people out from attending committees, we don't want to have secret committees, but any publication of a draft report which has been submitted to a committee before such a report has been agreed to by the committee, that was the position of this report, and presented to the House or of a report of a committee before it has been presented to the House, is treated as a breach of privilege. I'm simply drawing to the attention of the Members, quite possibly inadvertently through a lack of experience, but certainly everyone of us ought to make sure that such things do not re-occur and I think I owe it to the Government and to this House to make this statement in order that everyone may know that what is commonly come to be known as a draft Bill was not a Government Bill, had not been prepared by the Government and was simply a draft report being studied by a steering committee for submission to a select committee of the House.

Motion agreed to and referred to Law Amendments Committee.

RESOLUTIONS

VETERANS' LAND SETTLEMENT

Mr. D.W. Valleau (Active Service Voters Representative) moved, seconded by Mr. Buchanan (Notukeu Willow Bunch):

That this Assembly, recognizing that Veterans' Land Settlement is an urgent problem which, while primarily a Federal responsibility is nevertheless the concern of both Federal and Provincial authorities, urge:

- (1) That the Dominion and Provincial Governments give special assistance to communities in which Veteran Settlement of a pioneering nature is taking place;
- (2) That the Government request the Dominion Government to bring in legislation to amend the Veterans' Land Act to provide for:
 - (a) The payment of Grants to Veterans' Co-operative Farming Units in lieu of the VLA credits of the Veteran participants;
 - (b) The purchase of land by VLA for the purpose of establishing Veterans' Co-operative Farm Units.

He said: In discussing this resolution which is already covered before a committee but I have some remarks which I think would be of interest to the House and I should like to discuss the motion on those grounds. I would like to ask either your ruling, Sir, or the consent of the House to proceed with this motion.

Mr. Speaker: — You may proceed.

Mr. Valleau: — Thank you, Sir. Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak in particular to the first portion, that is that the Dominion and Provincial Governments give special assistance to communities in which Veteran Settlement of a pioneering nature is taking place. I would like to begin by giving the House some idea of what I consider the magnitude of this problem.

I hope the House will bear with me, I am going to begin by quoting a few statistics. According to the 1941 census figures the total population of Saskatchewan was 895,992. The farm population of Saskatchewan was 514,677. Put into percentages, that means in our province 57 per cent of the people are farmers. We may presume that that percentage of the people are farmers. We may presume that that percentage is approximately the percentage that veterans returning to the province can expect should become their future method of living. That is, a group of any given group of veterans returning to the province we may expect that 57 per cent should normally return to agriculture, because agriculture is proven to be our main industry.

I have had some difficulty in finding the total number of veterans who should be normally expected to return to the province. Last month it was estimated that from 85 to 90 thousand but to obtain these figures accurately by provinces is either not possible or I have not been able to find the accurate figures yet. But working out what I think is a very conservative estimate, I think we can estimate that 70,000 veterans will be seeking to become re-established in Saskatchewan. I am certain

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that it will be more but we can be sure that it will be at least that many and of that number approximately 57 per cent will have to expect to find their final rehabilitation in agriculture, either on farms or in service industries directly connected with agriculture.

Now, the figures of Veterans' Land Act Settlement in Saskatchewan; full time farming, 2,678, small holdings, 213, commercial fishing, 4 and those settled on provincial lands, 505. These figures were accurate several weeks ago. I have a letter about a week and a half ago when these figures were accurate at that date. That makes a total of 3,400 who may be considered to be now established so far as individual establishment goes.

From here on their problem is a community problem, to be dealt with on the community level. They will rise or fall with their civilian neighbors in their civilian community and rehabilitation from there on will be civilian rather than veterans rehabilitation or military rehabilitation. But there are still quite a few remaining. There are a number of veterans who have been allocated provincial land who have not yet had their cases reviewed by The Veterans' Land Act and have not yet received Veterans' Land Act grants. I think this is merely a time lag and we may consider that the remaining veterans in this group, approximately 260, could also be considered to be established. There is a further group of 450 parcels of provincial Crown land now coming up for allocation and we can rest reasonably assured that that number of veterans will be re-established on the land. That makes a total of approximately 4,000 and we had to begin with 40,000 veterans who would probably have to go back to agriculture in the end for their re-establishment, leaving a gap of about 36,000 who are still to be re-established. Technological changes in methods of farming have led to many people moving to the cities. Agriculture is being carried out with fewer people today but still I think that comparing the figures actually established of approximately 4,000 with the potential lag still there, the 36,000 who still aren't established we may consider that no matter how we look at it the problem is still a long, long way from solution.

I am going to suggest to the House that neither the Crown land policy of the Provincial Government nor The Veterans' Land Act at the moment has to rely on the veteran finding his own land and purchasing or arranging a purchase through the Veteran's Land Act in order to get that. Today land is selling at very high prices and it is very difficult to obtain and there are already large groups of civilians in the field and quite well established. Sooner or later the provincial Crown lands will shortly run out and there won't be any of those parcels left which we have found scattered about throughout the civilian community. It's going to mean that we are going to have to develop some new technique, some new method of establishing a larger agricultural population in Saskatchewan.

The tendency on farms today is to have larger units with fewer men operating the units. I suggest that tendency can be corrected in a number of ways. One would be the smaller farm units, compulsory retirement age, some method of making farm units smaller by some method of compulsion. I am not sure that I am in favor of that. There is quite a bit of talk of it in the country at the moment but I think it would be possibly something that should be done as a very last resort. It's bad business to interfere with the march of progress. Another thing that can be done to increase our agricultural population is the

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system of more intensive farming and mixed farming. Of course we have had speakers and lecturers for quite a long time lecturing us on the advantages of going into mixed farming but still in the end people will not do that unless it pays.

The solution which I am going to advocate is one which I call economic and geographic pioneering and I will give you briefly what I consider to be the difference. Economic pioneering is the method of achieving a new way of living within a given economic area. For example, a co-operative farming system or a community farming system in which groups of farmers go together and who by pooling machinery or arranging their production co-operatively, find that they can produce more and thereby create a demand which allows other farmers in the same area to engage in dairy farming, or stock farming or some type of farming which will serve these very efficient groups of farmers. I don't think that any one man can today in our modern society diversify into every type of farming but farmers in co-operative communities can do that and that is the only method by which we can achieve completely diversified farming.

The particular branch which I would like to discuss and I am going to narrow it down to one particular section is that of geographic pioneering. Last summer I had the privilege of being able to visit one of the areas of the province in which the Department of Reconstruction was beginning to clear and break land for a veterans settlement. I said, 'privilege', Mr. Speaker, I think I should withdraw that word because I took my car and drove 15 miles in a very short time and then the remaining six or eight miles took me about ten hours to do, fighting all the way. It wasn't any privilege to drive a car through the type of roads, the type of bush, the type of stumps and the type of mud that I had to travel through in order to reach this breaking project. But the land was good and the area is an area which I am sure will become a productive asset to Saskatchewan in the future. It is about 25 to 30 miles from railhead and in the center of virgin forest. The veterans who are clearing and braking this area have nicknamed it the "Big Burn Area" because it is an area which has been denuded of trees by forest fires. The forest fires that swept over the area have left islands of trees here and there but on the whole the particular area in which the breaking is taking place at the moment has no heavy forest growth. It's all of a medium variety and this creates ideal conditions for mass production in the breaking field. The area that I am referring to is the area northeast of the town of Carrot River.

But the first problem that arises is the problem of roads which I have already referred to. At the moment this camp can only be reached by one road, in the summertime, that is. The prospective visitor has to travel over very rough municipal roads until he arrives at a bridge. I think the bridge belongs to the Paw Lumber Company. Arriving there he crosses the bridge and travels over a road which also belongs to the Paw Lumber Company, a private road which sometimes has a toll charged on it for lumbermen who are hauling out lumber. The road is a twisting, curving road fairly well graded but never maintained and after travelling over this road for about five miles there is another five miles to travel. At the beginning of the summer the second five miles was through virgin forest but the aggressive young veterans working for the Department of Reconstruction built themselves a well graded road to travel this remaining five miles. They are quite proud of the breaking project which they are carrying out. I found the moral at a very high peak. They are

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proud of the fact that they are breaking land which would serve to rehabilitate veterans in Saskatchewan. They are also proud of the fact that their first strike-out was five miles long and they hoped that that was a world's record. I rather expect that it will be.

I would like to stress this that the Government should consider very carefully the necessity of building a good road into this area. A road which can be travelled at all times. Breaking with bulldozers and with scrub-pilers and with very heavy caterpillar equipment is a very dangerous occupation. If these young men are in there that far from good roads and a doctor, it is possible that accidents could occur which could be quickly taken to hospital if a decent road were built into the community. I think that here we have a good case for provincial assistance and also a good case for suggesting to the Federal Veterans' Land Act that special assistance should be given to the province to build colonization roads into areas such as this so that the rehabilitation of the veterans in the community can be carried through on a community level.

It is one thing for a veteran to receive the standard grant when he is establishing himself in a community which has been established for a number of years, in which there are schools and doctors and churches and good roads and rail facilities for shipping out his produce. But it is a totally different thing for a group of veterans to back into a pioneer area and begin to fend for themselves. They co-operate together, they work hard but I think we have passed the time when we should expect people to live in log shacks and put up with the conditions that we experienced in the homesteading days. That is why I am arguing that there should be some specific type of assistance supplied by the Department of Veterans' Affairs for communities as communities rather than individuals as individuals. In this case I think we have a very good argument that the community itself needs special assistance. The form this community will eventually take I think we can discuss at great lengths in the committee on veterans affairs.

I would like to suggest that one of the things which should be done is to correct some of the mistakes made in the homestead type of farming. We should settle the veterans in communities, not necessarily saying that all the farming in the area should be co-operative farming or should be community farming for rental or owned by the veteran. Leave that argument aside altogether for the moment. It's possible under modern farming methods, in fact in many parts of the province it is being done, that the farmers themselves live in groups in town or other places and with the modern methods of transportation they can travel out to their field and farm it quite easily at a distance of 5 to 10 miles. I am quite definite in my opinion that any community established in this area should be established on that basis, with all the veterans' houses close together within reach of each other. If possible sewage and plumbing facilities should be installed in much the same method that the small holding communities have them installed near our urban centres and that the farming in the area be carried out from these centres. Thus, in this primitive community it would be possible to build one good road into the area – one all-weather road – and to begin with in the early stages the veterans would not have that great isolation that the early homesteaders experienced.

Mr. Speaker, I don't wish to take up too much time of the

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House at this particular time and I'm sure that we can discuss all the details of this at greater length in the Veterans' Affair Committee. I so move the Resolution, seconded by the Hon. Member for Notukeu-Willow Bunch.

Mr. N.L. Buchanan (Notukeu-Willow Bunch): — I will not deal with the first part of this Resolution, but I am particularly interested in the second part, that is Section 2 where it states:

That the Government requests the Dominion Government to bring in legislation to amend The Veterans' Land Act to provide for: (a) The payment of Grants to Veterans' Co-operative Farming Units in lieu of the VLA credits of the Veteran participant; (b) The purchase of land by VLA for the purpose of establishing Veterans' Co-operative Farm Units.

I want to say at the outset, Mr. Speaker, that I think both Federal Department of Veterans' Affairs and our own Department of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation deserve a considerable amount of credit for what they have done towards establishing veterans on farms. But the Hon. Member that has just spoken has pointed out that under the available facilities that we have in this province and approaching the problem as we have so far we are not going to be able to settle all the veterans who are anxious to settle on land. We're not going to be able to re-establish them on land unless we take further steps than those that have already been taken and I think that in the field of co-operation lies one of those further steps. To understand that we have to understand the history of agriculture in this province. We have to understand to a certain extent the history of the co-operative movement in this province.

Many of us in this House remember when the pioneers came West and broke up this land. They settled on mainly one-half section farms – the homestead and the pre-emption – and they started a certain amount of co-operation. They had to, because individually they were not able to handle all the tremendous problems that they were faced with. I can still remember the syndicate threshing outfit that they used down in our country in those pioneering days. All the pioneering farmers banded together because individually they were unable to purchase such expensive equipment as a threshing machine, and so they banded together. They pooled their resources and they bought a threshing outfit and this outfit travelled around in the fall of the year threshing for the different farmers who owned it.

Then through the years we found another process taking place. We found the more fortunate or the more industrious farmers gradually getting ahead and buying more modern equipment all the time while their neighbors who were perhaps on poorer soil or not as efficient farmers, fell behind and so these poorer farmer's holdings were absorbed by the more prosperous farmers and so we started in to develop larger farm units. That has been a continuous process ever since this West was first settled and it has reached the stage today where although we may have the land to settle our veterans we cannot get ownership of it. Therefore, I would ask that consideration be given towards making it possible for a number of these young men to get control of such units. They can't do it individually because they haven't got the money to buy such large farms and in many cases these men who hold these large farms are anxious to dispose of

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them to veterans. They are anxious to retire, to move away, and because the veterans haven't got the money to buy these farms they are unable to do so. Now, if these veterans could pool their resources, their VLA credits and what resources they have themselves and form one of these large farm units or a number of them, co-operative farm units, then they would be in a position to handle it.

I know in my country this is true and I believe it to be true over a large part of the province. I have travelled during the last year over a considerable portion of the province and there is one thing that strikes me as a tragedy – the vacant school houses all over this province. Where once there were children attending those schools, today there are no long any children attending those schools, today there are no longer any children in those communities. When there are no children coming up in a community, the community is bound to die and that land unless it is made available to veterans in the manner that I have mentioned it is going to become just part of some large holding and there will not be any possibility of a community being established there.

So we have to consider what we are going to do. It is undesirable and unpractical by legislation to break up these units but by co-operation it can be done and it will have to be done if we are going to re-establish our veterans. Co-operation is very seldom sought for the sake of co-operation alone. People are compelled by economic necessity to co-operate and it depends upon them, upon their intelligence, as to whether that co-operative is going to be a success or not. While we have seen that the people of Saskatchewan have met this challenge because Saskatchewan is foremost in the Dominion in its successful co-operative enterprises, and knowing these veterans as I do, I know that they will be able to do credit to those who have gone before them in the co-operative movement and if given the opportunity they will make a success of these co-operative farms. For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to second this Resolution.

Mr. H.G. Gibbs (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, I have no desire at this time to enter the debate because after hearing the discussion I think we should have more information. So, therefore, I would move that the motion be referred back to the Veterans' Committee of this House for further consideration.

Motion agreed to.

SECOND READINGS

Hon. J.L. Phelps (Minister of Natural Resources) moved second reading of Bill No. 26 – **An Act to Amend The Provincial Lands Act.**

He said: In rising to move second reading of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, there are just three or four main items that I think perhaps should be explained to the House at this time and the balance of it can be dealt with better in Committee.

The first is; one section of the Act provides for extension of the period for leases of land. At the present time the maximum length of period is 21 years but is renewable for another

21. A number of years ago, there was a section of the Act which provided for a 42 year lease. The effect of this amendment would extend that to 33 years. Another section, dealing with the Bill has to do with providing a purchase option which is provided for in the present lease, having to do with the returned soldier. That is being provided for in the Act. The other point is a provision made for transferring certain lands to the Department of Agriculture for administrative purposes.

As announced in the Speech from the Throne, Members are aware that provision is being made to turn over a substantial amount of the provincial lands, all the provincial lands suitable for agricultural purposes, to the Department of Agriculture for administration. We feel that that will be a distinct advantage. It will assist the Minister of Agriculture in working out his new program of agricultural development and conservation and feed banks and better utilization of soil. We have been working along that line, but we feel that this will co-ordinate it and make for even more efficient operation and it will provide him the opportunity of utilizing to a greater extent the agricultural representative service which he has organized over the province. They have a very well organized agricultural representative service and they will be able to study more closely the better utilization of various types of land in any given area and therefore, as I said, it is provided for in the Act that the Minister of Natural Resources can at any time transfer any land, blocks of land, parcels of land, to the Department of Agriculture for administration and in turn the Department of Agriculture can transfer back. There can be intermittently transfers of blocks of land backwards and forwards under that Act. The reason that it may be at some time in the future, desirable to transfer it back to the Department of Natural Resources is that it is the intention that all lands, other than land suitable for agricultural purposes or stock-raising, would remain under the administration of the Department of Natural Resources. This clause simply facilitates that arrangement without the necessity of bringing a separate Act to this House which would have almost identical clauses that The Provincial Lands Act has at the present time. We feel it was a much simpler method of carrying out administration and not have two Ministers administering two Acts.

The other point I would like to bring to the attention of the House in the Bill is provision in the Act for the exchange of lands. We have found and (several instances have arisen in the past – even before our time in the Government and since taking over) it has been desirable and we felt in the public interest to have certain lands exchanged for other lands, particularly this applies to school land, and under the Act possibly the school land is right in the middle of a reservation or in a park or a forest reserve, or something of that nature where it is unsuited to use in a land utilization program. Mr. Speaker, the idea of setting aside school land was a very good idea in its time and the purpose for which the money was to be expended was certainly a very appropriate one, but when we come to study land utilization the matter of setting aside sections with certain specific purposes doesn't always fit in to the best scheme of things.

Therefore, we are proposing that any time when land in any public reservation or Indian reservation or forest reserve, or park, or anything of that line, happens to be school land, that provision can be arranged for, exchanging that particular quarter section, half section or section, as the case may be, for land

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of equal value elsewhere and this amendment to the Act will so provide. It will simply be an extension of a policy that is now being carried out through the Land Utilization Board where, to the Land Utilization Board we are continually exchanging lands. I think last evening I found something like 12 or 14 transfers, exchanges, which will go to the Executive Council for exchange of lands. One has only got to look at the map to see the location of some of those lands which are in most cases in community pastures. Those lands have been arranged for through the Land Utilization Board to be exchanged for lands of equal value, where there is an increased value, then the person receiving the land pays the extra and in many instances they will have a quarter section to a half section many miles away from their own place, in the middle of the community pasture that is detracting from the development of that community enterprise. It is not in the interest of the community and it is working against the interest of the individual. In most cases, individuals are very glad to exchange that land for land which, in many cases, often times the Crown has, or through Land Utilization Board is much nearer to home. So, therefore, it is through the Land Utilization Board that it has been possible to effect a number of exchanges which have been of distinct advantage to all parties concerned and this is simply an extension of that same principle and policy and it will apply then to school land. But as I said before it will not in any way effect the trust that has been created by the school land. At all times the Land Utilization Board would see that the public interest was protected in that lands of equal value would be set aside elsewhere.

I think, Mr. Speaker, unless there are some questions or further debate those are the main points in regard to the Bill. Other details can be discussed in committee. I, therefore, at this time, move the second reading of Bill 26, an Act to Amend the Provincial Lands Act.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly adjourned at 6:00 o'clock p.m.