

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Fifth Session — Tenth Legislature**  
**Day 1**

**Thursday, February 5, 1948**

This being the day appointed by Proclamation for the opening of the Fifth Session of the Tenth Legislature Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor (Hon. R.J.M. Parker) entered the Chamber at 3 o'clock p.m., and was pleased to open the Session with the following speech:

Mr. Speaker, and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is My privilege and pleasure to welcome you to the fifth Session of the Tenth Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Since the last Session of the Legislature, there has developed a keener awareness of the economic problems with which Canada and the other nations of the world are faced. The peace which force of arms secured, is jeopardized by the imminence of economic dislocation; hunger stalks the greater part of Europe and Asia; insecurity and fear are springing up in the wake of the devastation of the late war. The work of the United Nations in striving to realize one world is being seriously impaired by maldistribution of the world's wealth.

At the same time, the economy of the Province is being strained by a national policy of decontrol. Agricultural production which My Government has sought to increase and stabilize, is threatened by the uncertainties of uncontrolled prices; speculation is replacing orderly marketing; and many of the gains won in agricultural production during the past four years are now being lost. Consumers are finding their purchasing power seriously curtailed by rising prices, and many are hard-pressed to secure the basic necessities of life. As a result, the health of our people will be impaired, and the economy of Saskatchewan may suffer serious and irreparable consequences. My Government reaffirms its belief that upon economic planning of a national and international character, a sounder basis will be established for the production and distribution of the world's wealth according to men's needs. In this principle, the people of Saskatchewan find their best hope for prosperity and peace.

The marriage of Her Royal Highness, the Princess Elizabeth, has been the occasion of widespread rejoicing. To Her Royal Highness, the Princess Elizabeth, and to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Edinburgh, the people of Saskatchewan extend all good wishes for their future happiness.

For the purpose of advancing agriculture in Saskatchewan, My Government has recently established the basis for agreements with the dominion Government under which a water development programme may be initiated by mutual participation. Saskatchewan will thereby make available to the government of Canada water rights and provincial crown lands required for the construction and operation of irrigation projects. My government has executed the first agreement under this arrangement and it

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is hoped that early concurrence by the Dominion Government will facilitate construction of large-scale irrigation projects in Saskatchewan. To deal with development plan, an Irrigation division is being established by the Department of Agriculture.

Progress has been made during the past year in developing the regressing, reclamation and conservation programmes of the Government. This has been of especial significance in the face of the extensive drought which the northern and southwestern parts of the Province suffered during the past crop year. The self-help features of the Emergency Feed and Fodder plan averted a major disaster in these areas, and the work carried on under The Grain and Fodder Conservation Act is resulting in the establishment of reserves against future feed deficiencies.

A new grazing land leasehold policy has been developed on the basis of the carrying capacity of lands, and it is expected that this policy will result in the stabilization of the livestock industry and the encouragement of diversified farming. Better land use and better farm practices have been achieved through the transfer of the administration of agricultural lands to the Department of Agriculture. Legislation will be introduced at this session to alter the boundaries of certain forest reserves in the northern part of the Province with the object of achieving more efficient utilization of land resources.

The services of trained agricultural personnel have increased in the past year; new veterinary districts have been formed, and graduates are returning to the Province skilled in veterinary science. Funds again will be made available during the coming year to certain agricultural societies for the purpose of providing accommodation for short agricultural courses. The agricultural representative service has expanded and will continue to render valuable assistance to farmers in all parts of the Province.

During 1947, the Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan completed its first year of operation, successfully removing the economic barrier to hospital care. During the year, approximately 130,000 persons, including 20,000 newborn babies, received hospital care. The Plan has now been extended to residents of the far north who may participate on a voluntary basis.

Hospital facilities have been enlarged; in the past four years, 21 new hospitals were established and eight hospitals and nursing homes were extended. During the year, eight more Union Hospital Districts were formed, bringing to 67 the total number of hospital districts, 41 of which were established in the last three years. Bed capacity increased by approximately three hundred in the last year, and it is anticipated that approximately one thousand new beds will be added in the coming year. Extensions will be completed in 10 hospitals, and 23 new hospitals, and 23 new hospitals will be under construction.

It is proposed to further extend tuberculosis control in the coming year through the installation of special X-ray units, the capital expense for which will be shared by the Anti-Tuberculosis League, local hospitals, and the Provincial Government. Under the Plan, patients entering hospitals

having such equipment will receive a chest X-ray at public expense.

Two additional Health Regions were organized during the past year, bringing the total number of established units to six. The number of patients carried by the Air Ambulance Service more than doubled in its second year of operation. A considerable increase also is noted in the number of patients diagnosed and treated by the Saskatchewan Cancer Commission. The quarters which have been provided for the Regina Clinic will enable it to give services unsurpassed anywhere in Canada.

Great advances have been made in mental health through the inauguration of community programmes under the guidance of mental hygiene clinics, four of which have been established. Training facilities have been developed at North Battleford and Weyburn for short courses available to community professional personnel. At the same time, treatment and training at the Weyburn and North Battleford hospitals have greatly improved.

Despite the continued shortage of materials and equipment, highway construction in the past year exceeded all previous records; building and surfacing covered a total of 2,185 miles. In addition to the improvement of existing roads, the Government's programme of development pushed the frontiers of the Province further north to Lac La Ronge and along the Flin Flon highway. New roads were extended into the northern agricultural areas. The roads maintained by the Government during the past year reached an all-time high of 8,977 miles. The use of government crews has effected many economies, and as a result, the full advance in highway construction costs general throughout the continent, has not been reflected in construction costs in Saskatchewan. The bridge construction programme of the past year was carried out on as large a scale as materials permitted and it is proposed that it progress further during 1948. In the coming year, it is intended to continue an extensive programme of highway construction in every part of the Province.

For the first time, applying a formula which recognizes local conditions, grants to municipalities for the construction of market roads were made upon an equalization basis. In view of its widespread acceptance, it is proposed to continue this policy in the coming year.

Positive steps are now being taken to construct a bridge across the South Saskatchewan River. This undertaking will meet a long felt need in the southwest part of the Province.

My Government, recognizing the important place of local government in provincial affairs, has been giving consideration to the needs of municipalities. The Province has assumed some of the burdens formerly borne by the municipalities, and additional revenues have been granted them. The government proposed to convene a conference of representatives of the municipalities and of the Province for the purpose of dealing with provincial-municipal relations. A study of their respective responsibilities and sources of revenue is now proceeding.

In recent months an inter-provincial conference on municipality assessment

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has succeeded in devising principles to bring about uniformity in the assessment of property in the Prairie Provinces.

Legislation will be submitted to provide the basis for the municipal assessment of railway property in the Province. It is also proposed to introduce legislation providing for a measure of self-government in hamlets, the residents of which will be empowered to elect committees to make special levies for public improvements.

The Department of Municipal Affairs has completed its review of the 1928 Seed Grain Accounts in all municipalities and refunding will be completed in a short space of time.

The Government is keenly aware of the needs of our senior citizens who are without the amenities of home life. Increased accommodation has been made available to them during the past year, and it is proposed to further extend these facilities. The Legislature will be asked to make provision for increasing the benefits granted by My Government to Those entitled to old age pensions.

The transfer of administration of the corrective institutions to the Department of Social Welfare has made possible the implementation of a progressive programme of training and treatment along the lines suggested in 1946 by the Saskatchewan Penal Commission.

Work among the Metis population of the Province has been accelerated in the past year; Metis schools and housing for teachers were constructed at Crescent Lake and Duck Lake, and expansion of this programme is planned in the coming year.

For the first time, systematic fire inspections were carried out in the Province. The Fire Commissioner inspected more than six thousand buildings in the past year and developed a basis for the participation of local authorities in an integrated fire prevention programme.

In recognition of the need for improved educational facilities in the Province, my Government paid increased grants during the past year. Rising costs have imposed greater burdens upon authorities charged with the responsibility of providing education. Bargaining between teachers and trustees has proceeded upon a collective basis in many localities, and progress is steadily being made in improving the status and remuneration of teachers.

The in-service training programme for teachers has been extended during the year to include all superintendencies in the Province.

During the year, the addition to the engineering Building at the University was completed; work on the Soils and Dairy Building, the School for Agriculture and the medical College building is likewise progressing. 1948 will see progress made in the construction of a building to house a betatron which will be available for atomic and cancer research.

By the end of 1948 the school building programme in Northern Saskatchewan will be nearly completed. Although the cost of building materials has greatly increased, there has been satisfactory progress in building and renovating schools.

A conference of farmer, labour and teacher organizations sponsored by the Adult Education Division in co-operation with the Occupational Group Council, the Saskatchewan Federation of Agriculture, and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Union, succeeded in fostering understanding of the problems common to these groups, and paved the way to further co-ordinated activity. It is proposed that similar conferences be held in the coming year.

The year 1947 established a record for mineral production and it is anticipated that Saskatchewan stands at the threshold of a period of widespread mineral development. Mineral production valued approximately at \$25 millions in 1946, reached a total of \$32 millions in 1947, being a gain of 25 per cent. This development is being encouraged by the extension of mineral surveys and geological studies.

Industrial development also expanded during the past year. the output from the Government plants increased. Reports and financial statements of the crown corporations will be tabled in the course of the Session. There was also a rise in the general level of industrial activity, both private and co-operative.

Research and experiment have proceeded in a variety of fields, including the use of Lloydminster oil, the refining of sodium sulphate, the mining of potash, the utilization of timber and pulpwood, the production of salt, the manufacture of rockwood and the processing of a wide range of ceramic materials.

The Royal Commission on Forestry submitted its report in May of last year and a comprehensive programme of conservation and development has been set in motion with a view to prevention of the wasteful exploitation and maximum utilization of the Province's forest resources. The Report of the Royal Commission on Fisheries has set the pattern for the Government's fish policy which is designed to improve the quality of fish, to scientifically utilize fish products and to stabilize the fishing industry.

The fur resources of the Province are being conserved and developed. It is expected that production yields will increase further through a proper allocation of trap lines and improvement of natural =facilities.

A northern administrator has been appointed to co-ordinate governmental activities in northern Saskatchewan. Establishment of an administrative Act for that area will be considered in the course of the Session.

To provide services to residents of the northern areas, the

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Government has established a Crown corporation to fly passengers, mail and supplies on regular schedules using Prince Albert as a base.

The Provincial power system has expanded through the purchase of Canadian Utilities, Limited. This added twenty-four generating units, thirty-eight communities and 419 miles of transmission lines to the power Commission system, bringing to 45,087 the total number of customers served. A third reduction in rates was effected during the year, and at the same time, both consumption and net revenues increased. New generating units and transmission lines have made possible the extension of rural electrification in the Province.

A further increase in co-operative activity was reflected by the number of organizations carrying on business in the Province and the volume of business transacted by them. Recognizing the dependence of Canadian agriculture upon British markets, and in order to better enable the United Kingdom to buy Saskatchewan's produce, My Government has continued to stimulate trade with the object of effecting direct exchanges of commodities wherever possible. To this end, a trade delegation of Saskatchewan producers and distributors sponsored by the Government, will leave shortly for Great Britain to attend the coming British Industries Exhibition.

The application of the Canadian railways to the Board of Transport Commissioners for a thirty per cent increase in freight rates, has been strenuously resisted by the Government, acting in co-operation with the other western provinces and the Maritime provinces: Saskatchewan's dependence upon transport facilities necessitates continued opposition to every move designed to increase railway charges at the expense of western producers and consumers.

Further encouragement was given to the extended use of the Hudson's Bay Route, through which passed a greater volume of commercial exports in the past year, than in any previous year. A second delegation to Churchill is being sponsored to enable interested citizens to view the possibilities of the route as a port serving the western provinces.

Research has proceeded into the construction and improvement of rural homes, the establishment of community centres and the use of building materials. The emergency housing programme was continued by the Department of Reconstruction and Rehabilitation during the past year; more than five hundred housing units have been completed to date, and one hundred more are under construction. Housing, dormitory and dining room facilities have been operated for student veterans and their families at various points in the Province. Citizens rehabilitation committees have continued their activities in close co-operation with the Government and are working out solutions to many veterans' rehabilitation problems. Surveys of employment opportunities for veterans have been continuously conducted; training and apprenticeship have been encouraged, and a considerable number of placements has been effected. Twelve hundred and eighty veterans have been settled on provincial crown lands under a thirty-three year renewable lease

system, with an option to purchase at the end of ten years, and one thousand farm units will be allocated in 1948.

Since its inception, the Automobile Accident Insurance plan has dealt with 2,728 personal injury claims on which it has paid or is currently paying more than \$600,000. During the year, 2,788 collision claims were dealt with, incurred losses for this period alone being in excess of \$575,000. Amendments to The Automobile Accident Insurance Act will be presented with the object of further extending benefits without increasing fees.

During the past year, My Government has directed its attention to the enforcement of laws designed to give security to farmers in their homes and farms, and to workers in their employment. The Government has won its right to appeal to the judicial Committee of the Privy Council from the majority decision of the Supreme Court of Canada concerning the Farm Security Act, and all steps are being taken to establish the constitutional validity of this basic legislation. Rights granted by the Legislature to labour have been jeopardized by certain judicial decisions, but during 1947, the Supreme Court of Canada, reversing the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal, upheld certain of the powers of the Labour Relations Board. Appeals are pending in higher courts concerning the application of provincial labour legislation to railways, and to decide whether the labour Relations Board has authority to enforce important aspects of the Trade Union Act. Upon the outcome of the latter appeal may depend the authority of other provincial boards to effectively carry out their duties.

During 1947, the Hours of Work Act came into force, and as a result, a substantial number of workers in the province now enjoy an eight-hour day and a 44-hour week, with the same take-home pay. This measure complements previous measures granting workers higher minimum wages, annual and statutory holidays with pay, and security in the exercise of their right to organize. Improvements have also been made in The Workmen's Compensation (Accident Fund) Act, and it is proposed at this Session to introduce amendments further extending the benefits of this legislation.

In accordance with the resolution of the Assembly last year, steps have been taken to prepare amendments to the Professional Acts, which will be submitted for your consideration.

Certain amendments to The Saskatchewan Election Act, and The Athabasca and Cumberland Election Act will be presented in the course of the Session.

The public accounts of the last fiscal year, together with the Estimates of the year beginning April first, 1948, will be submitted.

I leave you now to the business of the Session with full confidence that you will favourably discharge your duties and responsibilities in the best interests of our Province, and may Divine Providence continue to bless our Province, and to guide the Legislature of Saskatchewan in all its deliberations.

His Honour then retired from the Chamber.  
The House adjourned at 3:40 o'clock p.m.