

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Eleventh Legislature

Thursday, February 16, 1950.

This being the day appointed by Proclamation for the opening of the Second Session of the Eleventh Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan, His Honour the Lieutenant Governor (Hon. J.M. Uhrich) 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 Second Session of the Eleventh Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan.

During the past year fundamental constitutional changes have taken place in the Dominion of Canada. Appeals to the Privy Council have been abolished. The Canadian Parliament has acquired the power to amend our Constitution in every respect, with the exception of minority rights, such as language and education, and with the further exception of those matters which are exclusively under provincial jurisdiction. A Dominion-Provincial Conference has been held for the purpose of working out an amending procedure for The British North America Act. My Government will continue to co-operate with the Dominion and the other provinces in seeking an amending procedure which, while safeguarding the rights and privileges of minorities and certain basic human freedoms, will at the same time permit sufficient flexibility to allow the changes that are necessary if the needs of the Canadian people are to be met adequately.

The Government of Saskatchewan welcomes the invitation extended by the Prime Minister of Canada to attend a Dominion-Provincial Conference this autumn. At that time My Government will continue to press for the implementation of the social security and economic proposals which were advanced by the Federal Government at the Dominion-Provincial Conference on Reconstruction held in 1945.

During the past year My Government has continued with the building of a social and economic framework designed to produce more equitable opportunity, fairer distribution of income and greater social security for the people of this Province.

The recent loss of overseas markets for agricultural products and the termination of the long term agreements, resulting in a reduction of farm income, are cause for grave concern. The decision to abandon the national marketing of certain commodities and to place the responsibility on provincial governments and producers' marketing agencies will inevitably result in further confusion in the field of marketing, and will increase the uncertainties facing Saskatchewan farmers.

In the opinion of My Government, farm commodities should be handled through national marketing boards, and the Government is prepared, upon request from the Federal authorities, to submit for your approval the necessary provincial enabling legislation.

February 16, 1950

Failing any action by the Federal Government to adopt such a policy, the government will proceed to give aid, to the full extent of its power, to the farmers of this Province. To this end, a Board has been appointed under The Natural Products Marketing Act of 1945 to operate in conjunction with the federal Agricultural Products Marketing Act of 1949.

The programme for the improvement of agriculture will again be directed toward overcoming some of the natural hazards and uncertainties facing this basic industry. Progress made in this direction during the past year will have a very significant effect upon the stability of farming in the Province. During 1949 over 20,000 acres of under-utilized land were developed for feed and fodder production, and more than 15,000 acres were prepared for irrigation. A total of 3,000,000 acres of land has been scientifically classified, most of which has been disposed of on a long-term basis.

While the main emphasis of agricultural activities is directed toward receiving the basic causes of agricultural instability from natural hazards, the emergency problems which face the industry each year have received continued attention. Emergency assistance has again been provided to enable farmers to obtain fodder at the lowest possible cost.

As a result of co-operation between the various agencies concerned, a successful campaign of grasshopper control was carried on during the past year. It is estimated that control measures in 1949, saved at least \$50,000,000 of crop. You will be asked to approve expenditures for a similar programme for 1950.

In all these projects for farm improvement, this work has been accomplished through co-operation among the Provincial Government, municipalities and groups of farm people. Municipal governments are using the services of the Provincial Government, and are receiving grants to secure their own seed, feed and fodder reserves, and to develop community projects. Members of water users' organizations are working together with Provincial Government technicians for the more efficient use of our limited water resources. Conservation districts are drafting long term plans for development of natural geographic areas of the Province. Farm people, municipalities and the Provincial Government are now equal partners in the conservation programme for permanent farm improvement.

During the past year there was crop failure in some parts of the Province. The Government, in co-operation with the municipalities, immediately took emergency action, and a Work and Wages programme was implemented, with sixty-four rural municipalities and Local Improvement Districts participating.

The Government has continued to encourage the development of the natural resources of the Province. The value of Saskatchewan's 1949 mineral production will exceed that of 1948. An important factor in the expansion of mineral development is The Provincial Prospectors' Assistance Plan, which has been in operation for the past two summers. Prospectors operating under this Plan have been largely responsible for the very promising finds of radio-active minerals which are now in the early stages of development.

Saskatchewan has three potentially productive uranium fields. Discoveries of gold and base metals have resulted from the growing interest of mining firms in Saskatchewan. It is significant that more mineral claims were staked during 1949 than in any previous year.

There is an intense search for oil taking place in the Province. The policy of the government has been directed toward insuring that the maximum exploration will take place, and that the rights of the people of Saskatchewan will be safeguarded. In addition to royalties, approximately 25% of the oil and gas rights on all crown lands are retained for the people of this Province. Practically the whole of the remaining surveyed section of the Province is being explored. Extensive geophysical exploration has been carried on, and a large-scale drilling programme has been planned for 1950.

Investigation is being carried on in order to determine the feasibility of further industrial development in the fields of ceramics, magnesium sulphate, potash and wood utilization.

Forest production is being geared to meet the requirements of a sustained yield policy. Through intensified forest management and forest conservation programmes, production is gradually being brought into balance with the annual tree growth.

Certain legislation and amendments, which will aid in the development of the natural resources of the Province, will be presented at this Session for your approval.

During the year continued progress has been made in the construction of new school buildings and in the establishment of vocational programmes in additional centres. This progress is due to the desire of Boards to provide improved educational facilities and to the availability of Government grants and loans. The scholarship fund, established in 1949, has assisted nearly six hundred deserving students to further their education. There has been a marked increase in adequate programmes of musical activities in classrooms, in the use of classroom radios, and of visual education facilities. During the year the School of Agriculture building, the Soils and Dairy Laboratory, the Medical College building and the Gymnasium have been brought into use. These buildings have done much to remove the congestion at the University, and to provide greatly improved services, particularly for agriculture and education.

Amendments to the Teachers' Superannuation Act will be introduced, which will provide an increase in the retirement pensions of our teachers.

The programme directed toward increasing the hospital facilities in the Province has been continued. There have been many additional hospital beds provided and new hospital districts established. Emphasis in the past year was placed on the training of public health personnel. There has been a progressive increase in services under the Hospital Services Plan, and preventive work has been strengthened.

To meet the demands for modern community preventative services, plans are being formulated to organize the rest of the Province progressively into health regions.

You will be asked to approve further expansion of mental health services, including the construction of a new training school for mental defectives with an ultimate capacity of 1,000 beds.

Provision for increased grants to Tuberculosis Sanatoria and hospitals will be presented for your approval.

February 16, 1950

My Government's objective in the field of health is to develop the most complete programme possible pending the enactment of federal legislation which will make support available to the Province of the establishment of a comprehensive programme of health insurance.

The past five years have marked a new era in social services for children. Family welfare services have been provided so that families may remain together wherever possible. Higher standards of care have been established for children who must be cared for outside their own homes. With all these increased services, the Provincial Government has continued to bear the major financial responsibility and has relieved the municipalities of much of the burden of financing child welfare services.

There has been a continued extension of the Corrections Programme for juvenile and adult delinquents, along the lines recommended in the Laycock Penal Commission report. Punitive, restrictive and custodial methods in the treatment of delinquents have been largely replaced by rehabilitative and training methods, and by the extension of probation and parolement. The results have been gratifying. While there has been an increase in gaol populations elsewhere in Canada, in Saskatchewan there has been an actual decrease during the past year, enabling the Moosomin Gaol to be discontinued. Regina Gaol has been converted to a Borstal type institution, and a modern school of correction for boys will be opened in 1950. A Corrections Act will be introduced to permit an extension of the treatment approach to the problem of delinquency.

The Deserted Wives' and Childrens' Maintenance Act will be repealed, and a new Act, based on modern social practices and needs, will be introduced.

Four Veterans' Co-operative Farms were organized during the past year, and additional farms are in the process of organization. One Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty veterans are now occupying Provincial crown lands, and further settlement will continue.

From an examination of man-days lost through strikes, and the number of occasions the Government has been called upon to do conciliation work, it is interesting to note that the Labour-Management situation in the Province is even better than in the previous year. Certain amendments to The Trade Union Act, The Workmen's Compensation (Accident Fund) Act, and The Apprenticeship Act will be presented for your approval.

My Government was gravely concerned with the recent developments and announcements in the field of rental control. Believing the flat increases allowed were, in many cases, too drastic, steps were taken to insure that these increases did not take effect in the Province of Saskatchewan. You will be asked to approve The Lease-held Regulations Act, which will prevent undue hardships, and provide for a more equitable adjustment of rents.

Legislation will be introduced for your approval which will give to women of the Province the right to act on juries.

The programme of improved highway maintenance and construction will be continued. Plans for 1950, when implemented, will greatly extend the mileage of highways constructed to a standard that provides all-year travel with a minimum of snow removal. Excellent progress has been made with the construction of the Saskatchewan Landing Bridge, which will be completed during 1950.

Rural Municipalities will again be assisted with grants toward their road building programmes. The Government has given every co-operation to the Federal Government in connection with the proposed Trans-Canada Highway. It is anticipated that the required agreement will be finalized in the near future, so that construction of this roadway may commence this year.

The Saskatchewan Power Corporation has continued its programme of rural electrification, providing electrical services to nearly 1,200 farms. The total number of services added was over 6,600. At the same time the power system has been extended to forty-seven towns and villages, involving the construction of over four hundred miles of transmission line.

You will be asked at this Session to approve a new Power Corporation Act and a new Power Commission Act. This legislation will better enable the Saskatchewan Power Corporation to continue its vast programme of electrification, which brings so many amenities of modern civilization to the farm and village.

In Saskatchewan the Co-operative Movement continues to lead all other provinces in the volume of business transacted. Last December the Government convened the first annual conference of those interested in Co-operative Farms and the co-operative use of farm machinery. The demand for this type of organization continues to grow, and indicates the interest which is manifest in co-operative farming.

You will be asked to consider a new Co-operatives Association Act designed to meet the growing needs of co-operatives of different types.

The public accounts of the last fiscal year, together with the estimates for the year beginning April First, 1950, 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 guide the Legislature in all its deliberations.

His Honour then retired from the Chamber.

The House adjourned at 3:30 o'clock p.m.