

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Eleventh Legislature
Second Day

Friday, February 17, 1950.

The House met at 3 o'clock p.m.

MOTIONS OF CONDOLENCE

Hon. T.C. Douglas (Premier): — At the beginning of each Session of the Assembly, it has become customary for us to take a few moments to give some thought to some of those members of the Legislature and former members of the Legislature who have passed away since we last assembled here.

This year death has taken a particularly heavy toll, both of members who sit in the present Legislature, and members who have sat in previous Legislatures. I would like first to refer to the two members of the present Legislature who have passed away since we last assembled here.

The first one I refer to is Alvin Cecil Murray, who was born on a farm in Burford, Ontario, July 27, 1895. Mr. Murray came west when he was fifteen years of age and two years later took up a homestead at Tompkins, Saskatchewan. He has farmed at that point ever since, with the exception of one year which he spent in British Columbia. He succumbed to a heart attack on September 13, 1949. Mr. Murray is survived by his widow and one son, who now farms at Tompkins.

Mr. Murray was a pioneer worker for the Progressive movement. He took an active part in the organization of the Wheat Pool; was president of the Tompkins Co-operative when it started in the 'thirties. Prominent in local affairs, Mr. Murray held several important positions, such a president of the Tompkins Credit Union, director of the Co-operative Implement Limited; he was a member of the School Board. He first entered this Assembly in the general election of 1944 as C.C.F. member for the constituency of Gull Lake, and was re-elected in the general election of 1948.

Mr. Murray was an exceptionally conscientious member, was assiduous in attendance and in his duties as representative of an important constituency. His opinions were always respected and his counsel valued. It is said of him, and the records show, that throughout the years of his service in the Assembly he was one of the most regular of all the members in attendance at committee meetings. I think that those of us who knew Mr. Murray would agree that undoubtedly his very conscientiousness probably shortened his life. I know that personally, in 1948, he had made up his mind that he was going to retire because of ill health and go to the coast; but when his neighbours and friends asked him to continue to stand for nomination in order that he might continue to be their representative in this Legislature he finally acquiesced, although I think he felt himself that the added burden of the responsibilities which he was being asked to assume might very well shorten his days upon earth.

February 17, 1950

I know that all members would want to join in paying tribute to his memory and to the loyal service he gave to his constituency and to the people of this province.

The second member of this Legislature to pass away was Mr. Paul Prince, who was born in Battleford fifty-two years ago. He was the son of a pioneer resident of town and district. He received his early education there, then took an Arts course at St. Boniface in Winnipeg. The war interrupted his education and, on his release from the Air Force, he was called upon, at the early age of twenty-two, to take over his father's business, one of the oldest establishments of its kind in Saskatchewan. He was active in the affairs of his home town. He served for seventeen years on the Battleford council, acting as councillor and mayor in his father's footsteps, and for eighteen years he was Chairman of the Separate School Board. Mr. Prince's death occurred at Saskatoon on December 17, 1949, following a serious brain operation. He is survived by his widow and one daughter.

First elected to the Assembly for the constituency of The Battlefords in the by-election of 1940, Mr. Prince became the first legislative member to represent the constituency which had been represented by his father (the late Senator Benjamin Prince), who had represented The Battlefords in the old Territorial Assembly. Mr. Prince was defeated in the general election of 1944, but was re-elected in the general election of 1948.

Mr. Prince was the last surviving male member of the Prince family which transferred its roots from old Quebec to Manitoba in 1873, and thence to Battleford. For approximately seventy years, the Princes, father and son, carried on a splendid tradition of community and provincial service. In his one Session with us, we came greatly to appreciate his worth, recognizing in him the courtly dignity we associate with an older generation and with the race from which he sprang.

Now I am sure that members in all parts of the House will want to join their voices together in expressing our regret at the passing of the later member for The Battlefords. It was not my privilege to know Mr. Prince at all well until he came into the Legislature, last year, but I always found him courteous, gentlemanly, and a very fine servant of the people who sent him here.

I want to make reference now to two former members of the previous Legislatures who have also passed away since the Legislature met last. I refer, first of all, to Guy Franklin Van Eaton who was born at Magnolia, Iowa, in 1878. Mr. Van Eaton spent his early childhood on a stock ranch in South Dakota. In 1889, the family moved to the State of Washington, where Mr. Van Eaton continued his education at Tacoma High School and Tacoma Academy. He began his farming career in eastern Washington, where he helped to organize a farmers' co-operative elevator and store. In 1916, the Van Eaton family moved to Vanscoy, Saskatchewan, and became Canadian citizens. In 1927 he purchased land near Shellbrook and resided there from that time until near his death. He died on January 9, 1950, at the home of his mother at Yakima, Washington.

Mr. Van Eaton was always an outstanding representative of the farmers of this district. He was director of the Livestock Pool for District No. 7; was vice-president of that District Pool until the group amalgamated with the Wheat Pool; and he was also a director of Shellbrook Co-operative, and delegate from sub-district No. 8 of District 15 for Saskatchewan Co-operative Producers, for several years. he was elected to this Assembly as C.C.F. member for Shellbrook in the by-election of June 29, 1945.

Of a quiet and retiring nature, Mr. Van Eaton was a very devout and active Minister of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Surviving him of his immediate family are his widow, five sons, three daughters and fifteen grandchildren.

Another former member who has passed away during the past few months is Norman Leslie McLeod, who died at his Estevan home of a heart ailment on September 23, 1949, at the age of fifty-seven years. He was elected Liberal member for Souris-Estevan in the disputed by-election of 1930, but was unseated in the following year. In the general election of 1934, he was elected as member for Bromhead, but following redistribution and the general election of 1938, he returned to the Legislative Assembly as member for Souris-Estevan, serving until 1944.

Mr. McLeod, was born on February 17, 1892, at Melita, Manitoba, his parents being pioneer settlers at Estevan. He attended public and high schools at Estevan, and later Regina Normal School. He received his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Manitoba in 1914, and from 1916 to 1924 was principal of Unity town school. Married in 1924, he leaves to mourn his passing his widow and one daughter.

A farmer and a merchant, Mr. McLeod served for four years on the Estevan Town Council and as a member of the School Board. He was a past master of the Masonic Lodge, past grand master of the Odd-fellows, and a past president of the Estevan Rotary Club. As a member of the Assembly, he was amongst the first of the members to direct attention to the plight of the teaching profession in the 'thirties.

I have placed these facts on the record, Mr. Speaker, because I think it is part of the history of the province that these men, who have served in this Legislature, should be remembered and something of their work recorded. I think all that is necessary to say is that all of us regret seeing empty seats in the Legislature and hearing of members pass away who have been rendering useful service in their day and generation. I think it also ought, probably, to remind us that men and women in public life do undergo a certain strain and that we ought always to remember, with a good deal of thanks and with deep appreciation, these men who have given of their time to serve in the processes of democratic government, sometimes shortening their lives thereby; but without their sacrifice and their willingness to serve, the kind of government we believe in would be impossible. Therefore, I am sure that all members will want to join in expressing our regret at their having passed away.

I therefore would like to move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by Mr. Tucker (Leader of the Opposition):

“That this Assembly records with profound regrets its keen sense of personal loss its membership has suffered through the passing of two of its most conscientious and highly respected members, that late Alvin Cecil Murray and the late Paul Prince, who represented the Electoral Division of Gull Lake and the Battlefords, respectively, during its last Session; and also of two greatly esteemed citizens and former members of this Assembly, the late Norman Leslie McLeod of Estevan, and the late Guy Franklin Van Eaton of Shellbrook.

“And further, that this Assembly, in paying tribute to the memory of these lamented colleagues and friends, and recalling their devotion to the service of this House, of this Province, and of the Constituencies they so ably represented here, expresses its condolences with the bereaved families, praying that Divine Providence may comfort and sustain them in their sorrow.”

(CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY)

Mr. W.A. Tucker: — Mr. Speaker, in speaking on behalf of the Opposition, I wish to express our support of the motion which Mr. Douglas has just moved, and particularly the part expressing sympathy to the bereaved relatives. I think everyone who has had any part in public life knows to what extent relatives also make their contribution, particularly in the case of a family where the man is so involved in his public duties that he must be away from home a great deal. In the case of all the men who have passed away, and with whose passing this resolution deals, they were so devoted to the public service that this certainly is the case with them and their families. When they, also, have had to see their loved ones spend so much time away from home in the public service, it is very fitting that we should send to them our heartfelt sympathy in their bereavement.

None of these men were very old as they passed away and, as the Premier said, it should serve to remind all of us that while today we may enjoy good health (as some of these men did up until very shortly before they passed away), we never know when we will be removed from this field of activity, and it is very fitting that we should try to bear that in mind as much as possible.

In regard to the passing of Mr. Murray, most of us on this side only came to know him last Session; but I think he was a man who had no enemies, so far as I know, in this Legislature. In travelling through the seat of Gull Lake, which he represented in this Legislature for several years, I found that he was a man who was very deeply esteemed and respected throughout that whole constituency; and as far as I could ever see or hear he was a man in a constituency without enemies, a man

whom everybody felt, was thoroughly devoted to serving the public welfare, and man that they were proud to have as their member.

In speaking of Paul Prince, who was a very beloved colleague of ours, it is hard for me to really express in words the sense of loss which I experienced at his passing, and knowing him and his family much more intimately than I knew Mr. Murray, I was much more conscious of the terrible bereavement that his passing inflicted on his beloved wife and his young daughter. He was a man who was very completely devoted to his wife and family, and it was a very sad thing to think that at such a young age he should be taken from them. His passing was a great loss to us on this side of the House and to our Party, which he served with such distinction and with such devotion and so ably. His services were recognized by the Party when he was made its Provincial President in 1925, and he was serving that post when I was elected leader of this party. He was to me always a dear friend, a devoted friend, a person I could always go to for advice and assistance. In his community, I gave some knowledge of how he was respected there. In that regard he was very much like Mr. Murray. Everyone seemed to be a friend of his; everyone had the greatest amount of affection for him, regardless of political affiliation, they had the greatest possible admiration for Mr. Prince.

In tribute to Mr. Prince there were two very moving reference made in the North Battleford paper, and I would like to read these two short references because they so adequately describe Paul and I think in a very large measure, they are applicable to Alvin Murray and to the other two gentlemen, Mr. Van Eaton and Mr. MacLeod.

The first of these tributes reads as follows; and when I read them in regard to Paul Prince I think they do apply to the others whose passing we mourn:

“Paul Prince’s death, in the joy of this Christmas season, has touched with sadness all who know him. It is difficult to realize now that we will see him no more. It seems only yesterday that we heard his cheerful greeting, enjoyed his happy companionship. Today he is gone and we will not know again the pleasure of hailing him in the street or sitting and talking with him. It is a truism that no man is irreplaceable but insofar as there are exceptions to this, Paul Prince, in the town of Battleford where his father and mother came as pioneers, will be irreplaceable. Here he was born, brought up, and here he came to manhood, served his fellow citizens and became a leader among them. When one thought of Paul Prince, he thought of Battleford, and the converse was equally true. Honour and integrity were the fibre of his being. he wore a cloak of consideration and of unstudied courtesy, of natural easy grace. he was a gentleman. in all things he was a man whom we were proud to call ‘friend’. The pride we took in his friendship was shared by thousands here throughout this province. For his part, he took delight in his friends, young or old,

February 17, 1950

rich or poor, of high or low estate; it did not matter. He loved his fellowmen. Our deepest sympathy goes to his fine loyal wife and to his brave young daughter. Their burden of sorrow is heavy; they are bowed with grief. Yet in the years that lie ahead they will look back to him with pride in the thankfulness that he was all things that go to make a good husband, a good father and a good man. The memory of Paul Prince will ever remain green in The Battlefords. May the sod on his grave lie lightly over him.”

The other tribute reads as follows:

“It is good to have known Paul Prince. That community is fortunate indeed which possesses men of the stature which was his, for his interest within the community reached out and touched the lives of most of our citizens in a personal contact. He was generous, large-minded and filled with understanding. Into every activity of the community he injected the richness of his personality. Paul Prince was a real bulwark in community life and enterprise. He brought clarity of vision and aptness of expression into the council of his fellow businessmen that always marked him as a leader. The everyday people with the fundamental welfare was his fellow man. Paul Prince was free from the partisan and insular point of view and he was always ready to give his personal attention to the difficulties of others wherever his assistance could alleviate distress. His willingness to listen, his ability to help with wise counsel endeared him to those who sought him out. The kindly humanity and broadness of interest made Paul Prince a worthy representative of his community in the government of the country. Whether in the simple confines of his home or in the wider responsibilities of State it was his constant purpose to carry high purpose, with dignity of bearing allied to the expression of character in a Christian gentleman in all the affairs of daily life. Battleford was rich in the possession of such a citizen and it is good to have known Paul Prince.”

And I say, Mr. Speaker, that I think we can say the same in regard to Alvin Murray, in regard to Guy Franklin Eaton and in regard to Norman Leslie McLeod. They were beloved in their respective communities. It was good to have known each of these gentlemen and they have made a contribution to their province and to their country which should be an inspiration to us to try to emulate and to which we do humbly pay tribute this afternoon; and in so doing we extend our deepest sympathy to those who have been bereaved by their passing.

Hon. T.J. Bentley (Minister of Public Health): — I would like to add my words to those which have already been said regarding particularly Alvin Murray, whom I knew extremely well. It was not my good fortune to be acquainted with Mr. Prince and Mr. McLeod, but those people here whose opinions I respect I think have said the kind of words I would have said, had my knowledge of these men been as extensive as theirs, and I join with those who mourn their passing.

Mr. Van Eaton was a little better known to me, as I had associated with him in agricultural circles and in Co-operative ways. Our Mr. Murray was a very close personal friend and the words the Leader of the Opposition so kindly said about him, that he heard in his travels around Gull Lake, last fall and probably at other times, were correct. The people there have a deep and abiding respect and affection for Alvin Murray and his memory. It has been given to me to have the honour of replacing him in this Chamber, and I do sincerely hope that all Alvy's friends will always be here with me while I am sitting and trying to fill his place.

Mr. J.E. McCormack (Souris-Estevan): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to join in these tributes with particular reference to Norman Leslie McLeod; who also gave very great service on the School Board, the town council and any worthwhile organization located in Estevan and district. He was well respected by everyone and his loss will be severely felt by all his friends and fellow citizens. Despite the stormy opening to his political career in 1930, he never became bitter and he was always a kind friend to everyone.

Hon. Mr. Douglas: — I wish to move, seconded by the hon. Leader of the Opposition:

“That the resolution of profound regret at the passing of the late Alvin Cecil Murray, the late Paul Prince, the late Norman Leslie McLeod and the late Guy Franklin Van Eaton, together with transcripts of the recorded tributes, be communicated to the bereaved families, on behalf of this Assembly, by Mr. Speaker.”

(Carried Unanimously)

The Assembly adjourned at 3:45 o'clock p.m.