

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**First Session — Twelfth Legislature**  
**1st Day**

**Thursday, February 12, 1953**

This being the first day of the meeting of the First Session of the Twelfth Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan, the members elected having subscribed the Roll containing the Oath, took their seats in the Assembly at 3 o'clock p.m.

His Honour then entered the Chamber and took his seat on the Throne.

**Hon. Mr. Burton (Provincial Secretary):** — I am commanded by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to inform you that he does not see fit to declare the causes of the summoning of the present Legislature until later today, when the Legislative Assembly shall have elected a Speaker, according to law.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor then retired from the Chamber.

**Hon. Mr. Douglas (Weyburn):** — I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Fines, that Tom Johnston, Esquire, member for the Constituency of Touchwood, do take the chair of this Assembly as Speaker.

**Mr. McCormack:** — Mr. Clerk, it is a foregone conclusion that the Speaker will be elected from the Government side of the House. I therefore move, seconded by Mr. Lopton, that Mr. Peter Howe, Esquire, member for the Constituency of Kelvington, do take the chair of this Assembly as Speaker.

**Mr. Howe:** — I am sorry but I will have to decline this nomination.

The question being put by the Clerk, the Motion of the Hon. Mr. Douglas (Weyburn) was agreed to, on division.

The Clerk having declared Tom Johnston, Esquire, duly elected, he was conducted by the Hon. Mr. Douglas (Weyburn) and the Hon. Mr. Fines to the Dais, where, standing on the upper step, he returned his humble acknowledgments to the Assembly for the great honour they had been pleased to confer upon him by choosing him to be their Speaker.

Thereupon he took the Chair and the Mace was laid upon the Table.

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His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor re-entered the Chamber and took his seat upon the Throne at 3:15 o'clock p.m.

Mr. Speaker then addressed His Honour to the following effect:

May It Please Your Honour:

The Legislative Assembly have elected me as their Speaker, although I am but little able to fulfill the important duties thus assigned to me.

If, in the performance of those duties, I should at any time fall into error, I pray that the fault may be imputed to me and not to the Assembly whose servant I am, and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their Queen and Country, humbly claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to your person at all seasonable times, and that their proceedings may receive from you the most favourable consideration.

The Honourable Mr. Burton, Provincial Secretary, then said:

Mr. Speaker:

I am commanded by His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to declare to you that he freely confides in the duty and attachment of the Assembly to Her Majesty's Person and Government, and not doubting that their proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temper and prudence, he grants, and will upon all occasions recognize and allow their constitutional privileges.

I am commanded also to assure you that the Assembly shall have ready access to His Honour upon all reasonable occasions, and that their proceedings, as well as your words and actions, will constantly receive from him the most favourable construction.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor was then pleased to open the Session with the following Speech:

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is my privilege to welcome you to the First Session of the Twelfth Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has been graciously pleased to set the second day of June as the date of Her Coronation. On that day Her Majesty will dedicate herself to exercise constitutionally the prerogatives and powers of government vested in Her Person and to assume the responsibilities and duties which devolve upon the Crown in the community of nations, states and territories which comprise the Commonwealth. The crowning of Her Majesty as Queen of Canada will give us a more direct and personal interest in this significant event. Saskatchewan shares the hopes so widely expressed at the accession of Her Majesty that Her Coronation will usher in a new Elizabethan Age in which the peoples of the Commonwealth will prosper in peace.

During the last year Saskatchewan was privileged to welcome His Excellency the Right Honourable Vincent Massey, Governor General of Canada, on his first official visit to our Province. The Governor General was welcomed not only as Her Majesty's Vice-Regal representative but also as a fellow Canadian who has made significant contributions to the national life of Canada.

Saskatchewan had the privilege of being host to delegates from the Ottawa Conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The visit of these representatives from all parts of the Commonwealth reminded us of the benefits we enjoy as a member of this free association of nations.

This Legislature has been called to its first session to deal primarily with the programmes and plans recently endorsed by the electorate of our Province. Legislation and estimates which will be presented for your consideration and approval will reflect the initial stages of the implementation of these plans.

Favourable weather conditions in 1952, combined with steadily increasing acreage in production, resulted in a record crop of nearly seven hundred million bushels of wheat and coarse grains, the gross value of which is expected to approximate nine hundred million dollars. This will represent the largest return from field crops ever realized by Saskatchewan farmers and will temporarily offset serious price declines for livestock, dairy and poultry products.

It is a matter for grave concern that despite Canada's high level of prosperity, certain trends threaten our agricultural economy. Trade records indicate that the United Kingdom and Europe have been compelled, by reasons of currency restrictions and trade barriers, to restrict their purchases of Canadian farm products. Canada must give serious consideration to this vital problem and take immediate steps to prevent the further loss of our natural markets for farm produce and the accumulation of vast surpluses of food.

This month representatives of wheat importing and exporting countries have been meeting in conference to discuss the future of the International Wheat Agreement. It is our earnest hope that these discussions will lead to the renewal of this Agreement on terms satisfactory both to the consumer and to the producer.

The benefits which have accrued to our nation as a whole, as well as to our farmers, as a result of the Wheat Board principle of marketing grain are an established fact. My Government is of the opinion that never before has the need for the marketing of livestock, dairy and poultry products by similar agencies been more apparent. It is urged, therefore, that such a marketing plan be adopted and that the Government of Canada call a conference for the purpose of implementing sound, long-term marketing plans which will guarantee to the farmers their fair share of the national income.

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There has been widespread disappointment and regret that the Royal Commission appointed by the Federal Government has recommended against the immediate construction of the South Saskatchewan River Project. During the hearings of this Commission My Government submitted carefully prepared material, which, in its opinion, demonstrated conclusively that the South Saskatchewan scheme was not only essential to the economic stability of Saskatchewan but also a feasible and economic undertaking. The Government of Saskatchewan has renewed its offer to the Government of Canada to meet the provincial share of the cost of the project and has asked that the recommendations of the Royal Commission be ignored and that the construction of the South Saskatchewan River Dam be proceeded with immediately.

Last year the Legislature approved the appointment of a Royal Commission to investigate and make recommendations regarding the requirements for the maintenance of a sound farm economy and the improvement of social conditions and amenities in rural Saskatchewan. The Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life has been appointed and has already done valuable work in the fulfillment of its assignment. In view of the importance of its task, My Government invites the people of Saskatchewan to give the Commission their full co-operation in order that its endeavours may achieve success.

Significant advances were made in agricultural programmes, including the building of drainage and irrigation ditches, the construction of colonization roads and the seeding of grasslands. These programmes received the co-operation of more than three hundred Agricultural Improvement and Conservation Committees.

You will be asked to approve estimates to continue the work of solving drainage problems, of improving land for agricultural production and of advancing the development of irrigation. You will also be asked to approve provision for the appointment of an Implement Engineering Committee to conduct and carry out tests and examinations of implements and repairs as recommended by the Select Special Committee on Farm Implements.

New records have been established in the exploration and development of our oil resources. Over one hundred oil wells were brought into production last year. Over three hundred oil wells produced one million six hundred thousand barrels of oil. Ten proven oil fields are now being developed. Oil companies have announced that new and additional oil refining facilities will be constructed, with the result that refining capacity will be increased by more than sixty percent during the present year. The construction of an oil pipeline from the Fosterton field to the City of Regina is planned.

The increased activity in the development of our natural resources has required a reorganization and expansion of our Natural Resources Department. You will be asked to approve legislation which will establish a new Department of Mineral Resources.

Canada's first potash mine is now being developed at Vera. Several other companies are carrying out preliminary work on a million acres of Crown minerals estimated to contain the largest source of underdeveloped potash in the world.

The search for radioactive minerals and base metals was particularly intense last year, with more than four thousand one hundred mineral claims recorded. This record is more than double the previous high established in 1951.

The Eldorado mill for refining uranium ore is now nearing completion and is expected to be in production this spring. A new copper and zinc mine is being developed at Birch Lake.

The forest inventory has continued to reveal large volumes of standing timber, particularly pulpwood. Economic studies are continuing to assess the feasibility of more intensive utilization of our forest resources.

During the past several years the commercial fishing industry of Saskatchewan has progressed and consolidated into the third largest inland fishing in Canada. Filleting plants in the north, some of which were given direct assistance, process and ship over a million pounds of fish to North American markets annually.

A new natural gas field was developed during the past year. The Saskatchewan Power Corporation, operating as a public pipeline and distributing utility, supplied natural gas to the towns of Brock and Kindersley. The proving up of additional reserves has enabled the Power Corporation to proceed with plans to supply natural gas to the city of Saskatoon and intermediate points this year.

The electrification of the Coleville oil field marked an important development in the expansion of the Saskatchewan Power Corporation. Major power plant capacity was increased thirty-six percent in 1952 to meet growing demands for electrical energy. The integration of the northern power system was advanced by the constituency of additional high tension lines.

The accelerated programme of rural electrification resulted in the connection of four thousand three hundred farms and forty villages and hamlets. More than twelve thousand farms are now served with electric power. You will be asked to make further provision for a Rural Electrification programme designed to supply power to four thousand farms.

The Saskatchewan Hospital Services Plan has continued to operate as a successful humanitarian undertaking. It appears evident that this programme has been responsible for the fact that an adequate amount of hospitalization is now available to the people of the province. The method of payment to hospitals has resulted in greater financial stability, thus making possible continued improvement in the standards of care and hospital accommodation.

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The establishment of the Regina Rural Health Region was another milestone in the expansion of public health services. Eight health regions, together with the health departments of the Cities of Saskatoon and Regina, now provide organized health services for the majority of the population in our Province. It is anticipated that other health regions will be organized as personnel becomes available.

The medical care programme of the Swift Current Health Region continues to operate successfully. The provincial programme of providing comprehensive medical and hospital care for the aged, indigent and other groups is now available to some thirty-three thousand Saskatchewan people. In order to extend the benefits of such programmes the Government of Saskatchewan reaffirms its willingness to co-operate with the Federal Government in establishing a comprehensive National Health Insurance Plan with the least possible delay.

Amendments to the Health Services Act, which facilitate the administration of municipal medical care programmes, will be presented for your consideration.

The severe poliomyelitis epidemic which swept the continent during the last year affected more than twelve hundred Saskatchewan people. Much credit is due to the medical, nursing and hospital personnel and private agencies of the Province for the excellent care provided to these victims. Rehabilitation facilities for physical restoration are being expended to provide treatment for the large number of poliomyelitis patients suffering residual paralysis.

During the past year the greatest programme of highway construction in the history of the Province was completed. Notable among the projects undertaken was the completion of the bituminous surfacing between the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. Work on the Trans-Canada Highway continues to be up to schedule.

You will be asked to approve estimates providing for the first phase of a five-year plan designed to complete the grading and surfacing of the main arterial highways. Details of the 1953 highway construction programme will be placed before you for consideration.

The timber bridge policy was amended to provide assistance to Rural Municipalities on an equalization basis, taking into consideration the number of bridge spans required and ability to pay.

Special assistance was furnished to rural Municipalities that suffered exceptional flood damage during the past spring. The Civil Defence and Disaster organization rendered immediate assistance in the rehabilitation of the people affected by the floods and financial assistance was granted to those who suffered losses.

Unprecedented high levels on the South Saskatchewan River inflicted major damage on the Saskatchewan landing Bridge. Repair work on this structure is progressing favourably and it will be re-opened for traffic this year.

During the year votes were held in five areas not previously organized as larger school units. The result in each case was a vote in favour of organizing a unit. The inclusion of six town districts and one consolidated school district in larger school units indicates a trend which contributes to a greater measure of equality of educational opportunity.

The establishment of additional transportation routes has resulted in bringing to many children more satisfactory educational services. This centralization of school population makes desirable the provision for a more representative school authority in the areas affected. Legislation to this end is being introduced.

The work of co-operative curriculum planning at the elementary school level has proceeded satisfactorily. In the year 1953 it is planned to extend work undertaken under the Dominion-Provincial Youth Training Agreement to include short courses of a nature appropriate to the needs of the people living in the more remote northern areas of the Province.

Legislation will be introduced to provide for the improvement of libraries in the Province and the increase of library grants.

Although Saskatchewan enjoyed the distinction of having the lowest highway fatality rate during 1951, the accident rate during 1952 increased alarmingly. It is deemed advisable, therefore, to recommend the appointment of a Legislative Committee to study the problem of reducing the number of highway accidents.

Amendments to the Vehicles Act providing further protection to motorists will be introduced. You will also be asked to approve amendments to the Automobile Accident Insurance Act which will widen insurance benefits.

An expanding rehabilitation programme for handicapped persons now makes it advisable to submit a Rehabilitation Act for your approval.

The completion of the Melfort Nursing Home is progressing favourably. The expansion of the programme of nursing care for aged citizens is being planned.

During the past year the co-operation extended by the Government of Saskatchewan to private contractors and municipalities has resulted in an increasing number of homes being erected. The programme of assisting municipalities in meeting their share of housing projects constructed under provisions of the National Housing Act will be extended.

Saskatchewan has continued to enjoy a relatively high level of employment. Industrial relations remained satisfactory. Apprenticeship training will continue to assist in meeting the increasing demand for skilled workers.

The growing number of power and gas installations will require increased activity in the field of public safety.

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Amendments to the Workmen's Compensation (Accident Fund) Act designed to increase certain benefits will be introduced.

The Saskatchewan Municipal Advisory Commission, consisting of three members with outstanding experience in the Municipal Government field, was appointed since the Assembly met last. It is anticipated that the creation of this body, as recommended by the Committee on Provincial-Municipal Relations, will be of invaluable assistance to the Government in its policy of assisting municipalities on the basis of need.

Volume and value of services provided by co-operatives reached the highest level in the history of the Province. During the past year, one thousand one hundred and forty three co-operatives, with a combined membership of over five hundred thousand, reported a business volume of almost four hundred million dollars.

During the past year increased use was made of the Hudson Bay Route. Overseas business and trade promotion programmes sponsored by My Government contributed to the increased interest in trade with the United Kingdom.

Amendments to the Co-operative Association Act, the Credit Union Act and the Co-operative Marketing Associations Act, which are designed to enable co-operatives to improve their operating and administrative procedures, will be placed before this Legislature for approval.

Plans for the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the establishment of our Province have been underway since the proclamation of the Golden Jubilee Act early this winter. Last week a representative group of Saskatchewan citizens who were appointed to the Golden Jubilee Committee, met in Regina to give direction to the many activities which will form part of our Celebration. The Government of Saskatchewan invites citizens throughout the Province to give their full support to the efforts of this Committee in planning our Golden Jubilee.

The Committee appointed to consolidate and revise the Statutes of Saskatchewan has worked actively during the past year. This Committee has recommended numerous amendments which will be submitted to this Legislature for approval.

The Public Accounts for the last fiscal year, together with the estimates for the year beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1953 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 the Province, and may Divine Providence continue to bless our Province and guide the Legislature in all its deliberations.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor then retired from the Chamber.

The Assembly adjourned at 3:40 o'clock p.m.