

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan
Second Session — Twelfth Legislature
37th Day**

Friday, April 2, 1954

The House met at eleven o'clock a.m.

On the Orders of the Day:

S.F.U. TAX LEGISLATION WITHDRAWN

Premier Douglas: — Mr. Speaker, with the consent of the House I desire to make a brief statement. As all members are aware, legislation has been placed on their desks to permit rural municipalities, where the ratepayers approve, to levy a tax of one-half mill on all farm land to assist in financing the Saskatchewan Farmers' Union.

This proposed legislation provides for a limited right of withdrawal. It should be noted that the right of withdrawal is limited to one year and is also limited to forty-five days within which the owner of any farm land may notify the secretary of the municipality, in writing, that he objects to the levy and does not wish to pay the tax.

The S.F.U. have asked that the right of withdrawal be further limited to those ratepayers who actually reside upon or operate the land on which the tax is levied.

The Government does not feel that it can agree to this further limitation of the right of withdrawal. We are prepared to submit legislation to the Assembly which will provide a convenient means of financing the S.F.U. for those who are desirous of supporting that organization. However, we are not prepared to introduce legislation which would compel those who are unwilling to contribute financially to the S.F.U. to do so against their will. The Government has taken the position that there is a distinct difference between providing a convenient method of supporting the S.F.U. on a voluntary basis and imposing a compulsory tax on certain landowners merely because they do not happen to operate or reside upon their farms.

The S.F.U. have informed the Government that unless the legislation now before the House is amended to further limit the right of withdrawal to those who actually operate or reside upon their land, the legislation in its present form is unacceptable. Since the Government does not feel that we should grant the right of withdrawal to one type of ratepayer and deny it to another, we have decided not to proceed with the legislation at this time.

5:55 o'clock p.m.

His Honour the Administrator entered the Chamber, and having assented to certain Bills, was pleased to deliver the following Speech:

Mr. Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is my duty to relieve you of further attendance at the Legislative Assembly, and in doing so I wish to thank you and congratulate you upon the work you have done. I wish also to express my confidence that the approval

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of the programmes and plans presented before you will continue to provide the services necessary to the growth and development of our Province.

Of the many decisions you have made, it is appropriate to single out for noteworthy comment increased grants for education, the plan to participate in providing allowances for disabled persons, provision for the further extension of electric power into the rural areas and provision for the further construction and maintenance of our highways.

The first Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life, which was received during the Session, will receive careful consideration.

I thank you for the provision you have made to meet the further requirements of the Public Service, and assure you that the sum of money voted will be used economically, prudently, and in the public interest.

In taking leave of you, I desire to thank you for the manner in which you have devoted your energies to the activities of the Session and to wish you the full blessing of Providence as you return again to your respective homes.

The Assembly was then prorogued.