

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session - Twelfth Legislature
21st Day

March 10, 1955

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

BUDGET DEBATE

The House resumed from Wednesday, March 9, 1955, the adjourned debate on the proposed Motion of the Hon. Mr. Fines (Provincial Treasurer): That Mr. Speaker do now leave the chair. (The Assembly to go into Committee of Supply).

Hon. C.C. Williams (Minister of Labour): — Mr. Speaker, when I adjourned the debate yesterday afternoon I was speaking on the subject of unemployment and will continue along that line a few minutes, this afternoon.

Last year in this House, I made some reference to unemployment which, at that time, was 316,000, or an increase of 100,000 over the 1949 figure — that is, Dominion figure. Now, I must report that the latest figure is 610,000 on February 1st this year, a still more alarming increase. This province a year ago, February 25, 1954, had 15,754 unemployed; now, it is 21,234, February 24th again.

It is most frustrating to see such a situation and be able to do very little about it locally. It is true that firms who buy considerable quantities of materials from time to time can arrange their orders so that such goods will be made in the slacker time of year and so reduce to some extent seasonal unemployment. I would encourage these groups, including the Federal and Provincial Governments, to follow this policy, although obviously it is no solution.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, this Government is the largest employer of labour in the province, and with Crown companies, has kept a fair number of employees working who would otherwise be unemployed at the present time. I refer to the brick plant at Estevan, the sodium sulphate plant at Chaplin, the box factory at Prince Albert, and several others.

The post-war immigration policy of the Federal Government appears to have resulted in bringing in more people to this country than could be absorbed, with the result that many of them, and people who have been here for years, are among the unemployed. Opinions of the federal Minister of Labour, Mr. Pickersgill, and the Ontario section of the Chamber of Commerce notwithstanding, it is obviously not good to bring people into Canada if there is no work. The Chamber of Commerce of the two larger eastern provinces favour unlimited immigration. These people, the "Seigneurly Club" crowd, are undoubtedly quite clever when it comes to making money for themselves or their corporations, but such qualifications do not necessarily make them experts on immigration.

I would suggest to anyone, including the editorial writer of the 'Leader-Post', that they visit the various unemployment offices in this province any morning they are open, and talk to the men looking for work and then see if they could conscientiously go out and advocate the bringing in of more people. Unemployment exists in all parts of Canada, and no provincial government has the

power to overcome it. The crop failure of western Canada was reflected almost immediately in large lay-offs in eastern Canada, especially where machinery is being manufactured. Embargoes and tariff restrictions placed on Canadian goods entering the United States, and a general loss of world trade, are some of the reasons – and I do not want to see anyone on the opposite side of the House try to place any responsibility on this Government.

A few days ago, the member for Wilkie (Mr. Horsman) spoke briefly on this question, and here is what he is reported in the Leader-Post to have said:

“I cannot see where the Provincial Government is doing much to ease it. (He is referring to unemployment), except to call on the Federal Government for assistance. He said that the important thing was to have jobs provided and the Provincial Government should concentrate on attracting industry to provide these jobs.”

That, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what this Government has been doing for a number of years. We have the Industrial Development Board under the directorship of Don Black, and he has done everything possible to attract industry to this province and with some success.

Criticism with no constructive suggestions or alternatives is of no value, and this Government would welcome information or suggestions as to how unemployment can be overcome or reduced. Fifty years ago people in European countries were urged to emigrate to Canada and were told they would find gold lying about on the streets. The propaganda is not so crude nowadays, although there have been complaints made of false or exaggerated statements. I feel the transportation companies are partly to blame for much of this. Anything to keep their boats filled.

Last September I had an interview with Laval Fortier, Q.C., Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration at Ottawa. Primarily, I went to see him to protest against the fact that pipeline workers, particularly welders, were being brought in from the United States to the disadvantage of Canadian workers. He agreed to look into the matter, and we were later advised that pipeline companies had strenuously denied any such practice, although, being a highly specialized skill, and comparatively new in Canada, they did admit bringing in quite a few welders. Any definite case where American workmen are being brought in to do jobs that can be done by Canadians should be reported either to the branch office of the Department of Immigration here, or to the Department of Labour, and we will pass the information on.

Immigration came up in my talk with Mr. Fortier, the Deputy Minister in Ottawa, and he stated that with the exception of Great Britain and France, people would not be brought in from other countries after the end of September. This did not apply, of course, to individuals coming out to join their families. However, we understand a conference on unemployment is being called to meet in Ottawa a few weeks from now, and it is to be hoped a solution will be found, or at least measures taken to materially reduce the number of unemployed.

I will leave unemployment now and go to the question of compensation for people in the farming industry. This question, Mr. Speaker, is not

March 10, 1955

new. It has been considered from time to time, but without very much interest being shown by the farmers themselves, or their organizations. It might be of interest at this point to indicate briefly how the Act is financed. Various industries are kept in separate groups and the employers are assessed sufficient amounts, each year, to provide enough funds to take care of the accidents in that group. Obviously some occupations are more hazardous than others, and the rates must vary according to such hazards. For instance, bridge building has the highest rate of any group — \$9.00 per \$100 a payroll. Mining has a rate of \$4.50, which means that for every \$100 paid out in wages, \$4.50 is paid into the Workmen's Compensation Fund to take care of accidents in that industry. Carpentry is \$2.75 per \$100 payroll. Rates for different groups vary down to as low as 20 cents per \$100 in the printing industry, where accidents seldom occur.

If those engaged in farming were to be covered by compensation enough money would be required from the farmers themselves to create a fund sufficiently large to take care of farm accidents, both fatal and non-fatal. This could be done along the same lines as the present in industry, by setting an arbitrary wage rate for those to be covered and assessing farmers a percentage, say, of \$1.00 or \$2.00 per \$100 of that estimated wage rate.

Another method could be the collection of a fraction of a cent per bushel of grain, or a fraction per pound on livestock, to build up the required fund. The Rand formula procedure, of which we have heard so much lately, could be considered. I do not want any rumors to start now, to the effect that farmers are going to be taxed in some way in order to provide compensation for accidental death or injury, and I wish it to be perfectly clear that the Government is making no such proposal. If and when protection is provided for our farming people such requests will first need to come from the farmers themselves through their representative organizations. We have no thought of forcing such legislation on them, although I do think it would be an excellent thing. I suggest the Saskatchewan Farmers' Union or some other farm organization might promote the scheme. I would also suggest that, during the next 12 months, the members of this House might canvass the situation in rural areas of their constituencies and ascertain whether or not there is a demand for such compensation benefits.

Someone recently sent me a mimeographed sheet of instructions for employees issued by a furniture company in Salt Lake City a good many years ago — in fact, before the turn of the century. Perhaps some of you have seen it. For comparison purposes it is both interesting and to some extent amusing. I will quote part of it:

“Store opens at 7 a.m. and closes at 8 p.m. except on Saturdays when the store opens at 7 a.m. and closes at 9 p.m. This is in effect the year round. This store will remain closed each Sabbath.

“Duties of employees — sweep floors, dust furniture, office shelves and showcases. Each clerk should bring in one bucket of water and one scuttle of coal. These are necessary to prepare us for the day's business.”

Listen to this, Mr. Speaker, what they thought back before the turn of the century:

“Any employee who smokes Spanish cigars, uses liquor in any form, gets shaved at the barber shop or frequents pool halls or public dance halls will give his employer every reason to suspect his integrity or worthy intentions and his all-round honesty.

“Men employees will be given one evening off each week for courting purposes . . .”

Premier Douglas: — Any age limit?

Hon. Mr. Williams: — No age limit, no.

“ . . . two evenings each week if they go to Church regularly and attend to Church duties . . .”

Mr. Danielson: — No motor cars.

Hon. Mr. Williams: — Opening at 7 a.m. and closing at 8 p.m. These conditions referred to existed long before the days of effective labour legislation or labour unions, and it is interesting to compare the situation as applied to similar groups of store employees today.

The circular refers to places of business opening at 7 a.m. and closing at 8 p.m. for 6 days a week and an extra hour on Saturday – a 14-hour day for the sixth day and 13 hours the other days of the week. Today we have the 44-hour week in the cities and 9 larger towns and the 48-hour week over the balance of the province. Admitting long hours were generally accepted and probably necessary years ago, gradual changes over the years have improved the working conditions and resulted in a happier life for the wage-earner and his family.

New inventions, technological changes, a good supply of man power, all have contributed, and it is now obviously unnecessary for the long working hours just referred to. Good wages, fair wages, are also now a necessity in our way of life. Unions, not only in this province, but in most countries, have seen to it that their members are not taken advantage of. Where unions do not exist government has had to step in and provide legislation to ensure that their members are not exploited. Saskatchewan is well to the forefront, leading in many respects along these lines.

I have gone into considerable detail regarding our labour legislation on previous occasions in this House; the members are well acquainted with the general picture. I do not propose to repeat it here today, but rather to give a brief outline of the various branches contained in the Department of Labour.

First, I will deal with the Hours and Wages Branch, the operation of which will cost the Treasury \$63,850 for the approaching year. This branch administers the various Acts which have to do with seeing that employees, generally the unorganized group, receive their proper pay, are not worked over the legal limit unless overtime is paid, get their holidays with pay, their day off per week and so forth. During the first ten months of this fiscal year, or until February 1st, approximately \$55,000 has been collected from employers and turned over to the employees who were entitled to it. This was made up as follows:

March 10, 1955

Wages	\$26,000.00
Public Holidays	4,000.00
Overcharge for meals	400.00
Annual holidays	16,000.00
Overtime	8,600.00

These amounts may not seem very high, but it is an indication that, as time goes by, employers of labour are becoming better informed in regard to our legislation, and an occasional employer who does take advantage and underpay his help finds sooner or later that those tactics do not pay. The existence of this branch is, of course, most necessary in order that wage-earners get their just dues and that the various Acts are properly enforced.

We find that the 5-day week is becoming quite widespread, and joint requests for permits coming from employers and their employees show a marked increase over former years. A total of 103 have been received during the past year: 12 from factories, 13 from offices and shops, and 116 from banks, which brings the total number of banks now on a 5-day week in this province up to 173. A few years ago it would have been thought impossible to operate the banking industry from a public standpoint on 5 days a week, being closed all day Saturday. But experience has proven that, with some adjustment in hours, it is quite feasible, is appreciated by the staff and accepted by the general public without complaint.

The work of this branch has been made considerably more difficult, during the past year, due to the increased number of small businesses failing, resulting in a larger number of employees requiring assistance to collect their wages. Such matters seem to go along with unemployment. It is to be hoped that, when Spring opens up, conditions will improve all around, although it is obvious the crop failure of 1954 will have a far-reaching effect until the 1955 harvest.

Let us now turn to the Labour Relations Branch which takes \$46,770 out of the Departmental vote. We have two conciliation officers whose duty it is, as far as possible, to maintain industrial peace in this province. They go in where negotiating committees are having difficulty in making agreements or are deadlocked, and make every effort to assist the parties in resolving their differences. Last year 55 disputes were settled in this way out of a total of 86 in which these two officers took part. Eleven were referred to Conciliation Boards and 20 are still unsettled. Out of a total of 86 disputes referred to, 7 resulted in strikes. The most serious one, of course, was the strike in Sicks Regina Brewery, which lasted 15 weeks. The strike in this brewery was the longest in the history of the province, 111 days to be exact. Concerning a luxury product, it was not of much importance to the general public and not too important to the company, the local plant being only one unit in a chain of 7 or 8 across western Canada and in the north-west United States. It was, however, of great importance to the 120-odd employees who were out on strike, with no pay cheque coming in for a period of 3½ months. Some, but not all, found temporary employment elsewhere.

Both parties made mistakes, especially at the start, and the breach gradually widened with negotiations at a standstill until I was able, about the middle of October, to get the parties' representatives meeting with each other. Progress was slow and made difficult by the attitude of C.I.O. officials from outside the province, and the strike might still have been on

had it not been for the action taken by this Government. It was finally settled by Mr. Sick, of Seattle, President of the Company, getting in touch with the union head in Cincinnati and agreeing on the main issue, wages. Being caught in the middle, as it were, I came in for some criticism, particularly from one of the outside C.I.O. men who, unable to get anywhere himself, had to look for someone to blame it on. Following one of the union meetings I was awakened about 12:30 one morning, from a sound sleep, by the telephone. The anonymous caller, after shouting a few foul names into the telephone, slammed up the receiver. Of course, Mr. Speaker, in my position, one must expect such incidents, although I would have liked to have had the opportunity of returning the insults in kind. But, it wasn't possible that time. I was quite gratified later, however, to receive a letter from the Secretary of the Union expressing appreciation for my actions and assistance in settling the strike. On meeting individual members of the Union committee on occasion since, I have found them to be most friendly, and can only conclude that criticism was confined to a very few. Mr. Sick, of Seattle, also wired me his thanks, so both parties appeared to be satisfied with the actions of the Department of Labour and the Government. It is to be hoped that such a situation will not repeat itself, and it is most regrettable that only approximately 80 out of the 125 employees have since returned to work.

In addition to matters pertaining to labour, the Department administers several other branches, sometimes referred to as safety branches. The first I will mention today is the office of the Fire Commissioner. Its functions are as follows: first, inspection of buildings; second, fireman training; third, fire investigation; and fourth, licence and inspection of oil-burning appliances. In addition, a great deal of fire prevention work is done and the fact that the insurance companies operating in this province were able to reduce their premiums 10 to 25 per cent in fire insurance rates on dwellings (a lesser amount on mercantile risks) is, we think mostly as a result of the activities of this branch, together, of course, with the work of the Electrical Inspection Branch, or the Steam-boilers Branch, and also, with the excellent co-operation of the fire chiefs and fire departments throughout the province.

Saskatchewan has the smallest per capita fire loss on both a five-and-10-year average of any province in Canada, which I think is something we should be quite proud of. During the past year, 1954, 22 persons lost their lives in the province by fire, including 12 children. The fact that two small children were burned to death in a fire which started in their home where there was a glass jar of gasoline, forcibly illustrates the soundness of an amendment made last year to The Fire Prevention Act making it illegal to place gasoline in other than a metal container which must be coloured red.

It is difficult to realize how any merchant or clerk in this day and age would be so stupid as to sell gasoline in a glass jar and the R.C.M.P. either have, or will soon, lay a charge against the storekeeper who sold the family gasoline in this jar which resulted in the death of the two children referred to. It is against the law to leave children alone, and every few days we read of cases in some province where one or more are burned to death on this account. We have hesitated to prosecute parents in this province for so doing, believing their grief should not be aggravated by court action. However, in some provinces parents have been fined and sent to gaol and we may be required to take similar action unless this dangerous practice is discontinued.

March 10, 1955

Previous to last year the regulations contained a provision making it illegal to sell unapproved fire extinguishers, usually the glass bomb type. These articles, which cost about 50 cents to make and sell from \$4 up to \$5 and \$5.50 are practically worthless in putting out a fire, and persons who have bought and installed them in their homes and buildings are living under a sense of false security. Last year, it will be recalled we passed an amendment and placed the prohibition of selling these worthless articles right in the Act, because the validity of prohibiting by regulation had been challenged by a company who persisted in selling them. These unapproved extinguishers besides being dangerous cannot be sold legally, and farmers and others who may be urged to buy them should report the matter to either the local fire chief or the nearest police officer. Human life, Mr. Speaker, is too valuable to fool around with these shysters who are willing to jeopardize life and property in order to make money.

The careless smoker continues to be a menace and is still the cause of most fires. The second highest cause is electricity, and the third, faulty heating appliances. We have six fire inspectors who continue to inspect all public buildings, including hotels, schools, homes for the aged and hospitals. There has been no loss of life in a public building during the past year. Regulations are that plans and specifications for all public buildings be sent to the office of the Fire Commissioner, Regina, for review and approval, which often results in savings for alterations later on.

During the year, 98 special fire investigations were made. As a result, 5 persons were convicted on charges of arson. Two persons were known to have set fire to buildings but committed suicide before being brought to trial, and in six instances the fires were known to have been of incendiary origin, but no charges were laid due to lack of evidence and the insurance companies refused to pay; they denied liability. In 5 other fires which were known to be incendiary, no charges were laid due to lack of evidence and the insurance companies paid by compromise.

The branch has sponsored fire-poster competitions in the schools, and I am glad to be in a position today to announce the winners. A total of 190 posters were received from some 50 provincial points. The public school entries numbered 168, and there were 22 entries received from the high schools. These posters were judged by Miss Nora McCullough, Secretary of the Saskatchewan Arts Board, James Hudson, operations manager of the Central Press, and Mr. Sweitzer, the Fire Commissioner. Here are the winners: Leona Friesen, 527 Avenue 1 north, Saskatoon, grade 11 student at Bedford Road Collegiate, with a poster depicting ruins due to the careless use of matches; Clayton Paige, Balfour Tech, Regina, with a poster showing the dangers of smoking, and Vince Moehn, of Balfour Tech, Regina, with a poster depicting the value of keeping chimneys clean. Honourable mention also went to Ron Kohlruss, of Balfour Tech, and Anne Dunlop, of Kinistino. The public school winners were: Irene Wright, grade 5, School for the Deaf, Saskatoon, with a poster depicting the danger of throwing away lighted matches; Ken Connelly, age 13, Connaught School, Regina, with a poster warning to keep children out of danger; Dolores Ferguson, age 13, Grade 8, Connaught School, Regina, with a poster warning about the careless use of matches.

In leaving the subject, Mr. Speaker, it will be of interest to all members to know that the office of the Fire Commissioner is endeavouring to collect obsolete fire equipment used by pioneer residents and have it on display along with modern equipment, which will show the advancement in firefighting apparatus during the last 50 years.

The Theatres Branch has made approximately 12,000 inspections of theatres and public halls during the past year, and a number of hazardous situations eliminated and exit facilities improved. There has been no loss of life or serious injury in our theatres for a number of years, which speaks well for our inspection service and co-operation from the owners.

Our film censor, located in Winnipeg, is in a position to play an important part in the control of juvenile delinquency by rejecting altogether or eliminating scenes and dialogues from indecent pictures. Occasionally, we do come across the ultra-sophisticated individual who does not believe in censorship of any kind; neither do many of those who produce or sell the films, because they know that by reducing censorship the field for the production of undesirable pictures is widened and more money made as a result. To these people, the producers, making large sums of money is of the greatest importance and they give no thought to the injury done, particularly to young people, by seeing their disgusting films. Were it not for crime, murder, lust, sex, robbery serving as a basis for their stories, half of these Hollywood producers would starve or have to go to work.

When I spoke in this House last year, and the year before, I dealt with these so-called crime comics at some length. I will only briefly mention the subject today. We see an increasingly large number of articles in newspapers and magazines referring to this subject, and it is gratifying to know that public opinion is finally being aroused. In the 'Leader-Post' January 3, 1955, there is a story which states:

“The Saskatchewan Tuxis Parliament, Thursday, called for censorship of all degrading literature, movies, television programmes now existing.”

I wish to commend all those who are campaigning for the eradication of this slimy sort of so-called literature, and especially wish to congratulate the Saskatchewan Provincial Command of the Canadian Legion, under the chairmanship of Mr. Austin Hunt, for their activities in this direction.

I will now briefly mention the Boiler Pressure, Vessel and Elevator Branch, which is self-supporting through the charges for licences, fees, etc. Saskatchewan is the only province, incidentally, where money from the Treasury is not required in the operation of such a branch. In some provinces the cost of operation is twice the amount of the revenue received. This is one of our safety branches, and the fact that there are very few accidents caused by boiler or pressure vessel explosions, speaks well for the efficiency of those in charge, and the inspectors. I should, perhaps, make reference to one unfortunate fatality which occurred in an institution operating an old-style elevator not equipped with safety locks, which makes it impossible to open the elevator door unless the elevator is there. A visitor was being conducted through the building and when his guide unlocked the door stepped into the open shaft, fell to the ground floor and was killed. Our inspector had recommended safety locks being placed on this elevator many times; the Department had written over 20 letters over a period of years urging that this be done. All correspondence was ignored, and it is unfortunate that there had to be a loss of life before the safety locks were installed. Our inspectors do not travel over this province for their health, Mr. Speaker, and when these changes are recommended, they should be complied with as soon as possible. The branch is not unreasonable and will usually give a suitable time for safety appliances to be installed.

March 10, 1955

I want to speak for a moment about safety on highways. Safety on highways has been given a good deal of publicity during the past year, and I am glad to know the accident rate is down in comparison with the previous year. The driver who is not concerned with the driving rights of others and is always in such a hurry to get no place in particular, even in heavy traffic, is however, still with us, although the various magistrates and justices of the peace are clipping his wings quite regularly. Commercial trucks are probably one of the most dangerous hazards to safety we have to contend with and I have some figures here to show the percentage involving these trucks as compared with the total. In 1953, accident analysis shows that involving all motor vehicles, 116 persons were killed; 29 of these, or one out of every four, involved a commercial vehicle. Of a total of 2,293 non-fatal accidents, 399 involved commercial trucks; of a total of 7,850 accidents where there was property damage, 1,727 involved commercial trucks. The total paid out in 1953 by the Insurance Company was \$3,975,230 and of this amount \$1,176,000 was paid out as a result of accidents involving commercial vehicles.

Here is a brief summary, Mr. Speaker, in approximate figures: one death out of every four involved a commercial vehicle; one accident out of every five involved a commercial vehicle; 33 per cent of the total paid out was on account of accidents in which commercial vehicles were involved. I suggest that this is too high a price to pay in lives, personal injury and property damage for the right assumed by the trucking industry to use provincial highways as their roadbed. Such industry should be able to afford the purchase of their own right-of-way across the country, build their own road and operate on same so much per mile for each commercial vehicle. In this way, our roads would be returned to those whom originally the highways were intended to serve – our farmers, our city and town people and tourists. Hard-surfaced roads should then last almost indefinitely. I do not, of course, refer to farm trucks, or light trucks, and am only expressing my own viewpoint.

I see I won't have time, Mr. Speaker, to finish some of the other branches; but before I take my seat I want briefly to make some reference to the fact that this is Saskatchewan's 50th Jubilee Year. Thanks to the Jubilee Committee, Mr. Fred Maguinness and his staff, everyone in Saskatchewan and thousands outside the province know that 1955 is our Golden Jubilee Year and are well informed of the various events and celebrations that will take place, and many former residents will return for a visit this year. If I may interject a personal reference, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of Canada, having proclaimed Saskatchewan a province in 1905. During the summer of 1942, which was Regina's Diamond Jubilee, it was left to me to locate the spot in Victoria Park where Sir Wilfrid had stood when he made the declaration. At that time, back in 1905, the park was a large square without any trees or shrubs; but old-timers recalled that there had been a cricket pitch right in the centre of the park, and that the bandstand in which Sir Wilfrid had stood, was located about 100 feet south and a little to the east of this cricket pitch.

With this information Mr. Leslie (who was park superintendent at the time) and I went to the park, one morning, and as nearly as we could estimate, located the place which is now marked by a suitably inscribed cairn erected by the Historic Sites and Monument Board that same year.

Just before I take my seat, Mr. Speaker, I want to make some reference to the Apprenticeship Branch, which we feel is one of the important branches of the Department. We find a great deal of interest, an increasing interest, by people taking apprenticeship training in the various trades, mostly

in the building trades, and it is expected there will be an attendance of well over 500 students at the apprenticeship school, this year, in comparison with 395 last year. We are also taking steps in regard to the qualification angle and it is the policy of this Government to encourage workmen through the giving out of certificates – that is, first class, second class, third and fourth, and finally journeyman – to indicate their status in the trade. Behind it all, of course, is the thought that these men as they improve their skills will be in a position to give better workmanship to the customers, to the general public.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry that I was not able to finish everything I have here, but I promised to be quite honest with my friend, the Provincial Secretary, and I see we have exactly split the 75 minutes radio time – he has 37½ minutes coming. So, with those remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will support the Budget.

Hon. J.W. Burton (Provincial Secretary): — Mr. Speaker, now that we have heard the voice of labour, I feel pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words on behalf of that other branch of the working family, namely, the thousands upon thousands of men and women who produce the food for the nation. They have no 8-hour day. Their calendar is divided into four parts . . .

Mr. Danielson (Arm River): — The most honest thing you've said for a long time.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — In the spring they place their trust in God and they plant their seed, regardless of how disappointing the previous year's harvest may have been. The second period they use to nurture their crops by fighting weeds, insects of all kinds; they summerfallow, and put up feed for the winter, and they worry about the weather. The third period, during the shortening days of autumn, they garner in the harvest. If it is good, they thank God for his bounty; if, on the other hand, the harvest has been disappointing, as it was last year, they are out in all kinds of weather, endeavouring to salvage what is left.

Mr. Lopton (Saltcoats): — Blame the Government.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Throughout these three seasons of the year the only time they go by is that regulated by the sun. It used to be that the length of our days was gauged by the endurance of the beasts of burden; but now, with the mechanization of our farms, the length of days in the rush seasons is usually governed by the endurance of the human body. Speaking for myself only, may I say to those who get all enthused about daylight saving time that, if they would go out to a farm, preferably a mixed farm, and stick it out from seeding time until freeze-up, and follow the farmer and his wife around from seeding until freeze-up, as I say, he or she would have saved enough daylight to last them for a number of years.

Mr. McDonald (Leader of the Opposition): — Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — The fourth season should really be used by those on the farms to recuperate, store up enough energy to start all over again for the next crop; but those carrying on mixed-farming operations find themselves compelled to play chambermaid to a herd of livestock. Before leaving that subject, Mr. Speaker, I say 'hats off' to those tillers of the soil who work so close to nature.

March 10, 1955

Speaking in support of the Jubilee budget submitted by the hon. Provincial Treasurer on March 2nd, I wish to congratulate the hon. Minister on achieving the record of having brought down eleven consecutive balanced budgets, every one of which marked a milestone in the continued progress of this province under a C.C.F. Government. In my humble opinion the people of Saskatchewan, with a few notable exceptions, appreciate the service rendered by him and by this Government. The exceptions referred to are those people who, apparently, are prepared to sell this province short in the hopes of obtaining their own selfish ends.

I should like to congratulate the hon. member for Maple Creek (Mr. Cameron), the financial critic of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. His was indeed a most difficult task – one that many a man would have shied away from; but there is no doubt that he and others of our political opponents, after wandering in the wilderness for eleven years, were hopeful that they had finally got the breaks. First, there was the calamity of too much rain, coupled with the severest rust epidemic ever experienced in the province; one does not need to be a mind reader to know that they hoped to capitalize on that. Their every action indicated that they believed the farmers, labourers, teachers and preachers sitting on the treasury benches could not possibly cope with such a situation. Surely the first Socialist government in Canada would now, for the first time, have to retreat and cut services! That was their hope, and what a disappointment it was to them when that hope failed to materialize.

Mr. Speaker, you were in a better position than I, on the opening day of this Session, to observe the look of chagrin that spread over the faces of the members of the Opposition when the Speech from the Throne gave no indication of a retreat, but rather, an extension of services to people in need, inclusive of a comprehensive work and wages programme. Then their next hope was the budget. They reasoned that this, surely, would have to be a deficit budget; and possibly, even increased taxes. In the morning edition of the 'Leader-Post' on the day of the budget speech, the paper carried this cartoon, wherein they depicted the unwelcome budget collaborator, labelled "The Poor Crop Year." Well, Mr. Speaker, as I said, they again were disappointed.

Then, a few days later, when they found out that there would be no increased taxes and that the budget had been balanced, to save their face, the 'Leader-Post' and the Liberals followed another tactic, typified in a cartoon, where it makes fun of and ridicules the proposed increase in services, attempting to belittle the work that has been done for the people in need.

Mr. Speaker, the great majority of the people of this province appreciate the fact that we were able not only to hold the line, but have been able to extend those services. But the hon. member for Maple Creek had to say something, so he wandered all over, far afield. Now I would raise no objection to him or any other person comparing Saskatchewan with Alberta and Manitoba, if they would only tell the whole story; but when they, in typical Liberal fashion, distort the truth by only telling part, I say that they are doing a disservice to themselves, and, worse than that, to our province.

Mr. Cameron (Maple Creek): — Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege. I did not want to interfere with the hon. Minister,

but when he says that I distorted the truth, I think he should attempt to substantiate that, or withdraw that remark.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Just give me a chance.

Mr. Cameron: — There was no distortion of the truth at all.

Mr. Speaker: — That isn't a point of privilege.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Mr. Speaker, if the hon. member will only give me an opportunity I shall soon show plenty; and, furthermore, I am sure that Mr. J. Harper Prowse, the Liberal leader in Alberta, will not welcome the one-sided story that he painted of the Social Credit administration during the course of his speech.

The financial critic for the Opposition continued his one-sided part-time storytelling when he attempted to deal with school and municipal taxes. Having been a farmer all my life, I feel that I know something about it. However, unlike some people, I don't claim to know everything, but I do contend that I do know something about it. For the past twenty-five or thirty years I have given special thought and study to the problems facing us farmers. I know that, throughout these years, we have suffered many injustices, and any person who has given any thought to our problems knows that the only time we received anywhere near parity prices for the commodities the farmers produced during the past twenty-five years was for that short period of time when the Wartime Prices and Trade Board held the prices for the things we had to buy down to some degree of equity with the price of the products we had to sell. However, that equity started to disappear as soon as the controls were removed, and the disparity has continued to become progressively worse, to the extent that, after having produced better than five crops in three years prior to 1954, the farmers are worse off than before. Sure, the farmers are mad, and they have every right to be mad; but I disagree with some of my fellow farmers in that when they are mad too many of them try to kick the nearest thing at hand, and that is usually their own local self-governments, such as their school boards and their municipal councils. And the members of the Liberal party are trying their best to stir up that kind of complaint. The financial critic tried his best to do it . . .

Mr. McDonald: — Who wrote that for you?

Hon. Mr. Burton: — And so have other members of the Opposition group and again let me repeat, in a most unfair manner they have tried to do that.

Mr. McDonald: — Sounds like the Bureau of Publications.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — In my opinion, they are deliberately refraining from telling this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan that their Liberal friends in Ottawa, and the friends of their friends, are putting more taxes on the people of this province than the combined taxes levied by school districts, municipal councils and the provincial government. Did he tell us that? No. Well, I am going to try and refresh his memory a little bit. I have a number of examples here and No. 1 is — During

March 10, 1955

the war years the Federal Government operated three fertilizer plants. These plants manufactured the fertilizer and turned it over to the fertilizer company at cost. Under the Wartime Prices and Trade Board they were allowed a substantial markup. That this markup was substantial cannot be denied, because fertilizer that had, previous to the war, cost the farmer between \$45 and \$50 a ton, under this setup referred to cost the farmer \$60 a ton. When the war was over the Federal Government was in a hurry to get out of the fertilizer business.

Some Government Member: — What kind of fertilizer?

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Well, I guess they didn't want that kind of competition. They wanted to turn it over to the free private enterprisers who they claimed could make a much better job of it. My hon. colleague, the Minister of Public Health, sitting here before me, will recall the battle that we of the C.C.F. group in the House of Commons at that time put up, trying to prevent this business from being turned over to a monopoly. We pleaded with the Federal Government not to do it. When it became evident that they were determined to dispose of these plants for a song we begged them to turn at least one or more of them over to the Co-operatives . . .

Mr. Danielson: — Did they do that?

Hon. Mr. Burton: — We pleaded with them to do that.

Mr. Cameron: — What about your tannery?

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — When we found out that the Government . . .

Mr. Cameron: — Tell the true story.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — . . . was determined not to do that, we found out where that great Liberal party stands insofar as co-operation is concerned.

Mr. Cameron: — Come on back to Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — They turned a deaf ear. The Co-operatives were prepared to go into the business. And that is why the hon. member for Maple Creek did not want to have the whole story told.

Now, what have been the results of that action? Their friends, the free enterprisers, have surely made a better job of rooking the farmer. Fertilizer that used to sell for \$60 a ton, with a substantial profit, as I mentioned a moment ago, was pushed up and up and up, with the result that it reached the high price, last year, of \$120 a ton. I am informed that we can expect a slight drop this year — of a couple of dollars a ton!

Since the members of the Opposition want to stir up discontent with the increased taxes in schools and municipalities, why don't they show the increased taxes the farmer has to pay to this corporation, the friends

of the Liberal Party? I have a friend who farms on the Regina plains here; he has 580 acres under cultivation . . .

Mr. McDonald: — He's a capitalist!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — His assessment is \$17,950; he only uses fertilizer on the summerfallow wheat, the yearly acreage being approximately 290 acres. He uses 40 pounds of fertilizer per acre, which means that he has to buy 11,600 pounds of fertilizer every year. In 1954, he had to pay \$120 per ton here in Regina, which made his fertilizer bill \$696. This means that his fertilizer cost him 38.7 mills on his entire assessment; but let us be fair about this, and only consider the increase over and above what a fair price had been for fertilizer. You will find that he is paying an additional tax to the fertilizer company to the tune of over 19 mills.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. members sitting opposite should let their heads hang in shame, instead of snickering and laughing the way they are, because they have supported the Liberal party at Ottawa who is responsible for this unfair and unnecessary extra burden being placed upon the farmers. Wouldn't those 19 mills be a substantial relief to farmers who have to pay school and municipal taxes?

And here is another one – I am not through yet. Example No. 2 . . .

Mr. McDonald: — I hope it's better than that last one.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Shortly after the end of the war a 14-foot self-propelled combine cost \$2,776; but, last year, it cost \$5,800, being an increase of \$3,024. Now if this increased cost is spread over a ten-year period, the farmer has to pay an extra \$302 per year as an additional tax put on by the implement company. This works out at 16.85 mills on the farm I referred to, when I was speaking about the fertilizer; and furthermore, this does not allow for the extra high price on the repairs that are, or will be, required to keep that machine operating for ten years. On the other hand, many of these machines are operating on land that does not carry such high assessment, so I have taken a section assessed at \$2,500 per quarter – and I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, and you know it as well as I do, that there are many of these combines operating on that type of land, making for the whole section an assessment of \$10,000. In that case the farmer's tax to the machine company has been increased by 30 mills. This, again, would take a nice slice off school and municipal taxes.

Mr. Kramer (The Battlefords): — Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Cost of road construction machinery – the hon. member for Canora, the Minister of Telephones, when speaking last Monday, told us how the Federal Government, by so hastily removing price controls, had allowed the prices to skyrocket; they have been responsible all down the line for the increased costs that we have had to bear . . .

Mr. Horsman: — Poor Ottawa!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — And the same applies to municipal road machinery. The hon. Minister told you that it had been increased by

March 10, 1955

approximately three times what it had been before . . .

Mr. McCarthy (Cannington): — We know that.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — And I would say, Mr. Speaker, to properly construct and maintain the types of roads required, today, a municipality is handicapped if it has less than \$100,000 worth of equipment at the present-day prices; and even then they will be required to do careful buying.

In 1945-46 the companies manufacturing this kind of equipment were making a substantial profit. Why do they now need three times what they used to get? I haven't worked this out on a mill rate. I admit that the mill rate, spread all over the whole municipality, would be a minor part, but, nevertheless, it does show you what it amounts to when the municipality has to operate. And furthermore, this increased cost, even if you only doubled it, instead of trebling it, would build quite a number of substantial school buildings in that municipality. Apparently, the friends of the Liberal friends of the friends of the Liberal friends in Ottawa would much rather have the fertilizer company officials and the officials of the machine companies give a higher education to their children, while we have to scratch to get it for ours.

I have another one – and I hope they are not getting tired of it . . .

Mr. McDonald: — No, it's amusing.

Mr. Cameron: — We are enjoying it.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — I want to deal with the Federal excise and sales tax on cars and trucks. The Canadian Automobile Chamber of Commerce published a bulletin, in 1953, entitled "Facts about great Canadian industries." In this bulletin an average was taken of the three most popular makes of lower priced four-door sedans in Canada, and it was shown that an average of \$362 per car was being paid in sales and excise tax to the Federal Government. Besides one car the average farmer requires at least one truck, and the Federal Government, in their generosity, are not charging an excise tax on trucks, but they do charge the sales tax, which averages out to more than \$200 per vehicle. This, added to the tax he pays on his car, brings his Federal tax bill, for those two vehicles, close to \$600. Did the hon. member for Maple Creek make any suggestion that this exorbitant tax on cars and trucks be divided with the municipalities? No, he did not; but he proceeded to suggest that this should be done with our provincial gasoline tax.

Mr. Kramer: — Hear! Hear!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Since when is that the policy of the Liberal party? In looking over the programme released by the Liberal party, following their convention in Saskatoon, last fall, I find only two items having any bearing on what the hon. member for Maple Creek suggested, and I quote:

“Recognition of the pressing need and rights of farmers for better main market and other municipal roads by immediate inauguration of a province-wide main market road programme.”

Aren't they the copy cats!

Mr. McDonald: — That's better than you can do.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — I continue with the quotation:

“And in addition substantial grants to assist rural municipalities in their road programmes.”

The other one reads:

“Reduced land taxation through increased school, road, municipal and sanatorium grants.”

But nowhere in their seven-page report can I find anything pledging themselves to share the gasoline tax with the municipalities.

Mr. McDonald: — We'd take it off.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Referring to their convention resolutions, I say, of course, they are always very liberal about handing out money, or suggesting that money be handed out, for which they have no responsibility. It is easy for them to suggest anything that they think can bring them a few extra votes; but they know full well that they will not have the responsibility of raising the necessary money to do that with for many years to come.

Mr. Lopton: — Wishful thinking.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — However, let me say to those municipal people who . . .

Mr. Cameron: — Ask the farmer . . .

Hon. Mr. Burton: — . . . might be inclined to fall for that kind of political bribery, that the Liberal record of assistance to municipalities, when they were in office was not so hot.

Premier Douglas: — It was lousy!

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — When they left office, in 1944, most of the municipalities in the province were staggering under heavy loads of debt. When the C.C.F. took office on July 10th that year, the cupboard had been swept bare, with the exception of a curt note from the Federal Minister of Finance wanting to know how and when the provincial government was going to pay the treasury bills issued in connection with the supplying of relief, and threatening to withhold the Federal subsidy to which Saskatchewan was entitled under the Constitution. If ever a province in Canada was on the verge of bankruptcy, this was it. Very few people realize how fortunate it was for the province that the old guard was swept out of office just in the nick of time. Be it to the everlasting credit of our Provincial Treasurer and his colleagues of that day that our credit has been re-established and placed on a sound basis. Our provincial securities are eagerly picked up by investors, and we have been able to finance expansion programmes which have caught the eye and the imagination of people

March 10, 1955

far beyond the boundaries of Canada. In addition to that, during the past ten years of C.C.F. Government we have given more assistance to rural municipalities in one way and another than the total combined assistance given by the Liberals in their entire 34 years in office.

Some Government Members: — Hear! Hear!

Mr. McDonald: — Says who?

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. Cameron: — Who wrote that speech for you?

Some Government Member: — He wrote it himself.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — This Government has been fully aware . . .

Mr. Cameron: — The Bureau of Publications.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — . . . of the fact that changing times and conditions have added greatly to the problems of local governments in particular, and agriculture in general. Therefore, the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life was appointed to gather facts and data covering the whole field, and has been instructed to report, with the view to planning a long-term programme to meet the requirements. I have no knowledge as to what the recommendations in their report will contain, but knowing the calibre of the members of the Commission, and especially that of the chairman, Professor Baker, I am sure it will contain ample material to enable us to work out a comprehensive and practical programme. However, I would urge all interested people — and that should be every person in this province — to study these reports carefully, after they become available, before jumping to conclusions. I would also suggest that we constantly bear in mind that first things must come first, especially in such a long-term proposition, which may easily have a bearing on our system of local government, and our way of life in rural areas, for the next fifty years or more.

While many people, like myself, are pleased that this budget makes provision for additional assistance to municipalities, it is my considered opinion that this additional help is only to meet the present emergency, until we have time to work out the more comprehensive programme. Therefore, I suggest that the proposition of the Liberals and the proposals of the Liberals to jump in willy-nilly and dish out a lot of money is most inopportune at this time.

Mr. Lopton: — Who by?

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. McDonald: — He's a good reader.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Some Government Member: — He composed it.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Mr. Speaker, I should like to report that the Department of Provincial Secretary and all its branches have operated smoothly during the past year. The flow of official correspondence has increased and this, along with other causes, has made the work load heavy; in fact, so heavy that it has been impossible for us to prepare the necessary amendments I had hoped we could submit in order to bring a number of the Acts under our jurisdiction up to date. I am pleased to report that the number of Saskatchewan companies registered in our office is approximately the same as last year, but with a slight increase in the total capitalization. The number of companies incorporated under Federal laws or in other provinces and registered in Saskatchewan is up to 727, an increase of over 200, with a total capitalization of over \$513,500,000.

In the Insurance Branch, again, we have about the same number of companies operating as last year, but they report a substantial increase in the total business. During the latter part of 1954 we had the pleasure of having the annual conference of superintendents of insurance for Canada held in Saskatoon. All ten provinces were represented by their superintendents and most of the Canadian companies, and many from south of the border, had their public relations staff in attendance. I am especially pleased to report to have been host to a former colleague of mine in the House of Commons, the Hon. Brooke Claxton, who has left public life to join one of the larger insurance companies in an important position. Our Superintendent of Insurance and his staff did a marvellous job of arranging every detail for the pleasure and comfort of our guests, all of which helped to make a very successful conference. I have received many letters from delegates who, after their return home, wrote to express their appreciation. At the conclusion of the conference we entertained the guests and visitors at a chicken barbecue on the grounds of the Dominion Forestry Station at Sutherland. The Saskatchewan Golden Jubilee choir was in attendance and at the completion of their short programme they received a standing ovation. I wish to express my thanks not only to the members of my staff, but also to all the Saskatchewan people here and in Saskatoon for their help and co-operation. They did our province proud.

I also wish to report, Mr. Speaker, that our new Securities Act, which was passed a year ago, has been of considerable help to us in handling that part of our work. Our chairman, however, became seriously ill and, after several months, when we all thought that he was well on the way to recovery, he passed away suddenly just at the close of the year. We miss Angus W. MacPherson. He was a pleasant man to work with, and he rendered a good service to the people of Saskatchewan. It was a privilege to have known him, and we regret his passing. This all placed an added burden on my deputy and my staff and I wish to express my appreciation to them for carrying on so ably while Mr. MacPherson was ill, and since that important position has become vacant.

I am happy to announce that Allan Blakeney has been appointed chairman of the Securities Commission. Mr. Blakeney was born in Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, and received his elementary and high school education there. He later attended Dalhousie University in Halifax, graduating with a B.A. degree in 1945, and an LLB degree in 1947. In his final year he was awarded the University medal in law. Between 1947 and 1949 he was a student at Oxford University on a Rhodes scholarship, graduating from that institution of learning in 1949, with a B.A. degree. On his return to

March 10, 1955

Canada he articulated in law in the office of Mr. W.B. Potter, Q.C., now Mr. Justice Potter of the Exchequer Court of Canada. Mr. Blakeney was admitted to the Bar of Nova Scotia in 1950, and following that he was associated, for a short time, with a law firm in Edmonton, Alberta, but later that year he came to Saskatchewan as secretary and legal adviser of our Crown Corporations. In addition to his duties as chairman of the Securities Commission, Mr. Blakeney will continue as legal adviser to the Saskatchewan Government Finance Office.

Now, Mr. Speaker, speaking of securities, permit me to say that there are many reliable firms and securities salesmen doing business in the province. We have no desire to hinder their activities; but, as frequently happens, a few dishonest and unscrupulous persons can and often do bring a whole profession into disrepute. I would appeal to all people who are called upon by salesmen, be they book agents, hawkers, or pedlars or security salesmen, not to do business with a stranger until they have satisfied themselves on a number of points:

- (1) to obtain his or her name and address;
- (2) be sure the person is in possession of a proper licence;
- (3) do not accept the sales talk without first checking with some responsible person whom you know;
- (4) do not allow yourself to be rushed into signing any document or contract until you are satisfied that it contains the provisions under which it is being sold to you;
- (5) don't pay cash to a stranger; it is much better to make payment by cheque payable to the firm the stranger professes to represent.

If an agent cannot produce, or refuses to produce, the proper licence, please let my office know at once, giving the person's name and address, and letting us know what he is trying to sell. A great deal of unnecessary and frustrating work is caused by people who fail to follow this simple procedure. Many people wait for weeks or months and then, when they find that they have fallen for the slick talk of a stranger, they expect us to do something about it for them. In many cases they do not know for sure how the name is spelled, seldom have they any address, nor have they checked to see if he had a licence.

Just recently a case came to my attention where a so-called salesman called on a widow and tried to sell her shares in a company she had never heard of before. She did not want to buy any shares but became quite enthused with his sales talk, and finally he told her that he would guarantee her 20 per cent if she would lend him the money to buy the shares himself . . .

Mr. McDonald: — He must have been a C.C.F.er.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — . . . which she did, and now all she has for her \$2,000 is a note signed by a stranger, and what can we do? Months later, when she brought this to our attention — she became worried about it

and she wrote to us – a search of the records disclosed that no one by such a name had been registered in our books. Permit me to repeat, Mr. Speaker, what I have often said before: we cannot protect people against their own folly. We are more than pleased to be of assistance to people when they give us half a chance by supplying the necessary information in time. On the other hand, it should be clearly understood that we cannot and we do not give opinions as to whether this security or that security is a good buy or not, nor should we be expected to do detail work that they themselves, or their solicitors, should.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for a few moments I would like to deal with our Provincial Parks. As all hon. members can well understand, the extremely wet weather during the holiday and tourist season, last year, seriously affected the attendance and receipts at our provincial parks, with the exception of Cypress Hills. At that place, as soon as our 16 new fully modern units were available for occupancy, they were in constant demand until the close of the season.

Duck Mountain Provincial Park: At Madge Lake we found it absolutely necessary to construct new staff quarters, and while doing so, after the close of the season, we also erected four new units for tourist accommodation. These units and the staff quarters are also fully modern and will be available for the coming season.

Moose Mountain Provincial Park: The wet weather there also seriously affected our operations at Kenosee, but we are planning extensive improvements there, this year, including new bleachers, booths and bandstand on the sports ground, and it is our intention to construct several new fully modern cabins.

Green Water Lake Provincial Park: This park was the hardest hit by the weather, but the improvements made on the roads in co-operation with the rural municipality not only gave employment to people in that area but, we hope, will make this park more accessible in the future. I was very pleased, yesterday, to hear my hon. colleague, the Minister of Highways, say that his Department is going to construct a road south of this park, because not only will this be of great assistance to us, but also a Godsend to the people of that district who are in dire need of a suitable road to get to their market centre.

Manitou Provincial Park: The water level has risen considerably in this lake during the past year, and if it continues to do so, Manitou will come back into the position it used to hold as a holiday resort.

All five of the Provincial Parks just mentioned are in urgent need of additional tourist accommodation. Many of the old cabins, constructed years ago, should be replaced by new ones; but the demand for accommodation is increasing faster than we can meet the need with new construction, so we are continuing, much against our better judgment, to use even the oldest cabins in the rush periods. As I explained in the Public Accounts Committee meeting recently, both Katepwa and Good Spirit are only local resorts and do not bring in any revenue; but I want to mention that even during the past year, with the most unfavourable weather conditions during the season, tremendous crowds made use of these two beaches.

Valley Centre, of course is open the year round. The past year was the busiest in the history of it, so far. It is indeed ideally

March 10, 1955

situated and has excellent facilities to accommodate the various groups using it for their schools, conferences and seminars. All the reports coming to me from groups making use of this centre are most favourable and encouraging.

I also wish to mention another related matter. I do so purposely, Mr. Speaker, because, during the past few years, I have had numerous requests from different parts of the province that this or that area should be set up as a provincial park, when, in reality, they are only local resorts. Then, when I dig into it a little further, there is usually a person or two with the idea that, if it could be turned into a provincial park, they could get a substantial price for some of their property that they picked up for a song, years ago. However, I have a different story to tell you of one place, at York Lake, near Yorkton. The Southwood Golf Club, which owns a whole quarter-section of land, the town of Yorkton, which owns property along York Lake, and the R.M. of Orkney, which also owns some property, approached me over a year ago; they also wanted us to make this into a provincial park. They were willing – not to sell the property, Mr. Speaker; they wanted to donate the property to us, if we would only set up a park there. I told them that, much as I appreciated their generous offer, I could not see my way clear to recommend the setting up of another park in that part of the province until we had located a few parks in some parts of the province that were far removed from a provincial park. They kept on however, and the more they talked to me the more they convinced me that they were interested in preserving that property for the use of future generations for recreational purposes, and were not interested in it as a money-making proposition. So, finally we worked out a plan whereby these people are contributing their property, and are arranging it, with our co-operation, that this property shall be preserved for recreational purposes, but the local people are going to continue to operate the area.

I would like to mention something about the local resort areas, some having high aims of becoming provincial parks, and others realizing that the local resort area is the best idea. We have been endeavouring to help and encourage those people in that type of work. We give them advice gained from the experience of our people in the Parks Branch over the years, and, on occasion, we do give some small grant in aid of their project. We make it quite plain to them that this is only a local resort and that, before we will give them any assistance whatsoever, they has to assure us (1) that they have set up a responsible, permanent organization that will be responsible for that resort area; (2) that they will, from among themselves, raise enough money and put in a considerable amount of work before we will make a grant; and on that basis, while quite a number have applied during the last year, ten, so far, during the present fiscal year, have met the requirements. These are:

- (1) Moosomin Pipestone Lake resort, on the Pipestone Creek near the town of Moosomin;
- (2) Pine Creek Association at the foot of the Cypress Hills, west of Shaunavon;
- (3) The R.M. of Kelvington;
- (4) The Weyburn Community Park Association, southeast of the City of Weyburn;

- (5) Kipabiskan Beach, southwest of Tisdale;
- (6) Lac la Ronge project;
- (7) Govan Fish and Game League, beach on Last Mountain Lake, west of Govan;
- (8) Grant's Beach, near Rockglen;
- (9) Regina Beach project at Regina Beach;
- (10) Oxbow project, near Oxbow.

Now, Mr. Speaker, our ability to give this kind of assistance will be seriously curtailed during the coming year, owing to the tremendous expense we will have otherwise. But let me repeat that we will not go in and do the work for the people; they, themselves, will have to do their part.

Time will not permit me to deal with the other branches of my Department, especially since I wish to say a few words in connection with this, our Golden Jubilee year. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I appreciate having had the opportunity to serve as a member of our Golden Jubilee Committee and its executive. I feel that it is fitting that we should pause at this time, this year, to thank God for His blessings in the past and to beseech His continued benevolence in the future.

While I consider myself a pioneer, I am happy to have the opportunity to honour those who were pioneers even before my time, and as our hon. Premier has said, on previous occasions, 'let us take our hats off to the past, our coats off to the future'. Mr. Speaker, our province indeed has a great future.

I could not help but think, when the hon. member for Wilkie (Mr. Horsman) was speaking, the other day, when he mentioned about how happy we were in the old sod houses and log houses. I have slept in them many a time. On our homestead we had an old tarpaper shack, and I want to say this much, Mr. Speaker, that he is correct in this one sense that, at that time, there was a spirit of neighbourliness, a spirit of fellowship that for some reason or other is now missing. But, we also had reasons to hang together those days; otherwise we were sure to hang or freeze apart. I well recall that, whenever a storm blew up, the first thing done was to put a lighted lamp near the window so that any wayfarer becoming lost, or in need of shelter, would be able to find his way; and when he rapped at our door we didn't ask whether he was a Gentile or a Jew; we didn't ask him whether he was Catholic or Protestant; we took him in and bedded him down, if necessary, even behind the stove on the floor. That was the spirit there was during those days. For that reason I think we can also pay tribute to those men and women who went through those years. When the hon. member for Wilkie speaks about the comfort of a sod shack, I want to tell him and other people that the happiest day on our farm was when we could move my mother (God rest her soul!) and her few household possessions out of our old shack into a decent house.

I also want to tell the hon. member that, during those days, the cheapest power that you could have on the homestead was a yoke of oxen. I helped my father break up his homestead, and later broke my own homestead

March 10, 1955

with oxen, and no doubt my friends in the Opposition will say that that is where I learned public speaking. They might be correct.

Mr. McDonald: — We have never heard you — you read most of it.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — I just want to say to the hon. member that while that was true at that time, it no longer holds truer. Would your boy, would his boy, would my boy, be content to farm with oxen? Would it be reasonable for us to request them to do so at the present time with all the modern technology and equipment that we have? Well, Mr. Speaker, it is ridiculous. The trouble is with my friends in the Opposition, they are like the Bourbons of old: they learn nothing and they forget nothing. With changing times and conditions you have got to go along . . .

Mr. McDonald: — We've had a great example today.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — I can go my hon. friend one better . . .

Mr. Cameron: — Shoot. Let's have it!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — In the fall of 1899, in the company of my parents and other members of the family, we travelled over 1,000 miles in a covered wagon which, in those days, was known as a 'prairie schooner'. From the State of Kansas, where I was born, we travelled to the Red River Valley in North Dakota. It took us four weeks and five days to make that trip, and my mother prepared three meals a day on a campfire. We all enjoyed the trip, but I doubt if any member of the Opposition would want to join me on re-treading that trail, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Loftson: — I'll go with you.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — I also want to say, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. McDonald: — Get a good team and we'll all go.

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Hon. Mr. Burton: — Mr. Speaker, less than 10 years ago I had the occasion to travel a greater distance in a North Star aircraft, and it took us 4½ hours to make that distance. There again it shows you, when you stop to think — even that North Star aircraft, in less than 10 years, has become obsolete. No wonder the Liberals can't keep up!

I want to say, Mr. Speaker . . .

Mr. McDonald: — Federal Government aircraft.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — . . . that my first impressions of Regina and Saskatoon, in the spring of 1904, weren't anything to write home about. It was indeed a pioneer country. We moved our settlers' effects out from Rosthern to our homestead, which was located some 85 or 100 miles to the east. When my father and my brothers moved our settlers' effects out, it was during the latter part of March, 1904, which was known as the winter with the deep snow. It was most difficult to haul their equipment out at that time, and there would be whole caravans of sleighs, one helping another, and whenever the horses no longer could stand it, they would start to

unload some of their load. They would go a little further, and somebody else would unload something, and they would make a little mental note as to where they had unloaded. The story was told, and it was quite true, of one that had been in exceptionally stormy weather on a trip. By the time he got down to putting the box off the sleigh, he had in that box one dressed pork, and he thought he had better put that on the bunk of the sleigh and take it along. He wasn't afraid that any human being would pick it up, but the coyotes might. Nowadays you would hardly dare do that because the situation might be reversed . . .

Mr. McDonald: — There weren't any C.C.F.ers then.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — They might not be so afraid of the coyotes. When the storm was over they would go back and they would gather up; and maybe make two or three trips to gather up what they had disposed of during the course of the first trip.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not like to weary you much longer, but in looking over the records . . .

Mr. Loptson: — Keep on going, you're doing fine.

Mr. Cameron: — You do better on your own, than the fellow who wrote it.

Hon. Mr. Burton: — When we came into these parts it was then still the North-West Territories, and looking up the old map I find that what later on became the province of Saskatchewan was the territory of Assiniboia, the territory of Saskatchewan and the territory of Athabasca, and I made a note. Assiniboia came all the way from the international boundary up to just about Preeceville on the northeast, through Hazel Dell and Wadena, and over to Elstow and Vanscoy and out near Kerrobert. That was the dividing line between Assiniboia and Saskatchewan. Then Saskatchewan extended on up almost to the short of Lac la Ronge, and from there on north it was Athabaska.

In looking up the records, I also find that the first Lieutenant-Governor, after the province was formed in 1905, was the Hon. A.E. Forget. He occupied that position from September 1, 1905 to October 13, 1910. Then came the Hon. George W. Brown, from October 14, 1910 to October 17, 1915; the Hon. Richard S. Lake, from 1915 until 1921; the Hon. Henry William Newlands, February 18, 1921, to March 30, 1931; Hon. Lieut.-Colonel Hugh Edwin Munroe, March 31, 1931, to September 9, 1936; Hon. Archibald Peter McNab, September 10, 1936, to February 26, 1945; Hon. Thomas Miller, February 27, 1945, to June, 1945; Hon. Reginald John Marsden Parker, June 22, 1945, to March 23, 1948; Hon. John Michael Uhrich, March 23, 1948, to June 15, 1951; and then, June 25, 1951, the Hon. William John Patterson, the first Lieutenant-Governor to have been born in what is now Saskatchewan.

Members of the first Executive Council of Saskatchewan were:

Hon. Walter Scott, 1905, President of the Council, Commissioner of Public Works, and Commissioner of Railways;

Hon. John Henderson Lamont, Attorney General, September 12, 1905, to September 23, 1907;

March 10, 1955

Hon. William Ferdinand Alphonse Turgeon, Attorney General, September 23, 1907, to October 20, 1916;

Hon. William Richard Motherwell, Provincial Secretary and Commissioner of Agriculture;

Hon. James Alexander Calder, Provincial Treasurer and Commissioner of Education.

I have here a list of the Premiers, Mr. Speaker:

Hon. Walter Scott; Hon. William Melville Martin; Hon. Charles Avery Dunning; Hon. James Garfield Gardiner; Hon. James Thomas Milton Anderson; and again the Hon. Mr. Gardiner; Hon. William John Patterson, and then our own incomparable 'Tommy' Douglas.

I also took the trouble to look up to see who my predecessors as Provincial Secretary had been. As I mentioned:

Hon. William Richard Motherwell; then the Hon. William Ferdinand Alphonse Turgeon; Hon. William Knowles; Hon. Sam Latta; Hon. Charles Avery Dunning; Hon. John Michael Uhrich; Hon. Thomas Clayton Davis; Hon. Mr. Latta again; Hon. John Alexander Merkley; then again the Hon. John Michael Uhrich; Hon. Edward Milton Culliton; then again the Hon. John Michael Uhrich; Hon. Oakland Woods Valleau, and the Hon. Charles Cromwell Williams.

I have also a list here, Mr. Speaker, of those who represented the Provincial constituency of Humboldt, since 1905, and it has been a provincial constituency ever since. The first was Dr. D.B. Neely, who was re-elected in 1908, after having served the first term. Then he resigned to contest the Federal constituency, and William Richard Motherwell came in and represented that constituency from then until June 15, 1912. Then we had the Hon. Alphonse Turgeon, who represented our constituency from July 11, 1912, to June 2, 1917, and again re-elected and continued until May 16, 1921. Then we had a neighbour of our homestead days, Mr. Henry M. Therres, who was elected in June, 1921, and he continued until 1925, when he was re-elected as an Independent-Liberal. I might say that Mr. Therres had supported the Progressive party in the Federal field and the Liberals in the Provincial. In the next election he ran as an Independent, and we sent him down here as an Independent, but the Liberals, with their winning ways at that time, were able to bring him back into the fold for the next election, which was on June 6, 1929, and he continued until May 25, 1934. Then James Hogan was elected on June 19, 1934, but before the Legislature assembled he became seriously ill and died within the year. Then we had a by-election and Dr. James Chisholm King was elected November 19, 1935, to May 14, 1938, and re-elected in 1938, but then he resigned, Mr. Speaker, to make way for Mr. Dunn, who had been defeated in Melville.

As you well recall, Mr. Speaker, and a few others in the Assembly, I was elected on August 4th of that year. I served in this Legislature until 1943. I felt happy in the Legislature, but you will recall, Mr. Speaker, that prior to the election, and even during those elections, the Liberal party had stumped up and down the whole province, telling the people that if the C.C.F. ever got into office "you will never have another election." They told that story time and time again, but I have often said,

Mr. Speaker, beware of the Liberals. Beware whenever they try to scare people about what the other people are going to do, because that is usually what they are thinking in their own noodles. And it happened. They are the only party in this province in its 50 years history that went beyond their constitutional time of five years. My people in the Humboldt constituency were quite perturbed about that, and they persuaded me to resign my seat in protest and to run in the Federal election, or by-election, that was held that year. Then the provincial seat was vacant for one year. The next year my friend and co-worker, Ben Putnam, was elected in June, 1944, and he served until 1948. Then, in the 1948 election, A.W. Loehr defeated Mr. Putnam, and he sat here until June, 1952, and I presume you know what happened after that.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I have not always agreed with the viewpoints of some of the men who have held public office in the province; but I want to pay tribute to them for having conscientiously served to the best of their ability and according to the dictates of their conscience. The Humboldt constituency has played an important part in the development of our province. In 1952, the very Rev. Father Peter of the Order of St. Benedict wrote an interesting history of that area, entitled 'Fifty Golden Years'. The history of the town of Watson and the surrounding district was written by the former member, Ben Putnam, and some of his associates; and before the dawn of the Jubilee Year, "The Humboldt Story" by Robert W. Grant came off the press. Additional information is now being gathered and compiled for other sections of the constituency. Humboldt constituency has always played a very important role in the public life of our province, and I feel highly honoured to have the privilege of representing that constituency, and the fine people that live there, in this Assembly.

It is my considered opinion that this budget is to the advantage of my constituency in particular, and to the people of the province in general. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, while I am always delighted to see you sitting in that chair, I shall nevertheless support the motion that you leave it, in order that we can proceed with putting this budget into effect.

Mr. R.A. McCarthy (Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

(Debate adjourned)

CROW'S NEST PASS AGREEMENT

Moved by Mr. Thair, seconded by Mr. Larsen:

That this Assembly, keenly aware of the vital importance of the Crow's Nest freight schedule on grain shipments to the agricultural economy of Western Canada and of Saskatchewan in particular, reiterates its strongest condemnation of any abridgement of the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement, and urges that the strongest representations be made to the Government of Canada, through the usual channels opposing any amendment of sub-sections 6 and 7 of Section 328 of the Railway Act (R.S.C. 1952, c.234), giving effect to such abridgement, the said subsections being, and operating, as a guarantee of the continuance of the original Agreement.

Mr. Wm. S. Thair (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, in introducing this Resolution, I believe it to be of very great importance to western farmers at this time because of a recent statement of Chief Justice

March 10, 1955

Sloan, of British Columbia, who acting on behalf of the British Columbia government in the rail-labour dispute went out of his way to express the opinion – and I quote:

“That the Crow’s Nest Pass Agreement created distortion and imbalance of the freight rate structure.”

I might say that this statement brought forth a storm of protest from the leaders of the various farm organizations, as well as from the Legislature of this province and the western members of the House of Commons, and I would like to quote briefly from these organizations. Mr. J.L. Phelps, the Chairman of the Interprovincial Farm Union Council said:

“Farmers will fight to the finish against any interference with the statutory Crow’s Nest Pass rates which are covering grain and grain products, and resent the statement that the Crow’s Nest Pass rates are the major factor in the present decline of railway revenue.”

About the same time the Premier of this Province (Hon. T.C. Douglas) made a similar statement and further said:

“There was no evidence to show that the Crow’s Nest Pass rates had caused a distortion and imbalance of the freight rate structure and, further, that much more evidence must be brought forward than has been shown to date to persuade western farmers that the railways lose money on the movement of western grain under export rates.”

Saskatchewan Wheat Pool also said:

“That if the Canadian Pacific Railway did need additional subsidy, they could see no reason why this should be attached to the rates on export grain under the Crow’s Nest Pass agreement.”

I might also quote Mr. Ross Thatcher, C.C.F. M.P. for Moose Jaw:

“Western Canadians were opposed to any changes in the rate which should not be touched because the C.P.R. receives substantial concessions from the people of Canada.”

And I would like to quote what Mr. John G. Diefenbaker, Progressive-Conservative M.P. for Prince Albert, said:

“At no time will the people of western Canada allow interference with the Crow’s Nest Pass rates.”

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, the Hon. J.G. Gardiner, Federal Minister of Agriculture, assured the members of the House of Commons that there would be no interference with the Crow’s Nest Pass rates and was reported to have said:

“The group that attempted to do away with Crow’s Nest Pass rates would not be here after next election.”

Mr. Speaker, after all these quotations that I have given you, from the different organizations and members of both the provincial Government and the federal House of Commons, you can certainly realize what an important part the Crow's Nest Pass rates play in the economy of the western provinces. I might add that the western wheat growers, and particularly those of Saskatchewan, are indeed remarkably well informed on the whole question of Crow's Nest Pass rates on wheat and other grains.

Mr. Speaker, the federal Minister of Transport, Hon. Lionel Chevrier, made a statement about one year ago to this effect:

“There is no question of amending the Crow's Nest Pass at this time.”

It is rather regrettable, sir, that the Minister of Transport used the words ‘at this time’, which leave the impression that at some time in the future he may reverse his decision on this matter. This statement, I might say, came after the President of the C.P.R., Mr. W.A. Mather, had made one of his periodic attacks on the grain rates of Western Canada on wheat. He was bemoaning the fact that the railway was actually losing a great deal of money on hauling wheat from western Canada to Fort William, and, as usual, the President of the C.P.R. received a chorus of approval from the press and such papers as the ‘Star’ and the ‘Gazette’ of Montreal, the ‘Financial Post’ of Toronto, the Ottawa ‘Journal’, as well as the French daily, ‘La Patrie’ of Montreal. I might add that the increased Crow's Nest Pass rates on wheat has considerable support, unfortunately for us, in Eastern Canada.

In an editorial article of the ‘Leader-Post’, dated March 24, 1954, a statement was made from which I quote with regard to this article in the Montreal paper. The writer said:

“With regard to the article in La Patrie the plea for increased C.P.R. grain and flour rates is so filled with inaccuracy that it is apparent that the C.P.R. is doing much more effective missionary work in the press of Eastern Canada for a boost in grain freight rates than the farmers of the west and their spokesmen are doing to counteract it in the West.”

Mr. Speaker, I believe that is far from being a correct statement, as all the farm organizations in western Canada, as well as this Government, have been very active in speaking out at all times against any increase of the Crow's Nest Pass rate. As a matter of fact, I have just indicated the statements from various organizations and from the Premier and from members of the House of Commons.

I would like to recall a statement made in 1951 (I believe), by Mr. M.A. MacPherson, leading attorney of this province, who was acting as counsel for the Saskatchewan Government before the Royal Commission, and he practically forced from Mr. Jefferson, the Vice-President of the C.P.R., the Traffic Division, the admission, and I quote:

“In the event of the abolition of the Crow's Nest Pass rates, the freight rates on wheat from Regina to Fort William would probably be increased to 40 cents per 100 pounds, or an increase of over 100 per cent at Regina. At the present rate from Regina this would be an advance from the 12-cent rate on wheat per bushel

March 10, 1955

to 25 cents. According to Mr. MacPherson, this would make an increase on freight rates on wheat shipped from this province to Fort William in a normal crop year of over \$40 million per year.”

There is probably no newspaper in Canada that has been so loud in its clamour for abolishing the Crow's Nest Pass rates on wheat as has been the daily paper I mentioned a few minutes ago, 'La Patrie' of Montreal. This newspaper claims that Eastern Canada is being overcharged in freight rates because of losses sustained by the use of Crow's Nest Pass rates on grain in western Canada. This is not the case, as the Railway Association of Canada appeared before the Royal Commission and estimated that the railways of Eastern Canada are losing at least \$40 million to \$50 million annually as a direct result of the competitive rates which they claim they were forced to put into effect in order to meet the truck competition. Further, the report of the Transport Board shows that the rates are lower in the east than in the west. It is also reported by the Transport Board, that over a period of 29 years, the higher western freight rates returned \$753 million of net earnings to the C.P.R. against only \$361 millions of net earnings in eastern Canada over that period of time; that is that – more than twice the amount was received in freight rates from western Canada.

It makes it very plain, then, that instead of eastern Canada subsidizing the west, actually western Canada is subsidizing the East to the extent of \$40 to \$50 million per year. The increase of the Crow's Nest Pass rate by 100 per cent would mean, Mr. Speaker, that the western grain grower would be carrying the losses of the C.P.R. railroad because of the truck competition in eastern Canada.

Mr. Speaker, in about the year 1881, the C.P.R. were granted huge concessions and grants to build a railroad across this nation. They were first granted a subsidy of \$25 million and 25 million acres of land in western Canada. They were granted a free gift of a government-owned railway worth some \$35 million and, as I stated before, oil, mineral and timber rights on millions of acres of western prairie land, and, indeed in 1897, before the completion of the trans-Canada railway, the Federal Government practically saved the C.P.R. from bankruptcy at that time – (1897). Less than 60 years later, the C.P.R. had total assets of over \$2 billion.

The C.P.R. received other financial assistance in 1897 to complete a road from Lethbridge through the Crow's Nest Pass to Nelson. The Government agreed to pay \$11,000 per mile to assist in the construction of this road, with a maximum of nearly \$4 million. The B.C. government gave them the ownership of the Smelting company at Trail, which is now the lucrative Consolidated Mining and Smelting company. The Government also granted them 3½ million acres of land in that province with all the mineral, oil and timber rights. In fact, in a submission made before the Royal Commission, Mr. MacPherson, the counsel for the Saskatchewan Government, contended:

“That the development of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company has been made possible by the Crow's Nest Pass agreement of 1897.”

Up to the present time, the C.P.R. have refused to include their profits from their non-rail enterprises, as part of their general rail income. The submission made by Dr. Fowke, Professor of Economics at the University of Saskatchewan, before the Royal Commission stated:

“In the early days when the C.P.R. was incorporated, the parliament of that day did not expect the C.P.R. to use their company-wide powers to enter non-rail activities for their own profit, entirely apart from their rail operations, and there was no understanding of the segregation of rail and non-rail assets.”

Mr. Speaker, in 1951, for instance, the profits of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company were \$19 million. In 1952, the C.P.R. received over \$3 million from oil royalties. These are all just sidelines of the C.P.R. It is further contended that the development of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company has been made possible only by the Crow's Nest Pass agreement.

Just to show you how well they have done in this matter, in 1951, the value of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company on the books of the C.P.R. was \$17 millions, while the actual market value was placed at \$167 million, and its yearly profits, which were unknown, were supposed to be fantastic. This gives one some idea of the benefits received through the Crow's Nest Pass agreement. It is indeed very fortunate that the Crow's Nest Pass rates on grain are not under the control of the Board of Transport Commissioners but are actually under an Act of our Canadian parliament. The only protection the wheat growers have is the protection of parliament as far as freight rates are concerned in western Canada on grain and grain products. In this regard I would like to quote again an old statement made many years ago by the late W.L. Mackenzie King, the former Prime Minister of Canada, speaking of freight rates; and I quote:

“The east is protected by waterways; the Pacific by the Panama Canal and the prairies by an Act of parliament.”

Today the C.P.R. railway or corporation which originally got its start in Canada through heavy grants of money, land, and minerals and exclusive rights to provide transportation in certain areas to the people of Canada with the assistance of the Federal Government, is very big business. I repeat, the C.P.R. is big, big business today. It is true the information given to the Royal Commission indicated that it owns and controls or is financially interested in a total of 77 other railways. In addition, it (speaking of the C.P.R.) owns or controls 23 non-operating companies involving hotels, restaurants, steamships and ferries, buses, stockyards, abattoirs and trucklines, airlines and telegraph systems, manufacturing plants, trust companies, mining and real estate business, and the Lord knows what else. It also owns the title to oil rights on more than 11 million acres of prairie land, which it carries on its books today, I understand, at \$1.00 in value, though in one recent year these rights brought in a revenue of nearly \$3 million.

It is no wonder that the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, in its annual meeting, resolved to repudiate this wholly unfounded recommendation of Chief Justice Sloan, and they called upon the Government of Canada to resist the proposals that any additional subsidy is necessary, or should be granted, because of the existence of the Crow's Nest Pass rates and, further, that no losses as are suggested by the recommendation of Mr. Justice Sloan had ever been proved, according to the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I would just add that our western economy has been built up to quite an extent on these Crow's Nest Pass rates.

March 10, 1955

Some years ago a submission by the governments of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba was filed with the Board of Transport Commissioners. I quote from this submission:

“The Crow’s Nest Pass rates represent an established national policy, the alteration of which would be ruinous to the wheat growing areas of western Canada.”

And so, I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by Mr. Larsen the Resolution standing in my name.

Mr. Louis W. Larsen (Shellbrook): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to second the Motion presented to this House by the hon. member for Lumsden.

There is no more important question to western agriculture than that of the Crow’s Nest Pass Agreement, unless it should be second to the tariff question of the western agriculture. I won’t go into any lengthy discussion of the matter, but I do remember a trip I took out to British Columbia in 1947. As soon as you hit the mountains you cannot help but see the monopoly that the C.P.R. have from there on right out to the west Coast and to Vancouver Island. Stopping a week at Trail you can see the millions-and-millions-dollar plants there, and that is only one of many they have out there which no doubt are returning a very good return to the C.P.R. for that concession we got under the Crow’s Nest Pass agreement. Even when you go out to Vancouver, if you don’t get your car across to the Island good and early, you might wait there two or three days because the C.P.R. have a 99-year monopoly of ferrying the cars from Vancouver over to the Island, or over to Nanaimo anyway. So, you can see how as I say, they tied up the whole settlement from the mountains out to the Coast.

Turning now to the C.P.R. and this Crow’s Nest agreement, I don’t think they are losing any money on it anyway. It is just for some people who are never satisfied and want more and more and more. I am sure all the agriculture in the west would be in worse shape than ever if we lose that agreement that was made years ago with the C.P.R.

They have a monopoly on traffic. No lines going south from B.C. – they all have to go through their lines East, and I am sure that no political party or any member in this House would ever consider to have that freight rate abolished. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will second the hon. member for Lumsden’s Motion, and I think we are all familiar with that. It is a kind of Magna Charta for these western provinces when they are shipping their grain out, and it is something we must keep and hold. We have it and we will keep on fighting to retain that right as long as we are here.

Mr. G.H. Danielson (Arm River): — Mr. Speaker, I am not going to take many minutes. This particular agreement has often been referred to as the ‘Magna Charta’ of western Canada, and there may be a good deal of truth in that. There is no need for me to go into the history of this agreement; the member for Lumsden has told us pretty well all about it. Another thing is that it is not a new resolution – it has been before the House I think practically every Session for many years. It may be well to repeat it because, after all, it is something that vitally affects all

of western Canada, particularly Saskatchewan, because we are right in the middle. Alberta ships its grain to the west, and Manitoba's grain goes east to tidewater, so we are more involved and more affected by any changes or any repeal of this agreement, which would have the effect of hurting us more than any other part of western Canada.

I have had a little bit of experience with this. I think it was in the fall of 1918 or 1919 (I haven't got my records here) but I was the only person in my town of Davidson who shipped out a 1,100-bushel car of wheat on the old rate. I billed that out on a Friday afternoon (if I remember correctly), and next day, on Saturday, the rates were abrogated – not abrogated, that is not correct, Mr. Speaker, they were suspended, and were in effect, in any case. I do not remember exactly, but it was almost \$100 difference between the freight that I had paid on that car and that paid by another gentleman, Mr. Eady, when he shipped a day or two later; so I know something about it from practical demonstration.

The railways, of course, will tell you that they are losing money. I am not an expert on freight rates, and I am not going to make any definite statement in that regard; but I notice another thing – and that is this, that in some years when we have a small crop and in many years no crop they are losing more money than they ever did when they had lots of wheat to haul. That doesn't indicate, to me anyhow, that they are not losing money on hauling wheat. They may not have a very big profit, but at the same time they have been compensated for any shortage of revenue from hauling grain in the early days of this province and of this country.

In 1919, I think it was – was it 1919?

Mr. Loptson: — I think it was 1917.

Mr. Danielson: — Was it 1917 they abrogated it? In 1917, a Bill was passed through the House of Commons abrogating the Crow's Nest rates; that is correct. The Bill came into the Senate and an old gentleman from Alberta (I think his name was Watson, if I remember correctly) rallied around himself a group of men favourable to the interests of western Canada, and they were able to amend the Bill which abrogated the rates, the way it came from the House of Commons. They were able to amend the Bill in the Senate, so that instead of abrogating the rates they were suspended for a certain period of time. Then, when the Liberal government came in, in 1921, we had from western Canada I think about 22 or 23 Progressives . . .

Premier Douglas: — Sixty-five.

Mr. Danielson: — From the three western provinces.

Hon. Mr. Fines: — One Liberal.

Mr. Danielson: — That is correct. And there were three things that really bound together and cemented together the Progressive party. Now they were Liberals, they were Conservatives and there may have been some pink C.C.F. in the crowd, I don't know . . .

Mr. Loptson: — No C.C.F.ers then.

Mr. Danielson: — But anyhow these men had something in common; they had three things in common, Mr. Speaker. I was here and my memory is fairly good, and one of those was to get the Hudson Bay Railroad built; the

March 10, 1955

other one was to get substantial cuts, and if possible, free duty on our agricultural implements; the third thing, and probably the most important for the time being, was to get the restoration of the Crow's Nest rates on grain and flour from western Canada which were suspended at that time. Our member from my constituency, Mr. Fred Johnston, belonged to the Progressive party. As a matter of fact, I think he was the Whip of the party. He said when the budget was brought down there was no substantial, or hardly any, provision made for a cut in agricultural implement tariffs, and that created a great deal of friction and dissatisfaction among the group of the Progressive members. And Mr. Fred Johnston, as the Whip, Mr. McConica from Battleford, and two other fellows, one morning – (and this is probably not public property, but it is nevertheless true); there were two other members, I believe one of them had formerly been a minister, but they had an audience with Mackenzie King and pleaded for the restoration of the Crow's Nest rates; and Mr. King said, "You tell me if you will support my budget, and then I will tell you what I am going to do with the Crow's Nest rates. If you Progressives do not support the budget, the Government will be defeated and there will be no legislation on the Crow's Nest rates." That was Mr. King's statement to these western members. Well, there was enough of the Progressive party, and you can look back and find what I am telling you is true; there were enough of these Progressive members who decided to support the budget to see the Government through; and then after that was done a Bill was introduced into the House, and the Crow's Nest rates were restored to western Canada.

That, in brief, is the history of that episode in our history. It was a very critical one for us here in Saskatchewan, regardless of what you think about politics or anything else. There is one thing we can all agree on and that is, we want to make as much money as possible; we want that money so badly for everything we need here in western Canada, because we are at the mercy, we might say, of distance of transportation and many other things. We haven't got the water traffic which, of course, is a freight-rate regulator at all times. We cannot take advantage of that, and anything that allows us a few dollars more for the products we sell comes in very handy to pay for the extra cost on things we have to purchase to enable us to operate in this inland part of Canada.

I am not going to take up any more time, Mr. Speaker, we could talk on this for another hour or two; but this has been raised and spoken of quite often, and I will support the motion.

The question being put, it was agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 5.35 o'clock p.m.