

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session - Twelfth Legislature
37th Day

Monday, April 2, 1956

The House met at 10:30 o'clock a.m.

On the Orders of the Day

Extension Of Licenses

Re Bill To Be Introduced

Hon. C. M. Fines (Provincial Treasurer): — This Bill, which I am going to introduce tomorrow, Tuesday, April 3rd, is a Bill to extend the licences which are in existence on March 31st until the end of April. We have been giving consideration to this now for some time, but did not wish to say anything about it until after the 31st of March.

Because of the difficulty which the rural people are having in getting into town, on account of the condition of the roads, we feel that this extension is justifiable. We also feel that, because of the shortage of cash in many areas, that is another reason for doing this. And so this Bill will extend the licences, the operators' licences and the motor licences, and will protect everybody under the Automobile Insurance Act. They will be given thirty days - that is, until the end of April, when the old licences can still be used on automobiles.

Mr. James Gibson (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, may I ask a question? I wondered if the Provincial Treasurer has ever given thought to extending it, permanently, to the 15th of April each year.

Hon. Mr. Fines: — No, Mr. Speaker, there is no reason for it whatsoever.

Mr. Gibson: — But I mean, it is just a question of changing the year.

Hon. Mr. Fines: — But I say, there is no reason, normally, for it, because we put these licences on sale on the 1st of March so that people have a whole month; if we made it the 15th of April it would be the same thing - then somebody would say why not make it the 1st of May. We think, normally, the time is perfectly satisfactory.

Labour Relations Board

Hon. T. C. Douglas (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called I would like to make a brief statement. The extraordinary statements made by Mr. Justice Gordon of the Appeal Court, last Thursday, calls for some comment by the Government of Saskatchewan.

The first statement attributed to Mr. Justice Gordon by the 'Regina Leader-Post' is:

April 2, 1956

"It is no wonder that capital doesn't rush in to this province after it hears how the Labour Relations Board operates."

This statement is completely at variance with the facts, as will be evident to anyone who will examine the amounts of capital which are coming into the province at the present time, and has been coming in for some time.

More serious, however, is the fact that this statement has a purely political bias and is not a proper comment to be made by a Judge in his official capacity.

Some Govt Members: — Hear! Hear!

Premier Douglas: — If Mr. Justice Gordon wants to enter the arena of political controversy, he is perfectly at liberty to do so; but he ought first to resign from the Bench, rather than use his exalted position to make political observations. When individuals are elevated to the Bench it is with the understanding that they will leave their political bias behind them. The failure of Mr. Justice Gordon to do this not only calls in question his fitness for the eminent position which he now holds, but it makes suspect any judgement which he may subsequently hand down. The reputation of the Appeal Court is bound to suffer when one of its members indulges in statements that are political and controversial in character.

The second statement of Mr. Justice Gordon, to which I take exception, is this:

"While I am not going to quarrel with the legislation, it is the administration of the Act that is the problem. It would be all right if we could have confidence in the Board chairman."

Mr. Speaker, the function of the court is to interpret the law, and to decide whether the Board has exceeded, in any respect, the authority given to it by this Legislature. It is not the function of the court to express either confidence or lack of confidence in the chairman of a Government Board - so long as the Government has confidence in the chairman (and it has) it is not within the competence of Mr. Justice Gordon or the courts to pass on the fitness of the chairman to discharge his responsibilities.

It should be remembered that members of the provincial Boards have no means of applying to derogatory and insulting remarks made about them by a member of the highest court in the province. I am therefore asking the Minister of Justice to give these individuals some protection against these un-called-for attacks. If the Minister of Justice is not prepared to provide such protection, then the Saskatchewan Government will have the use whatever powers it possesses to protect its public officials, who are powerless to defend themselves, when attacked from the sanctuary of the Bench.

It seems to me that the statements of Mr. Justice Gordon cannot do other than to hurt the prestige of the Appeal Court itself. As the final Court of Appeal in this province it must have the full confidence of the public, in order that its decisions will carry weight and earn respect. If a member of the court is allowed to engage in political controversy while on the Bench, and to decry the confidence of provincial officials, the judicial impartiality of the court is bound to be called to question. As one who desires

to see the judiciary of this province hold in high esteem, and outside the realm of political controversy, I hope that those charged with the responsibility for doing so will see the incidents such as occurred last Thursday will not be repeated.

At this time I would like to place on record the Government's complete confidence in Mr. P. G. Makaroff, Q.C., Chairman of the Labour Relations Board, and also of all its members.

There may be honest differences of opinions with regard to the Board's decisions, but we are convinced that the Chairman and the Board have attempted at all times to deal fairly and justly with the cases which have come before them. The people of Saskatchewan owe a debt of gratitude to these men and women who have given much time and effort of minimizing industrial disputes and establishing better labour relations in our province.

Mr. A. Lopton (Saltcoats): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are preceded with, I feel that the statement of the Premier should not go without challenge. I think that if his Honour found, in his dealings with the Labour Relations Board, that it was deterring the progress of this province as a result of their inability in dealing with labour and management, that he has done a service to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker: — Order! Order! We cannot enter into a debate on Orders of the Day.

Re Press Statement

Mr. R. A. McCarthy (Cannington): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called I would like to call the attention of the House to an article that appeared in Thursday's 'Leader-Post', having to do with the Regina spring bull show. It says:

"An all-time record in the 48-year history of the Regina spring bull show was smashed Wednesday afternoon when a big-scale rancher from Montana purchased the grand champion Hereford bull for \$5,000. The previous record was \$3,750 established in 1953.

"The big money was paid for Blair Athol Dandy 4J owned by Lees Brothers of Arcola by Bill Studdert of Phillipeburg, Montana."

I would just like to say that the Lees Brothers are to be congratulated on their achievement. That have brought credit to themselves, to that fine constituency of Cannington, and to the province as a whole.

I would point out to you that these young men are descendants of a pioneer family in the Arcola district, that has always been famous for its good stock; and it is such young men as these who will continue to make our province great.

April 2, 1956

Re Regina Pats Hockey Club

Hon. Mr. Fines (Provincial Treasurer): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are preceded with, I am sure that all honourable members would like to join in congratulating the Regina Pats on winning the game on Thursday night with Flin Flon, thus becoming the champions for Saskatchewan and Alberta. They are starting the series, tonight, against Port Arthur, and I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that all members on each side of the House would appreciate it if you would be good enough, on their behalf, to wire the Pats, today, extending to them our best wishes for this coming series.

It does help the boys to get a telegram before the game and I am sure that they would appreciate receiving one from you. I am just making the suggestion, Mr. Speaker, that you send them a telegram on behalf of all the members of the House extending to them our best wishes. I do not think there is anybody that would like to take anything away from that wonderful team of Flin Flon; they put up a gallant fight; they made the series go for the full seven games, and even in the last game they were leading by a score of 4 to 1; and that just shows the stuff out of which our Pats made. The people of Saskatchewan should be very proud of the team, who came back, after being down three goals, to finally win the game and win the series against such very worthy opponents.

Mr. Speaker: — Is it agreed that I send a telegram, on behalf of members of the House?

-Agreed-

The Assembly adjourned at 10:00 p.m.