

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Second Session — Thirteenth Legislature
1st Day

Thursday, February 13, 1958

This being the day appointed by Proclamation of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated the Twenty-fourth day of January, 1958, for the meeting of the Second Session of the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan, and the Assembly having met:

Mr. Speaker informed the Assembly that he had received a communication from the Private Secretary to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor stating that His Honour would open the Session at three o'clock p.m. today, Thursday, the Thirteenth day of February 1958.

3 o'clock p.m.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor (the Honourable Frank Lindsay Bastedo) entered the Chamber, and having taken his seat upon the Throne, was pleased to open the Session with the following Speech:

MR. SPEAKER and MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

IT IS MY PRIVILEGE to welcome you to the Second Session of the Thirteenth Legislature of Saskatchewan.

The people of Saskatchewan rejoiced in the visit to Ottawa of Her Majesty Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada. Through the medium of television the opening of the Twenty-Second Parliament of Canada was witnessed in many Saskatchewan homes. This historic event focussed attention on our membership in the Commonwealth of Nations in association with many peoples of the world. Her Majesty's visit strengthened the bonds of loyalty and affection which we have for Her Throne and Person.

During 1957 Saskatchewan produced an average grain crop. Unfortunately sales of wheat were lower and the carryover of all grains stood at record levels at the end of the crop year. My Government is gravely concerned with the continued decline of our farm income brought about by a further reduction in agricultural prices and increases in farm costs. Continued restricted, delivery quotas further aggravated the situation.

Livestock population has continued to increase and Saskatchewan now has more cattle than at any time in her history. You will

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be asked to approve an extension of the Community Pasture program to assist this favourable trend.

Legislation will be introduced to establish a Board to administer The Farm Implement Act and to supervise the testing of farm machinery.

It is hoped that the Government of Canada will agree to commence construction of the South Saskatchewan Dam in the very near future. Discussions to this end have been resumed and my Government has made it clear that it is prepared to pay its fair share of the cost. It has contended, however, that in accord with the principle of equal treatment to all sections of Canada, Saskatchewan should not be required to assume a larger share of direct financial responsibility for this project than has been required of other provinces where projects in the national interest have been undertaken.

The final report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life has been received. The fourteen reports of the Commission have been given wide circulation throughout the province. Last December the Commission's recommendation to call a conference of interested rural organizations was implemented. The conference was widely attended by official delegates and observers who recommended the establishment of a Rural Development Council representing leading rural organizations.

All organizations which participated in the 1956 Provincial Local Government Conference have approved the resolution of the Conference which called for the establishment of a Committee to give further study to reorganization and reallocation of finances and responsibilities. This Committee was appointed last summer and is proceeding with this study.

The current winter has been marked by a higher level of unemployment than at any time since before the war. It is clear that in addition to the usual seasonal factors there has been a noticeable slowing down in the pace of the national economy. The more highly industrialized areas are experiencing the sharpest unemployment. My Government has followed a program of maintaining construction employment throughout the winter wherever possible, and has directed that government purchasing and procurement should be timed so as to encourage winter employment. At the recent Dominion-Provincial Conference my Government also urged that the Government of Canada join with the provinces and municipalities in planning needed public works projects designed to reduce unemployment. To date however, only limited steps have been taken to meet this problem. My Government has accepted all the offers proposed by the Government of Canada to share equally the costs of work-creating projects.

A conference on Dominion-Provincial fiscal relations and

related matters was held in Ottawa last November. Provincial Premiers were unanimous in pressing the Government of Canada to take immediate steps to provide the provinces and municipalities with a more equitable share of revenue from income taxes and succession duties. It was agreed that the conference would be reconvened early in the new year to consider these proposals. It is regrettable that this was not done. The Government of Canada has now announced that it is making some additional money available to the provinces under the tax-sharing arrangements for a period of one year. The amount offered still falls far short of what is required to meet the growing needs of municipalities and local school districts. My Government will continue to press for a more equitable share of the tax dollar to enable the various levels of government to carry out their constitutional responsibilities. You will be asked to approve increased grants which will pass on to the municipalities and local school districts all of the additional revenue which will be received under the tax sharing arrangements.

Saskatchewan has pioneered hospital insurance in Canada and over the past eleven years has demonstrated the social value of such a program. Saskatchewan welcomes the announcement that the Government of Canada is prepared to participate in a hospital insurance plan commencing July 1st. It must be noted, however, that the Government of Canada did not take steps to have Parliament pass the necessary legislation to make this effective. It must also be noted that the proposals recently advanced by the Government of Canada continue to restrict the application of the proposed national hospital plan by failing to include hospitalization for patients suffering from mental illness or tuberculosis. My Government continues to hold the view that a limited hospital plan meets only a part of the health needs of the people of Canada. It will continue to press for the early implementation of a comprehensive National Health Insurance Program.

The continued expansion of mineral production is making a significant contribution to the diversification of the economy of our province. In 1957 more than 3,200 oil wells produced 37 million barrels of oil valued at \$78,000,000. Secondary service industries related to petroleum exploration and production increased in line with drilling and development activities. A \$3,000,000 plant was opened in the city of Regina last year to produce steel pipe for use in pipe lines and well casing.

A flare gas collecting and compressing plant in the Smiley field came into production last year. A flare gas processing plant costing some \$20,000,000 is to be constructed in the Steelman field.

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Work on the shaft at the potash mine near Saskatoon is expected to be completed this year. A start has been made on the construction of a \$20,000,000 potash concentrator at this mine. A similar project is being developed at Esterhazy. Sinking has been resumed in the shaft near Unity. Another company is testing the possibility of mining potash by the brine method.

Sharp drops in world prices for metals contributed to the decline in metallic mineral production. Nevertheless exploration and development in the Precambrian area continued at the high level experienced in recent years. In order to assist this activity my Government undertook an aerial mineral survey of this area last year. Eleven thousand seven hundred mineral claims were recorded in 1937, the second highest number for any calendar year in our history.

The uranium industry in the north continues to expand. It is estimated that the value of uranium production in 1959 will reach \$39,000,000. Existing uranium concentration mills have been expanded and a new mill commenced operation last year.

Despite a general softening of the Canadian economy during 1957, the gross value of manufacturing production in Saskatchewan increased significantly over the previous year. An important part of this increase resulted from the coming into production of a number of large plants late in 1956 and early in 1957. There has been a marked increase in the number of smaller manufacturing units covering a wide range of economic activity. The impact that resource and industrial development has had on our economy is most encouraging.

During the past twelve years some 2,500 miles of forest roads, fireguards and trails have been built. The 1957 northern road program included the gravelling of 120 miles and the construction of 48 miles of new high-standard road and 92 miles of lighter road designed to give access to timber and recreational areas. It is expected that a five year Northern Development Road Program totalling \$15,000,000 will be commenced in 1958 under a new Dominion-Provincial sharing agreement.

The growth of the rate of consumption of electricity and natural gas continued at an accelerated rate during 1957. The expansion of generating and transmission facilities in the province has kept pace with this growth. The first units of the new generating stations at Saskatoon and Estevan will be in service during next winter. Last year electric power was extended to 6,200 farms, bring-

ing to almost 47,000 the total number of farms electrified.

Natural gas service to the city of Regina, the largest single project of its kind ever to be undertaken in our province was installed last year. The extension of natural gas to six other communities together with new connections in centres already served, added 13,000 customers to our natural gas system which now serves 33,000 Saskatchewan homes and commercial establishments. During 1958, emphasis will be placed on transmission pipelines to handle present loads and several additional communities will be connected to the system.

The Saskatchewan Government Telephones completed the Saskatchewan section of the Trans-Canada Microwave System during 1957. This system now makes the most modern telephone and television communication facilities available to the people of Saskatchewan.

During the year vaccination against poliomyelitis with Salk Vaccine was made available to all persons up to the age of forty years. This program was carried out by public health personnel and over four hundred thousand persons have now been given an initial dose of the vaccine. It is proposed to provide final doses to these persons during the coming year.

In the past year new health regions were set up in the Yorkton-Melville area and in the Rosetown-Biggar-Kindersley area. My Government is anxious to extend its program for the prevention of disease, and is hopeful that additional health regions will be organized.

An increase in hospital construction grants will be proposed.

You will be asked to approve estimates providing for substantial increases in Mothers' Allowance payments which have been in effect since the first of the year. You will be asked to ratify the action which my Government took in agreeing to share the cost of increasing Old Age Assistance, Disabled Persons' and Blind Persons' Allowances.

A new Geriatric and Rehabilitation Centre in Regina capable of accommodating three hundred guests was officially opened last fall. This new Centre is a further step toward the goal of providing adequate care and accommodation for our senior citizens who require active treatment and nursing services.

My Government has continued to provide technical assistance and construction and maintenance grants to municipalities and

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church organizations undertaking housing projects for Senior Citizens. To date twenty such projects with accommodation for 1,054 guests have been completed. Twenty-six projects with accommodation for 1,560 guests are currently under construction and additional projects are in the process of organization.

In accordance with the policy of passing on to local governments a share of increasing provincial revenue, provision will be made for again increasing school grants.

It is now eight years since there was a complete revision of the high school curriculum. Committees representing teachers, the University and the public generally will cooperate with the Department in a re-examination of the high school curriculum.

My Government's building program continues to expand and improve the facilities at the University of Saskatchewan. A new Saskatchewan Research Council Building will be ready for occupancy this year. The research laboratories which this building will provide will make it possible for the Council to expand significantly its program of research and so facilitate the development and utilization of our natural resources. The Government is co-operating with the Cancer Society in the construction of a Medical Research Building. Plans are being made for the construction of an Arts Building, a Biology Building and an Animal Husbandry Building.

We are gratified that Saskatchewan has been selected as the site for the Canadian Track and field Trials for the 1958 British Empire and Commonwealth Games.

Saskatchewan's section of the Trans-Canada Highway was officially opened last summer. The completion of this joint project demonstrates the benefits that can accrue through the co-operation of the federal and provincial governments in the field of highway construction. My Government will continue to press for a new agreement with the Federal Government that would provide for further cooperation in a comprehensive plan of road and highway improvement.

Surveys and studies related to the location of major bridges at Prince Albert and in the Petrofka area are presently underway. Detailed plans will be drawn for one of these structures during the current year.

A new policy of assistance to urban municipalities on

highway routes through urban centres has been announced and will be in operation during this fiscal year.

It is encouraging to note that 247 Rural Municipalities, 11 Local Improvement Districts and 14 Towns and Villages participated in the municipal grid road program last year. The progress which has been made in the construction of all-weather main market roads has been considerably in excess of expectations. You will therefore be asked to approve estimates which will provide for additional expenditures on this program during the past construction season. Estimates which will maintain the province's contribution to grid road construction at the level experienced during the present fiscal year will also be submitted for approval.

The Government of Saskatchewan has continued to resist the efforts of the railway companies to secure increased freight rates. Recently my Government joined seven other provincial Governments in appealing to the Government of Canada to disallow freight rate increases granted the railway companies by the Board of Transport Commissioners.

The incorporation of Estevan and Lloydminster as Cities were important milestones in the growth of Saskatchewan.

Notwithstanding restricted grain marketing, the value of services rendered to the people of the province by co-operative organizations was one of the highest in history. This movement continues to expand its services in various fields and is a factor of increasing importance in the province's economy. You will be asked to approve of certain amendments to credit union and co-operative legislation made necessary by the expansion of the co-operative movement.

A gratifying increase in the number of tourists visiting our province was noted during the past year. Our provincial parks reached an all-time high in utilization. An accelerated program to attract more tourists to our province and to encourage Saskatchewan residents to enjoy their own vacation facilities is planned for this year. Facilities and accommodation within provincial parks will be expanded and improved. A system of tourist accommodation rating will be prepared and instituted for the 1959 tourist season.

The Provincial Laboratory Building, on which construction began last year, will be ready for occupancy in 1958. A contract has been let for the construction of an office building in Regina to accommodate the Department of Public Health and the Department of

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Social Welfare and Rehabilitation.

My Government is desirous of extending full citizenship rights to all Indians in Saskatchewan. To this end all Indian bands will be invited to send representatives to a conference, this year, to discuss this question.

Legislation will be introduced providing for uniform time throughout Saskatchewan in accordance with the recommendations of the Legislative Committee which were adopted at the last Session.

A thorough study of procedures which obtain in our Land Titles Offices has been completed. As a result of this study legislation will be introduced to provide a greater degree of efficiency and reliability.

A committee of judges and lawyers was appointed in September, 1956, to study and review the judicial system of Saskatchewan. A report was made to the Government in October, 1957. Legislation will be introduced to implement many of the recommendations of that committee. Legislation will also be introduced to remove many of the present restrictions which deny litigants and lawyers ready access to the courts.

In 1957 the Government appointed a Royal Commission to examine into certain mineral transactions in the province. Many farmers may be awaiting the report of the Royal Commission before deciding whether to institute legal proceedings in connection with such mineral transactions. So that no right of action presently existing will be barred by The Limitation of Actions Act before the Royal Commission presents its report, legislation will be proposed extending the time limit for a further period of one year.

You will be asked to approve estimates to extend legal aid facilities to persons without means who are accused of criminal offences. Legislation will be introduced to provide simple and informal proceedings for the recovery of small debts and damage claims.

You will be asked to approve amendments to The Annual Holidays Act which will entitle employees with over five years service with the same employer to three weeks holidays with pay.

Legislation dealing with mining associations and commercial agents and providing for the recording of evidence by sound machine will be introduced. Amendments to existing legislation will also be submitted for your consideration.

The Public Accounts for the last fiscal year, together with estimates for the year beginning April 1, 1958, will be submitted.

I leave you now to the business of the Session with full confidence that you will favourably discharge your duties and responsibilities. May Divine Providence continue to bless our Province and guide the Legislature in all its deliberations.

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

The Assembly then adjourned at 3:30 o'clock p.m.