

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session – Thirteenth Legislature
1st Day

Thursday, February 12, 1959

This being the day appointed by Proclamation of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated the Sixth day of January, 1959 for the meeting of the Third 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 Twelfth day of February, 1959.

3 o'clock p.m.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor 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 Third Session of the Thirteenth Legislature of Saskatchewan.

The people of Saskatchewan anticipate with much pleasure the forth-coming visit of Her Gracious Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Prince Philip. Last summer Her Royal Highness The Princess Margaret visited the northern reaches of the settled areas of our Province. We rejoiced in the opportunity of welcoming to our midst so gracious a member of the Royal Family.

In spite of a severe drought condition which prevailed last summer, a near average wheat crop was harvested. A serious fodder shortage which followed in the wake of dry weather in many parts of the Province was overcome through emergency measures taken to assist farmers to meet this crisis. An extensive grasshopper threat was successfully met during the past growing season. Chemicals will be made available to farmers at cost to help meet the more widespread infestation expected this year.

The diversification of our agricultural economy continues at an encouraging rate. Livestock marketings have achieved new records. However, the added farm income realized from favourable conditions in the livestock market failed to arrest the growing disparity between farm costs and farm prices. It is apparent that steps must be taken by the Government of Canada to institute national policies to restore stability to our agricultural economy and give to the farmers their fair share of the national income.

Inadequate and uncertain returns have made it more difficult for

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families to transfer farms from one generation to another and for farmers to acquire economic farm units. Legislation will be introduced to assist the co-operatives in setting up a system of farm credit to help young farmers become established in agriculture.

The Government of Canada has announced that a measure to institute crop insurance in co-operation with such provinces as so desire will be laid before Parliament. This legislation has not been communicated to my Government but when it is available it will be studied. My Government will then determine, in consultation with the farm organizations, to what extent it will be beneficial to the farmers of this Province.

The Government of Saskatchewan welcomed the opportunity of signing an agreement with the Government of Canada for the construction of the South Saskatchewan River Development Project. Legislation will be introduced to establish a South Saskatchewan River Development Commission to provide for the orderly development of this great irrigation and power project.

Arrangements have been made for the Saskatchewan Research Council to undertake a comprehensive technical survey of water resources as related to the growing problems of municipal water supply. You will be asked to approve legislation regarding conservation, development and utilization of ground waters.

Despite adverse conditions in agriculture and the depressing effects of the national recession, Saskatchewan experienced significant advances in the field of industrial development and there was an encouraging increase industrial employment. In 1958 a number of new industries were established and construction of a steel rolling mill was begun.

In spite of our industrial growth seasonal unemployment is still a serious problem. To help meet this situation the Saskatchewan Government has joined with the federal and municipal governments in a series of work and wages projects. Mounting inflation has also added to the suffering of the unemployed and has threatened the security of low-income groups and those on fixed incomes. My Government has urged the Government of Canada to take strong measures to deal with these threats to our national well-being.

The mineral industries continued to make a significant contribution to the expansion of the economy of our Province. During 1958 Saskatchewan rose to fourth place among all the provinces in the production of mineral wealth.

A flare gas collecting system and processing plant in the Steelman area was brought into production during the year. The construction of this plant and related storage facilities have been important steps in the conservation of our fuel resources. Gas heretofore wasted is now available to consumers in Saskatchewan.

During the year the first potash mine in Canada commenced production

near Saskatoon. Work on the construction of a shaft and potash processing plans near Esterhazy is well advanced and other potash exploration programs are being carried on over a wide area. Important potential sources of iron ore in the Province are under investigation and have aroused widespread interest. A sub-surface geological laboratory for storage and examination of cores and samples was opened during the past year.

To keep pace with the growth in demand for electric power, it has been necessary to plan and bring into operation new generating units. Last year additional capacity was added to the Kindersley plant and the first unit of the Queen Elizabeth Power Station at Saskatoon was brought into operation. A second large unit at the new Saskatoon plant and the first unit of the Boundary Dam Generating Station at Estevan will be brought into operation this year.

A major interconnection of provincial power utilities which is being planned in the Estevan-Brandon area will be of mutual advantage to both Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Plans are underway to develop and bring into operation a hydro-electric power site at Squaw Rapids on the Saskatchewan River east of Nipawin.

Over five thousand farms were added to the provincial power system in 1958. Today more than fifty thousand farms enjoy the benefits of electric power. A concentrated effort is being made to complete the electrification of the rural areas of our Province.

The provincial natural gas utility also continued to expand. Weyburn, Estevan, Maple Creek and ten smaller communities were connected to the gas system last year. The program to extend natural gas to all cities in Saskatchewan will be completed this year and additional communities will also be served.

During 1959 Saskatchewan Government Telephones will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of its formation. The investment which the people of Saskatchewan have made in a public telephone system over the past half century has produced a modern, efficient communication system. It is gratifying to note that last year a record was set when approximately twelve thousand telephones were installed. Through the facilities of Saskatchewan Government Telephones, Swift Current was provided with direct television service from the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in 1958. Prince Albert will be connected in a few weeks time and the cities of Moose Jaw and Yorkton later in the year.

The continued development of the forest industry in Saskatchewan makes necessary the revision of The Forest Act. You will be asked to consider legislation to amend The Prairie and Forest Fires Act and The Game Act.

To keep pace with the increasing demand new parks are being developed to provide greater recreational facilities. A program will be undertaken to provide more camping and picnic facilities along our major tourist highways and within provincial parks.

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The value of services rendered by co-operatives doing business in Saskatchewan reached a record figure of more than \$560,000,000. New records were also set in the number of members of co-operative associations.

My Government has been encouraged by the extent to which the communities in Northern Saskatchewan have been improved through the development of local co-operatives. This achievement of the people in this area now makes it possible for the Government to implement its plan to convert the provincially-owned fish marketing and trading services into co-operatives. Legislation will be introduced which will provide for the transfer of these facilities to the people of the North.

The record program of highway construction which was undertaken last year provided improved highways in many areas of the Province. A new policy for assistance to urban municipalities through which provincial highways pass was well received. During 1959 work will commence on the construction of a four-lane traffic bridge over the North Saskatchewan River in the City of Prince Albert.

During the past year further progress has been made in the construction of the municipal grid road system. Two hundred and sixty-four rural municipalities, eleven local improvement districts and twenty-nine towns and villages have participated in this program to date.

During the past decade the Government has constructed more than two thousand five hundred miles of roads in the mineral and forest areas of Northern Saskatchewan. Plans are underway to exceed last year's construction record of over two hundred miles of northern roads. In addition, the Saskatchewan Government is co-operating with the Government of Canada in the construction of roads which will connect Prince Albert to Creighton-Flin Flon, Hudson Bay to The Pas, Buffalo Narrows to La Loche and Lac La Ronge to Uranium City.

It is evident that Saskatchewan has taken great strides toward realizing our goal of a more balanced economic base. During the post-war period the total value of commodity production has increased almost threefold. In 1958 non-agricultural sources accounted for over sixty-five percent of all commodity production. A team of specialized Canadian and American consultants has been engaged to carry out an objective appraisal of our achievements. Their studies and analyses will assist the Government in working out further long-range programs for the fullest development of Saskatchewan's economic potential.

Substantial increases in operating grants for schools will be provided. To assist with capital financing the Government has for many years followed a practice of purchasing certain school debentures, and further assistance in the financing of capital expenditures is being planned. Having in mind the ever-increasing need for advanced education, the Government is proposing a university scholarship program to supplement the extensive assistance provided through the Student Aid Fund.

The first stage of construction of the Provincial Technical Institute is underway and will be available for use this fall.

It is encouraging to note a continued improvement in the level of certification of Saskatchewan teachers and an increase in enrolment at teacher training institutions.

This year the University of Saskatchewan celebrates its Golden Jubilee. A steadily increasing number of students continues to take advantage of the opportunities provided by our University. To an already impressive campus is being added a College of Arts Building, a Biology Building and an Animal Husbandry Building. Last year saw the completion of the Saskatchewan Research Council Building and the Cancer and Medical Research Building. 1959 will also be marked by the retirement of Dr. W.P. Thompson after many years service as Professor, Dean and President of the University. Dr. Thompson's basic research contributed greatly to the development of rust-resistant varieties of wheat. Saskatchewan is fortunate in having had for so many years the services of such a renowned scientist, effective teacher and able administrator.

Saskatchewan is also fortunate in that the new President of the University is to be Dean J.W.T. Spinks, an outstanding scientist who has served the University with great distinction for many years.

No cases of poliomyelitis were reported in Saskatchewan last year. The framework of effective public health services built up in our Province enabled everyone under forty years of age to take advantage of the Government's policy of making Salk vaccine available without cost. This achievement gives hope that this crippling disease may ultimately be wiped out in Saskatchewan.

A new health region was established recently in the Melfort-Tisdale area. This brings to ten the number of health regions in the Province. You will be asked to provide funds to establish another health region during the coming year.

My Government has reduced the personal tax payments for hospital services. Additional out-patient services, including minor surgical procedures, will be progressively added as soon as hospitals can provide the staff and facilities to handle the increased workload.

My Government has worked out with the organizations representing rural and urban municipalities a new system of providing social aid to those in need. You will be asked to approve a new Social Aid Act which will provide for greater financial assistance to municipalities and a more equitable distribution of the municipal share of social aid costs between the municipalities. You will also be asked to approve amendments to The Deserted Wives' and Children's Maintenance Act. Legislation will be introduced to provide for the integration of child welfare and juvenile correction programs.

During 1958 twenty-two new housing projects for senior citizens

were completed, bringing the total to fifty-six. More than three thousand aged persons can now be accommodated in modern housing units. Six additional units are presently under construction and some twenty other projects are in various stages of planning. The growing life expectancy of our people continue to increase that portion of our population over sixty-five years of age. A conference of interested persons will be held early this year to discuss the problem of providing further programs and facilities for the care of the aged and those suffering long-term illnesses.

Legislation will be introduced to relieve the cities of the cost of housing surveys and to provide more housing for low-income groups by reducing to five percent the cities' contribution for low-rental housing.

Saskatchewan was represented at a Dominion-Provincial Conference which discussed the recommendations contained in the Report of the Fauteux Commission on Penal Reform. The Saskatchewan Government will continue to co-operate with the Government of Canada and work toward the development of a more humane and progressive correction program.

The work of the Local Government Continuing Committee is proceeding satisfactorily. Progress reports are being prepared for submission to the annual conventions of local government organizations.

Last fall Chiefs and Councillors from almost every Indian reservation in the Province met in conference with representatives of the Government to discuss the extension of the provincial franchise to Indians and other matters affecting their welfare. Arrangements have been made to have these questions discussed by the Indians on the various reservations. As requested by the Federation of Saskatchewan Indians, a further conference will be held next summer.

The report of the Royal Commission on Certain Mineral Transactions has been received. Legislation dealing with the matters reviewed by this Commission will be introduced.

The report of the Quadrennial Committee of Review of The Workmen's Compensation (Accident Fund) Act will result in some amendments to this Act being submitted for your consideration.

You will be asked to approve amendments to The Farm Security Act extending for a further two-year period the protection given to farmers against a final order of foreclosure of the home quarter.

Legislation abolishing ex parte interim injunctions in connection with labour disputes will be introduced. Amendments to The Landlord and Tenant Act to give greater security for wages to employees of tenants will be presented for your consideration. Amendments designed to strengthen provisions of The Fair Employment Practices Act will be proposed. You will be asked to approve legislation designed to provide simple and informal proceedings for the recovering of small debts and small damage claims. Amendments to The Attachments of Debts Act designed to assist wives and children in the collection of amounts payable under alimony and maintenance

orders will be proposed.

Recommendations of a Law Reform Committee appointed to give consideration to desirable reforms in statute laws will be embodied in proposed amendments to The District Courts Act, The Limitation of Civil Rights Act, The Interpretation Act and The Land Titles Act. Amendments to The Queen's Bench Act and The Surrogate Courts Act will also be introduced.

You will be asked to approve legislation transferring to the Local Government Board the jurisdiction now exercised over electrical and gas utilities by the Saskatchewan Power Commission.

Amendments to The Legislative Assembly Act and amendments to The Saskatchewan Elections Act will also be presented.

After a year of experience with uniform time legislation in the Province it is considered desirable to ask you to refer this question again to the Select Standing Committee on Municipal Law.

The Liquor Sales Outlets Inquiry Committee, appointed pursuant to a recommendation of the Assembly at its last Session, submitted its report to the Government. Representing all groups in the Assembly, the Committee reports a gratifying degree of unanimity on the major conclusions reached, thus enhancing the value of its contribution. Legislation based on the Committee's report will be presented for your consideration. You will be asked to approve plans for the extension of the activities of the Bureau on Alcoholism Approval of additional grants to assist in expanding temperance education programs will be requested.

The Public Accounts for the last fiscal year, together with estimates for the year beginning April 1, 1959, 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.