

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
SIXTH SESSION – FOURTEENTH LEGISLATURE
25th Day**

Wednesday, March 11, 1964.

The Assembly met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.

On the Orders of the Day

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mrs. Gladys Strum (Saskatoon City): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day are called, I would like to draw the attention of the house to 50 students in the west gallery from the Prince Phillip School with their teachers, Mr. Pearce and Mr. Nay. I am sure that you would all want to join with me in wishing them a very happy and profitable day and a safe journey home.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear! Hear!

ANNOUNCEMENT OF POLICY OF SASKATCHEWAN GOVERNMENT INSURANCE OFFICE

Hon. R.A. Walker (Attorney General): — I would like to appraise the house of an announcement of a policy of the Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office. I wish to advise members of the Assembly that the annual grant to the Saskatchewan Safety Council under the Automobile Accident Insurance Act for high school education and training has been increased this year by \$25,000 to \$140,000.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear! Hear!

Mr. Walker: — This grant to the Saskatchewan Safety Council was established under The Automobile Accident Insurance Act in 1958, and the fund is administered solely by the Safety Council. Presently more than 3300 students from 112 schools in the province have enrolled this year with the fund providing up to \$30 for each student. The additional grant this year has been allocated to specific areas, to specified areas where there is presently no driver training program in the high school and where the schools have asked for this assistance. The Saskatchewan Safety Council have applications from schools that wish to initiate the driver training program and the increase has been earmarked particularly for those schools: The Humboldt, Nipawin, Herbert, Tisdale School Units, the North Battleford Collegiate Institute, three schools in the Govan School Unit, and the school at Porcupine Plain and Yorkdale.

The number of students enrolled in the driver training plan since the inception of the plan in 1958 has now reached 10,669 and the total contribution by the Automobile Accident Insurance Act made out of the reserve fund, established in 1958 from premiums received under the act amounts of \$321,635.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear! Hear!

SECOND READINGS

HON. E. KRAMER (Minister of Natural Resources) moved second reading of Bill No. 45 – An Act to amend The Northern Administration Act.

He said:

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 45 – An Act to amend The Northern Administration Act, will do three things. First of all it will provide some communities in the north that have experienced some of the rudiments of self-government, through their ratepayers councils to take another step forward in self-government.

The next thing it will provide is provision for northern housing and development boards, which will be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor. The board's purpose will be to encourage and promote the development of industry and the development of housing. It is hoped that the board will be in very close liaison with the Department of Natural Resources. Money

is being furnished to assist with the housing and industrial projects; a grants program is permitted under this act for the use of monies appropriated by the legislature. The larger amount, that is the functional capital for this, will be provided through an advance account similar to the Forest Fire Fighting Advance Account, that we now have in our department.

The grants, I mentioned this earlier in the budget speech, the grants to these communities I mentioned that will set up their own community councils, will be \$1 for each \$1 of the tax collected and \$3 per capita. This will give them a fair start in a fund to carry on their own budgeting for work that will be designated to them in their communities.

Housing subsidies up to \$500 for new structures, and \$400 for improvements, will also be provided for. Now many of these things that will be permitted by this act are going on right now. I would like to tell the house, for example, about the milling projects that are being undertaken by the department. A new one was started for the community of La Loche. Last fall a mill was put in there. They employ, with the exception of the supervisors and foremen, all Chippewa labour from the village of La Loche. These people were taken in there. They hadn't any former woods experience to amount to anything, and certainly no mill experience. They did very well. I am happy to say that it wasn't necessary to let one of these people go; they worked very well once they gained some experience and the foreman told me that he would be glad to take any of them back on the next work program. Two hundred and fifty thousand feet of lumber were sawed in this one mill alone, on the banks of the Clear Water River, and the lumber is now dry piled at La Loche, preparatory to this housing program.

Now this is only an example I mention. I think I have outlined the main objects of the amendments to The Northern Development Administration Act. There will be, also, provision for other industrial developments, some of which are going on now and it is a pleasure for me to move second reading of this bill.

Mr. Allan R. Guy (Athabaska): — Just a question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if he could explain the difference between a local development area as it is mentioned in the original act, and a northern community area as outlined in the amendment?

Mr. Kramer: — Well, I don't think there is a great deal of difference, Mr. Speaker, in this, but I believe that it refers to the changes that will be made when we set up community councils.

With these words, I would now move second reading of this bill.

Mr. Guy: — I would like to make a few comments in regard to this bill. I think the idea as expressed in the bill is a good one but it is about twenty years too late. We all know that in northern Saskatchewan there is certainly a lack of opportunity for the people of that area. There are people there who have no jobs, they haven't been able to find work for many years, and this government had done very, very little to provide employment opportunities for the people of the area. So I am glad that finally, even though it is just before an election, that the government has decided to set up an organization whereby small industries will be encouraged, more opportunity, job and placement opportunities will result.

However, I am concerned with this particular act in regards to the way the boards are to be set up. Because we have here again an example of where complete power is going to rest in the hands of the minister, and if these boards are created and operate in the same manner that other agencies in the north that have been created by this government operate, they will be a failure before they ever get off their feet, because politics will be a prime expediency of these organizations.

It wasn't too long ago that there was a great deal of press coverage in regard to the settlement of Sandy Bay having a local council. Now this local council, I have been told by the residents of Sandy Bay, means absolutely nothing, because they never have the opportunity to be heard by the minister, or the Department of Natural Resources, their recommendations are never taken by government officials, and if this northern community area council that is to be set up under the complete authority of the minister, and this housing board that is going to be set up, still completely

controlled, members designated and chosen by the minister, well, then I am afraid that these developments will not be in the best interests of the people of northern Saskatchewan. I will hope that when we get into committee on this particular bill that the minister will give some consideration to allowing local councils, or set up local councils which will have some authority instead of leaving everything up to the power of the minister. I don't think there is much else to be said at this time. I will wait until the bill gets into committee in the hope that some changes will be made.

Mr. Franklin E. Foley (Turtleford): — I, too, would like to say a few words on the legislation. I was rather interested in one statement that the minister made in the introduction of the bill, when he said that some of the matters allowed under this act are going on right now. I presume that these things are going on right now under other authorities, and when the minister closes the debate on second reading, I would appreciate an explanation.

Now, I was interested too in the request of the member for Athabaska (Mr. Guy) to define the difference between northern development area and local improvement districts, because in the northern area of the constituency of Turtleford we do have a considerable number of native people who are concerned about their welfare and to the degree that this bill will also assist these people, then to that extent I certainly concur with the matters discussed.

Now, I noticed some time ago that the member from Meadow Lake (Mr. Semchuk) issued a press release regarding housing developments in the community of Meadow Lake and the surrounding district. At that time it occurred to me that there were other urban centres, possibly not quite as far north, who could benefit from a similar housing program and I would be interested to know the extent to which the government is prepared under this bill, to extend housing assistance in many of the northern urban communities of our province.

Certainly, clause 21 does cover a good many of the activities and basic industries of the northern part of this province with regard to logging, planing and other wood industries but I feel that a good deal more must be done by the next government of this province with regard to employment and industry. In the hopes that this bill will further those efforts I will support it on second reading, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Martin Semchuk (Meadow Lake): — I would like to make just a comment or two on this. I am very happy to see this legislation at this time. I can also agree with the member from Athabaska (Mr. Guy) when he says it has taken 20 years to get to this stage though it may have taken quite a long time, yet when I consider that we had absolutely nothing, absolutely nothing for the people of the northern areas of Saskatchewan at the time when this government took this province over and when we consider what has been done during the past 20 years . . . when we recognize all the roads that have been built, all the schools that have been built, and all the work that has been provided, then I get completely sick when I have to listen to this negative talk by members opposite.

It is only now with roads and with power lines and with educational facilities and communication systems and so on that we can take another step in the economic development and economic betterment of the people of the north.

I am very, very happy to see this and I think that now we can go forward and provide a broader economic base for the people of the north.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear! Hear!

Mr. W.J. Berezowsky (Cumberland): — Mr. Speaker, it has been said that we are 20 years too late. I would like to bring the house up to date on what has happened in the past 20 years. Until this government got into power there was no such administration act in any province of this country, and it wasn't until 1952 that the first northern administration act was passed in the province of Saskatchewan and it is only since that time that we have given leadership in this country for people who live in northern parts of Canada.

I would say that even at the present time, if hon. members opposite went into Manitoba, and into other parts of Canada, they would find they would still have set-ups whereby the governments of those provinces hand over the administration of the community, such as, say at Thompson, Manitoba, pretty well to the mining companies and other communities. But this province has a real basic administration act which will provide for all kinds of services that the people need, and so I am very proud that this act was passed in 1952, and I am more than proud that this act is now being brought up to date.

It has been said in this house by the hon. member for Athabaska (Mr. Guy) that the people of the north haven't got jobs, or haven't had jobs, this may have been true a number of years ago, particularly when former governments were in power, but I am proud to say at this time that his own people in Pelican Narrows and from Island Falls are occupied in working on roads and in other occupations such as opening up channels and cutting portages, which was not the case in the past. I think that the hon. member isn't aware of what is happening in his constituency, or else he is deliberately trying to misrepresent what is going on. The people in Pelican Narrows have spoken to me personally and I have been up there time and time again this fall, and they are today occupied and working.

I would also like to add my words of congratulations to the minister and to the government, and to the Department of Natural Resources for putting into this act these particular sections which include housing. They have had housing programs in the north in the past, but this is the kind of program that if brought into effect under The Northern Administration Act will really provide good housing in the future and I am certainly going to support the bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear! Hear!

Mrs. Gladys Strum (Saskatoon City): — Mr. Speaker, I too want to support this bill. I have had some experience teaching in the north and I know how degrading conditions can be for people who must depend on others for support. I was appalled by the things that happened in Uranium City. I was appalled at the lack of opportunity, and any thing that will give our native people employment, training, skills and self-support, will promote self respect. Mr. Speaker, I submit it is only when a man can earn his own bread through the sweat of his own brow and get away from begging that there can be any self respect. It is only when we can have a development of skills and opportunity for employment that we can get away from this terrible waste for which we must all take responsibility.

So I congratulate this government for at least launching a program that makes this possible.

Mr. Kramer: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is any necessity for me to say anything more even in reply to some of the suggestions that have been made from across the floor. I notice that there are a couple of MLA's that seem to know what is going on in the northern constituencies and I appreciate their comments. I would like to say this, Mr. Speaker, that we are not the only government agency in northern Saskatchewan. The party that sits opposite, when they talk about programs being too late, might well look at their opposite numbers at Ottawa who have been in power longer in the north than any other government, certainly, longer than the Tory administration was. We have still to see much coming forth in the way of programs ever initiated by any Liberal government in any northern native settlement, anywhere in Canada.

We did have some improvement, as I said in the budget debate, in progress in the north. It was the first time we had any assistance for a filleting plant for instance, which provides benefits to both native and Indians, where during the five years of Tory administration we did get some assistance; and let it not be forgotten, Mr. Speaker, that every single program we undertake, whether it be a fish filleting plant, or a works program or other program does, to some extent, benefit the Indian population as well. I think it is high time that the federal government stepped up its programs as well and some of the advice that was given so freely from across the floor might be directed to the Liberal government at Ottawa, and they might just as well, Mr. Speaker, instead of going around wasting the public's

money, knocking down towers that were useful in northern Saskatchewan for instance without even consulting us on their use; instead of ripping out modern buildings that we could have used in, for instance, Tazin . . .

Mr. Guy: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, has this anything to do with the bill under discussion.

Mr. Kramer: — It has very much to do with the bill under discussion. It has to do with . . .

Mr. Speaker: — ORDER! The discussion, I agree has strayed considerably from the bill and the tie-in with the bill makes it very difficult for the Speaker to rule on. If the members would stay strictly to the to the principle I could keep rebuttals to the principle. It is very difficult for me; I will ask the minister to keep his remarks to the bill.

Mr. Kramer: — I am quite glad to keep them to the bill, but the member for Athabaska (Mr. Guy) suggested that we hadn't done anything for the last 20 years, and I am replying. You allowed his remarks to be made here, and I am replying to them. I am just drawing some examples of what is being done by what is being done by the federal government and the things that they are doing certainly are a detriment.

I just want to point out one example. At the Tazin site, a half mile from our fire tower, we needed a modern building to house our fire wood. They wrecked and ruined a building there as well as knocked down the towers which could have been used for telephone service.

This is only an example, \$7,000,000 complex in the north, this Canada line, knocked down and ruined by a helicopter crew just during the last month. Is this the brave new group that is going to do things in Saskatchewan? If they don't do any better than they are doing in Ottawa, Sir, they had better take another look at their progress.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe another thing concerning Sandy Bay, I want to say that the remarks regarding the settlement of Sandy Bay are not correct, Mr. Speaker. The liaison between our department and the people of Sandy Bay has been tremendous; the work programs that have been undertaken have worked out very well, and the people there say so and are happy. The chief of the area has written me and congratulated me.

Mr. Foley: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the minister a question before the vote is taken.

Mr. Speaker: — I don't know whether we can have questions on replies, but if it is a short question and related definitely to the bill, I will permit it.

Mr. Foley: — Was either the telephone corporation or the Saskatchewan Power Corporation contacted regarding these towers, Mr. Minister?

Mr. Kramer: — I have no idea whether they were contacted. I know, Sir, that we were not contacted and we are in charge of northern administration. Certainly, if any one was contacted it should have been our department and our director of northern affairs.

Mr. A.C. Cameron (Maple Creek): — Answer the question.

Mr. Kramer: — I did answer the question.

Motion agreed to and bill read a second time.

The house adjourned at 5:31 o'clock p.m.