

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
First Session — Fifteenth Legislature
1st Day

Thursday, February 4, 1965

3.05 o'clock p.m.

This being the day appointed by Proclamation of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated the eighteenth day of December, 1964, for the meeting of the first session of the fifteenth Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan and the Assembly having met:

His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor entered the Chamber and took his seat on the Throne.

Hon. Mr. Heald (Attorney General): — I am commanded by his Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor to inform you that he does not see fit to declare the causes of the summoning of the present Legislature until later today, when the Legislative Assembly shall have elected a Speaker, according to Law.

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

The Hon. Mr. Thatcher, addressing himself to the Clerk, moved, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Heald, That James Edward Snedker, Esquire, member of the constituency of Saltcoats do now take the Chair of this Assembly as Speaker.

He said: Mr. Snedker is a well known farmer and business man of the Saltcoats area and has been a member of the Saskatchewan Legislature since 1960. During that time he has been an eloquent speaker for his constituents and the people of the province of Saskatchewan. I have confidence in his ability and integrity. I believe he is well qualified to carry out the duties of the office. In Canada, Speakers have traditionally refrained from taking part in any political activity outside of the house. Mr. Snedker has assured me that if the legislature honours him with this appointment he will fulfill his duties with impartiality and neutrality. I know that he will place before all else duty to the province of Saskatchewan.

The question being put by the Clerk, it was resolved that James Edward Snedker, Esquire, do take the Chair of this Assembly as Speaker.

The Clerk, having declared James Edward Snedker, Esquire, duly elected, he was conducted to the Chair, where, standing on the upper step, he returned his humble acknowledgements to the Assembly for the great honour they had been pleased to confer upon him by choosing him to be their Speaker.

Thereupon he took the Chair and the Mace was laid on the Table.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor re-entered the Chamber and took his seat upon the Throne.

Mr. Speaker then addressed His Honour to the following effect:

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR.

The Legislative Assembly have elected me as their Speaker, although I am but little able to fulfill the important duties thus assigned to me.

If, in the performance of those duties, I should at any time fall into error I pray that the fault may be imputed to me and not to the Assembly whose servant I am, and who, through me, the better to enable them to discharge their duty to their Queen and Country, hereby humbly claim all their undoubted rights and privileges, especially that they may have freedom of speech in their debates, access to your person at all

seasonable times, and that their proceedings may receive from you the most favourable consideration.

Hon. Mr. Heald (Provincial Secretary): — Mr. Speaker, I am commanded by his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor to declare to you that he freely confides in the duty and attachment of the Assembly to Her Majesty's person and Government, and not doubting that their proceedings will be conducted with wisdom, temper and prudence, he grants, and upon all occasions will recognize and allow, their constitutional privileges.

I am commanded also to assure you that the Assembly shall have ready access to His Honour upon all seasonable occasions, and that its proceedings, as well as your words and actions, will constantly receive from him the most favourable constructions.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor was then pleased to open the Session with the following speech:

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my privilege to welcome you to the First Session of the Fifteenth Legislature of Saskatchewan.

Jubilee Year Celebrations

This year, 1965, we celebrate the diamond jubilee of the founding of our province.

It is an occasion for giving thanks to Providence for all the blessings of the past 60 years.

A wide range of activities has been planned, designed to encourage our people to review the history of the province, to reflect on our inheritance and accomplishments, to visit Saskatchewan's beauty spots, and to envisage our bright and challenging future.

Economic Development

1964 has been a year of signal importance for our province; for it has seen our people enjoy a remarkable degree of economic growth, chiefly in the field of industry.

Although grain production did not reach the record level of 1963, it was above average and good prices and ready markets prevailed.

Chief among our developments in the non-agricultural sector was the outstanding growth of the potash industry, in which investment in our province surpassed three hundred million dollars.

We also saw the establishment of Saskatchewan's first base metals mine in the Lac La Ronge district.

My Government has pursued a course of private enterprise methods to encourage development and private initiative throughout the province.

These efforts were marked by a thirty per cent increase in the number of new companies registered in our province during 1964, as compared to 1963.

This adds greater impetus to my advisors' efforts to further diversify Saskatchewan's economic base.

Johnson Commission

My government has also recognized the need for vigilance, efficiency and effectiveness in the discharge of public business.

To this end, it established a Commission on Government Administration to study ways and means of improving efficiency, and the practice of economy in the administration of government.

It is hoped their report will be available to the government before the Legislative adjourns.

There are already indications that their recommendations will be most useful in making significant savings in the expenditure of public funds.

Tax Reductions

My Government believes that taxes in Saskatchewan are a burden greater than that borne by Canadians in other parts of the country. Therefore, although large expenditures are planned in the forthcoming year, my Government will propose major tax reductions.

Increased Highway Spending

To facilitate the development of our primary industries, my Government plans a greatly expanded program of highway construction, so that our province's transportation standards will meet those of the other developed provinces of Canada.

You will be asked to approve capital expenditures which are about fifty per cent greater than in the past year for highways.

Youth Department

My advisors have expressed concern about our failure in the past to retain a large proportion of our young people in Saskatchewan. You will, therefore, be asked to approve the establishment of a new agency for youth. The purpose of this agency will be to co-ordinate and promote the cultural and recreational facilities available throughout the province for our young people.

Education

You will be asked to sharply increase our assistance to education.

In addition to increase in ordinary expenditures, the Legislature will be asked to provide for the extension of technical school facilities in centres now not providing these facilities, in order to meet the increasing demand for skilled labour in a province that is fast industrializing.

You will also be asked to extend financial assistance to a number of private high schools.

My Government is fully aware of the problems facing our institutions of higher learning, due to ever-increasing enrolment and capital and operating costs, which are now greatly increased.

To alleviate this situation, you will be asked to approve substantial increases in operating and construction grants to the University of Saskatchewan in both Saskatoon and Regina.

Pensions for Teachers and Civil Servants

My Government will ask the Legislative to provide financial assistance for the purpose of increasing the pensions of teachers and public servants who retired some years ago with deplorably inadequate pensions.

Arts and Culture

My Government realizes the tremendous importance of encouraging the growth of the arts and culture if our distinctive Canadian way of life is to continue to develop. Therefore, you will be asked to approve the granting of larger funds to materially aid this development.

Indian and Métis Branch

You will be asked to approve of legislation setting up a New Indian and Métis Branch of the Government of Saskatchewan.

The task of this department will be to raise the standard of living of the Indian and Métis people to a level closer to that enjoyed by

fellow citizens.

The immediate problem that will face this branch will be the task of securing employment for these people.

New Institutions

My Government plans to construct a new Women's Correctional Institution in Prince Albert.

It will also build a modern home in Regina to give proper care to approximately forty children.

Hospitalization and Medicare Amendment

Amendments to the Saskatchewan Hospitalization and Saskatchewan Medical Care Insurance Acts will be introduced, to prevent citizens from being jailed for failure to pay the hospitalization or Medicare tax.

Minimum Wage

My Government will make proposals to increase the Saskatchewan minimum wage.

Wire Tapping

Legislation will be introduced to make wire tapping illegal in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Legislative Secretaries

My Government will ask the Legislature to authorize the appointment of a limited number of legislative secretaries to help my ministers with the heavier portfolios.

Election Act

You will be asked to amend the Saskatchewan Election Act to prevent, in future, confusion such as resulted in the last election. Absentee ballots will be largely discontinued and members of the armed forces will be given the same voting privileges as other citizens.

Insurance Company Amendment

The Government will introduce legislation which will permit all insurance companies to compete on a tender basis for insurance on such institutions as schools, hospitals, and sanatoria. This insurance has heretofore been awarded automatically to the Government Insurance Office.

Retail Store Opening

Permissive legislation will be introduced to enable municipal councils to pass legislation allowing retail stores to remain open either Friday night or Saturday night, but not both.

My Government intends to introduce a number of measures which will be of particular help to agriculture.

Lease Land

The problem of leasing Crown lands has caused much concern throughout Saskatchewan.

A new point system has been set up for allocation of pasture lease land. An independent appeal board whose members were nominated by Saskatchewan farm organizations, has been set up to ensure that leases are awarded on a fair and equitable basis.

Where conditions warrant, the Government will sell grazing lands for establishment of economic farm units to farmers now renting the same.

It will, when requested, sell cultivation leases to farmers now renting, with a 10 per cent down payment, with 30 years to repay, and a low interest rate.

Master Farm Awards

In order to draw attention to the wholesomeness of the family

farm and the dignity of rural life, Master Farm Family awards will be instituted. Each year, two "Master Farmer" awards will be given, one in the North, one in the South. These awards will be given to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to agriculture during the year.

Coloured Margarine

Legislation will be introduced to permit the sale of coloured margarine.

Rail Line Abandonment

The railway network in Saskatchewan is the life blood of the community and the vital factor in its economic well-being.

My Government believes that wholesale rail abandonment in the province would be completely unthinkable.

A Special Committee of Cabinet has been established to receive representations from farm organizations and other interested parties.

When proposals are before the Government of Canada, this Committee will make representations to Ottawa.

My Government is determined to make every effort to guarantee that a policy is devised which will provide for a proper rationalization of transport services.

Liquor Outlets

You will be asked to approve amendments to The Liquor Act which will permit the establishment of a very limited number of new agencies. These agencies will be used to provide services in communities where size of population does not warrant the present type of outlet.

Tourist Industry

My Government is dissatisfied with the progress which Saskatchewan has made in developing the tourist industry.

The Tourist Bureau will be expanded this year and you will be asked for increased expenditures for tourist promotional purposes.

Provincial Parks

My Government will continue the expansion of provincial parks. It is expected that 11 new regional parks will be established during 1965.

Canada Pensions Plan

You will be asked to co-operate with the Government of Canada in introducing the Canada Pensions Plan.

At the appropriate time, if necessary, legislation will be introduced into the Legislature to effect such co-operation.

Constitution

You will be asked to approve a resolution which, in conjunction with similar legislation now before the Government of Canada and the other provinces, will permit Canada to amend her own constitution.

The Public Accounts for the last fiscal year, together with estimates for the year beginning April 1, 1965, 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.

The assembly then adjourned at 3:40 o'clock p.m.