

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**First Session — Sixteenth Legislature**  
**48th Day**

**Thursday, April 25, 1968**

The Assembly met at 10 o'clock p.m.  
On the Orders of the Day

**THIRD READING**

The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Hon. Mr. Grant (Minister of Public Health) that Bill No. 84 — **An Act to amend The Mental Health Act** be now read a third time.

**Hon. W.S. Lloyd** (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, I think that something more must be said as we move to the vote on the third reading of this particular Bill. This is a Bill, Mr. Speaker, which again moves to carve off some benefits which Saskatchewan people have enjoyed. It is a Bill which puts some more blocks between people and benefits which they have considered for some time to be their rights.

To begin with I hope that no one on the Government's side will feel compelled to pronounce the Premier's benediction at the third reading of this Bill. In other words, I hope no one will feel it necessary or appropriate to say as he did in the passing of deterrent fees as he applauded that "this is another Socialist mess cleaned up."

This Bill, Mr. Speaker, in addition to other things, provides one more additional tax on Saskatchewan sick people. The Minister has said that he anticipates the collection of up to another \$300,000 per year as a result of the passing of this Bill. In addition to that, in other measures we know that mentally ill people are not going for the first time to pay deterrent fees if they are treated in general hospitals. If they are treated in any facility other than the Saskatchewan Hospital at Weyburn or at North Battleford, they will pay some more deterrent fees. These are going to be in excess of \$100,000. In other words the amount to be extracted from persons treated for mental illness may be as high as half a million dollars, approaching half a million dollars in the current year. That's part of the price tag that we are adding the last touches to. I hope these people are happy. I hope that they feel their cure is being increased because they are now participating in this way to the extent of up to half a million dollars. This has been the theory on which these Bills have been presented to us.

Secondly, I point out again, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill removes more rights which Saskatchewan people have enjoyed for almost 20 years.

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Thirdly, this Bill adds to the number of benefits which are available, only if the Minister is kindly enough to grant them. It makes it possible for the Minister to say to the widow, for example, of the person who has had care at one of our institutions, "You may inherit an estate of an average quarter section of land, \$10,000." I know that the Minister has discretionary rights to allow more than that. But the facts of the law are that the Minister may say, "It is sufficient for your care for the rest of your life that you have a small house or a relatively average quarter section of land to take care of you for the rest of your living days." The Minister rejected in Committee a proposal that he increase this figure of \$10,000. He rejected a proposal that this be increased to be comparable to that provided under another Act. The rejection is all the more regrettable, because this other Act was one which he had, as I recalled, previously quoted as a standard for this \$10,000.

But Mr. Speaker, we can't look at this Bill in isolation. During this session, this government has chipped away medical care benefits, it has cut away hospitalization benefits, it has literally carved blocks of benefits away from cancer patients. And now it proposes to clobber the mentally ill to the extent of something like \$300,000, this plus deterrent fees adds up to one-half a million dollars. We can't look at this Bill in isolation. It's the staggering, monstrous totality of the attack of this Government on public health programs for which we express concern.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Lloyd:** — It's not even just the monstrous totality of the things done. We must be aware of what appears to be possible addition to that monstrous totality — of things intended. I say that, because this chipping, this cutting, this carving, this clobbering has been done, according to the Government's words, out of philosophical conviction that this is the right thing to do. As we stand and vote on this Bill we certainly must ask ourselves the question: what of the future? We have the Government's philosophical statement that people ought to pay for these benefits of health care according to the extent that they use them.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. L.P. Coderre** (Minister of Labour): — Mr. Speaker, I've heard a lot of arguments in this respect, but I cannot accept the hypocrisy and the holier-than-thou attitude that the former Government is now creating in this

respect. I have a constituent of mine who had one section of land and \$12,000. The lady in question was in hospital for 27 years. I approached the former Minister of Health prior to the Hon. Member for Regina Centre (Mr. Blakeney), I approached him on this matter and there was nothing left in the estate for him. You took it all. At least this Bill is going to leave something in it and that's better than it ever was in the past. If you want me to, I can name the case, a case in Gravelbourg. One section of land and \$12,000 you took every single solitary penny. At least this Bill is going to leave \$10,000 — a minimum. You took it all.

**Mr. A.E. Blakeney** (Regina Centre): — Mr. Speaker, I won't attempt to reply to the remarks of the Member for Gravelbourg. I think that it is obvious that under the previous legislation it was quite impossible for a widow to have lost her farm or any part of the estate if she lived in Saskatchewan and if the care was rendered after July 1, 1945. If she was not able to discern this from the legislation, she might have consulted one of his legal colleagues who could have. I certainly don't recall any approach by him and I would invite him at another time to show me a copy of any correspondence which he sent to me, because I fancy that it does not exist. However, I do not want to argue that point. I would like to ask the Minister when he closes the debate to reiterate the assurance that he gave us in Committee that no charges would be made against the estates of anyone who did not die in an institution. This assurance he gave us informally in Committee and I would like him, if that is the position of the government, to repeat it when he closes the debate. I would simply like to express once again that the views which I expressed in its approach. It is a wholly unwarranted distinction between people who have mental illness and people who have TB or people who are physically ill. This area we have explored. The Minister has made perfectly clear that, if what affected the person is not a chronic mental illness, none of these things would be charged against him or his estate. No attempt has been made to justify these distinctions which are being made greater rather than less by this Bill. I think that we have not heard anything in Committee which could possibly defend the principles. All that we have heard is a reiteration of our worst fears of the principles which are contained in this Bill.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. W.J. Berezowsky** (Prince Albert East-Cumberland): — Mr. Speaker, just a word or two. I want to say this. The last two or three hundred years the people of the world and of this nation and of this province have fought for certain rights and for certain privileges. These have been hard to get. The state, which is the Government, has brought in legislation in the past for the improvement of life, for the betterment of health and for other services. This Bill as has been

pointed out by my Leader and the other speakers, is definitely retrogressive. This is a betrayal I think of the faith that the people of Saskatchewan have put into their Government. I want to go on record that on this third reading, I shall certainly be against it. I have no other choice.

**Hon. G.B. Grant** (Minister of Public Health): — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member from Regina Centre (Mr. Blakeney) said that all we had managed to do is to confirm their worst fears and apprehensions. I think that my reply to this would be that the Members of the Opposition have confirmed their own apprehensions. I certainly have not confirmed them.

In reply to the Hon. Member, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Lloyd) in all deference to his statement, it was fairly accurate, but not exactly. When he said that the Act would permit a charge against mental patients in other facilities, I think we made this distinctly clear and I will repeat it again in case there was some confusion. The utilization fees will only apply to mental patients in general hospitals and not in other facilities that he made reference to. He stated that it was another clobbering of the mental patients, another attack on the public health programs, all the play on the health sympathies of the people of the province — a very good area for politicians to play on. The sympathies of the people as far as health is concerned are very sensitive and the Opposition has done a pretty good job in playing on these sympathies, by citing imaginary cases that in my opinion — and all I can do is quote my opinion and my practice — will not occur. They fail to cite the cases such as I mentioned yesterday where an estate of \$160,000 will pass to three sisters who have contributed little or nothing to the care and maintenance and help of a male patient who passed away. The total cost was some \$60,000 over the 35 years. Our claim is based on \$5 a day or about \$30,000 and this is \$30,000 that the Province will now get. I think that it is only fair to the taxpayers of the province to cite these cases as well as the imaginary ones that the Opposition are working up.

The Hon. Member for Regina Centre (Mr. Blakeney) said that it was a wholly unwarranted distinction between patients and he cited TB cases. I don't feel there is this distinction because TB patients who are patients in a general hospital will be subject to the utilization fee the same as mental patients. In fact we are not showing any distinction, even though they claim we should be for patients in a general hospital. The same utilization fees apply to all patients including cancer, TB, mental and others. One last point. I am afraid that I am going to have to sign this in blood to satisfy the Opposition, but once more I'll repeat in this third reading that in the case of patients dying outside the institutions, their estates will not be attached.

**Mr. Lloyd:** — Mr. Speaker, would the Hon. Minister please answer one

question before he sits down? Do I understand him to say that the patients at, say, the facility at Yorkton, will not be subject to any kind of deterrent fee because I thought he had said differently last night?

**Mr. Grant:** — No. That facility is attached to a general hospital and is part and parcel of that hospital.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a third time on the following recorded division.

**YEAS — 30**

Messieurs

Howes	Grant	Weatherald
Boldt	Coderre	Mitchell
Cameron	Bjarnason	Larochelle
Steuart	MacDonald	Gardner
Heald	Estey	Coupland
McIsaac	Hooker	McPherson
Guy	Gallagher	Charlebois
Barrie	MacLennan	Forsyth
Loken	Heggie	McIvor
MacDougall	Breker	Schmeiser

**NAYS — 23**

Messieurs

Lloyd	Berezowsky	Baker
Wooff	Romanow	Pepper
Willis	Smishek	Bowerman
Wood	Thibault	Matsalla
Blakeney	Whelan	Messer
Davies	Snyder	Kwasnica
Dewhurst	Michayluk	Kowalchuk
Meakes	Brockelbank	

**INTRODUCTION OF MLA FROM VANCOUVER**

**Hon. W.S. Lloyd** (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, before we begin proceedings may I welcome and introduce to the Committee a fellow Legislator from another province, who is seated behind the rail. He is Mr. Gordon Dowding, an MLA for one of the Vancouver seats and has been a Member for some time. He is a member of the Bargaining in British Columbia and some other provinces as well. He is in the city on business and we are glad to have him with us in the Legislature.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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## **WELCOME TO STUDENTS**

**Mr. E.I. Wood** (Swift Current): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome 58 students in the Speaker's gallery from the grade eight class of Gull Lake school, Gull Lake being one of the good towns in the Swift Current constituency. This class is led by their teachers, Mrs. McLeod and Miss South and brought here by Mr. Leach, the bus driver. These students have enjoyed their lunch in the cafeteria. They had the privilege of having a lecture from Mr. Speaker, in regard to Parliament procedure. They went down to the Museum and they are now back to spend a little time with us. I hope that their stay with us will be very beneficial to them and that they will go away with a fair idea of how we conduct business here in the Legislature.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. D.G. Steuart** (Provincial Treasurer): — Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Lloyd (Leader of the Opposition):

That notwithstanding Standing Order No. 5 (1), Mr. Speaker shall leave the Chair tonight, April 25, 1968 from 5:30 o'clock p.m. to 6:30 o'clock p.m.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly recessed at 5:30 p.m. until 6:30 o'clock p.m.

## **ROYAL ASSENT AND PROROGATION**

At 10:03 o'clock p.m. His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having entered the Chamber, took his seat upon the throne and gave Royal Assent to the Bills presented to him.

His Honour the Lieutenant Governor was then pleased to deliver the following speech:

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is my duty to relieve you of further attendance at this Legislative Assembly. In doing so, I wish to thank you for, and congratulate you on the work you have done. I wish also to express my confidence that the approval of the programs and plans presented to you will continue to provide the services necessary to the orderly growth and development of our province.

The legislation you have passed in this first session of the Sixteenth Legislature has been designed to both speed the development of those resources Providence has bestowed on us, and to ensure an equitable distribution of the fruits of that development.

You have given approval to certain measures designed to

accelerate the further development of our vast agricultural resource.

In keeping with my Government's desire to advance our educational programs, you have approved expenditures to rapidly expand the University of Saskatchewan, and to facilitate the bargaining process between teachers and trustees.

In the interests of national unity you have agreed to the use of French as the language of instruction in certain areas of our province.

You have approved increasing opportunities for our citizens of Indian ancestry to better acquire a sound education.

You have approved measures to better control the costs of our health programs, and to safeguard them from abuses.

You have agreed to the establishment of an Alcoholism Commission in Saskatchewan.

You have approved certain proposals with respect to the more effective control of problem drivers on our roads.

You have agreed to a continued high level of assistance to our municipalities, and to increased expenditures on housing.

You have again agreed to increased investment in our highways and road system.

You have agreed to new legislation respecting surface rights and compensation.

You have approved legislation permitting the adoption of children into homes where the religion of the adopting parent differs from that of the natural parent.

You have again approved an increase in the minimum wage in our province.

Finally, you have given approval to many other measures designed to improve the lot of individuals in our province and make possible the fullest development of our resources.

I think you for the provision you have made to meet the further requirements of the public service and assure you the sum of money voted will be used economically, prudently and in the public interest.

In taking leave of you, I desire to thank you for the manner in which you have devoted your energies to the activities of the session and wish you the full blessing of Providence as you return again to your respective homes.

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The Hon. Mr. Heald, Provincial Secretary, then said:

Mr. Speaker, and Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is the will and pleasure of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor that this Legislative Assembly be prorogued until it pleases His Honour to summon the same for the dispatch of business, and the Legislative Assembly is accordingly prorogued.