

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**Third Session - Sixteenth Legislature**  
**1st Day**

**Thursday, February 12, 1970**

3:00 o'clock p.m.

This being the day appointed by Proclamation of His Honour the Lieutenant Governor, dated the twenty-third day of December, 1969, for the meeting of the Third Session of the Sixteenth Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan, and the Assembly having met:

Mr. Speaker informed the Assembly that he had received 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, 1970.

3:10 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,

Members of the Legislative Assembly:

It is my privilege to welcome you to the Third Session of the Sixteenth Legislature of Saskatchewan.

The Legislature meets at a time when many of our citizens face serious economic problems.

**INFLATION**

Both provincially and nationally inflation continues to be of major concern.

Rising prices and high interest rates are causing hardship to all groups of our society, particularly to those in the low income category, to pensioners, and to farmers.

The Government of Saskatchewan welcomes the announcement of the Prime Minister that every possible step will be taken in the near future to bring inflation under control.

My Ministers are determined to assist the Federal Government in every way possible in this most important task.

**AGRICULTURE**

Agriculture continues to be the foundation of Saskatchewan's economy.

Yet despite bumper crops, farmers in our province are experiencing major reductions in income because of a drastic fall in export sales.

The present situation emphasizes again the vulnerability of the Saskatchewan economy to the vagaries of weather and the international wheat market.

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As the current Session commences, there are encouraging signs that the world wheat marketing situation will improve during 1970.

### **Agricultural Diversification**

Today it is even more apparent that increased production of livestock and poultry offers a major method of marketing surplus grain.

My Government, since taking office, has consistently urged and promoted agricultural diversification.

Again at this Session you will be asked to approve additional measures designed to expand our livestock population.

An Act to authorize the guaranteeing of loans for the purchase of female breeding stock will be introduced.

Appropriations of the Department of Agriculture will include increased amounts for paying swine building construction grants, for re-seeding cultivated lands to grass, and for the extension of small irrigation projects.

You will be asked to approve additional funds for the Saskatchewan Economic Development Corporation, which will permit that agency to make additional loans to major agricultural projects.

### **Irrigation**

With completion of the Outlook-Broderick system anticipated in the coming year, the construction of a system to irrigate lands in the Conquest-Ardath area will be commenced in 1970.

### **EDUCATION**

My Government continues to give the highest priority to education of our people.

At the same time, it views with concern the year by year increase in local property taxes which are necessary to partially finance the cost of our school system.

Thus, in the current year, all school budgets will be thoroughly examined by the Department and rigid controls on spending will be imposed.

### **Student-Teacher Ratio**

In an effort to obtain better value for the education tax dollar, efforts are being made to increase the student-teacher ratio throughout the province by an average of two students per classroom.

At this Session you will be asked to approve changes in the School Grants formula.

These amendments will form the basis for a Foundation Grants Program.

### **Larger Provincial Grants**

My Government will ask the Legislature to assume a larger proportion of the overall costs of education, in an attempt to ease the burden on the local taxpayer.

### **University**

You will be asked to approve the largest sum of money in history for the continued expansion of the University of Saskatchewan on both the Regina and Saskatoon campuses.

### **Student Representation**

Legislation will be proposed to give students on the Regina and Saskatoon campuses the right to elect two members each to the University Senate.

### **French Language**

You will be asked for funds which will permit the expansion of the number of schools using French as the language of instruction.

### **Teacher Pensions**

Your approval will also be requested for a measure to increase the present ceiling for the pensions of teachers.

### **Grade Twelve Textbooks**

Since 1964, my Government has introduced free text books in grades 9, 10 and 11.

You will be asked at the current Session to expand the program to include grade 12.

## **MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE**

### **Sewer and Water**

My Government will continue the program of bringing sewer and water installations to our towns, villages and hamlets.

### **Airstrip Program**

During 1969, grants were approved for 13 new communities to assist in the construction or expansion of airstrips.

Since its inception, 69 airstrips have been included in this project.

The program will be continued and expanded during 1970.

### **Police Assistance**

You will be asked to approve legislation which will permit my Government to give financial assistance to municipalities in providing adequate police protection for their citizens.

### **Homeowner Grants**

In 1966, in an effort to help property owners with their local taxes, my Government introduced an annual \$50.00 Homeowner Grant.

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Last year, 180,300 taxpayers applied for these grants, which totalled over \$8,845,000.00.

At the current Session you will be asked to increase the individual amount of these grants.

### **Industrial Incentives**

My Government welcomes the Federal Designated Area Legislation, which was amended and improved a few months ago.

This Act permits the Federal Government to make cash grants to new industries of up to 33 per cent in certain "slow growth areas".

Unfortunately, only about one-third of the populated area of Saskatchewan is designated under the Act.

My Government will ask you to support supplementary legislation, which will bring industrial incentives to other small towns and communities.

### **Home Construction**

Because of unbelievably high interest rates on mortgages, and high building costs generally, the building of new homes has slowed appreciably.

My Government will recommend that a \$500.00 grant be given to all homeowners who construct a home during the winter months throughout the province.

My Government will continue the program of constructing subsidized rental housing units, and will expand the program of constructing or acquiring housing units for families placed in employment by The Saskatchewan Department of Indian and Metis.

### **Pipe Lines**

You will be asked to approve legislation which will permit the sharing of a portion of the property tax levied against oil and gas lines.

### **Liquor Outlets**

The demand for additional liquor outlets in rural areas is still widespread.

My Government will continue the policy of closing some stores in small villages where the size of population does not justify the regular type of store.

You will be asked to approve amendments to The Liquor Act which will permit the establishment of additional agencies.

### **Civil Service Pensions**

Your approval will also be asked for a measure to increase again the present ceiling on annual pension benefits for civil servants.

Furthermore, the Assembly will be asked to pass legislation making further adjustments to the existing superannuation allowances for our pensioners and widows.

### **Coming of Age Act**

In Saskatchewan, as in other provinces, persons under twenty-one years of age have always been considered minors at law without legal capacity to enter into contracts on the same basis as adults. My Government believes that our young people are discharging effectively their responsibility as citizens and as members of society at an earlier age than twenty-one.

You will, therefore, be asked to approve The Coming of Age Act, 1970, which will provide that a person who has reached the age of nineteen will be considered to be a legal adult, and to have reached legal maturity.

### **Electoral Reform**

During the past year, a special legislative committee has been meeting periodically to study electoral reform.

Using the committee's final report as a basis, at the current Session my Government will propose certain far-reaching changes in The Election Act and The Controverted Elections Act.

### **Legislative Rules and Procedures**

Since the last Session, a special legislative committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Speaker has been studying changes in the rules and procedures of the Legislature.

You will be asked to consider new legislative procedures and rules, based upon the committee's report, which are designed to expedite and facilitate the discharge of House business.

## **SOCIAL WELFARE**

### **Child Care**

After assessing recommendations proceeding from our clients' Child Welfare Conference, my Government will present far-reaching recommendations regarding the objectives and policies of child care services in our province.

### **Saskatchewan Assistance Plan**

Because of the steady and continuous increase in living costs, you will be asked to increase the food and clothing allowance granted under the Saskatchewan Assistance Plan.

### **Day Care Centres**

My Government will initiate a program which will encourage the establishment of day care centres for children in certain of our major centres.

### **Bus Fares**

My Government will propose a reduction in the rates of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company for old age pensioners.

## **HIGHWAYS**

Huge sums will be requested again for the construction and expansion of our provincial highway system.

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Another major bridge over the South Saskatchewan River will be commenced during 1970.

To facilitate the development of our northern resources, the construction of roads in the North is being expedited.

Assistance to municipalities for expansion and maintenance of their road system will again be emphasized.

### **INDIAN AND METIS**

It is noted with gratification that the native people of Saskatchewan are indicating a renewed pride and confidence in themselves and a strong sense of common purpose.

The Provincial Indian and Metis Department, established by my Government last year, has made progress in attacking the many problems facing our native people.

In co-operation with the Indian Task Force, many job opportunities have been made available to native workers.

However, it must be realized that only a modest start has yet been made.

During the past year improvements were made on the Cumberland House, Lebret and Green lake Training Farms.

The establishment of new training farms at La Loche, Ile-a-la-Crosse and Mortlach was undertaken and will proceed during 1970.

My Government believes that the problems of our native population must continue to be given a top priority, and you will be asked for sharply increased appropriations for these programs.

### **MECHANICS' LIEN ACT**

Over the years many problems have been encountered, resulting from certain inadequacies and deficiencies in our Mechanics' Lien Act.

You will be asked to approve an entirely new Mechanics' Lien Act which is designed to meet the many problems encountered in this area and to reflect a new approach to this very important aspect of the commercial life of our province.

### **VOLUNTARY PAYMENT OF FINES**

You will be asked to approve amendments enabling persons charged with Vehicles Act offences to make voluntary payments of fines through the mails, thus avoiding loss of time for court appearances to the offender and resulting in increased efficiency in our Courts.

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The Public Accounts for the last fiscal year, together with the Estimates for the year beginning April 1, 1970, will be submitted to you.

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 this Legislature in all its deliberations.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### APPOINTMENT OF CLERK

**Mr. Speaker:** — I would like to inform the Assembly that Gordon Leslie Barnhart, Esquire, has been appointed Clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in place of Charles Beverly Koester, Esquire, who resigned.

### APPOINTMENT OF CLERK ASSISTANT

**Mr. Speaker:** — I further wish to inform the Assembly that Michael Arthur de Rosenroll, Esquire, has been appointed Clerk Assistant of the Legislative Assembly.

## MOTION

### Adjournment of House, February 13 – February 18

**Hon. W. R. Thatcher** (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Lloyd, by leave of the Assembly:

That when this House adjourns on Friday, February 13, 1970, it do stand adjourned until Wednesday, February 18, 1970.

The purpose I think is well known to Hon. Members. There is a Federal-Provincial Conference between the Prime Minister and his officials and the respective provincial governments. We consider it a very important conference because the matter of inflation is first on the agenda. Also the Prime Minister has agreed that at this conference the matter of the wheat prices can be discussed.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 3:26 o'clock p.m.