

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Seventeenth Legislature
2nd Day

Friday, January 26, 1973.

The Assembly met at 2:30 o'clock p.m.
On the Orders of the Day

ANNOUNCEMENT

Appointment Of Assistant Clerk

Mr. Speaker: — Before the Orders of the Day I should like to announce to the Assembly that Donald Grant MacMillan has been appointed an Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

Presentation Of Yukon Flag

Mr. Speaker: — I should like to bring to the attention of the House that, as we are aware a number of Members took trips around the province last summer under the auspices of the Canadian Parliamentary Association. I was one on that occasion who went to the Yukon. More will be said at a later time and reports given to the House. On this occasion I should like to present to the Premier (Mr. Blakeney) a flag which was given to me to present to the province by the Yukon Territorial Council as a goodwill gesture from the Yukon. So on this occasion I present it to the Premier. I wonder if the Premier would hold I up so that the Members can see what their flag is like.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. A.E. Blakeney: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, I, through you, should like to convey to the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of the Yukon, if I am using the right description of their Chamber, the thanks of the Legislature of Saskatchewan for this gift. I would ask if you, Sir, would convey the thanks of this Legislature to the people of the Yukon.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Study On Plywood Mill

Mr. D.G. Steuart: (Leader of the Opposition) — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Industry (Mr. Thorson), it may be that it falls under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Bowerman), but anyway I understand that there was a report and I think the name of it (and I might even have the name wrong) is that Springate and Associates I understand have done a feasibility study on a plywood mill as part of an overall forest utilization study for the northeast part of the province. If such a study has in fact been commissioned and completed, could we have a copy laid on the table or could we have a copy of it

today or Monday at the latest?

Hon. K. Thorson: (Minister of Industry and Commerce) — Mr. Speaker, speaking for myself and the Department of Industry and Commerce, I, nor has anyone in my department, directly commissioned any such study but I will take the question under advisement and make inquiries.

Mr. Steuart: — It could be the Department of Natural Resources, I don't know but I should like to know if there is such a study.

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is correct in indicating that a study has been commissioned by the Government of Saskatchewan and that a firm bearing the name Springate, I don't know what other names it may have, did the study. Whether or not the study will be released, we shall, I think, frankly have to look at the study to see whether there is anything in it which was . . .

An Hon. Member: — What . . .

Mr. Blakeney: — Well, not all, we will have to see what terms of reference he was given and so far as I am concerned, it looks to me — I haven't ready the study but I have perused the conclusions — and my guess is that it can be released and we will be able to advise the House probably by Monday.

Journals Not Available

Mr. A.R. Guy: (Athabasca) — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the day, I should like to direct a question to the Premier. I should like to ask the Premier if he is aware that certainly for at least the last 12 or 13 years, and certainly since the time that I have been in this House and the time that he has been in this House, that this has been the first time that a session has been called when the Journals of the previous session were not available to the Members in order to facilitate the answering of questions, knowing which Returns had been tabled and which had not been tabled. I think it is deplorable and shows utter contempt for every Member of this Legislature that these Journals were not available before the sitting of the next session of the Legislature, particularly when one considers the number of staff that they have added to do these things.

Mr. Blakeney: — Perhaps I didn't quite understand the Hon. Member's question, which bore a considerable similarity to a speech, a speech that I would expect from the Hon. Member from Athabasca. All I can say is that if, in fact, the Journals are not available it was certainly not from any doing of the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Guy: — You didn't get them ready.

Mr. Blakeney: — I think, Mr. Speaker, that the task of preparing the Journals falls in the jurisdiction of the office of the Legislative Assembly. If I am in error there I stand to be corrected,

but I think those who prepare the Journals are responsible to you, Mr. Speaker and to the Clerk. If, in fact, the Journals were not prepared when they otherwise might have been, I know that I tender the apologies of all who were involved, and it is my submission that I was not one. If, in fact, this has happened, of which I am not aware but the Hon. Member may feel he is I aware – he is frequently aware of a great number of things which we aren't aware of, he has a lively imagination – I will certainly do what I can to see that this shortcoming is not repeated.

Mr. Speaker: — The Journals do come under the Speaker but the Speaker's questions cannot be placed on the Order Paper so the Speaker is quite willing to discuss with any Member and let him know what happened, if the Members will come to contact me on these points that come under the Speaker's jurisdiction.

Qu'appelle Basin Study

Mr. T.M. Weatherald: (Cannington) — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Byers). In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the Qu'Appelle Basin Study received no mention whatsoever in the Throne Speech as of yesterday will the Government take steps immediately to assure adequate financial assistance to the communities involved, particularly including the cities of Moose Jaw and Regina, to permit these communities to commence work immediately on sewage treatment and effluent control?

Hon. N.E. Byers: (Minister of Environment) — Mr. Speaker, the report was issued to the public, as all Hon. Members know, last Saturday. The report does contain some 64 recommendations for improving all aspects of life within the Qu'Appelle basin. The Government and our department in conjunction with other departments is considering a program of implementation for that report.

Mr. K.R. MacLeod: (Regina Albert Park) — Just a supplementary question to that, I wonder if the Minister is trying to tell us that he just had this report a few days ago because the letter of transmittal on the first page of the report is dated October 1972 and is addressed to the Hon. Neil E. Byers, Minister, Saskatchewan Department of the Environment. In addition to that I wonder if he is aware that the gentlemen who signed it is G.C. Mitchell, his own Deputy Minister, and that this was, in fact, available to his department last summer.

Hon. R. Romanow: (Attorney General) — I have a motion here.

Mr. MacLeod: — Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General broke in, very rudely perhaps, in front of the Minister of Environment. The question that I put to him was whether he was attempting to mislead the House into believing he was only aware of the contents of the Qu'Appelle Basin Study a week or two ago, last Friday when it was made available or put in the mail to us. If that is what he is attempting to tell us I should like to know precisely if that is the position that the Government has

adopted, or alternatively, is he totally ignoring the question?

Mr. Speaker: — I should like to inform the House that we are trying to keep the questions down to three. Questions to Ministers must ask for information pertaining to their department. The Hon. Member has maybe raised a good issue but I think it should be brought up during the debates on Estimates or some place else, because a Minister cannot answer a question where he is giving an opinion, he must be able to state facts from records at his disposal. This would or could be a matter of opinion and I think could well be raised better on a different occasion.

Mr. MacLeod: — Mr. Speaker, the only point I raised is, is he trying to tell the House — I want a clarification of his answer — is he trying to tell the House that he only knew about this a week ago?

Mr. Byers: — The answer to that is No.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Absence of Mr. D. Boldt

Mr. D.G. Steuart: (Leader of the Opposition) — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to make an announcement, although there was reference to it in the Press, concerning my seatmate, the Hon. Member from Rosthern, Mr. Boldt.

Mr. Boldt has had quite a long recurring back ailment and he has been ordered by his doctor to take complete rest for two months so he will be absent from the House under his doctor's orders, probably until some time in late March.

QUESTION

Orders For Return

Mr. A.R. Guy: (Athabasca) — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the Hon. Member what has happened to the other Returns which were not issued last year. I think these are Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7. When could we have those tabled?

Hon. E.L. Tchorzewski: (Minister of Culture & Youth) — Mr. Speaker, I shall take that question and I shall determine to find out where the other Returns are at the present time.

CONDOLENCES

Hon. A.E. Blakeney: (Premier) — Mr. Speaker, it has been customary in this House on the Friday following the Throne Speech to pay tribute to deceased Members, persons who were Members of this House and who have passed away during the interval since the last session.

I wish now to continue that tradition to move, seconded by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart):

That this Assembly records with sorrow and regret the passing during the last year of a former member of this Assembly and expresses its grateful appreciation of the contributions he made to his community, his constituency and to this province:

Harris Turner, who died on August 12, 1972, was a Member of this Legislature from 1917 to 1921 representing the Saskatchewan soldiers in France and from 1921 to 1925 for Saskatoon City. He was born at Markdale, Ontario, in 1887. He received his education at public and high schools in Orangeville, Ontario and attended the University of Toronto. He became a journalist and in 1913 he was a staff member for the Saskatoon Phoenix and later the Star and became well known as a humorist for his column called, "Starbeams." In 1915 he went overseas with the first University Company and was wounded in June 1916, losing total sight of both eyes. In 1924 he was unanimously elected house leader of the Opposition in the Saskatchewan Assembly. He served as an alderman on the Saskatoon City Council from August 30, 1929 to October 11, 1930. At various times in his life he was vice-president of the local Canadian Legion, vice-president of the Canadian Club, vice-president of the Great War Veterans' Association of Saskatchewan, president of the British Columbia Institute of Journalists, president of the Saskatchewan Rotary Club, president of the Sir Arthur Pearson Club for the war blind. He was co-founder of the Western Producer and its predecessors, Turner's Weekly and The Progressive, but was forced to resign the editorship of the Western Producer in 1930 because of his health. He came from retirement to work for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind in Toronto for 10 years as Director of Publications until 1945. From 1931 until 1957 he wrote a humorous column in the Western Producer called "The South East Corner."

Before moving the traditional motion, may I add a word of my own. I am advised that Mr. Turner is survived by a wife and two sons. From the description of his career it is clear I think that Mr. Turner was a remarkable man who, despite a handicap which would have completely daunted a lesser man, has made a remarkable and lasting contribution to the life of this province.

In recording its deep sense of loss and bereavement this Assembly expresses its most sincere sympathies with members of the bereaved families.

Mr. D.G. Steuart: (Leader of the Opposition) — Mr. Speaker, I should like to join with the Premier in paying a tribute to this man who served not only his nation but his province and his community, as the Premier has so aptly said, under conditions of extreme handicap and in so many ways. On behalf of the Opposition I pay my respect to his memory and pass on to his family our deepest sympathy.

Mr. W.A. Robbins: (Saskatoon Nutana Centre) — Mr. Speaker, I should like to add to the comments of

the Premier and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition some remarks with respect to this most remarkable person. I became very impressed with Harris Turner, I think basically, because when I was rather a small child, six or seven years of age he used to come to our farm home and visit my father. I think at the time I felt that he was remarkable for two reasons. He was a blind person but he could write, I found that rather amazing. Secondly, he come from the same district in Ontario as my father and I think that I felt that that added a fair bit to his fame somehow or other.

Mr. Turner used to come to our farm home, in company with Jack Douglas who was a former Minister of Highways in the Government of Saskatchewan (1944 to 1960), on numerous occasions in the years from 1922 to 1925. At that time he was very much involved in the work of the Progressive Party and I know the Hon. Member from Rosetown will recognize this name, John Evans, who was at that time the Federal Member for the constituency of Rosetown and often was in our home as well. I always enjoyed his column "South East Corner" in the Western Producer. Mr. Speaker, I am going to take the liberty with the Assembly's permission to read from one of these items. I have a number of them here and they are getting pretty yellow with age now, but I think you will find this one interesting. It shows not only his satire, his sense of humor but his humanitarian approach to matters.

I suppose if Harris Turner had one bias it seemed to be basically directed against the Canadian Senate. He was always poling fun at the Canadian Senate. I understand on one occasion he was asked what was the difference between a vacancy in the senate and a senator. He said, "about \$16,000."

The item I am going to read to you I think illustrates reasonably well the power of his pen. It is as follows:

It must have come as a distinct shock to a great many people to know that there are over a quarter of a million automobile workers and three times that many steel workers in North America. Most citizens receive their education, religion and cooking recipes over the radio and it is quite evident judging from a close study of the radio that most of the inhabitants of the United States and Canada are cowboys. If there are 750,000 steel workers there must be at least 80 million cowboy crooners and statistics show that Rosie the Rivetter is the only steelhand that ever made good on the megacycles. I used to think that a cowboy was a hard-working, grimy, bow-legged, underpaid, unmarried citizen, gifted with bad language and periodic bursts of intemperance. He was, according to my uninformed conclusions, a cheerful, reckless, improvident workman, given to loud shirts, accurate gunfire and chewing tobacco. I didn't think there were very many of the breed about, about as many scattered through a western state or province as you would find in the Canadian Senate one half hour after the session got under way. I was wrong. There are millions of them, if there are as many on the range as there are in the broadcasting studios there must be about 12 to each steer.

They are not cheerful lads. They are mournful and they all play the guitar or the banjo or the ukulele. One of

my formerly ingrained notions about cowboys was correct, none of them are ever married, they are all in love and most of them have had some bitter experience with that type of amusement and never cease whining about it. For the most part judging from their own musical admissions they have given up hope of ever achieving wedded bliss and have devoted their lives to mournful affection for their horses, their saddles, the moon, the lonesome trail and the cattle. Most of them express a strong inclination to be buried, an ambition to which few would offer any serious objection. The odd, boisterous cowpuncher apparently still likes to empty his revolver but he is just an apprentice cowboy and will as soon as he has been rejected by his sweetheart a couple of times trade in his six-shooter for a guitar and head for the nearest radio network.

Next to burial services, cowboys like saddles. He may long for the moon or a cow or a pair of boots or a waterless desert or a fly-ridden corral but his chief aim in life is to get someone to give him a saddle. If he and his horse and his saddle can get mouching along a prairie trail with the whole three of them thinking sadly about the girl that has turned thumbs down on the unsavory trio he is almost as dismally happy as any human being can manage. But, if one of them has to die of grief the cowhand would prefer that it be the horse; he can get another horse but that saddle has been so long his associate on gloomy excursions that it has begun to look like him and he loves it with an ardour no human hunk of leather could inspire. As a matter of act, the girl who turned him down knew what she was doing, she realized in time that if she married the sad slouch she would have to play second fiddle to a saddle for the rest of her life. Not even the most cowboy-minded young lady could joyously contemplate such a future

Well, you will sense from that brief article that Harris Turner had a real wit, commanded a satirical pen and was quite an informed person in terms of the current scene.

In conclusion I should like to add to what the Premier and the Hon. Leader of the Opposition have said with respect to this man. I think my city, Saskatoon, our province, Saskatchewan and our country, Canada owe a great deal to Harris Turner. He was a journalist, a war veteran, a municipal and a legislative representative, a humanitarian and a humorist. I wish to join in paying tribute, tinged with sincere regret at his passing. This man was a very, very remarkable man.

Hon. W.E. Smishek: (Regina North East) — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to say a few words in tribute to Mr. Harris Turner who passed away on August 12, 1972. While I did not have the privilege of knowing Mr. Turner personally I am aware of the outstanding work he has done in public business and community affairs both inside and outside of our province. His achievements, Mr. Speaker, are all the more remarkable because Mr. Turner was blind, having lost the sight of both eyes during World War I. Helen Keller, the internationally know lecturer, who herself was blind and also deaf, once wrote these words and let me quote:

We differ from one another, not so much in the severity of our handicap as in the way we meet it. If we succeed in wearing a crown of thorns with lifted head and smiling face, we prove ourselves equal to the difficult task of living. Without doubt the limitation develops the qualities we admire more in man, patience, sympathy, courage and magnanimity.

Miss Keller could have been writing about Mr. Harris Turner. He regarded his handicap as nothing more than an inconvenience, he accepted the challenge of being blind and he met his handicap head on. His record in public and private life speaks for itself as to his success. Mr. Turner's accomplishments should stand out to us as an inspiration to all handicapped people. Throughout his day to day activities he proved that the handicapped can be independent and that they can live full and productive lives.

Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the other Members in expressing my sincere sympathy to the members of Mr. Turner's family.

Hon. G.T. Snyder: (Moose Jaw South) — Mr. Speaker, I want also to avail myself of this opportunity to say a few words in tribute of Mr. Harris Turner a former Member of this Legislature who passed away on August 12, 1972.

Unfortunately I did not have the privilege of knowing Mr. Turner personally but I was aware of his service to this Legislature and to his country as a member of the Armed Services during World War I. This gallant Member, and I think all of us would agree, was a living example of perseverance in the face of adversity. he demonstrated that in spite of his blindness he could still serve and contribute in a very meaningful and a very substantial way. As a fellow member of the Royal Canadian Legion I trust that I may speak for that group when I express on their behalf and on behalf of myself a very great admiration for a courageous Canadian who served his country well both in war and in peace and I join with others in expressing condolences to the family of Mr. Turner.

Mr. F. Meakes: (Touchwood) — Mr. Speaker, I too should like to add a few words to the memory of Harris Turner. I did not know him but I was an avid fan of his. I remember when I was just a young boy, it was always a race between my father and me who got the Western Producer when it came into the House. I always looked forward with expectation to that corner in the paper, the South East Corner. He wrote with a delightful satire, his barbs were always sharp, yet not cruel. I remember us having many a delightful laugh over his remarks. I too should like to add my sincere sympathies to the family of a great Canadian gone to his rest.

Hon. J.E. Brockelbank: (Saskatoon Mayfair) — Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my words about the former Member of this Legislative Assembly, Harris Turner, who died on August 12, 1972. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, the first newspaper I ever read was the Western Producer. As was stated by members before me, Harris Turner was the co-founder and the first editor of the Western Producer. The great Wheat Pool debate sparked

a necessity for an independent press for the Wheat Pool and the co-operative movement. The Western Producer, successor to the Progressive, a newspaper started by Mr. Turner, became that press and as Harris Turner himself hoped would flourish as “the mouthpiece of the indomitable spirit of the Canadian farmer.”

Many tributes have been paid to Harris Turner, no doubt outside of this Chamber as well as I in this Chamber. Included in those tributes is the naming of Turner Bay on Reindeer Lake in his honor in 1952. My father brought this to my attention at the time it took place. Mr. Turner, a while later, upon finding that a bay had been named after him sent a humorous letter with a number of enquiries. I think this will help to outline to the Members, who did not know him, that he had a sharp wit and was a very interesting person. Some parts of his letter read as follows. First he asks if a map can be sent to him showing the exact location of Turner Bay along with the information as follows:

Does the conferring of my name on this property invest me with the ownership of the mineral rights? Would I be exempt from harbour dues? Is there good musk-ox shooting in the area? Would it be a good place to stage a long distance swimming contest?

Just aside, Mr. Speaker, for those of you who know the geography of the province, I imagine the water would be fairly cold and would make for a rather brisk swim. He goes on.

If I took up residence on the Bay shore would I be immune from arrest and the payment of excise duty on liquor and tobacco as I understand is the case with the official residences of governors and diplomats? Would I have to pay a fishing license? Can the name be changed by anything or anybody inferior in rank to the Saskatchewan Legislature? What are the extreme temperatures in summer and winter? How deep comes the snow and how many inches of rainfall? Does the Bay provide safe anchorage for private yachts, uranium barges and kayaks? Is the constituency of which Turner Bay forms a part represented in the Legislature by a Co-operative Commonwealth Federationist, a Social Crediter, a Liberal or a Labor Progressiver?

He concluded his letter by saying:

If the records of your department do not contain the information required to answer these questions, don't send an expedition to determine the facts. What is on file will suffice.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that what is on file and known about Mr. Turner, makes it indeed an honor to be here this afternoon as one of the Members of Saskatoon City to say a few words at his passing and to convey my words along with other Members of the Chamber to the members of his family with our sincere condolences.

Mr. Blakeney: — Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Steuart):

January 26, 1973

That the Resolution just passed, together with the transcripts of oral tributes to the memory of the deceased Member, be communicated to the bereaved family on behalf this Assembly by Mr. Speaker.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 3:13 o'clock p.m.