

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Third Session — Seventeenth Legislature
30th Day

Wednesday, March 7, 1973

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. Wiebe (Morse): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure this afternoon to introduce to you and through you to the Members of this Legislature, approximately 15 Grade Twelve students from the town of Morse. Morse is the town that my constituency is named after and I am very pleased to see them in the east gallery this afternoon. They are accompanied by their teacher Mr. Radbruch. I should like to sincerely welcome them all here and hope that they will have an interesting afternoon to see democracy in progress.

I might just mention as well that the town of Herbert, which I come from, is the neighboring town of Morse and there has always been competition between the two towns during the high school years in sports, hockey and baseball. An interesting point of view as well is I'm just wondering whether that competition still exists between the students themselves. When I was going to high school the boys from Herbert took out the girls from Morse and the boys from Morse took out the girls from Herbert. I am just wondering whether this still applies today.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to welcome them here this afternoon and hope that they have a very enjoyable afternoon.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to introduce through you to the Members of this Assembly 48 Grade Twelve students from Vibank School. They are in the east gallery and are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Roy Fahlman and their very capable bus driver, Mr. Frank Eberle. We certainly hope that they have a very enjoyable afternoon, an enjoyable trip to Regina and a safe journey home. I hope you find the afternoon very interesting.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Cowley (Biggar): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and to the Members of this House a group of 35 students in Grade Nine from the Perdue High School. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Walker and Miss Brown, also their bus driver, Mr. Don Kerar and by Mrs. Weir and Mr. Bill Nahorney. I may say that I take special pleasure in presenting this group to the House as the Perdue High School is where I completed my high school education. I did some quick calculations before the House sat today to see whether any of these students were in school while I was there, but unfortunately, unless they have repeated about four grades they weren't around and I am sure none of them have. I take great pleasure in introducing

them to you. I hope that they will find this afternoon informative and interesting and I am sure the Members both opposite and on this side of the House will put on their best behavior for them.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Hanson (Qu'Appelle-Wolseley): — Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to introduce to you and through you to the other Members of this Assembly a group of 33 students from the town of Wolseley. They attend St. Anne's School in Wolseley and are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. S. Stelmaschuk and they are seated in the west gallery. They have toured SaskTel this morning and the RCMP Barracks and I am sorry to say that there was a little bit of a mixup on the tours and they were a little overdue on one of them and we couldn't get together for lunch. I will be meeting with them at approximately 3:10 this afternoon. I wish them well for the rest of the day and hope that they find today's activities fairly informative and I hope to be able to clarify some of the questions that they have sometime after 3:00 o'clock.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Cody (Watrous): — I should like also today to introduce to you and to the Members of this Assembly six students from the Watrous School. They are Grade Ten students and there is a special connotation to these six students in that they are all New Democrats. It makes them a unique group. They were brought in today by one of the fathers, Mr. Jones and they are seated in the west gallery. As one of the Members says, there are only six, well I tell you they have a student enrolment there of some 200 and we have got about 190 of them. However, this is the executive, the NDY, so there is really a special connotation to it, as I say.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome them here today and hope that they have had a real good time in the Legislature so far and hope that they enjoy the deliberations this afternoon.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Mostoway (Hanley): — Mr. Speaker, I too, would like to welcome the group from Watrous. I was raised in that area and have many fond memories of that particular area. I hope — you'll get your opportunity later fellows, just simmer down right now — I want to take this opportunity and say that I hope that the group of six from Watrous has a pleasant afternoon and a good journey home.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Guests from British Columbia

Mr. Kramer (The Battlefords): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to add my words of welcome to those before me regarding the visiting students, but I have some special guests in the gallery from British Columbia, Mr. and Mrs. David Johnston, a niece and nephew seated in the Speaker's Gallery. They are here attending the Bar Convention in Regina. I should like the House to give them a good Saskatchewan welcome.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kramer: — I might also add that Mr. Johnston is very keenly interested in politics and that, too, should welcome him to this House. He is also an aide-de-camp to the Lieutenant-Governor in British Columbia.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Engel (Notukeu-Willow Bunch): — Mr. Speaker, if I may I should like to add a few words of welcome to the group that are here from Morse. I know some of the group there and I don't think the Member did it intentionally, but I would like to add a special welcome to the bus driver, a good friend of mine. Mr. Abe Unger.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

STATEMENT

Appreciation of Condolences — Mrs. Turner

Mr. Speaker: — I should like to inform the Members at this time that I have recently received a letter from Alice Turner, who wishes me to express to the Members of this Assembly and to those who spoke on that occasion, her thanks for the tributes paid to her late husband, Harris Turner. She wished me to express to you people her sincere thanks for the condolences expressed.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Headline Re IPSCO

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Industry (Mr. Thorson) in the absence of the Premier. There is a major headline in the daily newspapers in Saskatchewan, "Ipsco Share-trading Heavy — Saskatchewan Government said to be buying." In reply to questions from the Press the Premier made no comment. I should like to ask if the Minister of Industry would clarify this point. Certainly a comment like, "No comment" has increased speculation rather than decreased it among Saskatchewan citizens. I think it is an important enough issue to be cleared up once and for all.

Mr. Thorson (Minister of Industry and Commerce): — Mr. Speaker, I noticed the news report with some interest and I want to inform the Assembly that it is my intention to make a statement on the subject matter of the news report just referred to by the Member from Milestone. I am not in a position to do that today. I am scheduled to be in Saskatoon tomorrow afternoon and if I am able to rearrange that I will do so on the Orders of the Day tomorrow. In any event I will certainly do it not later than Friday of this week on the Orders of the Day.

Mr. MacDonald: — Just a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Normally that answer might be sufficient but this news following so close upon that rather dramatic announcement last week about the purchase of 45 per cent of Intercon, I am not sure . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order! A Minister's answer cannot be debated or questioned that way. We must accept the Minister's answer, he has promised an answer at a later date.

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a supplementary question. Mr. Speaker, certainly the people of Saskatchewan can't stand two shocks. If the Government is not purchasing shares, why did the Minister hesitate in saying so?

Mr. Thorson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I have said I have noticed the news stories. It is my desire to give a full and complete picture of the situation as raised by the statements made in the news story. I am not able to do that at this time but I certainly will do that and I don't think anyone in Saskatchewan will suffer in the slightest if they wait for a few hours.

Housing Starts Decline

Mr. Guy (Athabasca): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Housing. A CMHC Statistical Report released on Monday shows that housing starts declined five per cent across the Prairies from December to January and this decline is down 14.2 per cent from January of last year. I think it is significant that Alberta has increased their housing starts 16.3 per cent but in the NDP provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba it has declined 45 per cent and 33.2 per cent respectively. In view of this serious decline I wonder if the Minister would tell us what new programs he has to increase the housing starts in Saskatchewan over the next few months.

Hon. Mr. Wood (Minister of Municipal Affairs): — Well, Mr. Speaker, I am sorry to say that I did not notice the article that the Hon. Member refers to. I will surely peruse it with interest because the information that I have had that while the number of houses Saskatchewan has not come up with Alberta and Manitoba, percentagewise we have increased a good deal more than they have in the last year. This report, I gather from what the Hon. Member said is the direct opposite to what has been my understanding. So far as the programs that I intend to bring forward to change this situation, which is not a new one incidentally, Saskatchewan has been behind for quite a few years as far as housing is concerned. We are starting to pull out but we have a long way to go. I don't wish to take too much time of the House at this time, Mr. Speaker, because it is my intention to be bringing a Bill on the Housing Corporation very shortly. At that time we shall be explaining to the House where we expect to go and I think you will find there are a good many programs that will have even more bearing on increasing house construction than some of those that we now have. I believe the Hon. Member will note that the program that we have of giving \$800 to assist

people to build houses of under \$7,000 income has had a remarkable impact on the building of houses for people in those income brackets. He is shaking his head, Mr. Speaker, but I think if he checks on it he'll find that there is a big increase in that area.

SECOND READINGS

Hon. Mr. MacMurchy (Minister of Education) moved second reading of Bill No. 66 – **An Act Respecting Community Colleges.**

Mr. MacMurchy: — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce second reading of The Community Colleges Act. In short the Act would permit Community College Boards to be formed in regional areas throughout the province. The Act would give Community College Boards the authority for all adult programming in the area and would provide funds through the Department of Continuing Education to operate these programs. Simply, this is the general principle of the Bill.

Although the Bill is relatively simple in both structure and content, it provides the framework for an educational development that will be very important to the people of this province and in fact very important to the people of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the end of formal schooling is not the end of learning. We know that a society of rapid change in which we live demands continued learning; a new job means more responsibility; a new environment means more information. Every individual must have the opportunity to keep learning throughout life. We also know that traditionally the greater part of the educational system has been focused on the young from the primary school grades up through university, to the institutes, to the vocational schools. The emphasis at the post secondary level has been on strong adequate university and technical institute facilities and these facilities concentrate on career training for 18 to 25 year-olds, basically. Further these facilities are concentrated in the urban centres, basically Saskatoon, Regina and Moose Jaw.

I suggest that there are few families living in rural Saskatchewan who are able to pick up and move to the city in order to further their education. Mr. Speaker, learning opportunities need to be made available to adults where they are. This is a major gap in the educational system, Community Colleges will fill that gap. That is the formal part. The courses for credit which lead a person to a further degree, a certificate, a new job through new training, or a better job. That is only part of the learning that people need.

The pace of social and economic change is very rapid, so is the growth of knowledge which influences such change. There are greater opportunities for recreational, cultural and educational activities. People everywhere need access to informal programs, programs for personal and community enrichment. Programs of this kind will be a very important part of the Community Colleges' program. Short courses to improve one's skills, one's business, one's farming methods. Short courses to train nursing home assistants, community care assistants, recreation assistants, short courses for personal enrichment. Such programs, Mr. Speaker, will automatically enrich a community, but in addition we expect the colleges to devote some of

their work to the communities as a whole. Economic and social changes often bring a sense of confusion and a feeling of helplessness. Some communities are faced with decisions and actions which may determine their survival. Information and study within the community would influence the future direction of that particular community.

Mr. Speaker, Community Colleges will basically operate in the following way. A representative board will be established for each college region. This board will be the adult education authority for that region. It will receive requests from individuals and communities for educational programs. The board will assess the needs, set the priorities for the programs in the coming year. It will prepare its budget accordingly. A grant will be authorized from the Department of Continuing Education. Formal programs will be contracted from the university or from the technical institutes. Informal programs will be arranged in local communities. Wherever possible local persons will be hired as instructors. Programs will be held in existing facilities. The Regional Library System will provide the library resources for the programs. Courses will be disbanded when they are no longer required. College developers will be on hand to assist communities to continually reassess their requirements.

Now there are several important features of this Community College plan, Mr. Speaker. First of all decisions concerning program offerings will be made not by a central authority but by the Regional College Board. It is likely that no two colleges will be entirely the same as the program requests in each area will be different. The Department of Continuing Education will provide consultative review service. While balanced budgets will be necessary, if a board feels it is important enough to run a particular program, even though the enrolment may be only two or three persons, it may make that decision. There will be no arbitrary maxima or minima as presently when the grant minima presently cripple adult programs in most of our communities. Secondly, Community College programs will be decentralized, they will not be centralized in the urban centres of the province. They will go on insofar as is possible in local communities. Transportation problems may make present adult programs inaccessible to many. Under Community Colleges a course or a program can be offered in whatever town the majority of persons desiring that program or course reside. The Colleges will use existing facilities, no new multi-million dollar building programs will be involved in our Community College program. Every community has a church basement, a municipal council chamber, a hall, which will make adequate learning centres. In most communities most Members in this House will be pleased to see greater use made of the school plants and we have some excellent school plants in our communities in the province. Colleges will employ local instructors as much as possible. For formal programs we will work out some kind of accreditation policy whereby local persons can be tested and accredited to teach credit programs.

Each community has skilled persons with knowledge worth sharing. Training could be provided by the colleges for these people to assist them in becoming instructors and these persons could be the main resources for the informal programs.

Resources are no longer limited to books. Audiovisual tapes and cassettes are becoming increasingly significant as we

gain the equipment and the knowledge to utilize it. Recent grants by the Department of Education have assisted a great many more schools in obtaining videotape playback equipment. Adults will be encouraged to use this equipment in the Community College programs.

Educational broadcasting will play a particular role in making credit programs accessible to remote areas. The advent of cable television will open wide new doors in the whole field of using television for education purposes.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, many of the Community College programs will be short term. A specific program to meet a specific need then disbanded when the need is met. In this way the Colleges will be kept alive, vital, not saddled with a long list of permanent courses that no longer make sense.

This also means no long list of permanent instructors. The staff of the College will be small, a mere core. There will be a few responsible for arranging whatever programs are run and there will be those who circulate amongst the communities, helping to assess needs, to assess resources, to provide leadership. The instructors will be primarily contact, short-term personnel.

I would caution you that in writing The Community Colleges Act it was necessary to use traditional words, but this does not mean that it will have traditional meaning.

A student at a college will not be someone who arrives at 8:30 or 9:00 o'clock a.m. in a set location and leaves at 4:00. A student is anyone who participates in a college program. A principal is not an administrator or an academic institution. A principal is a directing and cohesive force, a person who keeps all the loose ends tied together in a college and keeps it responsible to the communities.

The theory that education should happen as I have described, is not new, it is not a new concept. But actually making it happen is very, very new. To separate the concept of learning from the concept of schooling; to turn a block of money over to the community for its own educational development; to determine what courses should be taught, for how long and by whom, these provide the novelty. This, Mr. Speaker, is local autonomy in the truest sense of the word.

This Community College project has no parallel in any other province in Canada. In Alberta, for instance, the Community Colleges are really junior universities. Some of them have in fact recently begun to seek accreditation as a university. A prime example of it, actually happening at Lethbridge.

We can't afford this kind of program in Saskatchewan. We do not want to follow this pattern in Saskatchewan. We do not want to follow it because we want a decentralized community education program.

In Ontario the Community Colleges are called Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology. The same applies to a great degree in Manitoba. These colleges there bear more resemblance to our technical institute than to Saskatchewan Community Colleges.

March 7, 1973

Mr. Speaker, we have begun four pilot developments in rural areas. We want colleges to get a foothold in the country and in the smaller towns before they expand into the four major centres. We want to appoint the initial boards to guarantee that all groups are broadly represented. We want the Board Members to be resident of the area so that the colleges will be responding to the real needs of the area. We want colleges to be governed independently of the university and of school boards. We do not want to tie them to the regular system from the start.

Now the implications of the Community College developments are very wide. As the community development idea takes hold it is combined with educational communications through the media, you will see the growth of a valuable new service to education and to our rural residents.

Colleges developed in this concept will be the advent of an open school, accessible to almost anyone, with courses initiated by local people to suit their own needs. Colleges will be a foot in the door to a more relevant school. Education will be available to adults where they live, not just in the cities of Regina and Saskatoon and Moose Jaw.

Mr. Speaker, this Government was elected on a mandate to shore up and strengthen rural Saskatchewan. Community Colleges are the educational expression of that mandate.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased, indeed, to move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill No. 66 – An Act to respecting Community Colleges, which as the Minister has indicated sets up the framework for the machinery whereby the new Community Colleges in the Province of Saskatchewan will operate.

I have two or three comments on this Bill, but I will ask the permission of the House to adjourn to assess some of the comments that the Minister has made. This is the first time that he has really indicated exactly what the role of the new Community Colleges will be in any detail.

I want to say that I, personally, and I am sure I speak for many Members of the House, like the concept that is involved in this new Community College idea that the Minister has indicated today. There is no question that lifelong education is a very important facet in the overall development of any individual in the province who wants to broaden his own mind and broaden his educational opportunities.

Certainly the educational systems that we know, not only in Saskatchewan but in Canada, are related to the existing school system whether it be elementary, high school or post secondary. They are usually oriented toward a specific goal or role in life such as a degree, a certificate or diploma. In most cases they are oriented toward the aspect or the possibility of obtaining employment.

There is little or no opportunity for an individual to broaden his own intellectual pursuits, to broaden his own mind, to become involved in the ongoing process of education. And if

this concept works in the Province of Saskatchewan, I think it will make a very valuable and important contribution. I think Members of the Opposition and I am sure that I speak for many people in Saskatchewan, are glad to hear the Minister say that we are not going to set up any elaborate new educational facilities.

We have, as you know, two University campuses in Saskatchewan, two very good technical schools the Saskatoon School of Applied Arts and Science, the Moose Jaw Technical School. We are now in the process of developing a third in the city of Regina, and this with a population of less than a million people, certainly this is enough for post-secondary educational opportunities. Some of them depending upon the size of enrolment may need expanding or contracting as time goes by.

However, there is no real opportunity for adult education or ongoing lifelong education and I am hoping that this Bill will accomplish this.

One of the questions that I wish the Minister would answer when he winds up the debate is: what will be the role of the Extension Department in the University of Saskatchewan? As you know the Extension Department in the University of both campuses, has played a very basic and fundamental role in transmitting educational opportunities or ongoing education in many of the rural parts of our province.

I noticed that the Minister indicated that this new Community College Board would make contract opportunities with the Technical Institute or perhaps the University itself and I would presume that perhaps it will be the co-ordinating body with the Extension Department and would then give them the opportunity of working together. If this is so then the Extension Department could, not only continue the very valid goal and part it has played, but also it would be able to expand that opportunity.

There is one thing though that I will say, Mr. Speaker, I intend to move three amendments in the Committee of the Whole. I am disturbed about one trend in this Bill. The Minister talks about local autonomy and yet the Minister has reserved almost complete and absolute control for himself under the Department of Education. It is the one aspect of every Bill that is brought into this House, that the NDP Government poses and that is, control, control, control.

Let me read you two clauses which I am concerned about. Clause 8 is a good illustration:

Each member of the board other than the principal, holds office at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

That means that he could be appointed today and removed tomorrow. That may well be an extreme example. They are not even appointed for a definite period of time. If this is to be truly a community college and a real community college, why is there no opportunity for the community themselves to select the people who will be on this board?

Let me indicate Clause 10:

Subject to the approval of the Department, a college board may appoint such officers and employees as it considers necessary for the purpose of operating the college:

- (b) determine the salaries or other remunerations of officers and employees of the board;
- (c) prescribe the duties of the officers and employees of the board.
- (d) prescribe terms and conditions of employment of the officers and employees of the board.

Surely to heaven if we are going to have local autonomy, if we are going to have a community become involved in the decision making process, then they should not, every time they hire a janitor have to have the approval of the Minister of Education.

Another one, Subsection (2) of Clause 5:

The college board shall appoint a person as principal of the college, prescribe his duties and tenure of office and subject to the approval of the department, determine the remuneration to be paid to him by the board.

Surely if as he says they will be given a grant, they will then have the responsibility of determining how that money will be spent. Surely then, the Minister of Education does not require that right or power of veto over the board. Surely if a board member is appointed, that there should be at least some permanent tenure or period of office so that he will not, in any way, be subject to intimidation by the Department of Continuing Education or the Minister whatever it may be. I am not suggesting that there are any ulterior motives involved. I am saying that if there is local autonomy, then for goodness sake let's make sure that this Bill does provide that. Take away that ministerial veto, that ministerial control, give to the Community College Board the opportunity of truly looking after their own interests and their own affairs.

I notice Clause 20, Subsections (1) and (2):

Each year a proposed budget for the college shall be submitted to the department for approval at the time specified by the department.

An annual budget for the college shall be adopted by the college board upon approval thereof by the department.

I don't object to this and I don't think anyone does simply for the fact that the Government of Saskatchewan or the taxpayers through the Minister of Continuing Education will in all probability be paying all or the majority of costs of operating the Community College. And, therefore, I think there is some requirement or some need for an approval of a budget presented to them. But I am concerned about Sections 5, 8 and 10 which mean that the approval of the department, the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, certainly in no way is related to the independence of the board.

I would hope that we will be able to move an amendment in third reading or Committee of the Whole, which would make it

possible for these board members to truly be autonomous, truly be independent.

I would hope that the Minister of Education, with his control of the budget would have all the controls that he would want and he would restore to the board or give to the board, the true opportunities to be autonomous and to run and to see that the new concept of community colleges really goes ahead in the Province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I do have a few more comments to make after assessing what the Minister has said. I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

The Assembly adjourned at 5:30 o'clock p.m.