

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session — Seventeenth Legislature
36th Day

Monday, March 25, 1974

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

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Hon. R. Romanow (Saskatoon Riversdale): — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you 46 students of Grade Seven and Grade Eight from St. Gerard School in the city of Saskatoon. They are seated in the west gallery. The students, as I have indicated to you, Mr. Speaker, are 46 in number. I am advised that they are accompanied by two of their teachers, Mr. Melyniuk and Miss Budz. I welcome them to the city of Regina and to the Legislative Buildings. I hope they find their stay here very informative indeed.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. G. B. Grant (Regina Whitmore Park): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to introduce a group of students in the east gallery from the Elsie Dorsey School, 32 Grade Seven students under the direction of Mr. Thompson. I know we all welcome them to the Session this afternoon. We hope their visit here will be informative and educational.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

QUESTIONS

Total Amount of Advertising in Department of Culture and Youth

Mr. D. G. Steuart (Leader of the Opposition): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Tchorzewski) in regard to a question I asked him when he was bringing in the Estimates for the Department of Culture and Youth. Does he have that answer? They were looking up the total amount of advertising.

Hon. E. L. Tchorzewski (Minister of Culture and Youth): — I expect I will be able to have them for you later this day. I just spoke to my people and they are compiling it and we likely shall have it later this day.

Mr. Steuart: — Thank you very much. A supplementary question and I'll direct this to him if he can answer it or the Premier or whoever wants to. The reason that we are concerned about this, is that I just did a survey of Saturday's papers, the Leader-Post, the Moose Jaw Times Herald, the Prince Albert Daily Herald and the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, and I find that the Government and their agencies have taken in the Leader-Post for example, a total of 536 column inches. The same in the Star-Phoenix. In the Moose Jaw Times Herald the Government and its

agencies actually took 17 per cent of the total paper — 17 per cent of that total Saturday issue was given over to Government advertising. This is one example, “Provincial Aid to School Boards,” and it gives a list of all the aid to school boards which I am sure is fine, I am sure this information went to the school boards who need to have it. What possible need there was to spend hundreds and hundreds of dollars to inform the public other than a political need.

Mr. Messer: — What is your question?

Mr. Steuart — I am asking the question. We have the sort of thing here, “A little co-op goes a long way.” Here is another big one in all the dailies showing a tree being cut down, “This crop is renewable.” As a matter of fact our calculations, Mr. Speaker, show that the Government, on Saturday alone, one day alone, in four newspapers spent \$8,000 to \$10,000.

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order! Will the Member ask the question.

Mr. Steuart: — My question can be directed to the Premier or the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

Will he go back and give us a total for a week of what is being spent in all the newspapers, radio and television? It must amount to millions and millions of dollars — one day alone \$8,000 to \$10,000. What is the purpose of this? Is the Government aware it is going on, this madhouse advertising, gushing and pouring out of money on political propaganda, is this coming from the deputies or is the Premier aware of this? If so what explanation does he have for it? It certainly isn't in any way to inform the public, it is unprecedented in the Province of Saskatchewan for this amount of money to be spent on this sort of propaganda.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. A. E. Blakeney (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I am sure all Members of the House will have reached the same conclusion that I have that the Member for Prince Albert West is unduly sensitive about people knowing the facts about school grants.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I may say that if I had his record when he was Provincial Treasurer in allocating school grants I wouldn't have put any ads in the paper either.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Blakeney: — I think, Mr. Speaker, that the advertisements speak for themselves. They indicate to the public what the school grants are, what the increase in school grants are. It may well be that the Members opposite feel that the public is not entitled to know about this public business but in our judgment when we are spending or asking the public to agree to the expenditure of \$900 million of public money, we think that a relatively

infinitesimal amount of that is properly spent advising the public how it is spent.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Steuart: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out to the Premier that 1 per cent would amount to . . .

Mr. Speaker: — Order!

Mr. Blakeney: — In replying to the question of the Member for Prince Albert West . . .

Mr. Speaker: — I think that the question as properly raised the other day by the Member for Milestone should not be prefaced with statements. We get statements after answers which leads to the confusion of the House. I would ask Members to state the question and not preface it with a speech.

Election Expenses Act

Mr. C. P. MacDonald (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the Attorney General (Mr. Romanow). Is it the intention of the Government to bring in an Election Expenses Act at this Session of the House?

Hon. R. Romanow (Attorney General): — I hope that we will have a Bill finalized and it will be introduced for the information of the Members of the House. May I say, while I am on my feet, I hope that it is a Bill that will receive the support of Members on the opposite side, I say that sincerely. We have a provision which will relate to advertising of agencies and departments during the election period which can be discussed, I think, in more detail clause by clause at that stage which will meet, I think, many of the points that you are trying to make in this Question Period.

Mr. MacDonald: — Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Attorney General a supplementary. I am interested in more than just the election period. Will it control the bare-faced arrogance of this Government in spending this kind of waste and extravagance of the taxpayers' money on straight political advertising which is strictly for one purpose and that is to strangle the Opposition in any election campaign while they squander and waste the taxpayers' money on straight political advertising in every newspaper, every radio and every television in this Province of Saskatchewan?

Mr. Romanow: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that the Election Bill, if and when it does surface at this Session, it will be more appropriately debated there. I must say, just as a comment, that I am surprised to see the reaction by my colleague and friend for Milestone on this. I think everybody would agree that from 1964 to 1971 Saskatchewan probably saw an unparalleled period of advertising by the Liberal administration, unparalleled in terms of thousands of dollars being spent by the administration. I believe that all Members would agree that in government there is a role for public information programs. There was during your

administration. I think there is during our administration. I think there is more probably to say in our administration than there was in yours, but that is a matter of judgment. So the Bill really talks about the expenses during an election which is what a good election law should do.

Canada Farm Labor Pools

Mr. J. G. Richards (Saskatoon University): — Mr. Speaker, I have a question to address to the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Messer) concerning Canada Farm Labor Pools.

A statement to this effect about the creation of these pools was released March 20th. The question concerns what measures, if any, has the Provincial Government undertaken or planning to undertake to assure that it won't in effect be just supervising a cheap labor pool? The wages in farm labor have traditionally been a low-wage sector of the economy, migrant labor and people in rural communities not on farms having to accept what is the going wage. What assurance is there under this new program that we won't merely have the Government formalizing a process and what assurances is there that there will be good labor standards applied in this program?

Hon. J. R. Messer (Minister of Agriculture): — Yes, the Department and the Government is most concerned as to whether or not the pool will really supply the kind of labor force that Saskatchewan farmers are looking for.

Unfortunately, the priority of the Labor Pool is dedicated to a seasonal type of labor and that is not so much in demand in Saskatchewan as it is in other parts of Canada. Consequently there may be more to benefit from Labor Pools as far as labor is concerned in eastern and far western Canada where they have vegetables and fruits to harvest than there will be in the Province of Saskatchewan. However, we have identified ourselves with the federal program. The staff will be instructed, as far as Saskatchewan is concerned, to put more emphasis on the placement of labor that emanates from the Province of Saskatchewan, find employees within the province to satisfy the demands of the farming industry in this province. In so doing we would do whatever was within our power to make certain there were, when they accepted a job, proper living conditions. In fact I think we would endeavor to give them opportunity to see the kind of conditions that they would be surrounded with before they accept the job and also know and be very knowledgeable of the kind of remuneration they are going to get for carrying out the duties that they will be obligated to carry out.

Certainly as far as our influence on that pool, we will be stressing those two things so that we will make certain that these people do not accept jobs under false pretences. If they do find themselves transferring their place of residence from one place to another, to a point in Saskatchewan that they don't find themselves locked into something which appeared to be something much better than what it really was.

Mr. Richards: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Are there any regulations which are being planned to bring that

into affect to make sure that it is in some sense formalized that there will be inspection procedures, publication of wages, whatever the Minister thinks is appropriate to make sure that this Labor Pool is not just supervising cheap labor.

Mr. Messer: — Yes.

NDP Propaganda

Mr. H. E. Coupland (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a short question to the Premier. Is it the policy of the Government to spread NDP propaganda through public offices throughout the province?

Mr. Blakeney: — Well, that's a little bit general. We make a practice of giving information with respect to public programs and I know some of these will be regarded by Members opposite as party propaganda since they don't agree with the programs. But I think that other than that I am not aware of any particular effort to publicize the affairs of any one of the political parties through the Government agencies. The Member may have an instance; if he has I would be happy if he raised it.

Mr. Coupland: — Mr. Speaker, I went to a meeting at Leoville Saturday and I had a group of irate citizens hand me three publications that they picked up at a school unit. Needless to say they were mad, they looked at it and on the bottom is "NDP Program for Policy." Then they turn it over and on the back it is a Saskatchewan Government photo printed by Service Printing Company. The first question they asked me, are we, the taxpayers paying for this? I really couldn't answer them and this is why I raised it in the House. I can tell you they were pretty upset.

Mr. Blakeney: — Well, if they were upset I wonder if you would advise them on my behalf to direct their complaints to the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association. Because the circumstances of that is that those booklets were printed and paid for by the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan, they were prepared for the purpose of an educational program of that party, fully financed by the party. The New Democratic Party, was requested by the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association to provide them with some copies of material. They presumably distributed it to their school units as surely is within their function. Now, if, therefore, the school unit has those on display, or if, therefore, the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association decides that they will so distribute this material it is not for us to complain. The New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan, provided it to the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association at their request and the party's expense. There is no Government involvement of any kind in those booklets.

Mr. MacDonald (Milestone): — How about the Government photograph?

Mr. Speaker: — Order, order!

SECOND READINGS

Hon. J. R. Messer (Minister of Agriculture) moved second reading of **Bill No. 73 — An Act respecting the provision of Financial and Other Assistance to Urban Municipalities for Capital Works Projects.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, in the Budget Speech the concept of an urban package consisting of a number of grant programs was introduced. These programs, Mr. Speaker, were designed to aid municipalities in planning and financing essential services and facilities. An important element of this package is the Community Capital Fund program which is to be implemented and carried out by the means of a new Act.

The Community Capital Fund Act, Mr. Speaker, is designed to provide financial assistance to urban municipalities in order to enable them to undertake capital works programs. To achieve this goal, \$47 million will be allocated to a special Community Capital Fund in the next fiscal year.

The Community Capital Fund program has a number of features that we think are not only desirable, but essential. Specifically I should like to mention three in introducing the Bill:

1. The level of financial assistance provided to urban centres.
2. The unconditionality of the program.
3. The provisions for long range capital and financial planning.

Mr. Speaker, this program provides for a higher level of assistance than was ever afforded to urban centres in this province in the past.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — Grants will be calculated on the basis of \$15 per capita per year to a maximum of \$75 per capita for the five-year period ending March 31, 1979. If communities wish to accelerate their capital program, the maximum allotment will be made available over a shorter time period than five years.

Unlike some of the programs of the past, this program does not distinguish between urban centres. Grants will be available to cities, to towns, to villages and even hamlets located in the rural municipalities and local improvement districts throughout this province.

The Community Capital Fund is an unconditional capital program and I think this is a very, very important feature. As I indicated to the House on a previous occasion, conditional programs, although sometimes necessary, do not always facilitate decision making at the local level. An even more serious situation can arise when a community has undertaken a project before a specific conditional grant program is implemented. When this occurs, regardless of the centre's financial plight, they are denied help if no other program is available.

Mr. Speaker, with the introduction of the Community Capital Fund, local autonomy will not only be preserved it will be enhanced. All projects of a capital nature will be eligible under the program and the priorities will be established by the community participating. I should like to point out at this time that municipal councils will be encouraged to involve the public in the selection of the projects.

Mr. Speaker, for a number of reasons, many urban centres in this province do not have a five-year program. These centres have planned on a year to year basis and we think that this is often undesirable. The situation has primarily arisen in part because of the senior government's tendency to introduce their grant programs in a very sporadic way. With this continual introduction of new cost-shared programs, many centres found it impossible to adhere to or to develop any kind of long term planning let alone a five-year period of capital development.

We think that long range planning is important and we feel that the urban package we have introduced will facilitate such planning. We have in a very specific way indicated to the communities the assistance they can expect to receive over the next few years.

With regard to the Community Capital Fund program which will continue for five years, we will ask all centres with a population of 500 and over to develop a five-year capital program. Basically, we are asking each community to think about its future needs and how it would like to have development occur in a given area.

When communities submit an application for a grant under this program, they will be asked to include an outline of their five-year capital works program and the proposed method of financing. The Department of Municipal Affairs will, upon request, assist any community with its application and with the development of a five-year budget.

Mr. Speaker, it is apparent that the Community Capital Fund is an important part of the new urban package. The urban package in turn will begin, I believe, a new era in provincial-municipal relations. We recognize what the Liberals refused to recognize during their period of power — that is that many urban centres have for some time experienced difficulties in capital development.

Mr. Speaker, when addressing the House on March 15, I stated that when the Liberals were in power, they virtually abandoned urban centres.

The Leader of the Opposition attempted to refute this statement by saying and I quote:

When we came to power in 1964, the total huge sum of \$9 million was being spent by the then CCF Government on municipalities, both urban and rural. When we left office in 1971, we had increased that budget by 350 per cent to \$31 million, a record that has yet to be matched by this Government.

And he repeated:

A record that has yet to be matched by this Government.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to take a moment to examine the Liberal record as it relates to assistance to municipal governments.

In 1964, grants to rural municipalities and local improvement districts exceeded \$6.7 million. By 1971, the grants had increased to \$12.9 million — an increase of \$6.2 million in seven years. While the Liberals may be impressed with this record, Mr. Speaker, I wish to point out that in 1974, we will be paying rural municipalities and local improvement districts over \$18 million in grants — an increase of over \$5 million in not seven years, but three years! So much for that record, Mr. Speaker.

However, my criticism of the Liberals relates primarily to their total disregard for the needs of urban municipalities. In 1964, urban municipal governments received grants of \$3.77 million. My 1971, provincial grants to urban governments amounted to the total huge sum, if I may use the words of the Hon. Member for Prince Albert West, the total huge sum of \$3.74 million. No increase whatsoever! Between the years 1964 and 1971, the grants had remained virtually unchanged, in fact, there is a slight decrease, Mr. Speaker. And yet the Opposition has the audacity to say, and I quote again the Member for Prince Albert West:

A record that has yet to be matched by this Government.

Let me assure the Members that sit to your left in the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, that this Government does not intend to nor want to set that kind of record. Their record speaks for itself and I suggest that it is a dismal record.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — The surprising thing is that the Liberals, judging by the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition, are proud of their dismal record. It is interesting to note that the Leader of the Opposition, who was a former provincial treasurer, finds it so difficult to add. In 1964, \$10.4 million was spent on municipalities, both urban and rural. And not the \$9 million suggested by the Hon. Member for Prince Albert West. In 1971 the Liberals budgeted for just over \$16 million for assistance to municipal governments. Not \$31 million as he would have us believe but \$16 million. Therefore, the percentage increase in municipal spending between 1964 and 1971 was 60 per cent, a far, far cry from the claimed 350 per cent. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition included in his calculations, and I suspect he did, the Homeowner Grants, which really are grants to people and not to local governments. However, if this is the game he wishes to play, we will match him stride for stride. If you add the \$12.8 million budgeted in 1971 for The Homeowner Grants Act, the Liberals planned to spend in 1971 on municipal government and residents approximately \$30 million.

Mr. Speaker, if we used the same criteria, we plan to spend over \$76 million in 1974. This figure includes the \$32 million allocated for the Property Improvement Grant program. Therefore, in summary if we accept the Liberal figures, which show an increase of approximately \$20 million in seven years, our record is even more impressive, for we have in just three short years increased that budget by \$45 million.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, we have more than matched the Liberal record. However, I will not dwell any more on the follies of the Liberals because the people of Saskatchewan know all too well their record of performance.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Messer: — The Community Capital Fund program will be administered by a Municipal Grants Division within the Department of Municipal Affairs. The Grants Division will operate under regulations prescribed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council which will set out the method of calculating grants and conditions which must be met by municipalities, including the sharing of costs, in order to obtain a grant. The regulations will include a provision that grants under this program with respect to a particular project will be limited to a maximum of 60 per cent of the cost, with an additional proviso that where other provincial or federal grants are received relative to a project, the sum of all such grants, plus the Community Capital Fund Grant, shall not exceed 75 per cent of the cost of the project. An appointed committee of not less than four persons will assist the Grants Division with the review and the approval of the applications. One of the main functions of this committee will be to provide leadership and guidance in the field of financial planning.

As a further service, Mr. Speaker, brochures indicating the details and application procedures for this program, as well as a complete bibliography of all senior government assistance programs will be sent to all our urban municipalities by the Department of Municipal Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, the grants will be paid on a per capita basis. The 1971 populations census will be used for arriving at preliminary allotment of funds, but this will be subject to adjustment when the 1976 population figures as determined by Statistics Canada become available. The final allocation will be made on the basis of the 1975 census. Communities showing a population growth will have their allotments increased accordingly at \$75 per capita, but there will, however, be no change in allotments in cases where population has declined between the years 1971 and 1976.

Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, this program will greatly assist local councils in the financial and physical planning of their communities. Through the adoption of the Capital Works programs, with the knowledge that future financial assistance is available through the Fund set up under this Act, urban municipalities will be in a vastly improved position to determine the extent to which funds will have to be raised locally or borrowed by themselves.

This Act and these moneys not only recognizes the needs of urban municipalities but it provides them with a chance to develop their best interests.

Mr. Speaker, having said these few words, I move second reading of Bill No. 73.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

Mr. D. Michayluk (Redberry): — Mr. Speaker, on a Point of Personal Privilege. With your indulgence and the indulgence of the House I want to take this opportunity to welcome a group of students from the Blaine Lake School unit now seated in the west gallery, some 45 in number. I know they were busy this morning and they were unable to be here for the regular time when students are usually introduced. Accompanying the group are two staff members, Mr. Daviduke from Hafford High School and Mr. Eliason from the Blaine Lake Comprehensive High School.

I want to welcome this group this afternoon. I am sure that their stay here will be educational and informative and I am sure that the calibre of the debate will be fairly high so that they can gain some value from the discussion here this afternoon. I also want to wish them a safe journey home.

Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Assembly resumed the interrupted debate on Bill No. 73.

Mr. J. G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, I heard some very strange words from the acting Minister of Municipal Affairs this afternoon. First of all he went back to the statistics and he referred to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. I don't think he had to refer to those statistics to prove to the people of Saskatchewan that the Government's record for spending money is considerably better than that of the Liberal Party and their ability to throw away money is better than that of any other government in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, the acting Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Messer) has stated that the new Bill — The Community Capital Fund Act is designed to recognize the needs of local governments, of urban governments in the Province of Saskatchewan. And we say that this Bill makes quite clear, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill indicates a lack of confidence in municipal government and a lack of confidence in local government by the Government opposite.

First of all, he says that the Bill does not discriminate against urban governments, when in fact it most certainly does. The Budget Speech itself makes a distinction between those communities of under 500 and those over 500. The Budget Speech in announcing this program makes it quite clear that the Government opposite has no confidence in the ability of communities below 500 to make their own long-term decision. They can only make annual decisions, whereas communities over 500 can make a five-year plan decision. It is a vote of non-confidence in communities with a population of less than 500.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — It certainly does distinguish between communities. But to make sure that the evidence of non-confidence is applying to all other communities we have two other provisions — if the acting Minister for Municipal Affairs doesn't be quiet when someone else is speaking, he will never permanently occupy the chair over there that is for sure. Although he may have the desire to do so.

It is quite clear that there are provisions in this Bill which will prohibit local governments from making the decision that the Bill is supposed to do according to the Minister.

First of all we have a committee of four people to be set up. We know that the majority of that committee will be NDP hacks or appointments or ones under the control of the Government opposite.

We didn't find out until we heard the Minister's speech today that that committee will have the right to assist and guide and recommend to councils themselves. In other words we are saying that the elected municipal officials in Saskatchewan don't have the ability. And we are saying that the Government opposite doesn't have the confidence in their ability to make their own decisions. So we have to have a committee superimposed on this to make sure that things don't go wrong here, to make sure that the urban governments do what the Government wants. And if that isn't enough the Minister then has the power on top of it all — in Section 7, subsection (3):

The decision of the Minister as to the eligibility of a municipality for a grant and the amount of any grant payable shall be final.

In other words the Minister still can say no, you are not getting that money. And we say that this Act, the way it is set up today and your whole program, is designed to give further control of the Government opposite over urban municipalities in the Province of Saskatchewan. And on that basis the Bill is wrong.

Certainly there is a need for municipal governments, but if you are sincere about your supposed desire to help the urban municipal governments then a straight outright unconditional grant would be in order. You put every condition on it, you have given the final say to the Minister himself, you have a recommending body in between that can stop the grants and then you have purposely left out those communities of less than 500.

We will have more to say that that is certainly a lack of confidence and discriminates against certain communities in the Province of Saskatchewan.

There are other disadvantages that I know the uneducated back bencher from Hanley (Mr. Mostoway) will not have thought of, if he even saw the Bill before it came before the House, that if municipalities are able to get through the rigmarole that is involved and all the terms, conditions and everything else, then we could be faced with abnormal capital pressures on the economy of Saskatchewan and in particular, the construction industry in Saskatchewan.

This will force municipalities to go on an immediate spending spree if they can get the money and we put that very important rider because of all the terms and conditions put on it. If they can get the money, they are forced now to go on a spending spree, when we are looking at increased costs in the construction industry which could amount to some 60 per cent in labor costs alone this year. We are now in a time of high economic activity forcing municipalities to go on a spending spree. I am sure the Minister of Municipal Affairs didn't think about that and likely didn't discuss it with the Minister of Finance before this project was announced. It seems to me that

there could only be one reason for this particular program and it is to pay off the council members of Saskatoon and Regina who maintain silence about the ward system that was imposed by the Government opposite.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Lane: — And is that the real reason for the Bill? All the evidence certainly indicates that, that it is a pay-off to those members who did remain silent. And there is probably every indication to the Members opposite that that committee will help those councils who didn't say anything about the ward system and help the Government ram it through on the people of Saskatchewan.

We, Mr. Speaker, will have more to say on this Bill, I beg leave to adjourn the debate.

Debate adjourned.

Mr. Messer moved second reading of **Bill No. 71 — An Act to amend The Municipal Employees' Superannuation Act, 1973.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, the principle of this Bill is to correct some omissions which occurred during the revision of The Municipal Employees' Superannuation Act, 1973. We established community colleges and the boards which are now administering the colleges have applied for inclusion in this superannuation plan. The commission in charge of the superannuation plan suggests that there may be yet other groups wishing to join the plan so we are amending the definition of the employer to include any group that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council approves. Any order issued under this Section will be greatly influenced by a recommendation from the commission.

We are providing the commission with the discretionary authority to grant an extension to the present six-months' time limit that may elapse between periods of employment without the member losing continuity of service. A member, for example, may wish to take educational leave for a period which is longer than six months and the commission does not wish to see the member lose any benefits of the plan because of the extended leave.

A member of the superannuation plan who is employed as a policeman or a fireman shall normally retire at age 60. Members in these classes of employment contribute into the plan at a higher rate because of their earlier retirement date and we are exempting them from the reduction factor that applies in the calculation of the pension of other members who take early retirement.

During the drafting of this Act the intent was to have it conform as closely as possible to the Public Service Superannuation Act. However, one omission occurred in the percentage factor which is used to calculate the reduction in the pension where the member takes an early retirement. The Bill corrects that omission.

Mr. Speaker, all of the matters contained in this Bill, all of the matters have been requested by the commission which administers the superannuation plan and they have been in turn discussed with the committee and I emphasize that for the Hon.

Member for Lumsden's (Mr. Lane) consideration so that his perverted mind does not attempt to confuse this Bill as he has in regard to the Community Capital Fund.

Mr. Speaker, having made those few brief remarks, I move second reading of this Bill.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. J. G. Lane (Lumsden): — Mr. Speaker, before the Minister takes his seat would he permit a question? You mentioned community colleges and, of course, the explanatory notes don't give even that indication. I am wondering what other groups were being considered here?

Mr. Messer: — We are not saying that we have any knowledge of any other groups at this time but obviously when the revision of The Municipal Employees' Superannuation Act was undertaken last year community colleges were ignored, they have now been brought to our attention. We don't want that to occur again so we want to open it up so that other groups, we don't know what groups they may be now, will have the opportunity to receive the benefits of the Act.

Mr. Lane: — Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate we didn't get a little more clarification. I will apologize to the House, unfortunately I was not given a copy of the Bill. We are also a little disappointed on the explanatory notes as you know certain basic information was not set out. When we get an explanation of what we are doing, it is simply to allow the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to add additional employers. We didn't find out until his speech today that that includes community colleges.

I am not quite satisfied with what the Minister says that no other groups were considered and that this particular provision did have — that this provision includes certain other groups and does have the support, as the Minister says, of the commission. It might be interesting to note that there are an awful lot of concerns and if this Bill includes other employers such as any employer that may be in existence under a provincial police force, if that is coming under proposed legislation, I am not so sure that that will have the support of certain members of the commission.

We will have other comments on this and I beg leave to adjourn debate.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. W. E. Smishek (Minister of Public Health) moved second reading of **Bill No. 67 — An Act respecting The Department of Health.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading to The Department of Health Act. On previous occasions I have had the opportunity of informing the House of the Department of Health achievements and initiatives in a wide range of activities relating to health care and health promotion. The extent of these achievements have been widely recognized. They have made out

Government pioneer in the health field.

The purpose of the new Act is to make the legislation responsive to existing and future health needs and demands. What this means is that we should like to set our role and responsibilities as they affect the health consumer and those who are providing or promoting health care. Many developments have taken place in the health delivery system over the past decade or so. Gone are the days of traditional public health when the providers of health care concentrated all their energies on the diagnosis and treatment of health disorders and the prevention of certain communicable diseases.

Today health services cover a vast spectrum, from environmental control measures to personal diagnostic, preventive treatment, rehabilitative and custodian services. As the World Health Organization defines it, "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmities."

Let me illustrate how health care can now be placed in a wider social context. First, Mr. Speaker, the Department is engaged in new and expanding areas of health and social programming. In an age of relative affluence and technological sophistication, the individual health consumer plays an increasingly important role in determining his own state of health and fitness. For those under the age of 40 the principal causes of death are motor vehicle accidents, heart disease and cancer, all of which are associated with certain life styles and living conditions which to a large extent are in our opinion, preventable. Likewise mental disorders, drug, alcohol abuse, venereal disease, obesity and malnutrition can be regarded as social as well as health problems. More and more the Department is responding to these wide social problems by providing health education programs encompassing nutrition, alcoholism, family planning, venereal disease and mental health, to name only a few.

More and more the Department is acting on behalf of the disadvantaged and in the interests of equality by reducing or eliminating the cost of such health measures as dental care for children, hearing aids, renal disease care, chiropractic treatment, aid for the handicapped, medical and hospital care generally. We believe every Saskatchewan citizen should have as close to equal access to health care services as possible. This is the long-range goal we are aiming at.

Second, Mr. Speaker, there is a new emphasis on delivery of health services. As I mentioned we are emphasizing preventive health and social programming to meet the needs at the community level. More specifically the Government is interested in minimizing the need for institutional care as well as promoting home-care services and the concept of community health and social centres. It is also our intention to encourage public participation in the planning of health and social services at the regional and local level.

With these developments in mind I should like to draw the attention of the House to the Bill's second clause which designates the Minister and the Department of Public Health as the Minister of Health and the Department of Health, respectively. With this new designation we hope health consumers will gain a greater understanding of the services offered by the Government as well as more closely identifying them with the goals of the

Department. We are more and more involved in the delivery and provision of personal health care as opposed to what used to be public health measures. People usually refer to the Department as Department of Health rather than Department of Public Health. Similarly in the voluminous amount of mail that we receive you will find people addressing their mail to the Department of Health rather than the Department of Public Health, or referring to the Minister of Health rather than Minister of Public Health. I find, Mr. Speaker, that people are even confused in finding the telephone numbers, they always look under "Health" rather than under "Public Health" and this often is an annoying feature of the name itself.

In Section 3 the stipulation that the position of the deputy minister be filled by a fully qualified medical practitioner has been removed, Mr. Speaker. This is a logical step in the light of the administrative and management duties that characterize that position. This is a common position in nearly all other provinces in Canada.

Section 6 clarifies and expands upon the public health functions as laid out in the existing Act. This Section deals with health delivery in its broadest aspect without limiting the Minister or Department to an outdated set of definitions and outmoded terms of references. Subsections (a) (g) (i) and (j) deal with the very necessary information gathering and research component of the health system. Our Government recognizes the importance of research and planning function as it contributes to the improvement of existing services and the creation of new programs. Subsections (b) (c) (e) and (f) elaborate upon the Department's working relationship with the providers of health care and with the health related agencies and organization.

Since the delivery of the health service involves a great number of public, private and voluntary organizations the need for mutual consultation, representation and agreement is recognized in the new Act, which was not the case under the old Act.

New emphasis has been placed on consumer participation and the development of comprehensive health services encompassing home-care programs and integrating health care facilities. Subsections (d) and (h) constitute a recognition that the development of human and material health resources can never be considered complete or for that matter left to chance. Growth and technological advancement in the medical and health sciences are progressing at such a rate that all health workers must be encouraged to adapt and to keep up-to-date.

Health education and related programs provided for in subsection (1) are increasingly important as we seek to motivate and educate people regarding their own responsibility in health maintenance. The on-going venereal disease information campaign, the expanded alcoholism program are the cases in point.

Mr. Speaker, Section 7 points to the continuing importance of immunization in the prevention of disease especially in children. This at one time used to be main function for the Department. We have come a long way since 1923 when the Act was initially passed. We cannot afford to relax our vigilance against diseases which once killed thousands and now through the efforts of the total health care system are rarely, if ever, heard of. Vaccines and other drugs have been and will continue to

be made available free of charge as they were in the past.

Section 8 generally describes the function of the Provincial Laboratory. Few people realize the role which the central Provincial Laboratory plays in the control of communicable and other diseases in protecting food consumers and in providing a total diagnostic testing service. New methods, technologies and equipment are constantly being incorporated so that Saskatchewan keeps pace with advances in medical science. It is worth noting that special efforts are made to provide rural physicians and the smaller hospitals with the comprehensive backup testing services.

Mr. Speaker, Section 9 permits the Department to provide transportation and drugs or supplies to those who are sick and injured and who may be caught in an emergency situation. Section 9 recognizes the Departmental responsibility to the physically disabled. I recently announced, Aids for Independent Living or the Sail program and work assessment. Work conditioning programs are good indicators of the strides we are making in this field and the commitment we feel for the disabled.

Mr. Speaker, Section 12 provides that the Minister may require an oath from persons who are appointed to boards, commissions, committees or councils. This may be interpreted as an oath of office provision, an oath which must be taken by all officials of the Public Service as laid out under The Public Service Act of our province. A person taking this oath promises not to take bribes or to divulge information gained through his office without proper authority. This oath is signed by all full-time Public Service employees in order that the interests of the individuals and the public at large are safeguarded. Despite the fact that boards and commissions are being used increasingly in the planning and administration of health programs this oath has never been a requirement for appointment. Such a measure, I feel, may on occasion be necessary to ensure that information on the health disorders and private affairs of individual patients is kept confidential. After all we are no longer a department in the public health arena only but also providing very much personal services. I am sure that Members on both sides will agree that it is important to keep those matters of private health as a confidential matter in the event that any board, commission or committee examines or looks into those areas of health. Members of many boards and commissions may on occasion have access to information that is highly confidential. Normal access to such material is granted only to people who are under oath of secrecy such as the civil servant, but as we involve more and more people in helping to provide information and participate in the organization of health services in order for them to make recommendations that are valid, very often they will need confidential information.

I think it is only right that the public continue to have confidence in the confidential nature of information given to the Government and to Members of such bodies as are appointed from time to time. In short, this requirement will ensure that boards and commission maintain the same high standard of ethics as the regular Public Service. Mr. Speaker, it will also serve to protect the personal and private rights of individual citizens as well as the integrity of the fellow board and commission members.

Sections 13 and 14 deal with the delegation of the

administrative duties to the Deputy Minister and the department.

In conclusion I want to say that considerable progress in health care has been made over the last 50 years. We are merely trying to update legislation that I think was long due for updating. Let me recap, Mr. Speaker, the basic provisions of this Act are as follows:

1. The name of the Health Department is changed from the Department of Public Health to the Department of Health.
2. It provides specific authority for the Provincial Laboratory or air ambulance, physical rehabilitation and communicable diseases, drug vaccine distribution program.
3. It reflects the current objectives of the provincial Health Department.
4. It deletes the requirement that the Deputy Minister be a physician.
5. Provides that people serving on commissions and boards and councils may be required to take an oath of secrecy.

We need a Departmental Act which reflects the realities of the 1970s, not of the 1920s. The old Act has served the people of Saskatchewan well. It was initially passed, as I have indicated before, in 1923 and it needs updating. It is time to retire the old Act and move on into the future with the new Act.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the support of the House for the new Departmental Act and I move second reading.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. D. F. MacDonald (Moose Jaw North): — Mr. Speaker, I have no quarrel with changing the name from the Department of Public Health to the Department of Health. I am sure this will help anyone making a phone call or looking it up in the phone book. I would suggest to the Minister as he is making the name of this Department a little simpler so that the public can understand it, that he talk to the new Minister of Natural Resources when they are setting up a department with quite a lengthy name associated with it.

One of the aspects of the Bill that I should like to speak on today, is that it has been quite a long standing tradition and one that was incorporated in The Department of Public Health Act, which we will be repealing by this Bill, that the Deputy Minister of Health shall be a duly qualified medical practitioner. In this Bill today, as the Minister has said, the Deputy Minister must no longer be a duly qualified medical practitioner, nor for that matter must that person necessarily have any expertise in the field of health care.

There has been a very definite and continuing de-emphasis of the professional in whatever field, in the field of health or any other field, as far as this Government is concerned, a continued de-emphasis of the professional. I think there is some particular reason for having a medical person as the Deputy in the Department of Health. We would never expect that the present Minister nor any future Minister of Health should have

to be a doctor. This is a little too much to expect. But it is, therefore, quite important, I think, that the Deputy Minister of Health have some particular expertise in the field of health, not necessarily in the field of politics. There has been, I think, a fairly noticeable attempt by the Blakeney Government to replace Deputy Ministers with particular expertise no matter what that expertise is, by people with an expertise solely in the field of politics. I am not naïve enough to expect that Deputy Ministers should not be sympathetic to the political party in power, of course, they should. But I do not feel that an expertise in politics alone is enough to qualify a person to be appointed to position of Deputy Minister, especially in the field of health.

A Deputy Minister knowledgeable in health matters is likely most important in this Government opposite. We have seen the NDP involve themselves in introducing politics into the field of health. This has been especially evident in the matter of the Regina Community Clinic. I think the Regina Community Clinic and other community clinics are founded on a good concept, but when politics get introduced we see a complete breakdown as we have seen in Regina.

It is odd to notice in this Bill that this Bill states that it will administer various Acts. Some of the Acts are still to be passed this year. It should be noted that there is one particular Act and it is Bill No. 47 — An Act respecting Certain Community Health Associations, which is not included as an Act to be administered by the Public Health Department. I think this would indicate that the Minister is possibly having second thoughts about even introducing The Community Health Clinic Act at this Session.

There is one other matter, and this is the one which deals with the oath of secrecy. I noticed the Minister, in defending this clause in the newspaper, on March 16th, the Minister said that he expects this provision would not be used extensively to withhold information of public concern. I don't know how he defines extensively but certainly this is not good enough for me.

The last paragraph in the Star-Phoenix of March 16th says, and I quote:

Until it is the appropriate time to release information it should be kept secret.

Well it is the Minister who is to decide what is the appropriate time and when it is not appropriate and what matter is appropriate and what matter is not appropriate for the public good. I say that the record of the Government opposite is not good in this matter. This Government has shown that what is appropriate may well be defined as what is politically advantageous. This Government opposite who believes in informing the public only when the information will promote the NDP.

We have seen the record of the NDP Government in the North, when information is released that the Government does feel is appropriate. If an official of the DNS releases such information he can well expect that he will lose his job, as had already happened. And the oath of secrecy that is included in this Bill by the Minister may well be the answer to this type of thing. We know that if certain information is made public regarding the Regina Community Clinics it could very well prove to be

embarrassing to the NDP. And possibly this clause, concerning the oath of secrecy, may well appear to solve some of the problems in this regard.

I don't have any arguments with the Minister that information on personal files must be kept confidential, of course it must, it always has been the rule and always shall be. This practice has been accepted by people on both sides of this House, by the medical profession and by the public and we have no argument with keeping personal files private and confidential. But it is the other matters which this oath of secrecy covers which cause me some concern and that it may be actually going a little too far.

Mr. Speaker, there are some other comments by other Members of this House, so I would ask leave to adjourn at this time.

Debate adjourned.

Hon. J. E. Brockelbank (Minister of Government Services) moved second reading of **Bill No. 41 — An Act to amend The Public Works Act**.

He said: Mr. Speaker, this Bill to amend The Public Works Act is for the purpose of updating the wording of the Act to conform with existing practices of the Department. Not only does it improve the wording in referring to present day contract practices but it allows some delegation of certain powers from the Minister, from the Deputy and from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to other people in the Department, because it is considered expedient to have them, and quite satisfactory, to have them authorize certain work and practices and does not impede or interfere with the work of the Department.

Members will be aware of the fact that The Public Works Act was written many years ago. It does have some antiquated references to equipment and materials. To illustrate that point I can make reference to "carts, carriages and horses" in The Public Works Act. The modern day practices would substitute terms such as vehicles to cover that situation.

The Amendments to the Act deal strictly with the updating and some delegation of powers to other people in the Department. I don't anticipate that anyone will find any great degree of objection to the amendments that are proposed since the principle of the Act remains intact and will continue on upon passage, in the modified and updated form.

I would, therefore, take great pleasure in moving second reading of this Bill.

Mr. H. E. Coupland (Meadow Lake): — Mr. Speaker, I went through this Bill and I can't see anything that we don't agree with. The Minister has already said parts of the Act that refer to carts and horses needs updating. We will be supporting it. We will probably have some questions when we come to clause by clause in Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

The Assembly adjourned at 9:30 o'clock p.m.