

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session - Seventeenth Legislature
67th Day

Wednesday, May 8, 1974.

The Assembly met at 10:00 o'clock a.m.
On the Orders of the Day.

QUESTIONS

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY STRIKE

MR. C.P. MacDONALD (Milestone): — Mr. Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Snyder).

I understand, Mr. Speaker, that in the construction industry that the negotiating teams are not meeting. The negotiations are at a complete standstill and there is absolutely no progress made after five weeks of striking.

I wonder if the Minister can indicate to the House what steps he is intending to take, or if he is going to take any steps to bring the two sides in the dispute together and see if the strike can be settled?

HON. G.T. SNYDER (Minister of Labour): — I think the Member is overstating the case if he says that nothing is happening and no meetings are taking place. The Department of Labour through the Deputy Minister and through the Industrial Relations Branch has been in regular touch with the principals involved. While at the present moment there is no immediate plan for a meeting to take place of the parties to bring them back to the table, we are assuming that in the not too distant future there will be a firming up of positions to the point where they will return to the bargaining table.

I don't have anything further to add other than that the Department of Labour is bending every effort to see to it that there is no stone left unturned with respect to the construction industry and the building trades involved. We will keep the House informed as the matter develops.

MR. MacDONALD: — A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, I find this attitude extremely strange.

The nursing profession went on strike one day. The Minister of Health got up and put the heat on them and demanded that they go back to work. The reason, of course, was because they didn't join CUPE, they joined their own union.

MR. SPEAKER: — Order! Will you state your question please, not a statement.

MR. MacDONALD: — Is the Minister going to ask the construction industry and the workers in the construction industry to go back to work and take the same attitude as the Minister of Health or is he going to sit idly by and do nothing. Millions of dollars worth of construction projects are at a standstill, thousands of employees are out of work and now from what I understand they are concerned, they are not getting a pay cheque. They are

disturbed about the possibility of the strike going on for weeks and weeks. And the Minister of Labour sits there and does absolutely nothing, while the Minister of Health in one day . . .

MR. SNYDER: — We have the continual editorializing by the Member opposite, he never makes a point in this House, he never asks a question without an editorial comment.

MR. SPEAKER: — I would ask the Members to ask questions and not make statements.

MR. McISAAC: — The Member did ask a question. It would be nice if the Minister would answer.

MR. MacDONALD: — My question, Mr. Speaker, is: Is the Minister going to continue to sit on his butt and do absolutely nothing about the construction industry while the Government attacks the nursing profession after the first day of the strike?

MR. SNYDER: — The gentleman opposite is a master of oversimplification and I suppose he knows so little about industrial relations or the construction industry that he isn't aware of the complexity of the construction industry. There is no indication at this time that an outside mediator or a person who would act in that capacity would serve any useful purpose.

I believe both parties have indicated a confidence in the Department of Labour and the conciliation services that are being provided. We think some movements are being made and we feel at this point in time an outside mediator, keeping in mind the wishes of both parties involved in this dispute, an outside mediator would not serve a useful purpose.

There are some plans that are being made that I don't propose at this stage to reveal to the House. But we are as interested and as concerned, probably more concerned than the Members opposite in seeing that a solution is reached to the problem.

PRO-RATIONING OF POTASH

MR. D.G. STEUART (Leader of the Opposition): — Before the Orders of the Day I should like to direct a question to the Minister of Mineral Resources. Is the Government planning to put an end to pro-rationing of potash?

HON. E.L. COWLEY (Minister of Mineral Resources): — Any Government policy in that area will be announced in due course.

MR. STEUART: — Surely you can answer the question. Is the Government planning, and if so, when will you announce your plans about putting an end to pro-rationing of potash?

MR. COWLEY: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I said

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before, the Government is planning many things. The Government will announce the results of its planning in due course, when the Government feels it is an appropriate time to so announce.

MR. STEUART: — Is the Government also planning that they will announce in due course to increase very sharply the royalty or the tax on the potash — on the potash industry?

MR. COWLEY: — The same answer, Mr. Speaker.

SECOND READINGS

HON. R. ROMANOW (Attorney General) moved second reading of Bill No. 133 — **an Act respecting Representation in the Legislative Assembly.**

He said: Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce and move second reading of Bill 133, an Act respecting Representation in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to make any lengthy speech at all with respect to this Bill. I believe that most of the issues have already been debated at the time of the boundaries resolution.

This Bill embodies in statute what the actual recommendations of the Maguire Commission on Independent Boundaries was with respect to the constituencies. The ridings are set out there according to the schedule which has been taken identically out of the report of Mr. Justice Maguire.

There will be extensive House amendments to the Bill. These House amendments, I am advised, are the result of technical errors in the descriptions of the constituencies. I refer to surveyor description errors in terms of boundary points and townships and so forth. The officials have advised me that there is no change in the intent or in the description or in the effect of the boundaries whatsoever. That all of these House amendments are those that basically make it technically more correct.

In fact I have received a letter from the Hon. Mr. Justice P.H. Maguire of the Court of Appeal and he says this in the letter which I should like to read into the record dated May 1, 1974. He writes:

Dear Mr. Minister. I am advised that you wish to receive confirmation of the fact that the Commission approves and accepts a number of changes in boundary descriptions which were proposed. I understand by an engineer, Mr. Babiuck, these recommending changes which do not in fact make any change in boundaries were considered and checked by the Saskatchewan Land Surveyor engaged by the Commission for this work. And following approval by him were considered to be proper and in many instances somewhat better in the actual description. I am pleased therefore to confirm to you that these changes are in order.

This matter was first brought to my attention by Mr. J.E. Friesen, Q.C., and I therefore think it proper to forward

to you a copy of my letter to Mr. Friesen, of January 28, 1974. Yours sincerely, Mr. Justice P.H. Maguire.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think anything else can be said with respect to this Bill. This Bill will come into effect when on the day next following, the day on which the 17th Legislative Assembly is dissolved or is determined by the effluxion of time. We work in the meantime on the old boundaries. We represent the old boundaries. But the new boundaries will come into play on the day of dissolution or otherwise through the effluxion of time.

There will be, as I say, these series of House amendments. I should advise that I have given a copy of these proposed House amendments to the Liberal Party opposite so that they can take a look at them, to double check them. I haven't personally checked them myself, but I have confidence in my officials and Mr. Justice Maguire that there is no change in this area.

Mr. Speaker, those are the only words I'd like to say and I, therefore, should like to move second reading of Bill 133.

Motion agreed to and Bill read a second time.

WELCOME TO STUDENTS

MR. A OLIVER (Shaunavon): — Mr. Speaker, I should like to introduce to you and to this House some 20 Grade Eleven students from Mankota High School, located in the west gallery. They are accompanied by Mrs. Picard. They have had a tour of various places in the city. I hope that they find the deliberations of the Committee of the Whole and later on, Committee of Finance, of an educational value to them. And you will see how sometimes the House operates rather informally and sometimes rather formally. This is one of the informal times. I hope your stay will be educational and you have a safe trip home.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

The Assembly adjourned at 9:31 o'clock p.m.