

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
Fourth Session — Eighteenth Legislature

November 16, 1977

This being the day appointed by Proclamation of his Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, dated October 25, 1977 for meeting of the Fourth Session of the Eighteenth Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan, and the Assembly having met:

Mr. Speaker informed the Assembly that he had received a communication from the Private Secretary of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, stating that His Honour would open the Session at three o'clock p.m. today, Wednesday, the Sixteenth day of November, 1977.

3:03 o'clock p.m.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor entered the Chamber and, having taken his seat upon the Throne was pleased to open the session with the following Speech: MR. SPEAKER,

MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

It is my privilege to welcome you to the Fourth Session of the Eighteenth Legislature of Saskatchewan.

CANADA

My Government believes that Canada will remain as a strong and united nation.

The efforts of my Government are directed toward finding new ways of defining Confederation so that Canadians from all regions will feel a renewed sense of commitment and loyalty to their nation.

This is not an easy task.

Resentment against the federal government is not confined to Quebec. Saskatchewan, in common with the other western provinces, has reservations about the status quo. We have paid a high price for the tariff protection of Central Canadian manufacturers. We are the victims of a national transportation policy which makes it difficult to establish job-creating local industries. We must share the revenues of our natural resources with the rest of Canada, but we do not benefit from a similar sharing of the revenues of other commodities. We are a multicultural society, yet we see Canada increasingly defined as a land of only two cultural traditions.

Nevertheless, no one can question the loyalty of Saskatchewan people to the idea of Confederation. We are proud to be Canadians, and we want a Canada which commands the loyalty of all its citizens.

My Government believes that a majority of Quebecers have not rejected Canada. To keep Canada strong and united, we must be prepared to encourage negotiations which will produce a new basis for the Canadian federation. My Government is committed to this course of action.

THE ECONOMY

Saskatchewan continues to enjoy remarkable prosperity. During 1976 our Gross Domestic Product increased to \$7.4 billion, personal income rose to \$6.3 billion, and the construction industry recorded sizable increases. Throughout the year 14,000 additional jobs were created and our unemployment rate remained among the lowest in Canada.

In contrast, the Canadian economy as a whole continues to weaken. Real Gross National Product is declining, spending on consumer goods and services is faltering. Canada's trade deficit is reaching new records, and unemployment is growing at an alarming rate.

Under the strong leadership of my Government, Saskatchewan has been largely shielded from this economic recession in the rest of Canada. My Government will continue its efforts to keep our economy strong and to make sure our citizens keep those benefits and services they have come to expect.

As an immediate practical step to maintain spending by consumers and to assist those living on low incomes, the minimum wage will increase to \$3.15 per hour effective January 31, 1978, and to \$3.25 per hour effective June 30, 1978. In addition, my Government will introduce measures to supplement public service pensions.

AGRICULTURE

My Government is committed to strengthening rural Saskatchewan.

The rich soil of Saskatchewan has sustained the economy of our province throughout its history. In recent months, many Saskatchewan citizens have become alarmed about the loss of farm land to non-resident absentee landlords. You will be asked to approve amendments to *The Farm Ownership Act* to maintain the ownership of Saskatchewan farm land by Saskatchewan residents.

The Farm Security Act will be extended to provide continued protection for lessees and purchasers of farm land in cases of serious crop losses.

For the last three years, the price of beef cattle has been below the cost of production. In the absence of positive action by the federal government, Saskatchewan introduced a program of cash advances and grants to cattle producers to help maintain herds through this period of depressed prices. Although prices have stabilized slightly. My Government recently announced more favourable terms for the repayment of these cash advances and loans.

The Canadian Wheat Board, an agency vital to Saskatchewan farmers, has been subject to increasing attacks. My Government will work actively to defend the Wheat Board and the principle of orderly marketing.

In order to provide greater protection against rustling you will be asked to approve a new Animal Identification Act.

RESOURCES

The results of my Government's resource policy are well known. Saskatchewan

people now control a greater share of their natural resources. Provincial revenues from these resources have increased significantly. A substantial part of these revenues, accumulated in the Energy and Resource Development Fund, have been invested to provide benefits for our people, not only in this generation, but in generations to come.

In order to deal more effectively with these investments for the future, you will be asked to approve legislation establishing a resource revenue trust fund.

In other areas, my Government will continue to promote the development of Saskatchewan's resources.

The exploration and development of Saskatchewan heavy oil reserves is expanding. Already in 1977 an estimated \$11 million has been spent in drilling activities. My Government is actively encouraging the construction of a heavy oil upgrading plant to process Saskatchewan heavy oil.

Saskatchewan has large amounts of high-quality uranium. My Government set up the Cluff Lake Board of Inquiry to investigate the economic, social and environmental effects of a proposed uranium mine in northwest Saskatchewan, and the broader implications of uranium development. Extensive public hearings have been held throughout the Province and many groups have been granted funds to develop presentations for the Board. My Government awaits the recommendations of the Board.

My Government also awaits the recommendations of the Natural Gas Development and Conservation Board on prices and development schedules for producers of natural gas.

Discussions are in progress with representatives of the coal industry and other interested groups on future policy for the development of Saskatchewan's sizable lignite coal deposits.

The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan became a potash producer just over a year ago when it acquired the former Duval mine, now the Cory Division. Since then it has added mines at Rocanville and Lanigan. Today, the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan owns more than 25 percent of the industry's productive capacity.

One of the objectives of my government in entering the potash industry was to guarantee orderly expansion of the mines. The Potash Corporation is already proceeding with plans to expand production at both the Cory mine and the Rocanville mine. This has already resulted in more jobs for Saskatchewan workers.

The Potash Corporation is now the largest single producer of potash in Canada, the largest contributor to Canpotex, and the largest exporter of potash in the western world.

My government believes that Saskatchewan people wish their government to take all appropriate steps to preserve and protect their right to develop mineral resources for their benefit and for the benefit of future generations of Saskatchewan people.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

During the past five years, the value of manufacturing shipments in Saskatchewan

more than doubled, total investment tripled and new manufacturing investment increased four times. In the same period, employment in manufacturing increased by 35 per cent. This is an impressive success story.

My Government recognizes the importance of locally-based Saskatchewan industry. We share the confidence of Saskatchewan manufacturers in a developing and a diversified provincial economy. Programs aimed at encouraging and strengthening the initiatives of Saskatchewan manufacturers will be introduced in the near future. Additional help will also be provided to smaller communities to revitalize their commercial areas and to identify promising business opportunities.

My Government believes that the construction of the Alaska natural gas pipeline will provide significant employment opportunities for Saskatchewan residents through construction activities and the manufacture of pipe by the IPSCO plant in Regina.

My Government appreciates the role played by small businessmen in the development of our province. It also recognizes the frustration of many small businessmen in the face of government regulation at the federal, provincial and municipal levels. A Minister's Advisory Committee on Small Business in Saskatchewan will be established to advise the Minister on additional ways to improve opportunities for small businesses in Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan is proud of the large place taken in its business community by co-operatives and credit unions. Since 1971, 340 co-operatives have been incorporated in the Province. The Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development continues to assist people interested in forming and knowing about co-operatives.

My Government notes with pleasure that next March Federated Co-operatives Limited, will celebrate its 50th anniversary.

Amendments to *The Credit Union Act* will be placed before you.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

My Government believes in strengthening local government. It has sought ways to broaden the base of municipal finance and has provided more flexibility and autonomy to municipal councils and school boards in setting local priorities.

In 1971 provincial grants to urban municipalities were less than \$1.3 million. These grants were all conditional. In 1977-78 grants to urban municipalities reached almost \$46 million and of this amount nearly \$26 million was in the form of unconditional grants.

Representatives of urban and rural municipalities are now engaged in discussions to establish a new system of sharing provincial revenues with local governments.

Local education authorities and other interested citizens have long recognized the need for strengthened local autonomy in education. The White Paper on school law, tabled at the last session of this Legislative Assembly, has now received extensive public discussion and study. You will be asked to approve legislation based on this Paper.

SENIOR CITIZENS

In the coming year my Government will continue to give special attention to the needs of senior citizens.

In order to help senior citizens who wish to remain in their own homes and communities, my Government has proposed a universal home care program. This program is being discussed with senior citizens and other interested people. My Government expects that the first stages will begin in 1978.

The Senior Citizens Home Repair grant program will be revised and strengthened.

Many senior citizens living in nursing homes require extra nursing and medical care, often at high cost. My Government will announce plans to provide additional financial relief for these people.

TRANSPORTATION

The battle for equitable freight rates and an adequate rail transport network is not yet over. Influential voices still call for rail line abandonment and an end to the Crow's Nest Pass freight rates.

The Hall Commission report on grain handling and transportation is a landmark document for Western Canada. The manner in which the recommendations are acted upon will determine the future not only of western agriculture but of the western economy. Actions to date by the federal government in apparent opposition to the recommendations of the Hall report have caused widespread concern.

In the interests of the West, my Government will continue to press for maintaining an adequate rail system and retaining the Crow's Nest rates.

In the coming year my Government will provide \$10 million for urban transportation. This program includes assistance for building arterial streets and highway connectors, conducting transportation studies and acquiring buses and other vehicles. Assistance will also be provided for transportation for the handicapped.

Work is almost complete on a new airport at Hudson Bay. My Government will share the cost of developing community airports in many other areas of the province.

The Maidstone Bridge, built at a cost of more than \$3 million is now complete. Work will begin in 1978 on the Gronlid Bridge.

NORTHERN SASKATCHEWAN

My Government will continue to place special emphasis on the needs of Northern Saskatchewan.

Since 1972 unprecedented strides have been made in all aspects of northern development. In housing, 175 homes will be built in this next year under the Northern Housing Program, bringing to 800 the total constructed during this five-year program.

In education, new schools will be built in such communities as Cole Bay, Turnor Lake, Michel Village and St. George's Hill, as well as a vocational school, estimated to cost more than \$4 million, in La Loche. The new gymnasium at Beauval is nearly complete and other facilities, such as the new Stanley Mission School, are well under way.

Municipal services will be improved by a new water and sewer system at Beauval and extensions of the systems at La Loche and Buffalo Narrows. The systems at Ile a la Crosse, Green Lake and La Ronge have been upgraded.

In addition, \$7 million for recreation facilities in the north will be provided during the next four years. Major grants have already been approved for Weyakwin, Uranium City, and Creighton.

Northern people have been given greater opportunities for self-government. Through the Northern Municipal Council, the Northern School Board and elected local school boards, local advisory councils, and local community authorities, northern people are making important decisions affecting their lives.

Legislation will be proposed to grant additional responsibilities to local governments in the north.

ENERGY

In the coming year, my Government will create an Office of Energy Conservation under the Minister of Mineral Resources. The office will play an important role in co-ordinating and fostering energy research and development.

To encourage conservation by home-owners, a loan program will be established for the purchase and installation of insulation.

JUSTICE

My Government continues to improve the administration of justice in this province.

The list of accomplishments is long. The budget and the number of staff positions for the Magistrates' Court have been significantly increased. A Chief Judge and an Administrative Director have been appointed and Judges' salaries have been improved considerably. The Provincial Court Management Information System, one of the first of its kind in Canada, has been introduced to strengthen the administration of the courts.

In a continued Effort to improve the court system in Saskatchewan, my Government will introduce The Provincial Court Act. The Act will:

1. Establish the Provincial Court as a court of record;
2. Provide for the creation of a Judicial Council; and
3. Give greater independence to the Provincial Court.

The Criminal Justice Co-ordinating Committee has recently reviewed the services available for juvenile offenders and disadvantaged youth and His Honour Judge Maher has completed his examination of the operation of wilderness camps in the province. My Government will be reassessing its policies in the light of these reports.

Hearings on the corrections system in Saskatchewan have recently been conducted by His Honour Judge Moore. My Government awaits his report.

FAMILY LAW

For some time now, my Government has been considering the recommendations of the Saskatchewan Law Reform Commission relating to matrimonial property.

In 1975, as an interim step, *The Married Women's Property Act* was amended to give the courts additional powers to make a fair and equitable division of property between spouses. At this Session my Government intends to introduce a new Matrimonial Homes Act.

You will be asked to approve legislation to establish a Unified Family Court. This new Court will deal exclusively with family law, thereby reducing the caseloads of other Saskatchewan Courts. The first Unified Family Court will be located in Saskatoon.

My Government will place before you a new Extra-Provincial Custody Order Enforcement Act.

SAFETY '77

Last year my Government announced a seven point Traffic Safety Program.

The results to date have been impressive.

New measures have been introduced to control impaired drivers.

A Traffic Safety Court has been opened in Regina.

A new traffic safety curriculum has been developed for use in our schools.

Safety standards and regular inspections for school buses have been upgraded.

Recent statistics confirm that the Safety '77 campaign has resulted in many people being saved from injuries in traffic accidents.

You will be asked to approve further amendments to *The Vehicles Act*.

HEALTH

In the coming year, my Government will make further improvements to our health care system.

Additional funding will be provided for the College of Medicine to permit new initiatives in geriatric services and family medicine.

The powers of the professional association regulating nurses will be strengthened and updated in proposed revisions to *The Registered Nurses Act*.

A new Lifestyles Program will be designed to help Saskatchewan residents attain healthier lifestyles.

Amendments to *The Marriage Act* relating to the minimum age at which a person may marry will be introduced.

RECREATION

My Government continues to take steps to provide protection and prudent management of our wildlife resources. A new Moose Management Program has been developed to ensure the protection of prime breeding animals while at the same time directing hunting pressure towards non-productive animals.

Last summer, my Government inaugurated the Community and Regional Tourism Development Program to promote tourism in Saskatchewan. The program is designed to provide financial assistance for the establishment of tourism regions and the formation of regional travel associations.

A new Regional Parks Act will be placed before you.

SPECIAL EVENTS

During 1977, the people of Saskatchewan have joined with people throughout the Commonwealth to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. To honour this important anniversary, my Government has arranged for the distribution of portraits and pins to schools and other public places in the province.

Looking ahead, my Government notes with pride several forthcoming events.

On November 23, 1977, His Royal Highness Prince Philip arrives in Regina. His visit will coincide with the meeting in Saskatchewan of the Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth for the first time in the history of our province and with the opening of Canadian Western Agribition, now Canada's largest livestock show.

This year, Saskatchewan 4H Clubs celebrate the 60th anniversary of their founding.

Next year, Regina will celebrate the 75th anniversary of its incorporation as a city, and in August 1978, Saskatchewan will host the 19th Annual conference of Canadian Premiers.

Looking further ahead, in 1980, Saskatchewan will celebrate its 75th anniversary as a Province of Canada. You will be asked to approve legislation to establish a body to co-ordinate the organization of festivities across the Province.

I leave you now to the business of the Session with the full confidence that you will favourably discharge your duties and responsibilities.

May Divine Providence continue to bless our Province and guide this Legislature in all its deliberations.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

INTRODUCTION OF PAGES

MR. SPEAKER: — I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to the members of the Legislative Assembly the pages who will be acting during this session. They are Natalie Biberdorf, Lorne Gulash, Connie McDougall, Gwen Orlowski, and Gail St.

Onge.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRESENTATION OF MR. NORMAN LUSNEY

MR. SPEAKER: — I beg to inform the Assembly that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has received from the Chief Electoral Officer, a certificate of the following election and return of Norman Lusney, Esq., as member for the constituency of Pelly.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I have the honor to present to you, Mr. Norman Lusney, member for the constituency of Pelly who was taken outside the row and now claims the right to take his seat.

HON. MEMBERS: — Hear, hear!

MOTIONS

SPEECH OF LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the Hon. Mr. Romanow (Attorney General) that:

The Speech of His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor be taken into consideration on Monday next.

Motion agreed to.

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Messer (Minister of Mineral Resources) that:

The Votes and Proceedings of this Assembly be printed after first having been perused by Mr. Speaker; that he do appoint the printing thereof, and that no person but such as he shall appoint do presume to print the same.

Motion agreed to.

HOUSE SITTINGS

HON. A.E. BLAKENEY (Premier): — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Snyder:

That when this Assembly adjourns on Thursday, November 17, 1977, it do stand adjourned until Monday, November 21, 1977.

Motion agreed to.

TIME OF HOUSE SITTINGS

November 16, 1977

MR. BLAKENEY: — Mr. Speaker, by leave of the Assembly, I move, seconded by the Hon. Mr. Bowerman:

That notwithstanding Rule 3, this Assembly shall on Thursday, November 17, 1977, meet at 10:00 o'clock a.m. until 1:00 o'clock p.m.

Motion agreed to.

The Assembly adjourned at 3:45 o'clock p.m.