

THE SENATE

Thursday, March 1, 1934.

The Senate met at 3 p.m., the Speaker in the Chair.

Prayers and routine proceedings.

MANITOBA SUBSIDIES IN LIEU OF PUBLIC LANDS

INQUIRY

Hon. Mr. HUGHES inquired of the Government:

1. When Manitoba became a province what subsidy did she receive in lieu of public lands?
2. How often has that subsidy been increased since then?
3. What was the date and the amount of each increase?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: The answer to the honourable gentleman's inquiry is as follows:

1. Nil.
- 2 and 3. An allowance of \$45,000 per annum was granted from January 1, 1882, by Act 45 Victoria, Chapter 5, as indemnity for want of Public Lands, and was increased to \$100,000 from July 1, 1885, by Act 48 Victoria, Chapter 50.

Under the provisions of the Manitoba Boundaries Extension Act of 1912, this grant was increased to \$562,500 in lieu of public lands as from July 1, 1908, subject to certain deductions on account of the retransfer of swamp lands and by reason of an allotment of land as an endowment to the University of Manitoba. (Yearly deductions from 1908 to 1929-30 for swamp lands \$138,492.82; yearly deductions from 1908 to 1929-30 for university lands \$15,000.00.)

Hon. Mr. HUGHES: Was not another increase made later in the final settlement with the province?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: There was no increase in the subsidy. There was some reference to a Commission to ascertain what compensation should be made in order that in relation to her public lands Manitoba might take her place on an equality with the other provinces. In its report the Commission recommended compensation to the extent of \$5,000,000. This was duly paid, and duly spent.

Hon. Mr. HUGHES: Five million dollars yearly?

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN: No; one lump sum.

THE WORK OF THE SENATE

INQUIRY AND DISCUSSION

Hon. CHARLES MURPHY rose in accordance with the following notice:

That he will call the attention of the Government to the work of the Senate and to the efforts made by the Senate to secure the initiation in this House of Government measures, and will inquire if it is the intention of the Government to introduce in the Senate at an early date any of the legislation indicated in the Speech from the Throne.

He said: Honourable members of the Senate, those of you who were present in this Chamber on the first of February last will recall that in the course of his speech on that occasion the honourable member from Vancouver (Hon. Mr. McRae) expressed the belief that

The people of Canada have but a very vague and quite erroneous impression as to the responsibility of this honourable House with respect to government.

He then added:

I make bold to suggest that some honourable member, with long experience both in this and in the other House, as well as in the Government, should make a very clear statement on the responsibility of the Senate and the scope of its authority. In this way, I am sure, we should hear much less criticism of this honourable body by reason of the long adjournments which are necessary from time to time for lack of business.

As the author of the suggestion, the honourable gentleman would have been regarded by his fellow members as the proper person to place the Senate in its proper light before Parliament and the country, but he prefers to subordinate his own fitness for the task and allow a member of longer parliamentary experience to undertake it. He has paid me the compliment of asking me to do so, and his request having been reinforced by similar requests from other members of this Chamber, I will ask the indulgence of the House while I attempt to the best of my ability to meet the wishes of my honourable friends. My observations will be confined almost entirely to a narrative of recorded facts, and are not to be taken or understood as embodying any plan of so-called Senate reform, or any fixed views of my own with regard to the best method of dealing with the case that the record establishes. I am merely asking my fellow senators to join me on a short excursion into parliamentary history, so that they may note certain facts as we go along, and observe, incidentally, what stands to the Senate's credit in the matter of money saved.

To get the true perspective through which to view Parliament and its branches, and the rights and privileges of each, it is necessary to