

# THRUST AND THRUST IN BUDGET DEBATE

### Mr. Calder Presents Year's Finances and Claims Small Surplus--Mr. Haultain Regrets Absence of Government Policy Regarding Large Ques- tions of Finance--A Prodigal Ministry

The second annual budget and financial statement of Saskatchewan was delivered by Hon. J. A. Calder Provincial Treasurer, in the Legislature on Thursday and Hon. F. W. G. Haultain continued the debate on the motion to go into supply.

**Budget Speech.**  
Mr. Calder, in opening, said the government in presenting this second annual budget considered its position unenviable. They had nothing to be ashamed of and nothing to conceal, and the estimates had been prepared with a proper and just regard to the conditions prevailing throughout the province. He was sure that the present estimates which had been prepared wisely, economically and with proper regard to the conditions. There were heavy duties devolving upon the Government from the fact that a great deal of immigration is coming into the country, and this immigration is not going into lands close to settlement. The new settlers are opening up new country, and every one who goes 10 miles away means large expenditures from the standpoint of the Government alone. To show the increase he quoted that last year there were 273 bridges, while in 1905 there were only 211. The organizations of schools had been as rapid, and in 1906 there were 248 of these constituted in Saskatchewan as against 237 in the whole of the Territories in 1904.

In the department of education, last year there were registered 562 school debentures and in 1904 there were 583. Of local improvement districts in 1904 there were 106, which were organized, as against 107 this year showing a considerable falling off in the work of that department. As an indication of the correspondence carried on, the figures go to show that in 1904 there were received 27,065 letters as against 33,543 in 1905, an increase of over one third.

**Scarcity of Labor.**  
The great scarcity of labor and material which existed during the year was felt particularly in the department of public works, but as it was felt in every branch of industrial life throughout the province. It was found last year that so far as the construction of roads and bridges was concerned, it was practically impossible to get early on the work. The money was available but labor could not be secured. The government placed orders for lumber and material months ahead of the time it was to be needed, but it was found impossible to either get the material or the labor to do the work. Profiting by this experience, arrangements have been made for this year's work some time in advance and the public works programme is well advanced now. At the same time the cost of labor and material is higher now than it was a few years ago, and the house must bear in mind that the purchasing power of the dollar today is not as great as it was in the days of the Territorial Assembly.

**Financial Position.**  
Coming to the position of the finances of the province the minister said the government carried forward last year a balance of \$546,700.05. The revenues contained grants and subsidies to the amount of \$1,124,125, and there was the grant from the school land fund of \$62,525. The estimated revenues at the time of the last budget showed that the receipts had exceeded by \$438,312 the actual estimate.

The total expenditure of the year was \$1,599,332.84, showing a straight surplus of \$482,280.14. It was not proposed to expend the half million surplus all in one year, and it was thought that this could be spread over a period of years. Comparing these figures with the provinces of Alberta and Manitoba Mr. Calder pointed out that the three western provinces seemed to be very much in the same position financially.

After giving a detailed statement of the receipts last year by the various departments similar to the one published in the Standard a few days ago, Mr. Calder went on to say that the expenditures last year were all within the estimates. The education department came within one or two thousand dollars of the amount estimated, and in the case of the civil government vote the same is true. In the case of the other departments however, there is a very considerable discrepancy between the amount voted and the amount actually spent. This was mainly accounted for by the fact that the department of the attorney general took over the case of the insane and the transportation of prisoners while the public works department took over the maintenance of the public buildings, amounting to an expenditure of some fifty thousand dollars.

**Sites Purchased.**  
The capital expenditures last year were for two sites. A land title site was purchased for \$10,000 and he was sure all would agree that the best location in the city had been secured. A site for the new parliament buildings was also pur-

carried forward into the present financial year some \$482,280.12. From the Dominion Government it is expected to receive for Government and Legislation, 450,000; on population, (80c. on 275,763) \$206,210.40, and (on 7,763 at 80c. since Sept. 1 1206) \$3,105.20; on debt allowance, \$405,375; in lieu of the lands 2575,000; building fund for the first five years, \$93,750; making a total revenue of \$1,133,440.60. In addition to this there would be from the school lands fund, \$70,000; from local revenues \$845,500; making a grand total for estimated revenue of \$2,540,620.74.

Comparing this revenue with that of the Northwest Territories from the Dominion Government he showed that the Territories received in 1898, \$283,934.69; in 1906 they received \$438,612.84; and in 1907 the province would receive \$1,133,440.60.

**Interprovincial Conference.**  
Considering the question of subsidies personally looked after by Mr. Scott, who had visited, St. Paul, Albany, Quebec, and Victoria in addition to Ottawa to secure points on matters of view for the buildings. There was to have been a conference with the professor of architecture from McGill relative to the subject, but the illness of Mr. Scott rendered the postponement of the conference necessary. Mr. Scott had, however, arranged with five or six of the most prominent architects on the continent to enter into the buildings. When Mr. Scott returns the matter will be taken up again immediately. Two bridges were started last year, at Saskatoon and Battleford, and it was hoped they would be finished this year. Negotiations were entered into with the C.P.R. relative to a bridge for Prince Albert but no arrangement was made. It is hoped that this can be built this year.

**Education Policy.**  
In the department of education nothing new was being done, and the policy of the past was simply being carried out with an effort to extend the school system as rapidly as possible to the incoming settlers. An organizer for this feature of the York had been appointed in Mr. McDonald, and he was a great help to the department in many ways. During the year there were some four or five hundred petitions dealt with. Work among the Catholics is extending and the department has now sufficient information with regard to these people that they hope within a few months to have about forty schools established in their settlements. It was hoped that a move along these lines could soon be made among the Doukhobors.

**Municipal Commission.**  
Touching upon the municipal commission, the minister said their work was not completed but it was hoped that their report would be received. He agreed with a sentiment expressed by the leader of the opposition at another time that this commissions work would be supplemented by the securing of the services of the very best men acquainted with the working of municipal law, in order that a system of municipal organization might be drafted that would be as efficient and at the same time not have the costly machinery of the other provincial systems.

**Marketing Grain.**  
The present conditions surrounding the marketing of grain are simply intolerable. Many suggestions have been made and many more will be made before this question is solved. It is suggested that there should be government control of the terminal elevators, and that the government should own all elevators, but so far no practical solution has been found. The present situation, however, cannot go on. The farmers must not be compelled to hold their grain in the bins and this is a question which must be carefully and seriously considered by the Government with a view to ascertaining a practical solution of the difficulty.

**Telephone Question.**  
He said all were agreed as to the utility of the telephone and the desirability of placing telephones at the disposal of everyone in the Province, but he thought that was a question which for the present at least is not so closely pressing as other matters which are upon the sun in the estimates for an enquiry as to all that would be necessary at present.

**Good Goods AT FAIR PRICES**  
The only items which gave rise to any comment were those for capital expenditure. An amount of \$250,000 for legislative and department buildings; \$100,000 for court houses in Moose Jaw, Battleford, Saskatoon and Camington districts, land slides offices at Regina, Yorkton and Battleford \$130,000; and an asylum costing \$100,000 were to be built. At present the Province pays \$75,000 a year to Manitoba for the care of the insane and it is therefore to erect an institution for the Province. Under this head arises the whole question of what shall be done with the capital expenditure, and it was proposed by the Government to ask the Legislature for borrowing powers to a million and a half or two million dollars, as it is thought that the money should not be taken out of the revenues.

**HAULTAIN'S REPLY**  
Mr. Haultain, in replying to the budget speech, said at the very beginning the minister had tried to avoid the question which they must take up and consider at an early date. Unless the large railway corporations are prepared to proceed with the construction of branch lines then something must be done to provide the people with railway facilities. The time is coming when the railways must not look for assistance in the country for their development but it is quite possible they will yet look for that assistance and it will probably have to be given in some way or other. If the railway companies cannot be got to construct the branch lines, then the time is coming when the Legislature must take up the matter seriously and consider what will have to be done in the matter.

**The Surplus.**  
The first thing noticed is that the Province shall carry hidden away somewhere in numerous details of proposed expenditures, a surplus amounting to nearly one seventh of the total revenues of the Province and must at the very outset of the Provincial career, take on a system of direct taxation. The proposal was to spend every cent in sight, and a million dollars

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