

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

2:30 o'clock, Thursday, March 6, 1975

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed, I should like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the loge to my left, where we have two former members of our Legislature, Mrs. Trueman and Mr. Sterling Lyon. On behalf of all the honourable members, I bid you welcome.

Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions; Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees. The Honourable Member for Radisson.

REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. HARRY SHAFRANSKY (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the first report of the Special Committee on the Rules of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other reports? The Honourable House Leader.

HON. SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C. (Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management) (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have the report of the Manitoba Water Commission, concerning a review of provincial procedures and plans for flood protection and flood fighting, dated December 1974.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour)(Transcona): I would like to table the Annual Report of the Civil Service Commission and the Administration of the Civil Service Act, 57th Annual Report.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements. The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier)(Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, I also have a number of reports to table in accordance with statutory requirement. The first would be several copies of the Manitoba Hydro Electric Report for the year ending March 31, '74. Honourable members have received copies through the mails but there are copies being presented here.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other reports? The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: . . . further reports to table, sir. I wish to table a copy for you, sir, of a Return under Section 20 of the Public Officers Act. The other copies will be brought to the clerk very soon today. And a Return under Section 13 of the Special Municipal Loan and General Emergency Fund Act; and a Return under Section 114 of the Insurance Act; and tabling of a report pertaining to the Law Society Act; and finally a Return under Section 66 of the Legislative Assembly Act.

I could give notice, sir, of two, possibly three more reports that are required to be tabled and I hope to do so later this week.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Speaker, in presenting the first report of the Rules Committee of the House, I believe that the Clerk has not read the report so that I can move it.

MR. CLERK: Your Special Committee of the House appointed to examine the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and allied subjects was established by resolution of the House adopted on May 30, 1974.

Your Committee, composed of the Honourable Mr. Speaker as Chairman, Honourable Messrs. GREEN, PAULLEY, Messrs. JOHNSTON (Portage), JORGENSON, SHAFRANSKY, SHERMAN and WALDING met on Tuesday, October 29, 1974; Thursday, October 31, 1974; Monday, January 13, 1975; Tuesday, February 18, 1975.

The quorum for all meetings of the Committee was set at five members.

Your Committee recommends the following amendments to the Rules of the House:

1. Sub-Rule 22(4) of the Rules of the House is struck out and the following sub-rule is substituted therefor: 22(4) Where the Resolution of a member is reached for the first time on the Order Paper during private members' hour, if the member is not present, or does not proceed with the Resolution at that time, the Resolution shall be placed on the Order Paper at the bottom of the list of Resolutions of that type.

2. Rule 23 of the Rules of the House is amended by adding thereto, immediately after Sub-Rule 1 thereof, the following sub-rule: 23(1.1) The Address on the Budget shall be preceded by a Resolution for the House to resolve itself into Committee of Ways and Means.

REPORT OF RULES COMMITTEE

(MR. CLERK cont'd)

3. Sub-Rule 48(2) of the Rules of the House is repealed and the following sub-rule is substituted therefor: 48(2) Written questions that remain unanswered shall be listed at the end of the Order Paper once every two weeks.

4. Rule 49 of the Rules of the House is amended by adding thereto, at the end thereof, the following sub-rule: 49(5) Addresses for Papers and Orders for Return that remain unanswered shall be listed at the end of the Order Paper once every two weeks.

5. The Rules of the House are further amended by adding thereto, immediately after Rule 54 thereof, the following Rule: 54.1 No member who is not a minister of the Crown shall move any amendment to a Bill or to estimates that increases any expenditure or varies a tax or a rate of tax or provides an exemption or increases an exemption from a tax or a proposed tax, but a member who is not a minister of the Crown may move an amendment to a Bill that decreases an expenditure or that removes or reduces an exemption from a tax or a proposed tax.

6. Rule 64 is amended by adding thereto, at the end thereof, the following sub-rule: 64(4) In a Committee of the Whole House, such officials of the government as are required by a minister may be admitted to the Legislative Chamber, and shall be permitted to sit at the table placed on the floor of the House in from the minister, but this rule does not apply during the debate on a minister's salary in Committee of Supply.

7. Sub-Rules 65(4) and (5) are repealed and the following sub-rules are substituted therefor: 65(4) Except as provided in sub-rule 65(5) speeches in Committee of Supply, including those of the ministers, shall be restricted to 30 minutes. 65(5) The address of a minister introducing the estimates of a department may exceed 30 minutes but shall be restricted to 60 minutes.

8. Sub-Rules 88(5) and (6) are repealed and the following sub-rules are substituted therefor: 88(5) Subject to sub-rule (7) no motion to amend, delete, insert or restore any clause or provision of a Bill shall be entertained on the consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill unless notice of the motion has been given to the House before the Order of the Day for consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill is called. 88(6) Where written notice of a motion to amend, delete, insert or restore any clause or provision in a Bill is given prior to the consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill, and the Order of the Day for consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill is called before the expiration of 24 hours after the notice is given, any member may request that the consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill be deferred until the expiration of 24 hours after the notice is given, and, unless the House by a vote, unanimous except for that member, refuses the request, the consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill shall be deferred until the expiration of that period; but, if the consideration of the Report Stage of a Bill is deferred once under this rule, the consideration of the Report Stage shall not again be deferred except by resolution of the House.

Your Committee also recommends that, for the balance of this Session of the Legislature, the Rules of the House be changed as follows:

Rule 3(4) will be subject to the special rule relating to adjournment of Committee of Supply.

Rule 19(2) will be amended to provide that Private Members' Business will be taken into consideration between the hours of 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. of each day and that whatever business is under consideration at 4:30 p.m. shall be interrupted at that hour so that Private Members' Business may be considered.

A new sub-rule, as follows, will be added

19(5) The time allowed for a question period prior to the calling of the Orders of the Day shall not exceed 40 minutes.

Rule 36(1) will be subject to the special rule dealing with the "previous question" in Committee of Supply or in a standing or special committee while the estimates of a department are under consideration.

The existing Rule 65 will be deleted and will read as follows:

65(1) Except as provided in sub-rule 65(2) speeches in Committee of Supply, including those of the ministers, shall be restricted to 30 minutes.

(2) The address of a minister introducing the estimates of a department may exceed 30 minutes, but shall be restricted to 60 minutes.

REPORT OF RULES COMMITTEE

(MR. CLERK cont'd)

65(3) While in Committee of Supply, the minister presenting his estimates shall be permitted to speak from a place in the first row of benches.

(4) In moving a motion of concurrence in the resolutions reported from Committee of Supply relating to Main Supply, there shall be only one motion dealing with the total amount of the Main Estimates of the Government but separate motions of concurrence may be introduced relating to Capital Supply, Interim Supply and Supplementary Supply.

(5) A motion of concurrence in the Estimates of the Government shall be debatable, but shall not be subject to amendment.

(6) Where the House is in Committee of Supply at 10:00 p. m. on any day, the Chairman of the Committee shall not leave the Chair at that time but, subject to sub-rule 7(c), the Committee shall continue to sit and the Committee shall rise at the discretion of the Leader of the House.

(7) Where the Committee of Supply is sitting after 10:00 p. m. on any day

(a) the Chairman of the Committee shall not accept any vote that defeats or varies an item in the estimates of the Government;

(b) the estimates of a department shall not be introduced after 10:00 p. m.

(c) unless the Committee has risen earlier at the discretion of the Leader of the House, the Committee shall rise on the completion of the consideration of the departmental estimates that were under consideration at 10:00 p. m.

(8) Where the Committee of Supply sits after 10:00 p. m., and after the Committee rises, any motion, except a motion to adjourn the House, is out of order.

(9) Where the Chairman of the Committee of Supply refuses to accept a vote that defeats or varies an item in the estimates, he shall put the motion as the first order of business at the next sitting of the Committee of Supply.

(10) The Committee of Supply may, by resolution of the Assembly, be authorized to consider the estimates of not more than 2 government departments outside the House.

(11) Where a motion for the "previous question" is moved in Committee of Supply or in a standing or special committee while dealing with the estimates of a department, the motion is not debatable.

Your Committee also recommends that, in view of the fact that the proposed changes are of a temporary nature and are recommended for use only for the balance of this session.

(a) this Report be taken under consideration immediately; and

(b) this Special Committee be reconstituted with the same membership for the purpose of reviewing the application, effect and enforcement of the proposed changes and to recommend any further amendments or changes which are, in the opinion of the Committee, deemed necessary or advisable.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Emerson, that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial Statements? Notices of Motions; Introduction of Bills; Questions. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Mr. Speaker, this is just a question. Yesterday I believe we were promised a report from the Minister of Education. I notice he's not here. Perhaps some other member of government was prepared to bring it forward?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister has the report to make and whether he does so today or tomorrow will depend on his availability.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. STEVE PATRICK (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Labour. The Minister last session indicated that he would establish a Task Force to review all codes and building regulations pertaining to protection of people in high rise and older apartment blocks. Has that Task Force been established?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. PAULLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to announce that I've received full co-operation from parties involved. There has been a committee or board established and they're working very arduously in the field referred to by my honourable friend.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary. Did the Minister say the committee has already met or has started to do its work, and can he indicate to the House how many members are there on this committee and perhaps who they are? Or is it a large committee or just one or two people?

MR. PAULLEY: I wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether my honourable friend would agree that I can indicate to him at the precise moment that the committee has been established, it has held some meetings; and insofar as the personnel is concerned I just don't have them on the tip of my fingers right now but I will supply that information.

MR. PATRICK: A last supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister indicate just what duties or terms of reference the Minister has given to this committee to look into all types of codes and procedure pertaining to old buildings, wiring, high rise and so on. Can he indicate what was their terms of reference?

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to supply my honourable friend and any other interested member with a copy of the terms of reference, and I recall the chairman of the board that has been established is Mr. C. Wright, a professional engineer.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the First Minister, and it's in relation to an offer of compensation issued to the people of Nelson House in February of this year. And the question, Mr. Speaker, is whether this report and offer of compensation to the people of Nelson House is in lieu of a settlement that was supposed to have been brought about by the study committee that was under way at the time, and as I understand it is presumably still under way.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, quite frankly, sir, there is something attaching to my honourable friend's question that I just don't quite understand and I'm unable to answer. Perhaps he could rephrase it.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I refer to a letter to the people of Nelson House from the First Minister dated January 31, 1975 and contained with it an offer of compensation for flooding, and the question to the First Minister is whether or not the offer contained here, or suggestions contained in this report are to take the place of an over all settlement with the community of Nelson House.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend is referring and holding up a lime green covered document. That document does not purport to be an offer of settlement. It merely is an outline in most summary form of the anticipated effects and it merely reiterates what has been a standing commitment all along; that upon evidence of damage, compensation will be payable and that if there is dissatisfaction with the amount proposed, that we stand ready, of course, to have it submitted to third party mediation or arbitration.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the main part of the document is a form for Claim for Compensation, Mr. Speaker, and the question directly is whether or not if this is to take place, the place of the settlement that is currently being negotiated.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, there is nothing incompatible between that document and the form of claim or application sheets there, application for compensation. They are merely intended to provide, if you like, an administrative means for persons to start the process of claim, and of course many have - I shouldn't say many - some have already, and some of the claims have been tentatively settled. There is no contradiction or incompatibility between that document and the offer to continue to discuss settlement that may have to do with other than individual damage.

MR. CRAIK: . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I wonder if the honourable member realizes he's had three questions on the same subject. I believe he's going into detail. Could we not have a more opportune time than the question period for detailed investigation of this matter. The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: I would like to then ask a general question of the First Minister. Whether or not people living on reserve lands do not fall into a category that is somewhat different

ORAL QUESTIONS

(MR. CRAIK cont'd) . . . than people who are offered claims settlement such as the people that live in the city of Thompson.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question is asking for an opinion. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY (Fort Rouge): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs responsible for housing. In view of the plans announced by the Government for the core area, does the government intend to provide any other programs of assistance for the upgrading and repair of older homes in other parts of the City of Winnipeg?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs.

HON. SAUL A. MILLER (Minister of Urban Affairs) (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, the questioner refers to plans. The Provincial Government is participating in what is known as a Neighbourhood Improvement Program launched by the Federal Government. We are participants in that program. There are two within the City of Winnipeg now and that's the extent of that kind of programming within the City of Winnipeg.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the Minister's answer that the only other program involved is the NIP areas, which again are two small areas, does the government intend to provide any form of assistance for the repair, upgrading or renovation of homes that are other than in NIP areas or in the announced Core Plan area but which still need serious help in the area of renovation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I'll ignore the editorializing of the last few sentences and simply answer, No the Government is not planning anything beyond what I just intimated.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister tell us in view of the announcement made yesterday by Mr. Danson in Ottawa, that the Federal Government is prepared to cost-share in a rent supplement program to non-profit and co-operative housing companies, is the Provincial Government prepared to join in such a cost-sharing program to offer such a rent supplement program to these areas for family housing?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, what I read in yesterday's newspaper is what the member has obviously read. We don't have details. I'm waiting anxiously for the details because I've been pressing Ottawa for just this for over two years.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON (Rock Lake): Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the First Minister. I would like to ask him if he can tell me now whether his government has decided to make a presentation to the Honourable Mr. Chretien in the House of Commons pertaining to the series of strikes at the West Coast.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, we do have a rather well understood division of responsibility in Canada under the British North America Act, we have our ways of communicating our concerns, and some concerns are better communicated on a joint inter-provincial regional basis to the Federal Government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Then, Mr. Speaker, so that I understand the First Minister very clearly; that his government has no intentions of making any presentations as it may concern the people of Manitoba in the next week or two weeks?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I should have thought rather the opposite. That the concern is so obvious that it goes without saying.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID BLAKE (Minnedosa): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. I wonder if he might inform us, in a round figure, the amount of the premium that is paid out by the corporation for co-insurance or re-insurance and what companies would be involved?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

ORAL QUESTIONS

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture)(Lac Du Bonnet): I'll take the question as notice, Mr. Speaker, so I can provide the answers for the member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services. I wonder if the Minister can indicate to the House whether part or all of the 100 extended beds in the new wing at St. Boniface Hospital are now open?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (Minister of Health and Social Development) (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, the last information that I had, not all the beds were occupied but I think that there will be an announcement on the general question of geriatric fairly soon.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Can the Minister indicate to the House any reasons why some of the beds are not open? I understand the place was ready for occupancy. There must be some reasons.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, this is something that is the responsibility of the hospital board. There's been recruiting of personnel and it takes a little while to get this thing going. I'll try to get more information and inform my honourable friend.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for LaVerendrye.

MR. BOB BANMAN (LaVerendrye): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Highways. Could the Minister inform this House as to when his department will be implementing the new driver's license classifications re air brakes, trailers, etc.?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. PETER BURTONIAK (Minister of Highways)(Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, this was legislation that was approved by this House at the last session. We've been working on the various amendments and what have you which were approved as I said, and we hope that, and I repeat we hope, that we can get this show on the road by April 1 of this year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister responsible for Colleges and Universities. In view of the announcement by his Department that they are extending the deadline for student aid applications, is the Minister now prepared to guarantee that all those students who apply by April 28th or May 31st will have their applications processed before the beginning of the school year, so there will not be the horrendous delays that there were in the past year and that they can plan accordingly?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest that if members are asking questions that's very valid; if they offer opinions afterwards that's out of order and I'm going to start clamping down. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: I'm quite prepared to rephrase my question.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you.

MR. AXWORTHY: Would the Minister of Colleges and Universities say whether he's prepared to guarantee that there will be no more than a four month time period in the processing of all applications for student aid that are received either by the April 28th or May 31st deadlines?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Minister of Education, Minister of Colleges and Universities Affairs)(Burrows): Mr. Speaker, all applications are processed as rapidly as they come in and I can no more guarantee a processing of all applications within the time limit that the honourable member indicated than I could guarantee that the applicants for student aid will provide all the necessary information within that time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the same Minister. Is the government's announced plans of decentralizing the operation of student aid offices mean that they will pass over responsibility to the major post-secondary institutions or will it still be handled by the student aid office?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, there is no delegation of responsibility to any one

ORAL QUESTIONS

(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd) . . . insofar as the major portion of the processing of student aid applications is concerned. All that will happen is that the preliminary review of applications to satisfy ourselves as to their completeness will be done locally within easy access and reach of the students, by the universities and community colleges.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. In view of the increased costs for tuition and other inflationary measures, does the Department of Colleges and Universities intend to substantially increase the amounts of bursaries and loans available to each individual student for the next school year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, the criteria that we follow are those for Canada student loans, and insofar as his reference to increased costs of tuition, I'm not aware of any increase in the tuition fees by any university in the Province of Manitoba.

ORDERS OF THE DAY - THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Matthews. The Honourable Leader for the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q.C. (Leader of the Official Opposition)(River Heights): Mr. Speaker, at the very outset I would want to extend congratulations to the new Ministers of the Cabinet and to the Mover and Seconder of the Address of His Honour.

The Speech from the Throne which we heard on Tuesday, was a remarkable, one might even say a very unique document. In times past, the paragraphs in the Throne Speech were typically couched in one form of language: "The Assembly will be asked to consider such and such." "The Assembly will be asked to consider some other matter." Sentences of this kind are almost totally absent in this Speech, and where they do appear they are usually with reference to matters, like Supply, that would automatically come before this House.

Well, Mr. Speaker, of what then does this Speech consist? It is, to begin with, largely backward-looking, in that much of it is a government review of the government record which the government judges good. For an exercise in self-congratulation they are to be congratulated though rarely have so few been so pleased with so little. However, what most strikes one about this Speech is its tone, and that tone suggests a speech composed in a fit of absence of mind. The Speech begins ringingly: "Never have the responsibilities of provincial legislators been greater, never the questions before them been more complex or more challenging than they are today."

Mr. Speaker, having suggested in the very first paragraph that we face great issues, the rest of the Speech is a headlong rush away from dealing with them, a rush that is broken only by complacent asides and a few - unconscious I'm sure - admissions of failure.

A press release could, and probably will tell us that we are to install additional phones in the province. A press release could, and probably will tell us that the province has acquired the Bald Head Hills. But, Mr. Speaker, where are the matters of substance? Of two matters, the Manitoba Development Corporation and the so-called urban renewal program, I shall have more to say later, but on the face of it, what is being proposed now on the Manitoba Development Corporation and on urban policy seems substantially to arise from the bankruptcy of what has gone on before, and in the case of the Manitoba Development Corporation that is true literally as well as figuratively.

The Speech contains not a word about provincial initiatives to deal with the cost of living. The province continues to profit from inflation and can boast complacently of the way inflation has apparently improved all the economic indicators. But when it comes to doing something that would affect people, through reduced spending or selective tax cuts, all we have is a deafening silence.

Mr. Speaker, not a word about Autopac. I shall have a few words to say presently. But is it not striking, Mr. Speaker, that in this catalogue of all the wonderful things that the government has done, from telephones to Bald Head Hills, Autopac is not presented to us as part of the NDP heaven on earth? That silence is perhaps the most eloquent part of the Speech.

There are, as I say, several matters raised by the Speech with which I will deal in a very few moments, but the over all impression, when the press release puffery is eliminated,

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) . . . when we dispose of yesterday's great expectations, and when we ignore the really trivial aspects of the Speech, one is left with an impression of a government preoccupied with matters that it has not chosen to discuss. I do not know, frankly, why that should be so, but I do know what final impression is left, and that impression, Mr. Speaker, is one of utter gutlessness of the government in tackling the real issues referred to so bravely in the opening paragraphs of the Speech from the Throne. After six years, Mr. Speaker, they are still talking about municipal financing. After six years they are still dithering about educational financing. After six years, we in this Assembly are entitled to ask, what in the name of heaven are you going to do? Can you tell us? Do you know? Do you realize that to govern is to choose? Will you tell us what you are choosing? These are the kinds of questions to which a Throne Speech should give some indication of answers, some indication of direction. But this document, unique in so many ways, is also unique in the number of matters to which it makes no reference.

As I've said, Autopac is one of them. In turning to Autopac, I find myself reminded of Allistair Stewart's famous chipmunk memorandum on CFI. In it, Mr. Speaker, he laid down what might be called the NDP's chipmunk doctrine. Simply stated, that doctrine is: If things go well, grab all the credit you can get; if things go badly, find a way to blame your opponents. We now have a number of examples of this, Mr. Speaker.

When it became clear that the NDP had lost control of payments to CFI, they appointed a supposedly neutral commission which in due course chastised the Conservatives, while minimizing the fact that more than \$150 million in CFI was paid out by the NDP.

A year ago we had another example. When the then Minister of Finance tried to beat back criticism of the Mineral Acreage Tax, he suggested that the Opposition had not opposed it with sufficient vigor in the previous session.

And now the most recent case of passing the buck is the case of Autopac. In the 1972 Throne Speech the government advised His Honour to pronounce Autopac "A-O.K." Have you noticed, Mr. Speaker, that "A-O.K." has somehow disappeared from the government vocabulary, not only with respect to Autopac, but with almost everything else. Well, from the 1972 self-congratulatory "A-O.K.", the government has, following the chipmunk doctrine, attempted to share the blame for Autopac's woes with the Opposition. I shall have more to say about this as well, but for the moment we simply say to the government: Thank you, but no, thank you.

In speaking of Autopac, let us make very clear at the outset what is not at issue here. The fact that rate increases occurred is not at issue. In an inflationary period, increases were to be expected. The comparability of our rates with other jurisdictions is in itself only partly an issue. And I say that because the government has so fiddled the books that comparisons are now very difficult to make. And in support of that statement, Mr. Speaker, I cite no less an authority than Mr. J.O. Dutton, the General Manager of Autopac, who told a committee of the Legislature that once premiums are subsidized, comparisons become very difficult to make.

The issues on Autopac are basically two. First, the government has broken the commitments made repeatedly in 1970 that Autopac would not be subsidized. Those commitments now stand exposed as utterly worthless.

Just consider some of the things that were said. The present Minister of Corrections was asked whether he believed Autopac should be subsidized by all the citizens of Manitoba. His answer: "No, I don't believe it should be and it's not going to be." Well, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to his vote against the gasoline tax.

The Premier said --(Interjection)-- I gather that the Honourable Minister of Corrections says that the gasoline tax is not a subsidy. It's just a tax, Mr. Speaker. The Premier said: "We have never suggested that there should be subsidization of a public auto insurance industry, and this is what we intend to abide by." Well we now know what that commitment was worth.

The Honourable Member for St. John's said to the former Member for Fort Rouge that "at all times it was indicated that the auto insurance scheme would have to stand on its own two feet," and he added that "obviously Inez Trueman didn't believe that." Well, Inez Trueman was right not to believe it.

But, Mr. Speaker, that is only one aspect of the matter that has angered people - the

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) . . . fact that they were lied to about how Autopac would be financed. The other thing is that when it became clear that Autopac could not stand on its own two feet, the government deceived us again by trying to mislead people as to what the government was actually going to do. And again, Mr. Speaker, it is instructive to recall the brave and high falutin' words about openness and accountability that would be found in a state-owned insurance company.

The Minister of Labour said that there will be so much faith generated in this province that people will flock from all sides into the province of Manitoba. Well, Mr. Speaker, they're not exactly lining up. The only line-ups are those that form almost constantly outside Autopac Claims Offices. The present Minister of Tourism observed that in the private monopoly there is no formal appeal mechanism. What, pray tell, Mr. Speaker, is the formal appeal mechanism now? A few weeks ago the Premier suggested that just perhaps the reclassification of small foreign cars was a mistake. Nothing has been done about it, and the Minister of Tourism should be satisfied. As long as he has the Premier's ear, he will have his formal appeal mechanism. But then they both will still have to deal with Mr. Dutton.

In the same speech, the Minister also said, "The public plan will not be able to mount a thinly-disguised political campaign with funds collected most unpolitically from Manitobans who want an automobile insurance service and not a political propaganda machine . . ." The words of the Minister of Tourism. So, Mr. Speaker, what do we get? We get instead a badly disguised political campaign paid for with taxpayers' money. We get a glossy brochure citing figures that are questionable. We get a glossy brochure purporting to quote newspapers praising Autopac, when in fact those newspapers were quoting Autopac praising itself. Any private company, Mr. Speaker, that behaved in the same way would be accused of false and misleading advertising.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we have the Premier, in a speech in 1970. And what does he say? "Two years from now, auto insurance will not be an issue any more. In two years the government will be able to run on the record of public auto insurance . . ." Well, low and behold, after nearly five years Autopac is an issue again. So much for that little bit of prophecy. As to being able to run on the record of Autopac - and the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources said we did - and as to being able to run on that record, well Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources and the NDP caucus and government weren't quite sure about that, so they decided to take out a little insurance of their own. Prior to the 1973 election, the government reduced Autopac premiums. But since that reduction has contributed to the present deficit, and since it's hard for politicians facing by-elections to admit mistakes, the blame for that reduction must now be foisted on the Opposition. Shades of Allistair Stewart.

The Premier says that the reduction was not his fault, it was introduced over his objections and against his better judgment. Mr. Speaker, can you not picture that touching and dramatic scene two years ago: the Premier surrounded by his Cabinet, his advisors, his officials, and the Opposition pounding at the door? All of them imploring, beseeching, begging for a reduction, and the Premier, hand to forehead, replying: "No, no, a thousand times no. No, I'd rather die than say yes." Well, Mr. Speaker, he said yes. And, Mr. Speaker, I trust that when we ask the government to reduce the sales and income taxes, he will show equally firm resolve.

We've seen broken promises and we've seen deceit. The duplicity wears one other guise, and I should like to mention it before turning to other matters.

A MEMBER: Be honest.

MR. SPIVAK: Be honest! In the Autopac debates . . . My God, coming from you - from you, the Minister of Consumer Affairs being honest.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question, or does he wish . . . ?

HON. IAN TURNBULL (Minister of Consumer, Corporate and Internal Services) (Osborne): . . . a matter of privilege. I was listening with rapt attention to the stupid speech of the Leader of Opposition, and then, without uttering a word, he's blaming me for something that some other member made. He's made this mistake many times before and I suggest he clear out his ears as well as his brain.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I have no comment to make of the matters of the Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs. I would suggest he'll have the opportunity in this debate.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, I've indicated that duplicity wears one other guise, and I want to mention it before turning to other matters. In the Autopac debate of 1970, we were given various accounts of why premiums were so high under the private insurers. The Honourable Member for St. Matthews claimed that many people try to rook insurance companies, and claimed the existing system has inherently been inefficient. Mr. Mackling, the then Attorney-General said, "There is no question in my mind that the issue we have before us deals with a system which is indeed sick,"

"Roeking", "Inefficiency", and "Sick". Well, with Autopac the question may fairly be asked: Who is rooking who? Inefficiency. Is efficiency really advanced when under a so-called no-fault scheme the good drivers are bearing disproportionate premiums to carry the bad, when rate structures are juggled out of all meaning, and when everything that moves (and several things that don't) are costing more to subsidize the system?

And "'Sick". Well, four years ago the villain was the industry and it was sick. Now the villain is the drivers and, according to the Minister of Autopac, the drivers of Manitoba are lousy. Now that in itself raises some interesting questions. (And he's shaking his head in agreement, that drivers are lousy.) Have they become more lousy since Autopac was introduced? Are all Manitoba drivers equally lousy? Are the less lousy carrying the more lousy? Mr. Speaker, I would never have thought that the lousiness of the consumers would be cited to explain the shortcomings of a government program. But then, Mr. Speaker, I must not question the Minister's realm of expertise. On lousiness, he knows whereof he speaks.

The upshot of this is that the government which claimed that openness would prevail has become a closed shop. The government that claimed to listen to people has in recent months attempted to manipulate people to the government's point of view. But when the heat is applied, when the criticism comes, this bunch on the other side can't take it, and the Premier replies in the language of the barnyard. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier's language can become as foul as he wants and we know how foul that can be, but let several things be clear. We will fight the gasoline tax at every step; we will get an accounting of Autopac's financing, and we will remind the gentlemen opposite of just what they have said in the past. There are some words they will, Mr. Speaker, I believe, wish they had never uttered.

Now, in turning to the Throne Speech's comments on the MDC, I suppose that at least one thing can be conceded. The government does seem to have received the message that the public patience with MDC is just about gone. But having received that message, I am skeptical that the government knows how to respond to it. To begin with, they misconstrue - deliberately I suggest - what MDF and what MDC is. Having done that, they suggest, with what I can hardly believe is a straight face, that MDC begin to compete with other lending agencies. Having contributed to the ruination of several high-risk ventures they now apparently want to seek and see what havoc they can wreck upon some good risks. Now I certainly don't quarrel with the notion that the MDC cannot go on as it has; I seriously question whether it can or should go on at all. When we look at MDC we are witnessing what seems to be an uncontrolled raid on the public purse by men who are supposed to be guardians of the public purse. Their attitude, in fact, seems to be that since it isn't their money they can waste and squander at will. When we look at the MDC owned companies specifically, the prospect is both ironic and alarming. The irony, perhaps the classic irony, is that CFI is the only MDC owned company now making money. The rest is a picture of unbelievably disaster. Saunders has now received close to \$30 million, Flyer over \$30 million, McKenzie Seed \$10 million. There are small outstanding loans to another 15 to 20 companies in the amount of roughly \$10 million. This is by no means the whole of MDC's indebtedness, and these figures alone indicate investments of over \$80 million.

Now these figures invite some interesting comparisons. The \$30 million invested in Saunders represents nearly five times the amount invested in the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation in 1974 and 1975. That \$30 million was more than was spent for the whole Department of Mines in 1974 and 75, and \$6 million more than was spent by the whole Department of Agriculture.

Flyer Industries received an amount equivalent to 15 times that spent by the whole Department of Labour, or an amount equivalent to the combined spending of the Departments of Consumer Affairs, Northern Affairs, and Public Works.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

Saunders, Flyer and McKenzie Seed together received more than was spent in the Whole Department of Highways, the fourth largest spending department in the whole government.

Now I make these comparisons for two reasons. First, because I think they indicate the magnitude of the sums involved; and second, because they graphically illustrate the point that we made many times, that the provisions of worthwhile government programs can be achieved even while reducing government spending if, and if this NDP, MDC boondoggle were brought to a halt.

In all of these companies, the government is afflicted with what might be called the Midas touch in reverse -- everything they touch turns to dross. That incompetence coupled with the Cabinets willingness to write the MDC a blank cheque, is a lethal combination. Now, Cy Gonick, in a recent issue of Canadian Dimension, says that all the government is doing is bailing out bankrupt companies. That would be a severe enough criticism of the NDP government, even if it were valid, but in fact the government is not bailing them out, the companies are going deeper into the red and the government is going with them.

Though Saunders may represent a different case, one cannot even make the claim in the case of Flyer that the cost, the mismanagement and the waste, have served the socially useful goals of assisting the company's employees. And again, as the government's erstwhile supporter Cy Gonick has pointed out, it was this NDP Government that had 500 workers locked out of a Crown-owned enterprise, many of which workers were lured to this country by this government on the promise of better quality of life. Mr. Speaker, chalk up another one for the humanity of social democracy.

But, Mr. Speaker, let us come back for a moment to what the Throne Speech said, and I quote: "The present Manitoba Development Corporation Act permits the Corporation to advance moneys only when all private lenders have refused. This stipulation has of necessity required the Corporation to conduct its activities only in the highest possible risk enterprises and circumstances . . ."

"It is the view of my government that the Corporation should be given an opportunity to play a more conventional development role, and accordingly members will be asked to consider removal of the restriction that it must act only as a lender of last resort."

I will repeat those last words: we will be asked to remove the restriction that it must act only as a lender of last resort. And I ask, Mr. Speaker, what incompetent, Mr. Speaker, what incompetent is the author of those words in the Throne Speech?

In asking that question I want to remind you of the words of the Minister of Industry and Commerce back in 1970 when the present Act was introduced. On that occasion he said, and I quote: "In order to meet the challenges of economic and industrial development we intend that the Corporation abandon the role of lender of last resort and become a development agency in the true sense of the word."

In short, Mr. Speaker, in 1975 we are told that MDC will be changed to allow it to do what we were told the new Act would do in 1970. Have the Ministers ever read their own Act? Do they understand it? Do they know what was said in 1970? Have they read the Throne Speech? Do we know that anyone has read it? Do they have the slightest idea what this is all about? And what are they doing? This is the most extraordinarily well-documented case of confusion we've ever had yet. And this government marched in here this week as the heralds of a new era for the MDC. It has tried to pin the blame for the MDC fiasco on the lender of last resort policy. Mr. Speaker, it now stands naked and defenceless, for according to that sage, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, that policy was abandoned five years ago. Mr. Speaker, there is a villain, and the real villain is incompetence, and that, like honesty, is not something you can legislate.

Mr. Speaker, in the midst of all of these red herrings about MDC, let us face one central fact, the NDP has made the MDC not a lender of last resort but an investor, an investor with bad judgement.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech talks about energy policy. It stops far short of saying all that could be said. The higher rates we are now paying for Hydro, and the higher rates we will be paying in the future, are the legacy that Mr. Cass-Beggs has left Manitoba. I applaud the fact that at the eleventh hour, the Premier is now consulting with the Northern Flood Committee. We must face the fact that the government has not been candid with the

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) . . . residents of Nelson House, or Cross Lake or Norway House. Simple justice is going to require fair settlements and fair compensation for the people of those communities, and we must recognize that the cost of those settlements will ultimately be borne by the consumers of Manitoba. The price of political meddling in Hydro runs very high indeed. And while the government has been botching its handling of one energy source it has been totally negligent in another.

Mr. Speaker, if Mr. Cass-Beggs, for the benefit of the Premier, had not come in here and in six days changed what Hydro did to satisfy the political requirement of the Premier and the others, Nelson House would not have been flooded.

And Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the Premier I refer him back to Hydro reports and . . .

. . . continued on next page

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. Will the Honourable First Minister state his matter of privilege.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the rules of this House, and I am prepared to say that if the Honourable, the Leader of the Opposition insists on saying that Nelson House would not have been flooded, I have to say he's lying, and I have to say that, sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: I must say, the Premier, and the Premier has indicated what he is, I say the Premier's lying. And, Mr. Speaker, I will rest on the evidence of the Hydro report of 1966 which indicated Nelson House would not be flooded.

MR. SCHREYER: . . . and I must insist that if he wishes to say that Nelson House would not have been flooded under their 1968-69 proposal that is simply false. A hundred percent false, sir.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about another matter which the Government . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, the other side may find this amusing. My reference was to try and deal with this matter, deal with another matter. I must say to the Premier I'm quite prepared to argue on any platform and to attend at Nelson House, and I would hope that his Ministers would be there and certainly the Member would be there because they haven't been there dealing with this matter, and I propose, Mr. Speaker, to take the information that we have available to us, and I propose to indicate directly, Mr. Speaker, because we have examined the information, that because the Premier stands up and says it's so, it doesn't make it so, and because he makes a representation one way, it doesn't make it that way.

MR. SCHREYER: . . . should be taken as being the last authority in the matter but the engineers should be given an opportunity to deal with the matter, and I'm quite prepared to do that.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, it would be interesting to bring both the engineers and all the directors of the Manitoba Hydro, and, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Premier as well, to open up all the Board of Director's minutes of the meetings and then we'll see who is being accurate about what they're saying.

A MEMBER: You're not, you'll find out.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Will the Honourable Member for Thompson state his privilege.

MR. KEN DILLEN (Thompson): I would not like the record to show, Mr. Speaker, that I've not been to Nelson House as the Leader of the Opposition would imply.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, approximately three weeks ago, just for the Honourable Member from Thompson, six members of our caucus attended with the Flood Committee and representatives of the Nelson House community at Nelson House. We can only report, Mr. Speaker, what they had told us. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that they're telling us falsehoods at all. They have indicated that the Honourable Member has not attended with respect to this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. DILLEN: I don't know why it is, sir, that --(Interjection)-- I have a point of privilege, sir, and if the Leader of the Opposition is going to continue to lie in this House surely, sir, you should bring him to task.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of privilege. Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member indicates that the information that we received from the residents of Nelson House, from the Chief and from the Committee was incorrect, then I suggest he take it up with them. I've indicated, Mr. Speaker, and there are other Members who are present here who were with us when this information was passed to us, and I can only report, and that's all I can do, Mr. Speaker, because really, Mr. Speaker, I've other things than worry about the activities of the Member for Thompson, and I'm not really very much interested in what he does, but, Mr. Speaker, I must suggest to you that the information passed to us was passed on by the Chief and the members of the community and the members of the Flood

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) Committee, and that is the information I'm passing to the House. If it is incorrect then, Mr. Speaker, they all are liars.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Let me suggest first of all that we all become a little more courteous, a little more tolerant; every person in this Assembly is entitled to his opinion. I do not think we should start to split hairs as to which is which and what is what at the particular moment. Let us not start accusing anyone of anything. We must trust that the information these gentlemen present before this House is, to his knowledge, accurate. If there is some difference of opinion I think we can iron it out in better ways than rising on points of order, points of privilege, and not letting a person at least express what he has at the present time. We are dealing with the Motion in respect to the Throne Speech. I would ask the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to continue.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I accept your words. I also understand the sensitivity of the members opposite of the Hydro matters and I believe we will hear this matter again.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that the supply of natural gas to Winnipeg is limited, and new housing and other new construction must now be designed around heating systems using fuels other than natural gas. We also all know that natural gas is the preferred fuel for heating purposes and that almost all new developments in Winnipeg would be using this fuel if they be assured of a supply.

Some two years ago, Mr. Speaker, in my reply to the Speech from the Throne, I drew to the attention of this House that a shortage of natural gas was developing and that the government should look to strategies to confront this emerging shortage. I pointed out that the new gas finds in the high Arctic, in the Sverdrup Basin, lay north and just a little west of Winnipeg. I pointed out that this gas would likely be moved south by pipeline. I pointed out, and I stated, Mr. Speaker, that two possible routes lay through Manitoba. One of these, a north-south route, would pass within a few miles of Winnipeg and would link with the expanded east-west Trans-Canada Gas line -- and that line is now in existence. The other route would swing east across the Hudson's Bay lowlands, past Churchill and on east across northern Ontario to Toronto. The first route would supply Winnipeg with additional natural gas; the second would not.

I urged the First Minister and his government to pursue this matter with intelligence and energy. I urged top priority for that question. The government refused to pay any attention whatsoever.

Mr. Speaker, I can inform this House that two routes are now under consideration by the Federal Department of Energy, Mines and Natural Resources and the Federal Department of the Environment. They have selected two routes and they are well along on the process of determining feasibility.

One route under consideration crosses the Hudson Strait into Quebec and proceeds through the Ungava Peninsula to Montreal with an additional link backwards from Montreal to Toronto.

The other crosses through the Hudson's Bay lowlands, past Churchill, then east through northern Ontario to Toronto and on to Montreal. Neither route will deliver any gas whatsoever to Winnipeg. The Manitoba route at its closest point will miss Winnipeg by about 600 miles. I should like to know very much, Mr. Speaker, what the Government of Manitoba has been doing while these developments were taking place. -- (Interjection) -- Fiddling. And, Mr. Speaker, they were fiddling, and they're going to continue to fiddle when the gas begins to burn.

Mr. Speaker, in the light of the Throne Speech contents regarding the possible development of nuclear fuel, I can only express the hope that they will demonstrate a surer touch in this respect than they have on anything else to do with energy policy.

Mr. Speaker, since this House last met, we have been through a series of meetings on the Special Committee on Land Use. Those hearings may not have gone well for the government and the authors of the Throne Speech obviously found it necessary once again to trot out the tired and worn defences of their position. Their problem, Mr. Speaker, is that they are not listening, indeed they refuse to listen, to what people are saying to them.

One of our most respected journalists made this point recently in the Winnipeg Tribune. On February 28th, Richard Purser wrote in that newspaper: "The Government's response" -- talking about the Land Use Committee -- "made a mockery of its claim that it

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) wishes to hear the views of the citizens. Government members of the Committee on the contrary made it clear that they did not enjoy hearing views other than their own."

Well, Mr. Speaker, he's perfectly right. The witnesses before the committee were largely practising farmers, every bit as knowledgeable as those who sit in this building and advise the Minister. They were not treated as such by the Minister of Agriculture, nor by his cohort, the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. Through accident rather than by design, the government's decision to have open hearings on Land Use policy, have provided real insights into their way of thinking. Those meetings have also provided the public one of those all too infrequent occasions to vent their feelings about government land policy.

The setting up of the Land Use Committee arose out of a concern about foreign ownership of land. Mr. Speaker, that is in my view a reasonable concern. The government's working paper, and the submissions to the Committee, both made the point that foreign ownership is far from being the problem we feared it to be. Both the paper and the submissions served to demonstrate that government ownership of land is proceeding at a pace comparable to that of ownership by foreigners. And I think it is stating no more than the obvious to say that it is that policy, government ownership of land, which has really alarmed the rural population of Manitoba. That government's policy has been clear for some time. For some time it has been impossible for farmers to borrow money from the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation for the private purchase of farm land. What the public hearings have made more explicit, however, is that this government's view on inheritance are not consistent with maintaining the concept of the family farm; that this government's view are not consistent with viewing the husband and wife on a farm as a single economic unit; that this government shows little concern for the continuity of ownership. --(Interjection)-- Well, you know, the First Minister says "nonsense".

The Minister of Agriculture was more revealing than he knew in his questions on one of the witnesses on the implications, Mr. Speaker, of continuing a lease for a farmer's widow. The question at issue was not the legal question of the contract. The question was not even one as to whether a widow could meet the contractual obligations of her deceased husband. The question from the Minister was, whether the widow in the first year following her husband's death would be able to take off a crop. To the Minister, Mr. Speaker, it was not sufficient that the state receive its pound of flesh under the lease, it had to see a crop produced as well, and without both of those, widow and children could be sent packing, bag and baggage. Such a view, Mr. Speaker, if enunciated by a Conservative would be called mercenary, heartless and inhumane. To this Minister, it is the true blue of social democracy.

The government has raised the foreign ownership issue. Its own figures suggest that it is not so serious as we might have believed, and I am confident that we can deal with it. But, Mr. Speaker, by raising that issue, and by pressing a policy which clearly alarms a great many of our people, the government is ensuring that the real problems are not being considered. And, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the real problems are two: How do we handle the complex problems of urban land use with their implications for recreational, residential and commercial use? How do we preserve the valuable agricultural land of this province for the production of foodstuffs for ourselves and for a hungry world? The question of land use within cities cannot simply be dismissed as a municipal problem, because without meaningful revenue sharing, municipalities are simply forced into a long series of ad hoc solutions. And so long as the municipalities are compelled to make policy by ad hocery, it is not possible to consider the question of how they grow, and how urban sprawl in fact eats into the valuable agricultural land we wish to preserve.

These, Mr. Speaker, are the real problems to which we must address ourselves, and I do not pretend there are simple answers. What we do need is some comprehensive approach to these problems of land use, and I submit, Mr. Speaker, that we are not being provided with that policy direction.

Mr. Speaker, last year in this debate --(Interjection)-- You're supposed to govern. Mr. Speaker, last year in this debate, I suggested that policy and administration are what government is all about. I still believe that.

Having said that, there is another proposition that I think is equally clear. The aim

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) of policy should be to improve the quality of the services that government provides. The aim of administration should be to control and where possible reduce the costs of government. The improvement of quality, the control or reduction of spending, that should be the target. We recognize that one cannot always have both of these things together. Now, Mr. Speaker, our complaint, our indictment, is that we have neither, one nor the other under this government, that in the vast majority of cases the quality of programs has not improved, while on the financial side we are suffering the most spendthrift administration in the history of Manitoba.

That, Mr. Speaker, is one of the major themes I wish to develop today. One can enumerate the problem areas: the MDC, the fishing co-ops, social policy, urban policy, land use, the public service, housing, northern development. In almost every case, if one makes the quality-cost calculations I've suggested, you find that the public comes off the loser in one respect or the other, and frequently in both.

The government says on Page 2 of the Throne Speech that the forthcoming budget proposals of 1975-76 have been based on a "rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of existing programs." I can only describe the pious platitudes accurately by descending to the Premier's language. There is nothing rigorous about anything this government does, and before we are expected to accept any claims in that regard, I ask the government to answer certain questions in respect of every program they propose or have proposed:

First, what is its budget and what will it cost? Secondly, what staff man-years will be required to make it run? Three, how is the target population of the programs defined? And four, what is the impact and effectiveness, and how are these measured?

The first and last of these are perhaps the most important, and in most areas I don't believe the government can answer them. Now in this connection, Mr. Speaker, I turn to the new so-called urban program. Mr. Speaker, we are told that a major program of housing and public works will be built in the core of the City of Winnipeg. The most specific and substantial aspect of this would appear to be in the realm of Public Works. A mausoleum for the Public Auto Insurance Corporation, a Magistrate Court, and an Environmental and Health Laboratory. On this proposal two questions strike me: Have the local residents been consulted on these measures, and by what means? And is it clear that the spending of tens of millions of dollars on concrete in the downtown core will do anything except literally pave over the problems of the area?

On the matters of housing, I look forward to the specific proposals, but before the government begins preening itself unduly, let us consider what the record has been and what the problems are.

In the area of public housing, which was inaugurated by the previous government, there has been significant expansion. That I believe would have taken place with or without the change of government in 1969. But what must be said, Mr. Speaker - Mr. Speaker, because the Premier after '69 was able to take advantage of all the federal money which allowed him to continue with the former government --(Interjections)-- let him not - and the new federal programs - let him not stand up. Mr. Speaker, he'll have his chance. You know, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister will have his chance. Mr. Speaker, what must be said is that public housing, public housing can only represent a partial answer in that it does not deal with what I would call the social aspect of the housing problems. The Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation has chosen to view itself as a vehicle for public housing, without examining the alternatives and without the additional social service support that is required. Without that, Mr. Speaker, public housing can be very quickly, or at least can very quickly become the ghettos of the poor. The record of the Department of Co-operative Development and Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation with respect to continuing co-op housing leaves much to be desired, and programs aimed at renewal and rehabilitation of existing dwellings such as the RAP program, have been grossly under-financed.

The result, Mr. Speaker, is that quite apart from the hazards - and we saw in the Patrick Street fire one aspect of that - and quite apart from the real concern for health problems, we face the fact that urban blight becomes a breeding ground for alcoholism, vandalism, rowdiness, juvenile delinquency, violence and the fear of violence. And I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that these concerns are not academic, they are the real day to day

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) concerns of the people who live in part of Winnipeg's downtown core. Downtown is "down" in more ways than one. Five years ago this government convulsed this House and this province over Autopac. Auto insurance, they said, should be treated as a public utility. Mr. Speaker, it says a great deal about this government that automobile insurance was more important than a comprehensive policy on housing.

The provisions of housing, the provisions of recreational facilities, of modern and efficient transportation, the preservation of open spaces, the protection of our architectural heritage, the delivery of health and social services in the peculiarly urban context, the problems of inward migration to the downtown core, these are the urgent problems, and they are beyond the financial competence of Winnipeg to resolve on its own. If the province is to provide some financial assistance, it must have ideas of its own as to which is important and what is feasible. And, Mr. Speaker, after six years we are still waiting. Three years ago in his budget address, the then Minister of Finance, the Honourable Member for St. John's said: "Our position has been and will continue to be that we will strive for economic development, rapid development, but only where it can be demonstrated that this development will mean real improvement in the quality of life for all Manitobans." As an aspiration, there is little in this with which one could quarrel. But, Mr. Speaker, where is the evidence that anything like this has taken place.

On Page One of the Throne Speech we are told in effect that Manitoba is growing wealthier. On Page Two, we are told yet again of the government's commitment to greater equality of the human condition. In short, we are being asked to believe that this government is redistributing the increasing wealth of the province. And my response is, prove it, prove those statements. You haven't for six years, and you can't. It doesn't exist. Prove that in real rather than inflated terms that this province is growing wealthier, relatively or absolutely, and prove that the alleged wealth is being redistributed.

Mr. Speaker, even though the convert to crude growth has retired to the back benches, we have already had trotted out the usual economic indicators. According to the Throne Speech, everything is coming up roses. Well not all the indicators are so rosy. There can be little comfort drawn for example from the Globe and Mail finding that Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, had the highest inflation rate of any major Canadian city in 1974. Mr. Speaker, Globe and Mail, Winnipeg had the highest inflation rate of any major Canadian city in 1974.

But, Mr. Speaker, I wish in any case to come back to something else that the Honourable Member for St. John's said in the same budget speech to which I referred. He said, "These broad indicators cannot be a true guide to social progress in a country. What, for example, does a gross output figure reveal about employment opportunities? What do total retail sales statistics reveal about the relative abilities of all our citizens to share equitably in the benefits of our society?" Well, Mr. Speaker, those were good questions, very good questions. But he didn't answer them, and after the passage of three more years, they remain unanswered.

A MEMBER: That's the gospel according to St. John.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, having posed those questions, the member then proceeds to berate the previous government for believing in growth for growth's sake. Well I believe we're all wiser about the problems of growth than we were 10 or 15 years ago. Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe not all, because opposite us sit those former critics of growth who have now become its reluctant apostles. I say reluctant, because they know full well that the indicators do not measure the quality of life, but those indicators are all they have got. They are left with indicators in which they don't believe, and with rhetoric which has turned to chalk upon their tongues. The simple unordained truth is that despite doubling and trebling of spending in important areas, many of the benefits have been minimal because their pious commitments were never translated into comprehensive advanced planning for the programs they undertook. Mr. Speaker, I cite one example, though many exist.

In 1973, the province insured nursing care service. A laudable undertaking. But because the legislation preceded the planning and the mechanics of a program, last winter we faced critical problems of bed shortages resulting from the sudden and massive influx of people into nursing homes. I have not the slightest doubt that the critical period was

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) costly, not merely in dollars, but in the quality of life about which this government talks so much. At the time the then Minister tried to minimize the extent of the problem, and also to blame it on the inevitable problems of start-up programs. You would therefore expect, Mr. Speaker, that by now, a year later, the start-up problems would be over and all would be well. Well in fact, Mr. Speaker, we face a repeat, and perhaps more than a repeat of last year's hospital crisis. And the problem at bottom, Mr. Speaker, is the government simply lacks the competence to make even the most necessary programs operational. The result is that it can boast of increased spending, stemming from inefficiency - and we can document declining quality of service stemming from an incapacity to plan and administer. Well, Mr. Speaker, what does this all add up to? If Press Releases were accomplishments, and propaganda was progress, Manitoba would be the most enlightened advanced place on earth. But we must recognize that words, for all their power, are not the same as performance.

In 17th Century Britain, during the religious and civil wars, the Privy Council of the day declared that hell no longer existed. A contemporary writer, with appropriate solemnity and irony, has commented that, "In the days before hell was abolished by the Privy Council, its terrors were very real".

We can all smile indulgently, Mr. Speaker, at the thought that our ancestors believed that the existence of hell could be determined by decree. But one can wonder whether we have gone such a terrible long way in 300 years. The government would like us to believe that it has abolished poverty, injustice and inequities by a combination of rhetoric and large infusions of public money. But the rhetoric has been overblown and the spending thoughtless, unplanned and uncontrolled, and it has led to what I consider, Mr. Speaker, is the most damning indictment that can be made of this government. Mr. Speaker, this government gave hope to those who had no hope, they raised expectations in those who had none, and then they failed them. They did that cruelly and callously, playing with the plight of the unfortunate, and that hope, Mr. Speaker, I suggest has given way to despair, and expectation, Mr. Speaker, has given way to cynicism.

The worst of it, Mr. Speaker, is that it need not have happened. When the Sales Tax was introduced in 1967, in part because the Federal Government changed the rules of tax-sharing, that tax was introduced to sustain many of the programs for which this government is now claiming credit. At the time, the tax was denounced as iniquitous by many of those who now sit in the Cabinet. The fact is, however, that through that tax and through the highest income tax in the country and through liquor taxes and all the rest, this government has revenues undreamed of when the Progressive Conservative Party left office in 1969.

Mr. Speaker, this government is fat and happy with money, and if ever it was within the power of a government to deal with the poor, to deal with the disabled and the disadvantaged, this government with its windfall tax profits has been in a position to do so. And I put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that it has substantially failed -- that the vast majority of those people who are in distress, or who live below the poverty line, have been but little affected by the policies and by the spending of the government.

In 1969, government spending was \$398 million; in 1974 it was estimated to be over \$870 million, it's expected to be over a billion dollars. In 1969, the public debt was \$420 million; in 1974 it was \$696 million. In the ten years from 1960 to 1969, the public debt increased by \$164 million, and in the five years from 1970 to 1974 it increased by \$274 million.

Mr. Speaker, I think that these figures, by themselves, are pretty eloquent: Government spending up 120% in five years. The public debt up 80% in five years. The public debt increasing an average of \$16.4 million annually under the Progressive Conservatives and at a rate of \$55 million annually under the N. D. P. -- or three or four times faster.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, where is the evidence that the people are so much better off? And how is one to account for the great discrepancy between spending and actual achievement? I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there are three primary factors. Inflation is one, but before anyone suggests that inflation explains it all, let it be

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) remembered that under our tax system inflation lines the pockets of the tax collectors.

Waste is a consideration in that much of the additional moneys have gone into the apparently bottomless pit of the Manitoba Development Corporation, or the Fishing Co-ops, or the Communities Economic Development Fund.

And lack of planning, Mr. Speaker, is the third reason for the gulf between promise and performance, between spending and accomplishment. In their approach to the real social problems of society, particularly those of Greater Winnipeg, the government has had no coherent over-all plan, no disposition to consult with those affected, and no effective formulae for calculating costs and benefits. There is a variety of reports and studies, most of them jargon-ridden, which provide employment for their authors, but instead of acting as a catalytic agent, this government has suffocated the initiatives of others, particularly in the private sector. It has had the financial resources to stop anything that it does not control, and because it is so large and its tentacles so far-reaching, inertia has frequently killed what policy and the purse have not.

Thus, for all the sound and fury on the other side, Mr. Speaker, for all the spending, for all the rhetoric about ensuring greater equality of the human condition, we find ourselves with great doubts as to what has been achieved and with no means of measuring the "achievements" that the Throne Speech trumpets forth. We find ourselves, in short, still at square one. And that, I remind you, Mr. Speaker, is not merely my conclusion, but reflects the views of many who attended the recent NDP Convention.

During the last session of this House, Mr. Speaker, we dealt extensively with amendments to the Civil Service Act. During those debates, which were instructive on both sides, we received certain assurances from the government regarding the political neutrality of the Civil Service. I mention this at this point because against that background I want to make several observations about recent developments in that area.

I must begin with reference to the Executive Council Office in Thompson. Over the course of a number of visits to Thompson in the last year, it has become very clear to me that the people of Thompson, and of the North in general, are in no way fooled as the real purpose being served by the Executive Council office.

It was I who proposed during the 1973 election campaign that a Premier's office be established in the North as a means of providing northerners with a tangible link with their government. The idea was derided by the NDP and was then borrowed. To conceal the fact that the idea was borrowed, the name was changed, but I don't particularly care about that. I believed, and still believe, that the idea was a good one and could serve a useful purpose. But, as with so many other good ideas, the government has taken it and manipulated it. The Executive Council office in the North, Mr. Speaker, is not an extension of the Premier's office in its governmental aspect -- it is an extension of his office in its most political aspect. If, Mr. Speaker, you are not a partisan or sympathizer of the NDP, there is little point in approaching the Executive Council office in Thompson. You would be much better off coming to, or writing Winnipeg -- although, as we have seen in recent months, even approaching the government in the capitol may be hazardous if you are critical and not a sycophant.

What I don't understand, frankly, is why this is necessary. The government holds all five northern seats. It has an extensive network of contract people working on its behalf. It has the use and abuse of the Communities Economic Development Fund and Co-op moneys before it. But its insecurity and paranoia would not allow it to establish any office in the North that would be truly governmental as opposed to purely political.

We see a similar mentality at work with respect to the continued politicization of the public service. We've expressed concern about this before, and we have been criticized by some, for dragging public servants into the public arena. But when members of the Premier's staff or the Chairman of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation write abusive letters to citizens, or when the Deputy Minister of Agriculture or the Deputy Minister of Co-op Development appear as speakers at NDP constituency meetings, surely the notion of their impartiality and their immunity becomes farcical. If they choose to involve themselves in the political process in this way, I for one regret it; regret it because they inevitably make their non-partisan colleagues vulnerable, and secondly, because they

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) make it unavoidable that the Civil Service will become more embroiled in the political controversies of the day.

As vacancies have arisen in the senior Civil Service, this government has time and again filled them with ideologues sympathetic to the government. I can at least understand that, however much I regret it and however much I regret the aspersions that have been cast thereby on some distinguished career civil servants, who have been passed over or shunted aside. What I can neither understand nor accept is the fact that in appointing these people, the cabinet pushes or allows these civil servants into the public arena as apologists for the NDP Party line. Either it suggests an inability on the part of a Minister to defend their own policies -- and that suggests incompetence even greater than we know to exist, or else a complete insensitivity to the modern traditions of parliamentary government, which I consider - the action on the part of the government - to be deplorable.

In the United States, a change of administration is usually accompanied by thousands of people in the bureaucracy also losing their jobs. We have boasted that one of the glories of our system is that such turnovers are made unnecessary. For how much longer will we be able to say that? What is apparent at the senior levels, and what is less apparent but still known at the middle levels, is that there are civil servants who are now committed to an NDP government only, and to an NDP party whether it is in government or not.

Mr. Speaker, we are all familiar with other manifestations of this attitude. We have seen the not-so-subtle arm-twisting to get Autopac agents to buy advertising in an NDP newspaper. We have seen persons stalking the halls of government buildings flogging tickets to NDP rallies. More recently, we've seen memos on the notice boards in this building indicating that tickets to an NDP dance could be purchased in Room 54 in this building. Mr. Speaker, none of these episodes may seem terribly consequential in themselves, but they betray an attitude of mind which I suggest is dangerous.

If people who live in democratic societies are not to lose faith completely in their democratic institutions, it is important that people in politics recognize and observe certain rules. Anyone who has studied civics in school or political science at a university will know the cardinal importance of distinguishing between the role and interests of government and the role and interests of a party, and they will likewise know that one of the characteristic steps that accompanies the drift towards authoritarianism and totalitarianism is the tendency to equate the party with the government, and the government with society as a whole. What we must never lose sight of, Mr. Speaker, is that a political party's interests, however legitimate, are basically the interests of its members and its supporters. The interests of government are everyone's interests, and we must be firm, Mr. Speaker, about keeping them separate, especially in the face of a government apparently set on confusing this.

Mr. Speaker, when I see pictures in the McGregor Herald of Mr. Bill Janssen addressing an NDP meeting in McGregor in January, I'm reminded of the Premier's assurances that civil servants in highly sensitive areas of policy-making would not engage in partisan political activity. And I wonder, does the left hand know what the extreme left hand is doing? And through it all, they have the gall to go on pretending that they are much superior to those who preceded them. Take also the case of Mr. Deschambault, who having switched his support, Mr. Speaker, from Mr. Marion to the new Minister of Health, has now been granted an Autopac licence, which for four years he had been denied. In so blatant a case of pork-barrelling it would be hard, Mr. Speaker, even for this bunch to pretend that they were better than their predecessors. No, they will just have to say, "Other governments have done it."

Mr. Speaker, I feel some sympathy for those gentle and idealistic souls who laboured in the vineyards of social democracy. They truly believed that at the end they would find the New Jerusalem. How horrifying it must be for them to learn that in the end all their leaders wanted was their turn at the public trough.

Mr. Speaker, I conclude with a final thought. Though largely barren, this is a smug and complacent Throne Speech, very much reflecting the attitudes of its authors. It is a measure of that smugness that they could, in the name of statism, pretend - and I use their words - that they provide "supplementary options and freedom of choice." It must have amused them to use words for which, in fact, they have so little regard, but since

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) they have had the gall to pretend that they even understand, let alone accept that concept, I wish to make a few comments on that subject.

Mr. Speaker, for men and women in politics, no useful purpose is served in the long run by trying to pretend that complicated issues are simpler than they are. But when I survey the record of this government, its attitudes, its goals, its failures, it seems to me that personal freedom emerges increasingly as an issue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have always accepted that there is not only a role but a responsibility for the state to help those who cannot help themselves. In the eyes of some, that apparently makes me a progressive, but I cannot believe that there are many Conservatives who deny that responsibility. That has been my position, that is my position, and I retreat not one inch from it.

But having said that, and having accepted that the state has a responsibility to do or to help to do what individuals or groups cannot do alone, I come to a stop. I draw the line at saying that the state must do for individuals what the state thinks it . . . Mr. Speaker, I draw a line -- I said, Mr. Speaker, that I would come to a full stop and I have. I draw the line at saying the state must do for individuals what the state thinks it can do better than individuals can do for themselves. I draw the line, Mr. Speaker, at saying . . . that the state is some mystical embodiment of all that is wise and good and therefore has a right to do what individuals and groups could do on their own. Mr. Speaker, I reject those notions philosophically. I also reject them practically. I see no evidence on which to believe that the state, whether in the form of politicians or bureaucrats, is better able to make decisions for people than people are to make for themselves. Where we do accept the practice, we do it because it is expedient, because it is necessary, because it is practical, because it is unavoidable. We do not, we should not, be doing it because we think it is preferable to allowing people free choice.

But that is where this government has gone, and in so doing, it has abridged, Mr. Speaker, the freedoms of the individual. Not absolutely, because freedom itself is not absolute, but unnecessarily, because there was no need. This government has developed a we-are-your-masters attitude.

And for what purpose, I ask, Mr. Speaker? And by what justification? I believe firmly that when one is going to speak of personal freedom, one must speak of freedom from want, from poverty, from poor housing, from sickness, from cultural deprivation, and from exploitation. But to be free from exploitation is not just to be free from the exploitation of the weak by the strong in the private sector, but to be free from exploitation by the state. Free, Mr. Speaker, free from exploitation by a small band of wilful men who happen at one point in time to control the levers of state power. In that context, Mr. Speaker, I speak for a growing number of Manitobans who want freedom from higher and higher taxes and public debt; freedom from the squandering of tax money in the Manitoba Development Corporation; freedom from arbitrary decisions and the petty tyranny of politicized civil servants, and, Mr. Speaker, freedom from agencies like Autopac which combine the worst features of private monopoly and public duplicity; freedom from the costly extravagances and mistakes of Hydro, freedom, Mr. Speaker, to own their own homes, to own their own farms, and to choose for themselves their own life styles.

Mr. Speaker, this is not much. It is no call, Mr. Speaker, for a return to laissez-faire. It involves no abdication from the social responsibility of government. What we are saying is that the notion that you must control people to make them free is nonsense, or worse. Certain limitations we accept of necessity but even that must be viewed with cautions. I remind you, Mr. Speaker, of the famous words of Pitt the Younger, uttered 200 years ago in the British Parliament, when he said, and I quote, "Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants; it is the creed of slaves".

We live in an age of bigness and technological complexity. It is an age which cries out for recognition of the fact that there is, for the individual a sphere of activity that is private, a sphere in which his or her own wishes and preferences and aptitudes and capacities must be given free expression. The government that does not recognize and respect that need is dangerous. This government seems not only not to recognize and

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) respect this fact, but seeks actively to deny it. It is a government which in the name of social progress, largely unfulfilled, has invaded this private sphere and is thereby unworthy of the confidence of this House and this province.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, and seconded by the Honourable Member for Brandon West, that the Motion be amended by adding the following words:

(a) That this House regrets the failure of the government to deal with causes of inflation by continuing to allow their own spending and needlessly high taxation to erode the incomes, the savings and the pensions of Manitobans.

(b) The failure of the government to honour its commitment on Autopac and its attempt to mislead the public as to the actual changes in premium rate structures.

(c) That this House regrets the continued waste of public moneys in respect of companies financed by the Manitoba Development Corporation.

(d) That this House regrets the continuing lack of candor on the part of the government with respect to financial affairs and management of the Manitoba Development Corporation, the Communities Economic Development Fund, the Northern Manitoba Fishing Co-ops and Hydro.

(e) The failure of the government to strengthen the authority and dependence in terms of reference of the Provincial Auditor.

(f) The continued politicization of the Civil Service.

(g) The failure to develop and implement comprehensive proposals dealing with the particular urban problems of housing, recreation and land use.

And (h) The continued attempts by the government to impose its narrow regimented attitude of supply and management on the farming population without regard for the wishes and priorities of the farmers themselves, and pursuing a land tenure system that is met with strong opposition from those farmers. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm assuming that the honourable gentlemen intends this amendment to be an addition to the original motion?

MOTION presented.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK Q.C., (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie is prepared to speak now then I will -- if he's going to adjourn it then I would like to speak before he does.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? (Agreed)

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've been looking forward to the opportunity to be able to address this House and to do the work of a Member of the Legislative Assembly from this part of the arena. I now would like to enter the debate as a member of the backbench to make comment on some of the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. I must say that I acknowledge that he did not descend to the low level that I really expected him to descend to. It was low enough, Mr. Speaker, but it was not quite what I expected.

I expect now that we will in this House for this session be viewers or onlookers of the leadership campaign which is already taking place, and as such we will be hearing the efforts of the various contenders for leadership to indicate their abilities and to try and get the support that they can from the members of their party. And having done so, I would have thought that we would have been able to see the Leader of the Opposition take advantage of the debate on the Throne Speech to propound the programs and policies which he would like to lead his party into carrying out in its years in opposition. But rather than that we found the same sort of repeated complaints, repeated accusations dealing with administrative competence, dealing with various failures or successes of this government, but barely a word, barely a word of what the Conservative Party stands for, what the Conservative Party believes, and what the Conservative Party would do if they were given an opportunity to lead in this province. Nothing, nothing of any consequence was proposed by him. We have no program with which we can assess, or that the people of Manitoba can assess, the policy of the Conservative Party. I think it's a pretty healthy thing that they started to follow the long established procedures and practices of the NDP and of the CCF before it, and the ILP before it, to have constant conventions dealing with policy, dealing with leadership. Every year the leader of our party puts his leadership to the test before the party and it is known that that is the case. There is no great hullabaloo about it.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd)

Well, it is of little concern to me whether the Conservatives this weekend are going to decide to have a leadership competition or not. The fact is to the extent that it may be helpful to the leader of the Opposition he has my support. I would like him to continue as Leader of the Conservative Party.

Having said that I do not want in any way to derogate from the abilities of the other contenders. I would say that any one of them would be acceptable to me, for one, as the Leader of the Conservative Party.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition did towards the end of his speech talk about personal freedom and of his fears. He still believes that the state should help those who cannot help themselves. But he then pauses and says however the state should not do that which it thinks it can do better than the people. I don't know who on this side disagrees with him. The fact is that our party and our government has attempted to carry out the will of the people as expressed by the people on election day and at the booth where they have to indicate their support or lack of support for any candidate. Our party at least has been able to show that when we ran on the campaign with a platform we carried out what we undertook to do, and this we did. I think that we've already done in one year what we undertook to do in the 1973 campaign, and certainly in the previous four years we carried out our mandate based on the authority of the electorate which instructed us through the election to proceed to do that which we undertook that we could and would attempt to do. And that is really what we feel government is about.

It's easy to have a regulating authority that would look after relief, that would look after the building of ditches and roads, that would be forced into dragging its feet, be forced into social measures, such as the health policies which were taken on by the Conservatives against their wish, against their will, contrary to their expectations but dragged into it and yet to do that by financing it through a flat premium tax. This is easy to do. It is not easy to do that which is a forerunner in the demonstration of how people can govern themselves through their elected representatives but do it in a way which will be beneficial to the people themselves. Because the Leader of the Opposition can think all he likes, that all that one has to do is to do that to help those who cannot help themselves if he only sees those who are in the lowest level of society's efforts to improve their own standards. He does not seem to think or to recognize that the whole system under which we operate is designed, designed inevitably to bring about a greater separation between the levels of income and the quality of life and services offered to people in this country. It is inevitable that it should happen because let me tell honourable members opposite that I believe that the profit motive is one which deliberately carries out that effort on the part of any individual to achieve more and greater than the other, and in doing so how could he not but have to push down the other a little bit in order for him to step higher.

We deal now with land speculators. We deal now with developers. We deal now with firms that are multi-national in character that develop our resources, not for the benefit of Manitobans, not for the benefit of Canadians, but for the benefit of the shareholders of those corporations. And even then the shareholders don't have much to say once it gets to the echelons where you have an Imperial Oil making decisions for us and International Nickel making decisions for us, other corporations of that nature making decisions for us. They're not doing it to help the people of Manitoba who are still striving to attain some sense of protection in their homes, some sense of security in their future, some sense of assurance that they will be able to provide decent educational opportunities for their children. They're not doing it for that. But the Member for Fort Garry, yes for Fort Garry, has a contribution to make. I'm sure you'll have the opportunity to do so. However if he wishes to ask a question I will certainly defer to his gentlemanly efforts in that regard. --(Interjection)-- Oh, then he would rather in an ungentlemanly way raise his voice in order to distract others who may be listening to what I'm trying to say. --(Interjection)-- Oh, he's doing it again. Oh, I'm not sure that I've yet had the opportunity to attempt the Honourable Member for Fort Garry's methods on him, but if he wishes me to, I can certainly try to do that in the future.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd)

It is certainly not in the interests of the institutions, the large economic mercantile institutions of this country to bend any effort to create any form of equalization amongst the people, or to remove the differential that now exists. I don't expect them to. The Conservatives maybe they do. I do not believe that it is the role of an institution which may be processing food for it to worry to make sure that the food it processes gets into the households of the poor as well as the rich. It's not their job, and it is not their objective, and if we think it is we'd better correct our thinking because we're being misled. And I say that if we have accomplished anything we have accomplished a great deal in at least reversing the trend that has been going on over the ages of eroding the purchasing power and the ability of people of this province in the lower income groups to acquire some kind of quality of life. The mere fact that reactionary government such as those that preceded us found it necessary to bring in public utility boards, municipal boards, that brought in boards that had to control others is an indication that they too thought that they were fighting in opposition to the trend that inevitably takes place in that effort to create a greater discrepancy in the distribution of wealth in the province. And when the leader of the Opposition says, "If you think that you have created any redistribution of wealth, prove it." "Are we wealthier?" he says. Well of course we are wealthier. It is clearly shown that the Province of Manitoba, the people of Manitoba are better off than they were, including taking into account the inflationary aspect.

Are we redistributing? Of course we're redistributing. It's only those who are so blind in their own eyes, those who wear blinders to that extent, who keep thinking about our expenditures as having no element of redistribution or of tax reduction. So much of what we've done in the last number of years has been to reduce the burden of taxation but not for the friends of the Conservative Party, but rather for the people who are in greater need. And the Member for Swan River is a well-meaning person who is deluded, who is deluded into thinking that across-the-board reduction of taxation is going to accomplish a greater redistribution of wealth. It is no doubt, no doubt in my mind that when you bring in those measures that the Opposition opposed: the attempt to change medicare premiums into income tax, they opposed it, but that only relates to redistribution of wealth. When the Conservatives opposed, as they did, the municipal property and the school property tax, the credit plan which was designed to help those in lower incomes, they opposed it because it did not jive in accordance with their supporters. --(Interjection)-- The Member for Swan River has a question to make? Does the Member for Swan River wish to make a speech? --(Interjection)-- Well the Member for Swan River often makes his best speeches from his present position.

Now the efforts we have made in redistribution have not been such as to make a great marked difference. But let me tell you that had we gone on with the Conservative policies, or let me say lack of policies, of the previous government it would have been much worse than it would have been now. And the Leader of the Opposition's been travelling up north. Is he prepared to tell me that the people in the north are not conscious and aware of what this government has done in that part of the province?

A MEMBER: They're aware all right.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, they're aware. For the first time ever have they seen the Leader of the Conservative Party in the north? And for the first time ever that they've seen policies designed to help the people of the north.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder in light of the remarks the member has just made if he's prepared to recommend removal of the sales tax on wheel chairs now?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I will not give the benefit to the Member for Riel to even acknowledge that he asked an intelligent question.

Mr. Speaker, it is this government which has shown so many of the people of this province that not only does it have good intentions but it makes an effort to do them, and makes mistakes too as it goes along, there's no doubt about that. And that is really the essence of the strength of the Leader of the Conservative Party, to point out what he can in his efforts to embarrass the government - and that's legitimate, that's what he's there for,

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd) that's why they put him there. They certainly didn't put him there to lead them in policy formulation because the fact is, and I'm not the only one who has said it before, the fact is that many of us believe that the Conservative Caucus would not accept their leader's philosophy in many respects in policy formulation. And that may well be his problem. But that is their problem more than his.

. . . . continued next page

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd)

It's interesting to me that the Leader of the Opposition had to justify the sales tax that they brought in in 1967 as being designed to accomplish certain purposes. We know. The record shows. It was designed to bring in additional revenue. And the record shows that we said that sales tax is a less attractive form of taxation than would the income tax. And we've proved what we said and that we meant it when we brought in an increase in income tax, where the Opposition or anyone who wants to confuse and delude the people say, well they are the highest income taxing province -- personal taxing province in Canada. And they continually and consistently -- and I don't blame them, they have nothing else strong to speak for them -- they continually and consistently ignore personal taxes such as premium taxes, medicare premium taxes.

They consistently ignore the fact that of all the ten provinces of Canada the sales tax is taxed in nine of them --(Interjection)-- not in Alberta, not in oil-rich Conservative Alberta. But it is taxed in rich Ontario which happens to be Conservative, if the Member for Swan River doesn't know. It is taxed in Newfoundland, which the Member for Swan River should know is a Conservative government. It is taxed in New Brunswick which the Member for Swan River should know is a Conservative government. As a matter of fact he should know that in Ontario the sales tax is seven percent. He should know that in Quebec the sales tax is eight percent. He should know that in New Brunswick the sales tax is eight percent. He should know that in Nova Scotia the sales tax is seven percent. He should know that in Prince Edward Island the sales tax is eight percent. He should know that in Newfoundland the sales tax is eight percent. And he should know that in the NDP provinces of British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba the sales tax is five percent.

The reason for that is not the sales tax is inherently bad, it is because sales tax is less attractive than the progressive form of taxation we have in our income tax system. And they should know that and they should admit it. They should at least say yes, these are all a package but we think premium taxes are better. They should say that because that's the way they've been acting. But they won't say that. They ignore the fact that we eliminated one and raised the other. They only talk about our having raised the one.

They ignore the fact that we have reduced the burden of property taxes on Manitobans in the lower income group or lower taxation group. They ignore that because they'd rather not, they'd rather call that an expenditure. And when they look at the expenditure items of this government, they say, look how they've grown. And when they have grown in accord with the increase -- reduction in taxation that we brought about, then they ignore that because they'd rather not say it. So the result is we find that when the Leader of the Opposition gets up to make his speech, his one opportunity to actually discuss the programs and policies of his caucus, his group, it is empty of contents, it is only full of some invective and some attack and criticism.

You know Mr. Speaker, a gentleman named Franklin P. Jones who wrote in a Philadelphia magazine -- it's not that I know who he was but I think it's only fair to give him credit for what I'm about to quote -- made the statement which any of us could make, "Holding public office is like trying to dance at a night club. No matter what you do you rub somebody the wrong way."

A MEMBER: And how.

MR. CHERNIACK: Of course I add to it that sometimes it's the right way as well, and that's why the people of this party are able to say that not only did we have a program which we presented to the electorate and which received its support, we carried out the program and we went back and we reported to the electorate and we asked them how they liked what we had done and we asked them whether they were prepared to give us support for the future, and they said yes. They said, thank you, yes. And that number that they gave us the percentage support was much greater than the Conservatives got. So let us remember that the Member for Swan River is part of the shenanigans that he and the Liberals tried to do by running a single seat, a single member against the Minister of Labour, against the Premier himself, and others. In spite of their efforts they failed to increase their holdings to any extent. So I say that we can really show it.

But, Mr. Speaker, I said that no matter what you do when you're a politician and you're engaged in a dance in a night club, you're bound to rub somebody the wrong way and then you

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd) . . . have people who have irritants that they want to add to the sores that are created by that. I think I'd better stop with that analogy. I think I've said enough for that.

So let's talk about Autopac. Oh, yes, that's the big issue. As I recall it somebody in the Conservative Party said, that will be the big issue coming up, Autopac. Well let me tell members opposite that the Premier was absolutely right when he said that Autopac as such would be a dead issue. Do you know what is not a dead issue? It is the efforts being made by the Conservative party to continue that and to therefore play on wrong information and on irritation that was caused by this government being prepared to dance in the night club. That's exactly what happened. Because what happened was that people received increases in their premiums, and in some cases they were greater than they were led to expect that they would be, because dancing in that night club meant that there were some people who were not informed properly. And that was a fault. I think that that took place. But when, Mr. Speaker, we are given all sorts of -- by the way it's only recently since the Leader of the Opposition in the last year or two has acquired some speech-writing capability that we find that our speeches have been read in the past and are being quoted back to us, that's very useful. But when he quotes back to us different statements made that there would not be subsidization of Autopac, that that statement was made, that is the fact. That is the fact that there is no subsidization. And frankly that was our undertaking there would not be subsidization. But I think that having accomplished the opportunity for people injured in automobile accidents where they are not owners of automobiles or insured people, that when they are assured the opportunity and the ease with which they are able to be compensated for the damages suffered, then I would not worry too much about the fact that they may have contributed to the cost of the premiums through forms other than the known, recognized taxes that are being used. But having said that I still say that there is not any subsidization in the program. I think that there is a very good balance created in recognition of the costs of automobile insurance. It is clear --(Interjection)-- Well somebody has difficulty seeing the fine line somebody needs it made so big for him that he can read without his glasses on, and I'd rather he made an effort to read every line regardless of the size. Now that he's put on his glasses I hope he'll be able to understand better what he's listening to.

Mr. Speaker, the Autopac cost has been apportioned now in such a way as to recognize firstly, what has been said so many times, that automobiles don't cause accidents, people cause accidents. Nevertheless when automobiles are involved in accidents there's a cost of repairing them or replacing them. And I believe now that I drive a rather small vehicle that that vehicle should not be taxed as much for its protection as should the Cadillac that may be driven by some of the members opposite. And that being the case I recognize that there should be a differential in the cost attributable to the vehicle that is insured. And there is a charge that all auto insurance companies have put against the costs or the value of the vehicle.

But then people cause accidents, not vehicles. So we have --(Interjection)-- oh, somebody didn't know that, an insurance agent in the first row there, didn't know that people cause accidents. Well, let me tell him that that is the reason why there is a driver's license portion that is charged to the driver which is paid to the Autopac coffers in order to recognize the people's records, driving records should be taken into account in attempting to arrive at the amount which that person ought to be contributing to the cost of insurance.

But then there's a third factor, and that third factor is that -- well, they always talk about that little old lady who only uses her car on Sundays. She does not drive very many miles and therefore she is not that much exposed, or does not expose her vehicle to that many accidents as compared with somebody who drives 20 or 30 thousand miles in a year. And therefore -- and let me tell the members frankly that I was in favour of this from its inception -- that there should be a tax which recognizes the use of the highways, the use by individuals of their vehicle -- that means really the exposure that they have to accidents -- and therefore we have said that one measure, and it's not a refined measure and it's not an exact measure, but it is a measure of the relative use of your vehicle on the road that can't be measured in a rough way by the use of the gasoline. And to the extent that that is the case then we said, this is one way of equalizing the burden in relation to the different factors that can create accidents by putting a two-cent tax on gasoline. Let's be clear, Mr. Speaker, there is no subsidization if the two cents is collected and paid directly to the Auto Insurance Corporation. It is known, it

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd) . . . is open, it is calculable, not in advance, but after the taxes are paid.

It would be subsidization if we said that out of the gasoline tax we will take three million four million dollars, or out of general revenues and pay it into Autopac, that's subsidization and that in itself isn't wrong, but I agree that we said four years ago that we would not do that. But when you say that we will raise our revenue needed for Autopac in several different ways, one on the vehicle, two on the driver's record, three on the usage that he gives that vehicle on the highway, then if that is a directly calculated to-the-penny amount paid directly to Autopac, it is not subsidized.

But do you think, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite -- and I notice that they have been listening to what I'm saying -- do you think, do you think that when they walk out today that they will say to the Leader of the Opposition, "You know, I don't think he's right but maybe there's something worth considering about what he said, let's discuss it." No they won't. They're going to go up to him and say, "Buddy that was a good speech. They are subsidizing and they can't explain it, and therefore they're going to say, let's go out and tell the people that the government is not to be trusted for what it said." And that is the difference, that is the difference of the integrity that I've learned to expect from some of the members opposite and lost out in many cases.

Now they're all making speeches and it only means to me that they must have been listening because they now want to debate it, and happily we will debate it, Mr. Speaker, happily we will. But to use words like deception, to use words like Autopac is something that is to be an issue now. It is only an issue because the opposition to government, and because the opposition in the media -- and when I say the opposition I mean, the almost declared opposition of the media to this government -- are drumming it up and trying to exaggerate it --(Interjection)-- Pardon? The Member for Swan River -- I really will answer the Member for Swan River if he'd only stand up. Stand up and ask the question. Mr. Speaker, I warn you, if you ever come into this Assembly after having been Speaker and you behave like your predecessor did, I'm going to take it out of you somewhere, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition said something about the MDC, and quoted the Minister of Industry and Commerce about MDC, and misquoted him in that he did not get the sense of what was said. There is no doubt that our government said we are an activist government. There is no doubt that our government said that we will not hide behind the facade of the secrecy of the MDC in order to let their sins rest on shoulders other than ours. We said no; we will be open in reporting the activities of the MDC, we will be involved in what they do. And Mr. Speaker, one thing that we said, and the Minister of Industry and Commerce said that, was that we would use the MDC as a developmental tool. That not only would we be a lender of last resort, we would also use the efforts of the MDC to develop industry and to become involved.

But Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition busily reading our own speeches, which I'm sure is a good educational process for him, and who himself was once responsible for the Manitoba Development Corporation, seems to have forgotten that it is still in loans limited to being a lender of last resort. And Section 7, Sub-section 1 reads: "The Corporation shall not make a loan if in its opinion the applicant for the loan can obtain sufficient funds for his requirements from other sources on reasonable terms." And that's what we're talking about. Now either we should be limited to being a lender of last resort or we should not. But to say that we are not and to read the Act is nonsense. He said he didn't know what incompetent could have written that portion of the speech. And all I can say is that I must recognize the incompetence of the person who may have read our speeches but didn't read the Act itself. That is really, for a lawyer one of the worst sins that one can be guilty of, not to read the law but to talk about it. --(Interjection)-- I'm even amused that the Leader of the Opposition has to come to quote as his authority the former Member for Crescentwood, Professor Cy Gonick. He now finds that he is able to find his source of inspiration, his source of knowledge, and he quotes him as saying, "Why this government, what it did to 500 workers at Flyer Industries." I don't remember, I don't remember the Conservative party insisting that the Government of Manitoba use its influence on the Manitoba Development Corporation and through it on the board of Flyer Industries to capitulate to the demands of the union and to give them

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd) . . . what they wanted. I don't remember that being said.

A MEMBER: You're darned right.

MR. CHERNIACK: Oh, the Member for Fort Garry just said, "You're darned right". Does that mean that the Member for Fort Garry now wishes that the government should accept -- the Member for Fort Garry can make his own speeches. But if he wants to interrupt me . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. CHERNIACK: . . . he can only do it in a sense of the role that he plays. Either he should sit there and listen or he can ask a legitimate question, or he can walk out, or he can sit there and interrupt and take up time, and these are his choices. A parliamentarian with his background knows the choices he has and obviously decided which to take.

. . . . continued on next page

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd)

Let me move on Mr. Speaker, on the reference to Cass-Beggs. It would have been inconceivable to me had I not known or not lived through speeches of the Leader of the Opposition before, for him to pretend and pretend so vigorously, and to repeat so often as to expect to be believed, that the Conservative party was not planning to flood to the extent that they were planning to flood when we went through all those hearings back in 1969, in the spring of '69. To deny that is intellectual dishonesty at least. To go back to something else, some prior report, and say why, we never would have done it. Mr. Speaker, it just doesn't hold water. And yet he will repeat it often, and often again, and attempting to correct him, even in his absence, is a rather unsatisfactory accomplishment.

So let me deal for a moment with the Land Lease program, which I believe, I still believe, as I believed at the time we propounded the Land Lease program, was the only opportunity that could really be given to the young farmer, the impoverished farmer, to get on his feet and get going in a program. I remember during the campaign where a young lady, 20 years of age, married for one year, had said, and wanting to farm, came to me and said, "What is your party going to do to help me. My husband and I, we have a child, we have," I think she said, "four heifers and that's our entire ownership, our entire equity. How can we get on a farm?" And I said, "I believe that the way you can get on a farm is to lease land and then work the land until you can acquire enough of an equity so that you can come back in order to buy the land, having achieved an equity, that you can propose." Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Opposition says why the Manitoba Agricultural Corporation does not lend money for that purpose, I say yes, that's right. I don't think that there was a need for the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation to compete with a federal program of lending money for purchase of land. But, by leasing it to them, by giving them the opportunity to work up an equity and stay on the land, the important thing is that those people are able to work the land and keep it. It is true they are not now speculators; it is true that by being tenants they are not able to cash in on increasing values that are created in the market, but I don't know what their purpose is. I don't know if their purpose of farming their whole lifetime is in order to achieve a capital gain or if it is really to stay on the farm and work the land and produce food and live that quality of life which to them is important.

And so, Mr. Speaker; when the Leader of the Opposition says that this government is opposed to government ownership of land, that's false. I'm sorry, is opposed to private ownership of land, that's not true. And, when he uses as an example the fact that this government has an inheritance tax, that I have to say to him, as we have said before, that I have yet to see, and I say this again, Mr. Speaker, in spite of protestations from others, I have yet to see examples where people were forced to sell land in order to pay succession duties. Now I know, I read in the newspaper, that a lawyer, a colleague of mine, representing a client, appeared before the committee and said, "Why this is being done", and when challenged he said, "Oh, I can't tell you that. I'm denied the opportunity by professional-by being unable to tell it". But, Mr. Speaker, I have yet to find the case. And when he learnt, this lawyer who made this speech, apparently learned in the noon hour that he was talking about something that mounted to very little, he was embarrassed to report how few farmers actually paid succession duties. Not those who were put in an awkward position because of, they had paid it. So the Leader of the Opposition is still playing that old tune, which he'll continue to play as long as they'll let him and I encourage that he do that, because the farmer cannot believe him because the farmer does not know of these instances. The way he talks about husband and wife is built right into the lease as I recall it, that there is a succession within the family. That all that we've been working towards since we came into government and when we were in opposition, was to try and maintain the family farm and assist the family farm in being viable. It is the opposition to the vertically integrated farms that brought us to study all these various aspects of attempting to retain the farm in the possession. I am less concerned about ownership I admit. But in the possession and subject to being worked by the people who live on the land, those are the people who should be the beneficiaries of their efforts.

And now I know my time is running out, Mr. Speaker. Let me just deal for a moment about land use, urban land use. --(Interjection)-- If it's not taken against my time, I really feel that I have very little time. No I'm sorry, if I have time at the end I'll certainly be glad to do it.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd)

The public housing. Now suddenly the Leader of the Opposition feels we haven't done enough about public housing. Who opposite there believes in public housing? This time I would wait. Yes there is one. Who is there--Mr. Speaker, the Member for Roblin believes in public housing. No one else indicated. Mr. Speaker, no one else indicated. And I want to tell you --(Interjection)-- If it's a question I'm sorry I do not have the time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. R. SHERMAN (Fort Garry): On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I don't know any rule in this House that suggests that the members on this side have to respond to a rhetorical question asked in bombast by the Member for St. Johns.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. SHERMAN: On a point of privilege . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That is not a matter of privilege. Order please. Order please. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: . . . raise a matter of House privilege. I think we're only the second day into the Session and we're at the worst stages we've seen at any previous Session already. Mr. Speaker, I would beg you, sir, to see what you can do to prevent this from becoming a circus such as is being precipitated by the Member for St. Johns now.

MR. SPEAKER: I am sure the Honourable Member for Riel has good intentions and I would hope that all the Members would have the same good intentions but I think that the only way I can adjudicate is by the actions of all the members and until they help me and co-operate with me, there's not much I can do. So, I really implore all of the members to think what they are doing, to really give some thought to their conduct, and I am certain that we'll get along very well. The Honourable Member for St. Johns has four minutes.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I trust that I am not being charged for the time taken by Honourable Members of the Opposition. I don't believe, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that I am now speaking in a bombastic sense, nor do I feel that I have the right to demand that members of this House respond to questions I ask, be they rhetorical or direct. But may I in a friendly quiet manner ask if there are any members present who would care to volunteer by a show of hands what their attitude is to public housing? I don't know, those who are in favour of public housing may want to indicate, and those who are not in favour of public housing may not want to indicate, and even those who are in favour may not want to indicate. So now I know that people on this side of the House are in favour of public housing. I do not know, Mr. Speaker, I do not know how members opposite feel about public housing, and the reason I do not know is that I have never heard them speak about public housing as being something important. And I want to exclude members of the Liberal party. I want to exclude them from what I said but when the Leader of the Opposition accuses this government of not having an attitude to public housing that would be--well I don't want to misconstrue his words. He said that there is nothing that was done by this government that would not have been done by their government had they continued in 1969. And that, to me, is so phony, Mr. Speaker, that I wonder that he had the nerve to say it, or maybe he didn't have the opportunity to cross it out of his speech when he was . . .

There was no department operating, Mr. Speaker. The former Leader of the Liberal party, the former Premier, was quoted today as having said that the people are opposed to public housing. The Conservative party rather was opposed to public housing. But maybe that's been changed and if so, maybe the convention tomorrow will clarify that.--(Interjection)--

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel state his matter of privilege.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, if any Honourable Member wishes to derive from the House its opinion on a certain matter, there is a procedure used to do it, and that is to bring in a resolution and have it put to a vote. Mr. Speaker, we've wasted now about five minutes on this ludicrous procedure.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: The Honourable Member for Riel-I don't mind his interrupting, and I don't mind his trying to raise the level of debate in this House, or deportment. but Mr.

THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

(MR. CHERNIACK cont'd) Speaker, he knows very well we've been here for five years debating issues of housing and other problems of that nature and I make my deduction based on what I believe I did not hear coming from members opposite. And if he feels that he has something to say, let him say it. He's got an opportunity in the next week to say what he wants to say about public housing. I would wish that he would support us.

But let me point out, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion - I know that I'm just about ready - that the record of the party, the Progressive Conservative party, is abysmal; the record of the party in regard to presenting policies is disgraceful, and if the Leader of the Opposition feels that he can strengthen his candidature for renewed leadership by now propounding policies, good. I wish they would. My biggest problem with them has been to debate their thoughts because they didn't have any to present to us.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Assiniboia, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the Honourable the Minister of Industry and Commerce, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10:00 tomorrow morning.