

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
2:30 o'clock, Tuesday, April 8, 1975

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: 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 Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

MR. CLERK: Your Committee met on Tuesday, April 1, 1975, for organization, and appointed Mr. Shafransky as Chairman. Your Committee met again on April 8, 1975.

On April 8, 1975, Mr. Leonard A. Bateman, Chairman of the Board, presented to the Committee a report with respect to the activities of Manitoba Hydro to date.

Your Committee examined and passed the Annual Report of the Manitoba Hydro-Electric Board for the year ending March 31, 1974.

Your Committee received all information desired by any member from the officers of Manitoba Hydro and the staff with respect to matters pertaining to the Report and the program for hydro-electric development in the Province.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

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

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports. The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour) (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I have a statement to make regarding the unemployment situation in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's actual unemployment rate in March of this year was 4.3 percent, the lowest rate after Saskatchewan and Alberta; a decrease in the rate which prevailed in February of 5.4 percent, up slightly from 3.7 percent a year ago. Manitoba's seasonally adjusted rate was 3.9 percent, down from 4.1 percent in February but also slightly higher than March a year ago. In terms of numbers unemployed from February to March, Manitoba decreased by 5,000 to 18,000 as compared with 23,000 a month ago and compared to 15,000 in March of 1974. Manitoba's labour force in March of this year of 422,000 was 5,000 lower than the previous month but a considerably higher number of 13,000 higher than it was a year ago. Total employment decreased by 1,000 in March of this year to 503,000 and was 9,000 higher than it was in March of 1974.

I indicate, Mr. Speaker, to you and to members of the Assembly that while our rate has been reduced from what it was in February of this year, again, from 5.4 to 4.3, we are still not satisfied with full employment in the Province of Manitoba. I want to indicate to honourable members, Mr. Speaker, that our labour force increased over the last year from 409,000 to 422,000; the number of employed increased from 394,000 a year ago to 403,000 this year, Mr. Speaker, which I suggest to honourable members of the House indicates that the economy of Manitoba is still progressing reasonably favourably and by comparison with the rest of Canada we are doing better here in Manitoba than most of the jurisdictions in the Dominion of Canada. And lest one considers or thinks that this is the result of outflow or out-migration of the citizens of Manitoba, at the same time, Mr. Speaker, that I present these figures, it's obvious that the total population in the Province of Manitoba is increasing, reflecting the situation, and that this government is directing the economy of this province very favourably by comparison.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q.C. (Leader of the Official Opposition) (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that everyone understood the figures and facts that were presented by the Minister in his usual decisive way. But at the same time I think the presentation indicates the necessity of some further examination to determine what obviously statistically may have been an error in the last month or two months, and if it's not an error, then obviously indicates a concern and a trend that has to be examined by government.

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(MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK cont'd)

I point out, Mr. Speaker, that in January of this year, there were 421,000 people employed in the labour force; in February there were 427,000, which was a rise of 6,000; and now, Mr. Speaker, we have 422,000 which is a loss of 5,000. And I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I do not believe historically that the government can show a trend such as I have just indicated based on the statistics that has existed in the past and not only for this period of time but for any three-month period with respect -- I'm sorry, there probably have been trends with respect to summer employment and that would be unfair. But I'm now talking for this period of time where the employment would be those who are entering the labour force and not those who would be part-time employees during the summer months.

So, Mr. Speaker, again I accept the exuberance which the Minister of Labour always demonstrates when he talks about the economy of Manitoba, but I suggest to him that the statistics that have been presented indicate the probabilities of an error at one point, maybe not necessarily for this month but certainly in the last three months, at one point there have been some errors made or, the scientific way in which this is evaluated has brought forward something which requires further examination. And I say this, Mr. Speaker, so that the members on the opposite side, the members on this side should be concerned that at this point the information has to be analyzed further to determine in actuality what is happening before anyone jumps to the conclusion that we are really into the period of low unemployment at a time when our employment numbers are greater than ever. If the trend that was indicated by the last three months was to continue, it would be a very sorry situation statistically for our province and for our labour force.

So I would ask the Minister to basically re-examine the figure and possibly be in a position to explain what is obviously an apparent error in the statistical data presented in the last three months.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial . . . The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Recreation.

HON. RENE TOUPIN (Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs) (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave to make what I consider to be today a non political statement. I have no copies for the Opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? (Agreed) The Honourable Minister.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with His Worship, Mayor Stephen Juba who has today signed a proclamation, designated April 8th to 15th as Holocaust Memorial Week for this year, and the reading of his proclamation did form part of a special memorial program today at 1:00 o'clock at the corner of Hargrave Street and Qu'Appelle Avenue in front of the YMHA Building.

I'd like to inform my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, that the program included in addition to the reading of the Mayor's proclamation, a ceremonial placing of symbolic street signs at Qu'Appelle and Hargrave which will carry the name "Avenue of the Warsaw Ghetto Heroes" for the duration of the Holocaust Memorial Week.

I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, you will agree that today perhaps more than ever, in light of the continuing crisis conditions in many parts of the world, it is important to remember the many millions, including six million Jews whose lives were lost as a result of the holocaust. The temporary renaming of one block of Memorial Boulevard as "Avenue of the Warsaw Ghetto Heroes" serves the important purpose of emphasizing that on these special anniversaries we are not only keeping alive the memory of the depth to which people can sink but also the super-human efforts that men and women are capable of striking back at their tormentors and in fighting for what they believe.

The Warsaw Ghetto Freedom Fighters take their place in the chronicle of heroism beside the Maccabees of Jewish history and in the suicidal fighters of ancient Massada. Theirs, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, was the first uprising against Nazi oppression and they fought to death as martyrs in the cause of freedom. The Warsaw Ghetto Fighters brought honour to their people, served as an inspiration for other uprising throughout Europe and added lustre to the annals of freedom.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the Official Opposition we would certainly want to associate ourselves with the proclamation issued by His Worship

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(MR. HARRY J. ENNS cont'd) the Mayor and commented upon by the Minister of Tourism and Recreation. I suppose the tragedy is that in re-thinking about that time and the horrifying experiences, it would seem that in the 35 years hence that as we watch women and children in different parts of the world still experiencing a holocaust in very real terms at this moment, the necessity of constant reminder that these remembrances are meant to do is only demonstrated that much more by what we see in the world today. So, Mr. Chairman, with those few remarks, we associate ourselves on the Opposition side with the proclamation that has been issued by His Worship, Mayor Stephen Juba in the City.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial Statements or Tabling of Reports? The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Minister of Education) (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a brief statement with respect to a report, the tabling of which was requested of me yesterday. I do not have a statement either for you, Mr. Speaker, nor for the Opposition, simply an explanatory comment.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? (Agreed)

MR. HANUSCHAK: Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, it was asked of me when the Annual Report of the Department of Colleges and Universities Affairs will be tabled and some concern over the fact that it had not been tabled in the House at the present time. Honourable members will know if they check last year's report that it was on a school term basis including the year '73-74. Therefore the report that is being published now will be for the academic year '74-75 which is presently in the process of publication and I'm informed that the House can expect to have it on or about April 15th.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for his explanation in respect to the Annual Report of the Department of Colleges and Universities Affairs. We had brought it to the attention of the Minister because we thought it would be appropriate to have this report prior to the debating of the estimates of that department, and knowing them to be coming up in succession to the Estimates of the Department of Education, we have simply asked that if the report is available that it be made available to the Assembly as soon as possible and as much in advance of the estimates as possible. We do not expect him to do the impossible but we do expect that he will, in his usual way, co-operate with the Opposition in this respect.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills; The Honourable Minister of Mines.

NOTICE OF MOTION

HON. SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C. (Minister of Mines, Resources & Environmental Management) (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would like to schedule, if agreeable, a meeting of the Committee on Economic Development for Thursday next, a week from this Thursday for continuance of the Manitoba Development Corporation Report.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Notices of Motion? Introduction of Bills. Questions; The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. I wonder if he can indicate whether it was the intention of the province to follow the lead of Ontario in cutting taxes in the province.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, Ontario it is true has decreased its sales tax from 7 percent to 5 percent. It is also very specifically indicated that it is for a period of only one year, in which case it shall go back to 7 percent. Manitoba being at 5 percent all along has no reason other than to carry on as we have.

MR. SPIVAK: Having accepted the explanation of the Premier, I wonder if I can ask him whether even for a year it's the intention of his Government to reduce any taxation in Manitoba?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, on the 24th of April I've indicated to the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition will be Budget night and he can wait with great anticipation for that event.

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MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I'm really not worried about my anticipation but I wonder whether the people of Manitoba can anticipate a tax cut?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, it just has to be said that if the kind of tax cuts that my honourable friend has in mind are the kind that took place in Ontario, those tax cuts, we are already at the level to which Ontario is cutting so I fail to see the relevance of the question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. ARNOLD BROWN (Rhineland): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Can the Minister tell this House when negotiations with the MMA will resume?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (Minister of Health and Social Development) (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, any time that the MMA is interested in continuing negotiating we will. That doesn't mean that automatically you have to give a new offer. I think that in all honesty we've reached the maximum of the offer of wages if this is his concern. But we'll negotiate with them any time they wish.

MR. BROWN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. Has the Minister made any attempt to resume negotiations? Have you made any attempt to resume negotiations?

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, as far as we're concerned they were never broken up.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BOB BANMAN (La Verendrye): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs and ask the Minister if this year the cottage owners in the Whiteshell resort areas will be admitted to the parks free of charge?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

MR. TOUPIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, in the revision of rates announced last week which is actually a doubling in most cases of rates, it was equally indicated that the entrance fee for the park that the owner has his cottage in, the individual will be admitted free of charge as part of his lease.

MR. BANMAN: Is the Minister then saying, upon payment of the \$60 a year by the cottage owner he will be receiving a sticker from the Department of Tourism?

MR. TOUPIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is the indication that was understood when the release was made, that in regard to the increase in fees that that included access to the park that the owner had his cottage in leased by the Department of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Birtle Russell.

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Urban Affairs. Sir, yesterday an advertisement appeared in the paper regarding landscaping of certain properties in the Town of Churchill and invited tenders by the Minister of Urban Affairs. Could the Minister indicate what section of his Department covers that area?

HON. SAUL A. MILLER (Minister for Urban Affairs) (Seven Oaks): Mr. Chairman, I wish to thank the honourable member for bringing this matter to my attention. I did not see the ad in question but he did show it to me last night. I've made inquiries. The ad was not issued by my department. We're trying to find out why it was headed the way it was and once I know more about it perhaps I'll convey it to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney-General and it's a question that I gave him notice of yesterday. I wonder if he can indicate to the House whether the employees of the Liquor Commission in The Pas and Flin Flon will receive the cost of living bonus that the employees in Thompson now receive?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. HOWARD PAWLEY (Attorney-General) (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for providing me with notice of this question. Back in November 2, 1961 an extra northern allowance was granted to the Liquor Control Commission employees in Thompson equivalent to 15 percent of salary. That extra allowance was continued for the

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(HON. HOWARD PAWLEY cont'd) Thompson Liquor Control Commission employees up until April 1, 1974. April 1, 1974 instructions have been issued that the 15 percent salary allowance paid to Thompson liquor store employees be eliminated insofar as additional new employees that are hired by the Commission in Thompson. For the present employees at Thompson it was instructed that the employees not receive a reduction in pay due to the cancellation of the 15 percent bonus, but that each time a general salary adjustment occurred for these people the northern allowance would be adjusted downwards until such time as all these employees reached the new established rate, \$100 per month married or \$68 per month single.

So that in answer to the question, Thompson is totally phased out insofar as the hiring of new employees is concerned. For present employees it's being phased out, the 15 percent over a period of time. I understand there are presently three employees in the Thompson liquor store that are affected by this special agreement. So in answer to the Leader of the Opposition, insofar as The Pas and Flin Flon is concerned, there would be no enactment of course under these circumstances of a 15 percent cost-of-living bonus for Liquor Control Commission employees in those stores.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder whether the Attorney-General would indicate whether he would be prepared or he would ask the Chairman of the Liquor Commission to be prepared to meet with representatives of the employees at Flin Flon and The Pas and to explain the detail that's been explained here. --(Interjection)--No, it's been tried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. PAWLEY: Yes, I would have hoped that that would have taken place, but certainly if it has not been done then I think that the manager of personnel services should discuss this with the employees in both Flin Flon and The Pas. I'm surprised that that in fact has not been done.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Minister in charge of the Insurance Corporation.

HON. BILLIE URUSKI (Minister for Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation) (St. George): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member from La Verendrye placed a question several weeks ago with respect to towing, with respect to the contract with United Towing; I wish to advise him that all Autopac towing is within the perimeter highway with United Towing as well as selective towing to a 20-mile radius outside the perimeter highway.

All vehicles which are to be returned to Winnipeg for repair will be picked up by United Towing. ^{at} Those vehicles which will be repaired in the locale of the accident will be towed by the usual firms in that locale. Vehicles which are involved in serious accidents which, because of injuries or road blockage, require the immediate attendance of a tow truck will be towed to their own premises by firms in the local area, whether or not the vehicles are to be repaired in Winnipeg. If they are to be repaired in Winnipeg, United Towing will pick them up from the premises of the local firm.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: I thank the Minister for that reply, Mr. Speaker. I direct a further question to the Minister for Autopac. Is Autopac presently conducting a survey within that 20-mile radius outside of the perimeter to see how many accidents could possibly be towed into Winnipeg?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. URUSKI: Well, Mr. Speaker, the initial contact normally made, if there is a severe accident is not made by United Towing or ourselves but it's made by the police, and if the police determine that that vehicle would normally be repaired in the city then they would, all circumstances being equal, would call United Towing for the vehicle to be towed to Winnipeg, if under normal circumstances a local towing firm would pick up the vehicle to his firm.

However, should the owner after estimating, decide to have that vehicle repaired in Winnipeg, United Towing would be despatched to the local area at no extra cost and the vehicle would be towed to Winnipeg.

MR. BANMAN: So if I understand the Minister correctly, that outside and within that 20-mile radius of metropolitan Winnipeg it's up to the authorities, the RCMP or the local authorities to despatch the towing services that they see fit at the time?

MR. URUSKI: It would be based on the requirements of the immediate situation.

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(MR. URUSKI cont'd) If the vehicle is slightly damaged, the normal procedure would be for the local towing firm to pick it up to the community they're in; but if the vehicle requires towing to - or more extensive damage - it would be towed to Winnipeg, that would be done by United. The police have that discretion.

However, the police are also aware that the contract for that area is with United Towing but it is within the discretion as to how quick that vehicle should be moved or where it should go.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question of the Honourable Minister, I guess, of Mines, Natural Resources and Environmental Management. My question is on wildlife management. I wonder if the honourable, the Minister can advise the House if he has any idea of the number of polar bears in this province that are destroyed or killed by the conservation officers or the RCMP under . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order for Return. The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. MCKENZIE: I have another question then, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: I wonder if the Honourable Minister can advise the House then if he's considering a limited hunting season in Manitoba regarding polar bears.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. HARVEY BOSTROM (Minister responsible for Lands, Forests and Wildlife Resources) (Rupert's Island): Mr. Speaker, there is no consideration by the department at this time on that matter.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Then I wonder if the Honourable Minister would consider the advisability of the RCMP and the conservation officers using the tranquilizer method instead of killing these bears with guns.

MR. BOSTROM: I'll take that question as notice to determine what methods are being considered.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID BLAKE (Minnedosa): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Public Insurance Corporation, and I wondered if he has an answer yet on our question to the matter of trucks being used as school buses.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Public Insurance.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, as soon as I receive a detailed reply the honourable member will have my reply in the House here.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Fort Garry had asked me whether or not charges had yet been laid in respect to certain disturbances which took place at the university, and I wish to advise the honourable member that there are a number of matters which are being examined by Crown Attorneys in the department now in respect to information provided to them by the police, and they're presently ascertaining whether or not charges are warranted in the various respects that have been brought to them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I address a question to the Honourable the Attorney-General. Has he got any further information with respect to possible charges being laid against principles involved in the Schmidt Cartage situation at Wabowden?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. PAWLEY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I was asked by the Honourable Member for Assiniboia with respect to the handling of flood claims, and I said that I thought they were all nearly finished. My information is that there were 21,000 claims. There are still 5,500 yet to do, and they are proceeding at the rate of approximately 200 a day. So I guess "nearly finished" wouldn't properly describe that, but that is the accurate information.

I was asked by the Member for Fort Rouge as to Lake Winnipeg elevations. The elevations that I can give him now are as follows: April 1st, which is of course past, 716.3; May 1st projected 716.41; June 1st projected 716.54. Without a scientific projection they're looking for levels in the nature of 717 at the height of the season in July.

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for providing us with that question. I would like to ask the Minister if he's in a position to determine, based upon those projected levels, if the cottage owners and residents of the Lake Winnipeg area and the municipalities around that lake must begin any form of preventative action or if there is any threat of flooding or water damage in those communities around that area?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, there will be a program relative to Lake Winnipeg which is being - it's to be disseminated by the Lake Winnipeg Management Board to the people in the area. It will largely be in relation to maintenance of last year's dikes which are still there.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary to the same Minister, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister indicate whether in light of these lake levels there will be any control factor emanating from the hydro works at the northern part of the lake; will they be brought into play in terms of effecting down to the 715 level which they're I believe, designed to achieve?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the only controls that are presently available for use are those that are capable of holding water back, and therefore raising the lake level. It is not proper to bring those controls into play when the water level on Lake Winnipeg is over 715 feet. The two channel improvements which have the effect of reducing lake levels have not yet been completed, but will be completed, as I am informed, in such a way as to be able to reduce water levels from what they would have been under natural conditions this fall.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. R. (BUD) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Honourable Minister of Labour. I wonder if he can advise the House whether the Youth Secretariat or any other agency of government conducted a job survey this year to determine what the student employment situation would be like in Manitoba this summer.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: No more than I indicated to the House the other day, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SHERMAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister advise the House what the results of that survey are?

MR. PAULLEY: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SHERMAN: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister advise the House why he cannot give us the results?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: Because I can't give the information, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs. I wonder can the Honourable Minister advise the House if he's had any correspondence or consultations with the Federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Affairs regarding the free family pass for Lower Fort Garry.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

MR. TOUPIN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe about two weeks ago I related to the House that I had received a notification of the Federal Minister, Judd Buchanan, that an upward revision of the rates there would take effect and I sent my comments to the Honourable Minister and since then have not received any formal reply apart from seeing that the rates have been upwards to the dismay of a lot of Manitobans.

MR. McKENZIE: A further question to the Honourable Minister. I wonder can the Honourable Minister advise the House if he has any knowledge of a meeting that's scheduled today with himself, the Minister of Highways, the First Minister, the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, with the Advisory Committee of the Parkland Regional Development Corporation --(Interjection)-- 4 o'clock? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: I have a question for the Minister of Urban Affairs. Can the Minister indicate whether the Provincial Government has yet decided whether it will cost share in reconstruction of the Osborne Street Bridge?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the decision that we would cost share in the reconstruction of the Osborne Street Bridge was made about a year ago.

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MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the Minister's belated announcement of that decision, could the Minister indicate why the decision has not been made at this stage to proceed with the construction?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I wonder if I must remind members almost every day that extraneous comments to questions are out of order. They do take up the time of the House and there is a limited amount of time, so would members kindly abstain from making those kind of remarks.

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge rephrase his question?

MR. AXWORTHY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will rephrase the question. Can the Minister indicate then if the reconstruction of the Osborne Street Bridge is now going to proceed in this building season beginning this spring if a decision has therefore been made?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I can only indicate as I did before and which has been known to all of Winnipeg and Manitoba for over a year, that the Province of Manitoba has indicated it would cost share to a specified amount in the replacement of Osborne Street Bridge. As to the timing of it, as to when it takes place, that really is something that the technical people are more involved in than I am.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary. Can the Minister indicate whether there have been any conditions or caveats placed upon the provincial decision to cost share and whether those conditions have been accepted by the City of Winnipeg for the reconstruction of that bridge?

MR. MILLER: No, there are no conditions beyond the usual conditions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs. In view of the rather substantial public outcry against the raising of the entrance fees to the Federal Parks and historic sites in the province, I wonder if the Minister could inform the House if his department has registered a protest with the federal people involved.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that I attempted to deal with that question in reply to a question posed of me two weeks ago and again today, by indicating that I had sent my comments to the Federal Minister indicating what I felt the Federal Parks to be and historical sites that are under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government, and if it was possible for the Federal Minister to try and keep his entrance fees in line with those being charged by the province, but that recommendation or comment was to no avail.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK; Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister and relates to one of the comments he made. And I just would like to confirm that Budget night will be on the 21st of April.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Thursday, April 24th, Mr. Speaker, yes I thought I had confirmed that to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition but if not certainly this is definitive.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, for clarification and for the record, I raised a question a moment ago and some other member from the Treasury Bench shouted an answer and I don't know whether that went into the transcripts of the proceedings of the House or not. I would think, Mr. Speaker, in the interests of the record that it would be advisable for the Honourable Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs to put his answer into the record.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism.

MR. TOUPIN: Mr. Speaker, to clarify. Yes I have been invited to a meeting this afternoon at 4:00 o'clock and will attempt to represent the opinions of the people as well we can.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable the Minister of Labour. Has the Minister been advised by his conciliation officer that talks have broken off between the two sides in the University of Manitoba dispute?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: No, I haven't been advised that talks have broken off between the two

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) parties have been requested to get down to realistic consultation insofar as the dispute is concerned.

MR. SHERMAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In view of the apparent understanding on the part of the union, AESSES union, that talks have broken off, would the Minister encourage his conciliation officer to redouble the intensity of that message to the two sides?

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that the Assembly would not expect me as Minister of Labour to take as hearsay any remarks of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Labour be prepared to take as fact a factual situation that I'm relaying to him from the two sides in the dispute?

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm used to hearing what the Honourable Member for Fort Garry considers facts which other people would dispute as to whether they were factual or not.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Labour care to check that assessment and opinion out with the two sides in the dispute?

MR. PAULLEY: I quite frequently, Mr. Speaker, check out what the Honourable Member for Fort Garry presumes to be fact and find that they are not fact.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm sure we can follow a different line of questioning. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry have another question?

MR. SHERMAN: Would the Minister rise above his petulance and his pettiness and check with the two . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm not going to entertain that kind of free-for-all across the Chamber.

Orders of the Day. The Honourable House Leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I believe that there is a debate on second reading to be considered followed by, Mr. Speaker, a motion to move into Committee for Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. Proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General. Bill No. 3. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell. Absent. The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable the Minister of Education, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MR. SPEAKER: I'll accept the motion, although I notice the Minister of Education was in flight at the moment when you made it.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Logan in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY - EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 46(a). The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Minister of Education) (Burrows): Yesterday just shortly before we adjourned, the Honourable Member for Fort Garry raised a general question with respect to the Planning and Research Branch and he expressed concern at the fact that it has a sizable budget and hence an interest in knowing just how it spends its money. Now it's rather interesting and amusing, Mr. Chairman, listening to the attitude of the Opposition toward the Planning and Research Branch within the Department of Education. Shortly before the Honourable Member for Fort Garry rose to his feet, his leader took quite the opposite approach and that was that Planning and Research isn't doing enough in the institution of the types of programs that he felt the City of Winnipeg required and other communities required, and then a member of his Party rises and takes the opposite view that perhaps we're spending too much money.

But of course that didn't really surprise me, Mr. Chairman, because earlier in the day, I believe, if I understood the Honourable Member for Brandon West correctly, that he was pressing and urging for some centralized form of evaluation of student progress. And there again I'm not quite sure whether he in fact was expressing a personal view or whether he was speaking for the members of his caucus, because I wasn't there and I don't know how accurate press reports are, but reading the press accounts of the conference or convention

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(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd) that his party held about a month ago, and at that time a resolution that was brought before it calling for the reinstatement of departmental examinations was defeated, as I recall the article on that. Of course he was there, he would have a better recollection of the proceedings and if I were wrong he would have an opportunity to correct me.

The total approved for Planning and Research for the '75-76 fiscal year is \$1.7 million, or exactly \$1,706,000. Last year it was \$1,239,000. Of the last year's appropriation, there was 16 percent which was for Native education, this year 19 percent of the appropriation is for Native education. Last year 23 percent of the appropriation went to school divisions as grants, this year 28 percent is going to school divisions in the form of grants. And if one includes Headstart and School Milk Program, then direct assistance to schools last year equaled 46 percent and this year it will be 49 percent.

Now, if I just may dwell for a moment or two on the programs that are funded which are operated at the school division level or in which there is considerable participation and involvement of the school divisions and the school divisions reaction to them. I will deal with . . . Yes, I will start off with one of the larger ones. The REAP program which for this fiscal year, the amount that's included in our estimates is \$275,000, which is \$25,000 more than last year.

I have here, Mr. Chairman, a couple of letters which I'll be prepared to table after I read them into the record. I have one which is a copy of a motion passed by a school division: "WHEREAS the school board is aware and appreciates the change of attitude of our communities toward the function of our schools; and WHEREAS the school board recognizes that this change was caused by the opportunity provided by the principle of REAP as well as the funds of REAP in large part; and WHEREAS the school board approves and supports these changes of attitudes as they are outlined in our superintendent's report to Mr. Meadows of March 19, 1975" - he is on the staff of Planning and Research in charge of the REAP program. "BE IT RESOLVED that the White Horse Plains School Division appreciates and supports the principle of REAP project and requests that the Minister of Education renew our REAP agreement for another year as outlined in our contract of 1974."

And another which I'm sure would interest the Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney. This is a letter from the Turtle Mountain School Division written by one Richard Campbell, the Chairman of the REAP project committee. He writes in his letter to me as follows: "Please accept this letter as a report from the REAP program in the Turtle Mountain School Division No. 44. We of the REAP committee believe the program is progressing very well at the present time. All new programs take a period of time to reach a point of acceleration. The REAP program which has been in operation in the smaller schools of our school division for just one year underwent this period but the past four months have shown a satisfying activity and good interest of people to become involved. The division has been most fortunate to have such a project director as Tom Emsley who has worked so very well with the people of the district.

We believe the most significant result of REAP Program is the parents and persons of the districts are becoming involved in their school and in its place within the community once more. The motto of our Minor Hockey Week, "Take Your Child to the Rink, Don't Just Send Him," could be borrowed and say, "Become involved with your child at school, don't just send him." Unfortunately too often people just send their children to school, later to become unhappy with the results obtained. Through the REAP program many fundamental programs relating to basic living are being offered to the children of the smaller schools. The REAP committee is most excited with the possibilities existing with the program for the coming years."

This letter was sent to me in February and about five, six weeks prior to that an article appeared in a newspaper, which I don't think that anyone would ever identify it with the party of my Government, the Toronto Globe and Mail, on January 1st, 1975. An article dealing with the REAP program that's on track, within the Constituency of Souris-Killarney and the Town of Ninette, headed, "A Town Caught Up In Learning." "On any given Friday afternoon the school in this small southwestern Manitoba community is all but deserted thanks to REAP, the Manitoba Government's Rural Educational Alternatives Program. But there is no truancy problem." And this, Mr. Chairman, may I remind you again, I'm quoting this from the article

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(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd) that appeared in the Globe and Mail. "Classes are in session all over town; in local autobody and carpentry shops, two downtown stores, a service station, a Pelican Lake training program for the retarded, and at Ed. Hinton's electrical shop. Mr. Hinton is the local Mr. Fixit when it comes to anything electrical. He is also a trustee in the Turtle Mountain School Division and currently Chairman of the School Board. Six days of the week Ed. Hinton is an electrician but every Friday he becomes Ninette's electrical shop teacher. He volunteers his time, his knowledge, his shop and his equipment for the use of the students and the instruction of basics of electronics. All over the school division farmers, professionals and businessmen are also donating their time and energy.

"Before REAP was developed by the Planning and Research Branch of the province's Department of Education, the problem of improving education in rural areas was tackled through consolidation of the small rural schools into large units with centralized schools. Although the largest schools provided more facilities, many rural communities resented the loss of their one and two room schools fearing a loss of community identity. Manitoba's NDP Government has made equality of opportunity in economic, cultural and educational affairs in rural areas one of its major priorities. Government leaders have sought both to retain the cultural values of the community school and provide educational opportunities on a par with the urban areas. And REAP was put forward as a possible answer and now is in operation on a trial basis in eight school divisions. The program tries to involve parents in the operation of a school through volunteer services. They are asked to take part in decision-making and identifying the needs of a community, the school and the students and in suggesting how to satisfy them. In Ninette the community of 700 about 130 miles southwest of Winnipeg, the students are taken out of the classrooms and their theoretical knowledge applied in retail outlets, farming operations and Ed. Hinton's electrical shop.

"Well, Mr. Hinton says, What is learning anyway? Is it sitting in a classroom in long lines of desks facing a blackboard and memorizing? I don't think so. Not once the basic skills and concepts have been learned. Learning is everywhere, it's a lifetime experience. That seems to be the program's basic premise. It varies from town to town in the division. At Dunrea a few miles west of Highway 23 parents are involved in the teaching of 4H courses. But the idea is the same, self-help in the community school concept put into practice. So far the parents, teachers, administrators and government officials involved with REAP are more than happy with the program. Really when you get right down to it, says Tom Emsley, REAP Co-ordinator for the entire division, it's probably the kids that are the most enthusiastic about it. I think the program is making school exciting."

Now that, Mr. Chairman, is an example of the type of reaction from the community to the various innovative projects that we have under way, that we are about to initiate this year or those that have been on-track for some time. And the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge and the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition in particular, who was concerned about the relevance of the types of programs that are being initiated in the City of Winnipeg. Are they in fact meeting the needs of the people within the Winnipeg community, and how do we know? Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to read a letter into the record from the Winnipeg School Division written by Dr. Latinez the Community Education Officer for it. And he writes as follows:

"I wish to thank you for the initiation of the Action Research Project on the immigrant in school". This relates to the Urban Education Program that I discussed yesterday. And he continues. Dr. Latinez's wages are being paid - in reply to the Honourable Member for Swan River who is speaking from his seat - his wages are paid by the Winnipeg School Division. And that the source of funds for that school division is no different than the source of funds for any other school division, including the one in which the former Deputy Leader of the Conservative Party resides. "In my opinion this project was long overdue, says Dr. Latinez, in the City of Winnipeg. During the 12 years I worked with City Hall my main concern was the co-ordinating effort among ethnic groups in order to ease the way for a multi-cultural mosaic. The assigned personnel under the over-all responsibility of Mr. George Heshka, particularly Mr. Kan Rahi and Mr. Adrian Gibbons are in the process of an excellent series of workshops in the selected schools. My involvement in the project is a privilege for me in Winnipeg School Division No. 1. Being an immigrant myself." Now here is a man who is speaking on the basis of some personal experience. "Being an immigrant myself I can identify

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(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd) the obvious value of the project. Thanking you and your staff again for the introduction of the project." Signed by Dr. Latinez.

That, Mr. Chairman, is the reaction of the community, urban and rural - a sampling of the reaction of a community, urban and rural to the types of programs that we have initiated, that we are about to initiate and continue with during the forthcoming fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I might say that those testimonials and press clippings are all very pleasant and all very impressive but they do not demonstrate satisfactorily to us, sir, that anything is being done that could not be done by enlightened principals in schools, by enlightened teachers in schools and by enlightened teachers in teacher training colleges. What we are asking is not that the government refrain from spending \$1.7 million on Planning and Research but that the government show us what that \$1.7 million is going for.

The fact of the matter, Mr. Chairman, is that the over-all budgetary increase in this province this year in the spending program of this government is approximately 18 percent over what it was last year. The increase in Planning and Research is approximately 40 percent, 40 percent plus. This is the response of this particular department or the Premier and his colleagues when they take a look at this particular department, to the urgings for restraint, to the urgings for control on government spending. Instead of the hold-the-line approach, instead of an approach that would be consistent with the over-all spending estimates approach of 18 percent, which is surely high enough, what we have here is a hold-the-line approach that produces an increase in spending of 40 percent plus. And what we want to know is when spending, when costs, when runaway spiraling government inflation of this kind is going on, what are we getting for it. We're not asking that Planning and Research be cut out, but there's a 40 percent increase and it hasn't been demonstrated to our satisfaction, Mr. Chairman, that that outlay either in totality or in the extent of it which represents an increase over last year, that that outlay is producing anything that enlightened teachers and principals couldn't produce in their own classes, in their own classrooms in their own school institutions.

The facts are, Mr. Chairman, that there are a wide number of areas that require some research, that require some examination and scrutiny and investigation in the field of education. The Member for Fort Rouge referred to some of them. There are countless others that are not in any way unrealistic or esoteric, and what I fear here is that what we have is an esoteric classroom laboratory kind of exercise. It's a white mice kind of an operation where people are, you know, playing with experiments in a laboratory. The fact is that there are some specific realistic questions that could be looked into in education. And I would like to ask the Minister, I asked him yesterday, who these people are and I repeat that request. To paraphrase that line from Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, Mr. Chairman, "Who are those guys? Who are those guys?" Who are they who are carrying out this program, who are spending 40 percent more than they did last year. That's what we want to know. Who the people are? What they're doing and what they're being paid? Man by man, woman by woman, buck by buck, job by job.

And then we would like to know, sir, for example what kind of research is being done in the area of teachers and teacher's training? What kind of research and planning is being done in the area of institutions themselves, the large consolidated composite school as opposed to the smaller virtual single room school? What kind of research is being done in the area of curriculum and matching pupils and student to curriculum? What kind of research is being done in the area of guidance which is probably one of the most crucial and critical areas in the whole field? What kind of research and planning is being done into the question of the school year, the approach to different teaching patterns, the approach to the semester system or the round-the-clock system? What kind of approach is being taken to educational schedules in total? What kind of approach in Planning and Research is being done in the area, for example, Mr. Chairman, which I mentioned last night, and that is the area of the cost of education? If there's a million point seven, \$1.7 million being spent on Research and Planning in the field of education, how about a little planning on keeping costs down. How about a little research into that field. I wonder if the Minister could respond to some of those questions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd be happy to respond to the questions raised by the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

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(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd)

He made the point that in his opinion there's nothing being done in the schools which could not be done by enlightened teachers and principals by themselves, which they couldn't do on their own. Well I would like the honourable member to know in all of these projects the teachers and principals are very much involved in the additional funding for the costs that may be incurred in the carrying out of the project over and above the normal school operating costs, are included in here, and any additional staff that may be required for the purpose of the conduct of that particular pilot project comes out of my appropriation. But whatever involvement is required of the teachers and the principals and the superintendents it is there, they are involved and working with the students in the schools. So these are not as the honourable member described them, white mice, some clinical type of situation which is removed from its natural environment and observed very closely in that fashion. They are working with the facts of life in the school as they are and not in some artificial setting.

The honourable member asked, "Who are those guys"? Well the honourable member will also remember that not too long ago I did accept an Order for Return asking for that very type of information, and I did indicate to the House that that Order for Return is in the process of being compiled and as soon as it is it will be tabled as all Orders for Return are, and that will provide the honourable member with his response. And if that should be incomplete, as I indicated last night I believe, either in further debate in this House or via the filing of a further Order for Return which if accepted by the House, further information will be provided to the honourable member.

The honourable member asked - now I do intend to go into a detailed breakdown of the operating costs of the department, and I'll come to that in a moment, but firstly I wish to touch upon three or four questions which he had raised.

Going in reverse - costs of education. I did indicate in the House yesterday that at the present time there is an inter-organizational committee consisting of representatives of the teachers, trustees, school superintendents and school business officials associations working together with my department, addressing itself to the whole matter of educational finance. And the Planning and Research staff is of course involved in its activities and it will be reporting to me shortly. And if I may repeat again, Mr. Chairman, a statement that I made yesterday, upon the receipt of its report then I would take it to my colleagues in Cabinet for its consideration with a view to bringing about whatever policy changes it may in its wisdom wish to make, with a view to varying or altering the manner of calculation of support paid to the schools and/or the level of support.

And then of course tied in with that is the matter of consolidation of schools. Now the REAP program is looking at the remaining small schools that are in existence where there has been expression of a community of an unwillingness to close those schools and how to make them function in the most effective manner possible. But the Committee on Education Finance will have to look at the effectiveness and efficiency of the operation of the entire school system.

Now with respect to research into the question of teacher training, that, Mr. Chairman, I could touch upon it briefly now - and I regret that I must because you know, some of these cases I would prefer to discuss the matters under one department, but the rules being what they are I think it would be more appropriate if that were discussed under Colleges and Universities because any work that is being done in the area of research and teacher training is under the aegis of the Department of Colleges and Universities. So if the honourable member remembers to ask me at that time I will try my best to keep in mind the honourable member's question and will deal with it at length then.

Now, the cost breakdown of Planning and Research. Within the Planning and Research Branch for the forthcoming year there are 21 SMY's approved, plus 11 Native Education, for a total of 333.5 thousand dollars; 215.5 and 118. And this by the way, in the Planning and Research Branch is a reduction of one SMY from last year when it was at 22.

Then I could give the honourable member a further breakdown of the SMY's in the planning and research staff, the ratio is - well there's 9 professional, and that would be the people who are involved in the actual planning and research work, and 11 administrative supports which would include your clerical staff.

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(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd)

So that, Mr. Chairman, is roughly the - and then of course in addition to that there are the SMY's, the staff man-years that are associated with the delivery of the various programs that we dealt with yesterday, REAP, Headstart, administration services, school milk, community volunteers, evaluation, urban education and so forth, which brings the total to about 55 - between 55 and 60 - I think closer to 60 SMY's in total. As we mentioned yesterday that it was about 30-30, about 30 in the various programs that I've mentioned, and 30 in the planning and research per se, about 9 of whom are planning and research people, 11 support staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister say whether the 40 percent plus increase in the budget results from increases in staff, and results from increases in physical properties, or results from expansion of concepts and expansion of work projects.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Of the programs that we had referred to yesterday a good portion of that is program expansion and the balance I would suspect would be the inflationary factor. Program expansion is as follows: REAP, 25,000, and Headstart \$11,000; and then of course there are three new programs that will be brought on track this year, there are two new programs; the community school nutrition program which is \$200,000, and the schools for urban neighborhoods which is \$50,000. So here in one block I have identified, 250, 275, 286 thousand dollars so there's close to 300 thousand, which brings us up to over \$1,500,000, and then there's inflation factor and there's possibly, you know if I were to take the time to go through the Estimates Book there might be an odd SMY, or fraction SMY here or there, and there's the balance. But those are the major items.

MR. SHERMAN: The other question that I had at the moment, Mr. Chairman, really relates to the questions I've already asked and to which the Minister has said the answers would be coming on an Order for Return. I wonder whether we're going to have to wait for that Order for Return and how long we're going to have to wait. The Minister has his experts, his professionals with him in the Chamber, and I think we'd be interested in having those answers rather sooner than the usual length of time we have to wait for Orders for Return.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Well, Mr. Chairman, the usual length of time that honourable members have had to wait for Orders for Return, I'm sure that if honourable members will check the Votes and Proceedings there were returns to them filed, to some, already during this session. My staff is working as rapidly as it can, collecting and assembling the material, and I have the assurance of my staff that that is being done, and as soon as that is complete the Order for Return will be filed hopefully within the next few days.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes. I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister in dealing with the Planning and Research portion of his estimates can indicate whether they operate under a functional budget or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Does the Honourable Leader of the Opposition mean by program activity?

MR. SPIVAK: Program activities and how do they account for their time?

MR. HANUSCHAK: Well, yes, Mr. Chairman. The determination of the staff size and the staff configuration is related to the types of programs, the number of programs, and the amount of time that the carrying out of any program would require, the level of expertise that the conduct of that program would require of its staff, and then on that basis the cost of it is determined.

MR. SPIVAK: Well who makes the evaluation as to whether the judgments that are being exercised or being made are correct. The Minister?

MR. HANUSCHAK: As the honourable member may know - I shouldn't say that he may recall because I can't speak for the previous government as to how it operated - but there is an Assistant Deputy Minister, an Associate Deputy Minister, there is a Minister, there is a Management Secretariat of Cabinet that reviews any - well is involved in the estimates review process, is involved in classification of SMY's, is involved in the assessment or the review of the cost of various government programs, and goes through all those checks and balances.

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MR. SPIVAK: What I assume that the Minister is saying is that his staff people account to the officials, both the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Minister with respect to the program they're undertaking and their time and the expenditures involved. Is that what he's suggesting?

MR. HANUSCHAK: Well, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is commencing in sort of a midstream situation. The general thrust and the general type and nature of programs that will be undertaken by government, that is a political decision to make, which we make, and for which we seek the approval of the people of Manitoba, and which we had obtained in June of 1973. Then once that having been done, then fleshing out that program in terms of staffing and designing the mechanical framework for the operation of it, is the responsibility of our Civil Service staff, of course.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Chairman, the people of Manitoba did not vote for a Planning and Research Branch of \$1,700,000. They may have voted for the government for many reasons, they didn't particularly vote for this reason. I don't believe this was one issue that was placed before them. --(Interjection)-- The Minister says, "Yes, it was." --(Interjection)-- The people of Burrows constituency voted for it. I would suggest the people --(Interjection)-- They voted for a planning and research branch of \$1,700,000? --(Interjection)-- Yes I know, I know the logic that the Minister would use. I understand the logic that he does attempt to use. I'm not saying that it's very logical.

I am now going to ask the question again to him. Planning and Research is a group of people who are both creating new initiatives and executing new programs, involved in the evaluation of existing programs and development of new ones. I'm asking now, the Minister to tell this committee how the staff people account for their time and for the initiatives that they take in trying to develop new ideas which in fact, may very well be accepted by the political group who are the ones who will make that decision on the program. What I'm asking the Minister to indicate is, how do these people operate, how do they account for their time, what procedure he has within his department to deal with their efforts?

MR. HANUSCHAK: Well, Mr. Chairman, you know the honourable member said that in June 1973 the people of Manitoba did not vote for this program. I want to assure the honourable member that - now he may not be aware of this in River Heights constituency - but I want to assure him that when we went to the polls we told the people what our program is going to be and one of the planks of our program was equality of educational opportunity, and we did explain that to the people in concrete terms what it was that we meant, what we wanted to do and that we're doing. So the people did know what they voted for and in that sense 73 percent of the Burrows electors who voted for me knew what they were voting for and they knew that they were voting for a Planning and Research department which had been in this department in 1973 at the time they went to the polls, and none of them voted to scrap it. So they knew very well what they were voting for.

Now, how do they account for their time? Mr. Chairman, as I had explained a moment ago, insofar as the general thrust of government programs, the direction which we are to move, the general purpose and intent, and the goals of government programs, that, Mr. Chairman, is a responsibility of those elected to government. That's our responsibility. Then to put flesh on those programs, to set up the mechanical structure for them, is the responsibility of staff, and we hire Deputy Ministers and Assistant Deputy Ministers and other supervisory staff to assist that Treasury Branch in seeing to it that the expenditure of the dollars is properly accounted for.

And in addition to that, in addition to that, Mr. Chairman, in every program that we've undertaken right from Day One, and this is a question that I, as a politician ask the staff, that others ask the staff - here's a program, here's a project that's being proposed, that's devised, and how long will it have to run to enable us to obtain some sort of a reading on the merits of it. And then we ask the next question, what mechanism is being devised for the evaluation of it, and there's part of the accountability process. And the evaluation of all programs, it varies. As I indicated in the House yesterday, perhaps the Honourable Leader wasn't in his seat at that time, some of the evaluations undertaken is out-of-House evaluations, some are in-House evaluations, some are on a joint basis with our staff and staff from the various school divisions of the province or from the Faculty of Education or

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(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd) from wherever else. But there is an evaluation mechanism built into every program right from its day of inception.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: There are a number of points that the Minister made, some of which require comments and then I'd like to deal with the information that I'm trying to obtain.

And I think that it's rather interesting. What the Minister is suggesting is that the Planning and Research Branch is equated with equality of education, because that's what he said the people voted for, and therefore they voted for the Planning and Research Branch. --(Interjection)-- Well, it's equated with the planning and research. Because I think there's something very significant that has to be understood with respect to the question of the government's accountability to this Legislature and to the people. For the period of time that we meet in between elections when programs are presented to the people of Manitoba and judgments to be made on past performance and what may be off in the future, programs are undertaken by government that are not in fact discussed with people. And those programs have to be accounted for both from a financial point of view and from a program point of view.

The questions that have been asked have not in any way dealt with the financial accounting within the department, that's just another issue, and frankly that issue hasn't been raised by us at this point. What we are trying to understand, particularly in this area in which new initiatives are supposed to have been developed and some additional pilot programs have been now undertaken, is how the staff, which we now know to be 60 or 61 or 62, account for their time, because one of the problems with this particular branch and one of the problems with the government, is the problem of having too many people running around on a variety of programs, not knowing what they're doing, not accounting to anybody, many duplicating what is happening in other departments and at the same time not in any way being responsible for what they're doing except spending public money. And one of the concerns that we've had and one of the reasons for the kind of analysis taking place here is an attempt to try and understand specifically the breakout with respect to \$1,700,000 on Planning and Research, to be able to evaluate what is taking place. And the kinds of questions that are asked are asked for the purpose of obtaining that kind of information.

Now to the general proposition that the people, in voting the government, voted that the government can do anything, and they accept that - well, I'm sorry. The people when they voted did not vote for a ten million dollar deficit in Autopac even though the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources may think that they did. I don't think they really did because they didn't know about it; they didn't even know that there was going to be a deficit, although the government obviously did. So, in effect, I don't accept the proposition that the Minister would like to present. But that debate will go on between us.

What I am now saying with respect to the whole range of programs that are involved here in an area which is essentially mysterious - and I want to suggest not only mysterious to the members of this Legislature, but mysterious to all those people who are involved in the teaching profession in this province - if there's one question that's asked over and over again of the members of the Opposition as they go through the province, and I think I can say that without any fear of contradiction, is: what do Planning and Research in the Department of Education do? And who are these people and who do they account for, and what kind of programs are they talking about, and how much detail and research has gone into the programs that are being suggested, and how much money is going to be spent? And I think I can say that, you know, again without fear of contradiction, because this has happened throughout all of the rural northern part of Manitoba. Yes, it has, and the Minister may not accept that, but I suggest to him that it is happening and he can read a couple of letters with respect to a couple of programs, but I can guarantee that we can duplicate that, well we can triplicate. We can, each one of us in our own way, produce documentation which will be a little bit more devastating than the documentation that he used to support his position.

The problem of evaluation becomes important here and the thing that is sort of disturbing, I guess, is how do we know that what is being contemplated, or what has been undertaken, really hits the objectives that the government has set out for themselves. In the report, the Director of Planning and Research states that "we are trying to create a comprehensive system of education that offers equality of educational opportunity", and that's an objective that people, I think, would be prepared to accept. But the question is whether the programs that have been

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) undertaken, or the studies that have been undertaken, or the work of the people who are in the process of trying to evaluate and come up with new programs, really are meeting that objective.

Now the Deputy Minister - he's in front of me - stated in his summary that your department "was cognizant that education must be increasingly viewed as a social service function," which I would think indicates a direction which has been, at least has been expressed to be the thrust of the government. And I come back again to a point that was made before with respect to Planning and Research, who this year will spend \$1,700,000, who last year spent \$1,239,000, whose salaries are \$333,000, and whose expenditures are \$1,332,000 forecast for this year - and we now know that that will contain probably the equivalent salaries - who will still have the expenses as indicated in the Public Accounts of '74, of membership fees, of furniture and furnishings, of printing and stationery, of telephone and telegraphs, automobiles and publications and travel expenses, which goes with any other listing of "other expenditures" (it's not peculiar to this particular section and I'm not trying to suggest it is); that realistically what really is the department doing with respect to achieving the so-called objectives that they've talked about? And what really is being accomplished with the exception of some piecemeal projects that are being undertaken, some of which are considered at this point pilot projects. but how do they tie in with the direction expressed by the government with respect to education and with respect to the over-all direction, with respect to the core area of Winnipeg? Because there has been an attempt to try and indicate that a major undertaking is going to take place, and as far as we can see, there's no attempt to introduce really new initiatives or programs of any meaningful standard.

We know that the economic and social conditions of the inner city and the inner core area, or the core area, depending on how you refer to it, have a disparity that is in many respects more severe than the disparity in the rural areas and in Northern Manitoba. We know that they lack economic opportunities and we know that they lack housing, but they also lack educational opportunities, and the problem one sees in the programs that are being presented and the way in which the Minister deals with this, is to determine whether in fact those educational opportunities are really going to be provided. You know, it's not sufficient to suggest that \$200,000 in one new program, and when we analyze that program and we realize that it will take staff -- (Interjection)--to determine how; what. Determine whether --(Interjection)-- effective way. Well I must say that the government has been in power for six years and it is talking in terms of an urban renewal program that should be a comprehensive program and which really should have tied in all the factors that are necessary, including all the various departments that are involved, of which education is one, and should be targetted for the people that they are trying to assist and help. And yesterday when we asked the various questions of who the target population were, have they been identified, what programs were going to be undertaken, we really have no answers that have been given by the Minister.

Now the Minister may feel that he's given satisfactory answers. I suggest to him that he has not. --(Interjection)-- Well I tell you what I would suggest. I would suggest a program that would be really concerned with the employment opportunities of the area, with the ability to be able to assist the people in the development of proper educational skills, and which will be tied into the economic and social needs of the people and be a complete comprehensive policy. And I would suggest that if you're going to spend money researching, both in an attempt to try and put pilot programs in and to come up with programs that were required, you would essentially do that, and you would do that in consultation with not just the people involved, but the whole range of people who are working within that area, and I suggest to the Minister that that consultation is not taking place in the way he would suggest but is on a piecemeal basis, and at the same time is unrealistic with respect to what is really taking place. And there's a tendency on the part of the government to believe that all that's required now is the development of some new public buildings and some additional housing and that's going to be the answer; and it's going to be far from the answer with respect to it.

Now what I am saying, Mr. Chairman, and what has been requested of myself and others is attempting to try and get information to try and understand how this program works, and all I can see at this stage, Mr. Chairman, is that the Minister is prepared to indicate that there are some programs which they feel very good about --(Interjection)-- Yes, I'll allow a question in a moment - they feel very good about it, and they are quite prepared to say

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) that these programs are in fact meeting the needs, and are quite prepared to simply sit down and let these programs be carried on, and at the end of the year say, "We have done something." Because, Mr. Chairman, all one has to do is look at the report of Planning and Research to see how really thoroughly convinced they are that they have really made a major contribution and the justification of the public of this kind of money is necessary. Well, to the extent that you've employed some people, both by way of civil servants and by way of contract, you've at least provided employment, so to that extent you've assisted somebody.

But the questions really has to be asked; are you really assisting the people with whom you should be dealing, and are you really providing the equality of educational opportunity that you've been talking about? And I think at this stage, one could say, based on the information supplied, that this is not happening. And the interesting part, Mr. Chairman, is that we haven't asked, as we can and as maybe some will and should, what all the other expenditures are. What are the travelling expenses? And when we get the listing of all the expenses and relate that together with the salaries, then we'll really know what's happening with respect to the programs, and then, Mr. Chairman, we'll see how really devoid the government is of really any kind of major direction in the kind of program initiatives that I've talked about. Because if we look at the Public Accounts with respect to this department in Other Expenditures, there was over \$231,000 in 1973-74 of some \$431,000 spent on Other Expenditures, of membership fees and the standard kind of things that happen in Other Expenditures. And I wonder if we examine the programs what we'll really find.

I've indicated, and I say this again, that those of us who have travelled throughout Manitoba in the field of education are met with some very basic questions. Some we will deal with with the Minister when he gets to his salary, and they are more appropriately dealt with with respect to him. But one is, what justification can the government have for Planning and Research? What is it doing? Can it prove a degree of success? Is it being controlled and managed properly? Is it meeting the needs and objectives that have been declared, and if it is, who is it accounting to?

Now, Mr. Chairman, we've only had a day and a part with respect to the Minister, and the degree of accounting that's been given, that's least been demonstrated, is not very good, with all due respect to the Minister. And the kind of information that we're getting is very difficult. It's very difficult because it is not the kind of detail that we should be getting, and I suggest to the Minister that our concerns are real; that this is one department, one phase of the department as there are many many phases in this government, which to a certain extent has been allowed to run wild with the best of intentions, but nevertheless at the same time is producing very little, and the justification of dipping into the taxpayer's pocket continually to pay out for these programs has to be made, and has not been yet made by the government.

. . . . continued next page

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Chairman, I believe while the honourable member was speaking, I did interrupt him asking whether he would allow a question and he said that he would. With reference to what he feels should be done within the core city area, the types of programs that should be developed and implemented therein, I got the impression that he spoke in terms as if the Department of Education should go in there and do certain things. But I wonder if he could just explain how he perceives the Planning and Research Branch of the Department of Education, or any branch, functioning, doing that type of job, being mindful of the fact that there are also school divisions which have school boards which have certain responsibilities.

MR. SPIVAK: One of the curious things about government is that they still don't recognize that they have to govern, and one of the constant pleas on their part is for us to tell them what they should be doing. And I want to explain to the Minister his function is to govern and his function is to make those decisions, and his function is to stand up here and tell us what he's doing. But I am quite prepared, Mr. Chairman, to indicate to the Minister that, with respect to the area of Planning and Research, his program is a program that must be combined in a total program of social development, and to a certain extent the Deputy Minister of Labour, the Deputy Minister of Education (I guess he considers he's also a Deputy Minister of Labour in his own way), has essentially said that. And I'm simply saying, where is this co-ordination? Where is really the long term approach to educational opportunity that he talks about? And I suggest to you that he hasn't got it. I suggest to you he hasn't thought about it. I suggest to you that all he's really essentially done is accepted a couple of programs and then to say that these programs mean that we are now creating the kind of new initiatives that are necessary. And while they may be helpful and beneficial in a certain way, they are far from the kind of programs that should be undertaken at this stage with respect to educational opportunities, and all one has to do is look at the core area and recognize what is being proposed and the real nature, the massive kind of thing that should be undertaken, to recognize, you know, how really void this program is of the kind of policies that will give a long term approach, that will provide for the people involved a solution to bring them to a stage of equality of opportunity and education.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to refer the Minister back for a moment to his staffing of Planning and Research. I think we've now settled out pretty clearly that there are, in total, something like 60 people in education related to Planning and Research, and about 15 at last count in Colleges and Universities which are working with the Department of Planning and Research. I wonder if the Minister could now tell me how many additions to Planning and Research there were during the past year. How many people were added to that department?

MR. HANUSCHAK: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I must apologize. I missed the last portion of the honourable member's question.

MR. MCGILL: I'm talking about Planning and Research staffing. How many people were transferred into that department during the past year?

MR. HANUSCHAK: This, Mr. Chairman, would have to be worked out because there are also some transfers out, and it will take a while to . . . Perhaps later in the day we may have the information for the honourable member.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, then the Minister has anticipated my second question: how many transfers were there out of the department? And the thrust of my questions is to indicate to me whether there is indeed a regular or sizable flow or change in the personnel involved in Planning and Research, and if he can get that information for me I would appreciate it.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to talk to the Minister for a moment about one phase of the operation of this department in relation to the school divisions. I understand that the department approves innovative projects within the schools, which are initiated by teachers in the school. These projects are conceived by teachers and referred to Planning and Research, and then, if approved, are funded by Planning and Research. Can the Minister tell me how many such innovative projects were considered and approved last year and the total cost of those innovative projects?

MR. HANUSCHAK: The cost of the projects was \$150,000.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister tell me how many projects were involved during the past year?

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MR. HANUSCHAK: Approximately 20.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Chairman, there is a program evaluation which has a funding of \$125,000. There have been a number of questions asked about this, but I don't think I have heard the answer or the series of answers that I am interested in now. I'd like to know what programs were evaluated in the past year. How many programs were evaluated during the past year?

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Chairman, the objectives of this program are fourfold: (1) to assess the effectiveness of educational activities being conducted in the public schools; (2) to gather information which can be used to make realistic decisions regarding the provision of equal educational opportunities to the students of Manitoba. A third objective is to assess and support, where necessary, the implementation of educational innovations in Manitoba; and (4) to create an awareness among teachers and Manitoba citizens regarding how they can be most productively involved in public school education. To meet those objectives - and this is all part of the evaluation project - there are six parts to it:

1. A study of the dissemination of educational information by the department. Now this study created an awareness regarding duplication of efforts by the various branches, and served as a basis for a comprehensive way of communicating between the department and schools.

The second program within it, program activity rather, a study of school organization. And this study provided information which served as a basis for decision-making on school organizations.

3. An evaluation of para-professionals. And this is designed to assess the effectiveness of this innovation, the use of para-professionals, and to provide information which will serve as the basis for modification and improvement of the use of para-professionals.

Study of teachers and change. This is designed to provide information which would be used as a basis for making decisions regarding participatory decision-making in schools, the effectiveness of curriculum and professional services to teachers, and the methods teachers use for evaluation.

5. Monitoring the revised school program. This would be an assessment and support to the schools and department regarding the implementation of the revised high school program and the evaluation of the Francophone program, here again to provide for the evaluation of special programs focussed on the needs of students requesting instruction in français.

It may interest honourable members to note that three weeks ago, if there is some concern about the reaction of the community, about the reaction of teachers to projects of this type, on March 19th we had received a letter which reads as follows: "Your letter regarding a project to study individualized instruction at the elementary school level was received with great interest." All of this focusses largely on individualized instruction and its effectiveness. And I'm continuing from the letter: "The Manitoba Teachers Society has expressed the belief that methods of instruction which meet the needs of each child should be encouraged." And then the letter goes on to name the Teachers Society's representative to work with us on this evaluation project - as, by the way, all evaluation projects are conducted.

And then the author of this letter goes on to state: "I have spoken to Chris Breckman, Director of Professional Development at the Manitoba Teachers Society, and he believes that your approach," meaning that of the Planning and Research Branch, "to this research project is a realistic one. I, too, am pleased to note that the Planning and Research Branch is attempting to analyze the nature of individualization of instruction and the various kinds of support service and conditions that are necessary to achieve individualization. Very best wishes with this worthwhile endeavour. I shall look forward to hearing of the progress of this project." And this letter is signed by the President of the Manitoba Teachers Society, Phyllis Moore.

The Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition had attempted to create an impression that at the present time there is the Planning and Research Branch of the Department of Education performing certain functions and perhaps not too warmly received by the school system at large, and I would like the honourable leader and the honourable members of the Opposition to know that during the past fiscal year, the year 1974-75, over 40 of the 48 school divisions in Manitoba and all major interest organizations of the educational system, the Teachers Society, Association of School Business Officials, Superintendents and Trustees, and great and countless numbers of individual schools, have been in close co-operation with

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(MR. HANUSCHAK cont'd) Planning and Research where, upon their initiative, they took the first step to call upon and request the assistance of the Planning and Research Branch of my department.

Now, the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition asked how, you know, how the effectiveness of the programs, of the activity of the Planning and Research Branch, measures. And I believe I indicated in response to another similar question last night, and if I could just elaborate on it for a moment or two: there are a number of factors taken into account. One is the response of the staff of the various schools, of the school divisions, and in judging their response that in turn reflects, or has to reflect, upon our own ability to involve staff. Looking at it from my vantage point, from the vantage point of my Deputy Minister, of any of his assistants, in evaluating and determining the effectiveness of the operation of the staff he asks himself how effective is my staff - that is the Planning and Research staff - in involving the people out in the field in the various projects that are initiated in the different school divisions. Is that person, is he one who, when he goes out to work with the school division, gets the support and the assistance and co-operation of the teachers, or is he one who goes in there and tries to do something just strictly on his own without the assistance and/or support or co-operation of the staff? If it's the latter, then certainly that is not the type of person whom we want. If it is the former, then that of course is the manner in which we would expect him to function.

Also his ability to solve problems, his ability and expertise in the development of proposals and plans of action for study and consideration at whatever level, be it within the school division or in bringing them back to the Department of Education for our consideration in determining the extent to which we would support those programs. Also his ability in providing assistance in locating whatever services a school division would require in the conduct of whatever project it may be involved in, and his ability to utilize local and other resources for school efforts.

The effectiveness of the staff itself is also measured in terms of their ability to conduct research, and preparing policy documents, and also their ability to design and propose implementation procedures for the programs with which they may be associated.

Also another way of - within the department - of measuring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Planning and Research staff is also in their relationship with various other agencies associated with our public schools, their manner, their ability to involve themselves in discussions related to the initiation and the implementation of projects, because in many cases a school division will come to us with a certain proposal which perhaps may not be all that refined or clearly defined or crystallized, and they would call upon the Planning and Research staff to assist them in defining the exact problem that they wish to deal with, and determining a method of ways and means in which they would wish to deal with it, and at that point in time the Planning and Research staff steps in to assist them. And I wish to underline the term "to assist them."

Now, looking to the future, Mr. Chairman, to the forthcoming fiscal year, on what basis will I determine the desirability of the . . .

MR. MCGILL: I wonder if the Minister would yield to a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Brandon West.

MR. MCGILL: I simply interrupt him because I fear that he has forgotten the question that I asked him and I see the time is running out, and I will put it again as clearly as I can. You are asking for \$125,000 for program evaluation. I'm asking you how many programs you evaluated during the past year; what the results were; how many were discontinued; how many were approved and continued. That simply was my question, Mr. Chairman. I hope that I have reminded the Minister so he'll be able to answer.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): It's a little late in the season for snow.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Yes, I appreciate the questions the honourable member asked me, but the honourable member will also remember that there were questions asked by his leader which I have not answered, and which I'm in the process of answering now, as his colleagues may also remember, perhaps not, but there were questions . . . --(Interjection)--

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30, I'm--(Interjection)--Order please. In accordance with Rule 19(2) of our House Rules, I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee for Private Members' Hour, and will return to the Chair at 8 p.m. this evening.

IN SESSION - PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR - PRIVATE BILLS

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Private Members' Hour. Tuesday, Private Bills. Adjourned debate on the motion proposed by the Honourable Member for Morris. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry. (Stands)

Bill No. 4. The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: I'd like that matter to stand, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 4. The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to say a few words in support of the resolution. I've listened with interest to several of the speakers who have gone before me on the bill and I can agree with some of them, I can disagree with others.

The bill is rather straightforward. The Resolved section, there's nothing contentious in it at all. It's merely that the government consider the advisability of implementing an aggressive policy of upgrading provincial roads and provincial trunk highways, and I can certainly support that.

We see in the budget, Mr. Speaker, over the last few years, a minimal increase in the Highways budget and I can agree with some of my colleagues that it would appear that the Highways Department is not getting their fair share of the increases. They have certainly grown to a lesser degree than some of the other departments, and I think the Minister probably will have to take an aggressive stand with his colleagues and go for a little larger share of that budget in order to provide the maintenance and upgrading that's required on some of the rural roads. There's no question about it in many of the rural areas, that branch line abandonment is with us. It, to a large degree, has been stalled or stabilized, but I think we have to recognize the fact that there are a considerable number of branch lines that have gone or will be going and will be taken up, and it'll be necessary for some transporting of grain a larger distance than was necessary in the past. And with this coming into reality, of course, the farmers are going to start hauling with much larger trucks, and this is going to be damaging, to say the least, on our provincial roads as they are today. They're going to need considerable upgrading and considerably more maintenance than they get to the present time in order to maintain them.

To wander around the province a bit, my colleague from Swan River mentioned the Shoal River road in his constituency, which is some 22 miles and is a mere bush road, but it provides the only link for a considerable number of people in the Shoal River Reserve, and these people certainly have to have an access to the outside road network. Now this road is treacherous, to say the least. I have travelled over it a considerable number of times because it leads into a considerably good recreation area. There have been a great number of accidents on the road considering the number of curves and the bad condition of it in most times of the year, and especially at this particular time of year. So there's certainly money that has to be spent there in order to improve that road to some great degree. I'm given to understand that there may be additional funds required on the Hecla Island road because some of the residents there tell me that with the first north wind that that'll be under water a large part of the time.

I think some provision should be provided in the budget in the way of a reserve for emergency measures. I realize that this is the case now to some degree, but in the upgrading and maintenance of roads, I know in my particular constituency we have been favoured with a fairly good amount of road work in the past few years, but people in areas like mine are never really satisfied unless you pave every road in the constituency.

But there's an area in the Sandy Lake region, not only Sandy Lake, Stewart Lake, Eagle Point, there are many many small lakes in there that in the last few years a lot of local residents and a lot of the tourist population have become aware of these small lakes. They're lovely little lakes and the fishing is quite good in them. The access roads to them, however, are extremely poor. They're provincial trunk roads in most cases and in very poor condition, and here is a whole new resort area that could be opened up with a few more thousand dollars spent on grading and bringing these roads into a little more of an all-weather condition. There are many of the roads in there that the first rain storm of the season and you can't get in or you can't get out, or the people going in with four-wheeled vehicles are creating such ruts in them that no one else can follow afterwards. There's an area there that I think the Minister

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(MR. BLAKE cont'd) could well be advised to look at and provide some of the upgrading money to bring those roads into a little better condition.

In my own constituency there was an incidence last fall where they had provided new grade on, oh, possibly five to six miles of road towards the Cardale area. They were about a mile and a half short of the particular area when the amount of work was completed. There were no additional funds apparently to do that extra mile and a half, which could have been done in dry weather and it may be several years before the waterholes and that are down low enough to complete it. So I think, in order to provide the upgrading and maintenance of the roads necessary, there has to be some provision for funds whereby the district engineer can make a snap decision, and if conditions are such that he can provide the work at minimal cost and probably considerably cheaper than could be done to re-tender it, I think these are decisions that should be able to be made rather quickly.

The amount of work that has been done in the past two years, I know the Highways people tell us that that's about all the department can handle; they're not equipped to handle any more work, and if we're going to provide a large increase in upgrading and in maintenance, that the department would have to be increased in order to handle it. Well if that is the case then, if that's necessary, then that should be undertaken also, because the road network in southern Manitoba - and we know that the road network in the North is continually being improved and it's certainly necessary up there - but there's a large network of roads in the southern part of the province and they've been deteriorating. All of the municipal people will attest to this and I can wholeheartedly support the resolution when it indicates that a significant upgrading of the roads and a real aggressive maintenance policy is necessary to provide the standard of road structure that's going to be required to carry even the farm traffic in the southern road network.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there have been several members on this side and opposite who have spoken on this particular bill, and I see no reason to belabour it, and if the time now is to bring it to a vote, well then I will certainly not say any more at this point.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. KEN DILLEN (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, the remarks from the opposite side of the Chamber have prompted me to rise on this resolution because I get the distinct impression that they're completely missing the point. And in addition to that, I have to say that it seems to me that they're going to have to get their act together. We just completed the resolution the other night on a motion that dealt with energy conservation, and we are dealing here with another resolution that does exactly the opposite. The resolution, as I see it, is calling for upgrading of the provincial highway system so as to allow for 110,000 lbs., or upwards of 110,000 lbs. GVW (gross vehicle weight), and in so doing--(Interjection)--Well I want to deal with that. The Member for Birtle-Russell says that we're going to get goods and services up north a little cheaper, and I'll deal with those remarks when I come to them. But the . . .

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, just as a matter of clarification, those words were not mine.

MR. DILLEN: Well I don't know who to attribute them to. I'll apologize if I . . . but I felt sure that the words came from that area. Perhaps it was from the Member from Minnedosa.

Well, I want to deal with this resolution in a manner that, you know, and I'm going entirely from memory, that the Member for La Verendrye made reference to the delays that he was experiencing in having automobiles delivered to his place of business. I think that the Member for La Verendrye's resolution is accepting that road transportation as a form of transportation is a serious alternative to railway transport. And, sir, I can't accept that. His resolution gives as one of the major reasons for implementing an aggressive road upgrading program the fact that the railways intend to abandon a large number of their lines. Well, sir, it would be much easier for my conscience to support a resolution that called for the curtailment of branch line abandonment and a re-institution of improved rail service to those communities that have been abandoned.

MR. HENDERSON: Steinbach hasn't got a railway.

MR. DILLEN: Well that may be. The Member for Pembina says that Steinbach does not have a railway, and that may be the case, I'm not sure. But my understanding is that there is a railway in close proximity to the town. But anyway, I want to deal with the resolution in the sense that it is accepting the fact that rail abandonment is accepted by the people of this province, and I for one am not ready to accept that.

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(MR. DILLEN cont'd)

Well, what happens when the rail lines are abandoned? I view trucking goods and services to areas of our province as being the most inefficient and expensive method of moving goods that there is, and I think that if we accept the resolution that railway abandonment is going to take place, if we allow it to happen in the branch lines, then it's only a question of time before the railways will be able to point to the people of Canada, and the people of western Canada and Manitoba particularly, in saying that their service has fallen off because of the increase in the number of trucks that are used and therefore we are going to abandon rail service altogether. And it completely ignores the contractual responsibilities and the social and economic obligations of the railways to the people of this country.

The resolution chooses not to mention the fact that the people of this country gave the railways over 25 million acres of land including the mineral rights, plus huge amounts of cash, tax concessions, valuable concessions of right-of-way, simply to entice them to build railways which they could make money on, while at the same time providing transportation for the people of Canada. It chooses to ignore the fact that the railways of this country are amongst the biggest recipients of social welfare in the form of cash subsidies, and more recently the building of grain cars with public funds. They have also contributed or are attempting to load the people of Canada with additional rate increases by doing away with the Crow's Nest Pass Agreement.

The CN and the CP are deliberately and systematically engaged in schemes which have resulted in national tragedies ranging from the scuttling of Canada's merchant marine, which was once the pride of the oceans, to sabotaging our rail passenger service and their grain handling service as well.

All of these acts of piracy, Mr. Speaker, have been ably assisted by members of both the Conservative and the Liberal parties, from Sir John A. Macdonald to C.D. Howe, and most recently to Otto Lang. The most incredible aspect of all this is the fact that while they held the people of this country up for ransom for over a century, never once have they been required to open their accounts for examination so that it could be determined by anyone besides themselves whether or not their demands were somewhat reasonable.

With the profits from their railway operation, the CPR has built a huge, profitable, world-wide empire including hotels, telecommunications, real estate, air transport, ocean shipping, investment, forestry and mining, and indeed a tremendous expansion into the truck transport industry under several different transportation names.

A MEMBER: . . . C.N.R.

MR. DILLEN: The CNR is no different. And what the railways are after now is to have governments build up a road system that would enable them to abandon their branch lines and short-hauls so they can concentrate on the lucrative long-haul business.

This will, of course, require building highways that will carry vastly increased loads. And who is going to be stuck for the cost of increasing or improving those highways? The people of this province, Mr. Speaker, are going to be responsible for picking up that cost, and it is relieving the railroads of their responsibility and their obligations to the people of this province.

If we follow the line of thinking that has been proposed by this resolution, it will mean blowing up existing bridges and building massive new structures in their place. It will require fleets of huge trucks carrying loads which the railways have already been paid for carrying, and of course will make it operative. Load limits for trucks will have to be lifted. And that's really what is happening at the present time.

That the Conservative Party could seriously propose this resolution in spite of the fact it is common knowledge that road transportation in terms of dollar costs and energy used . . . is almost incomprehensible. It is even more amazing when one considers that a member of his own party had just proposed a resolution asking the government to take steps to conserve energy. My advice to the Opposition would be to stop their internal squabbling long enough to get their act together.

If the Opposition is sincerely interested in developing transportation policies that will benefit Manitoba, I would suggest they get behind this government's struggle to force the railways to live up to their obligations.

Mr. Speaker, there has been some mention made of northern roads and northern

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(MR. DILLEN cont'd) transportation. Well, some time about 1964 or '65 the highway was built, a road was built to Thompson, and I stand to be corrected on this but I believe it was under the federal Conservative Government's Road to Resources Program. Well, Mr. Speaker, that was an excellent program, and I don't want to fault anybody in this House and to have anybody consider that it was not. But I have to refer back to the circumstances of that day as to why that road was built in the first place. And in 1964, sir, the members of the Steelworkers Local in Thompson went out on strike, and one of the items in their negotiations was to have a road built to Thompson, and I guess the members of the Local and the Manitoba Federation of Labour made representations to the Minister of Highways at that time and they were assured that they were going to get a road and they settled their disagreement and returned to work.

But that road, sir, was a trail built up through the bush. They are now saying that what we should do is allow an increase in the load limits on a road that was built with the muskeg at the side of the road and piled up into a heap and then expect to put 110,000 lbs. on top of it so that it's going to push the road back down into the muskeg in one place and back up on another. --(Interjection)--The member says its on permafrost and that is true. But how can he then suggest that, knowing that a major artery in this province is built on permafrost, can he support the resolution that comes out of their caucus for an increase in the load limits?

Sir, that road would be similar to - and I've heard it described in this fashion before - spreading out a stream of toothpaste on a desk and then expecting to put some weight on it and expect that that toothpaste is going to hold any weight.

But what happens when 110,000 lbs. is sent in over the road? The break-up of the surface does not do anything for the residents of the community. Let me try to put it into perspective. There will be probably pennies to be accrued in savings to the consumer of Thompson on the goods that he buys, but where the major savings are developed in that transportation system is to the persons or companies or groups or whatever, that can haul in 110,000 lbs. of one commodity and ship out nickel at 110,000 lbs. Now at the present time, the rates coming from Winnipeg to Thompson are \$1.09 a hundred. Well if that's on fuel, on cement, on whatever the case may be that you can haul in bulk, that indeed will result in some savings to the consumer - very minimal but some.

But there is nobody buys 110,000 lbs. of canned milk, 110,000 lbs. of shirts, 110,000 lbs. of pants and shoes and all of the other small consumer items that the consumer has to pay for in that part of the province. And in addition to that, when the roads are broken up, and the average person in Thompson, you know, would probably drive out once or twice, maybe three or four times a year depending on the long weekend or whatever service he had to come to Winnipeg for, or wherever, well you know it takes, if it means a wheel alignment, if it means a broken oil pan, a shock absorber, a gas tank or a tire or whatever the cost of that trip happens to be, the pennies that he's going to save in terms of the consumer goods that he'll purchase in that town don't mean a thing. And then in addition to that, if we go to the Member for La Verendrye's place of business and want to trade in a car and we say we're from Thompson, the immediate thing that he will do is knock a thousand dollars off the trade-in value of that car. Well I'm not pointing fingers at him in particular but I'm telling you that if you go to a car dealer anywhere in the province they will . . . If they ask you first of all where you're from, they will knock up to a thousand dollars off the price of that car. So what do you gain by increasing the load limits and improving the road system so that you can haul 110,000 pounds? Not only are you bilked out of the tax dollar for the building of that road and the improvement of that road and the maintenance on that road and the upgrading of the bridges and the building of the bridges out of the taxpayer's pocket, but in addition to that you have all of the other costs involved as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, it has been said here that if we had a program that would increase the road-building to resort areas and so on. On several occasions I have gone to people in my constituency and I have said, what do you think about building a road to this little lake or that little lake or a chain of lakes or whatever? They said, "We don't want any roads in that area." Now that may seem incredible. And I said, "You know," I said, "that's not the reaction that I'm getting from the NorMan Regional Development Corporation. It's not the reaction I'm getting from the mayor and the council. It is not the reaction I'm getting from other self-interest groups, the Tourist Association and so on." And I said, "Well, why is it that you are opposed?" And they said, "We want to maintain those lakes for the people who make their livelihood in

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(MR. DILLEN cont'd) the North as carry-in recreational lakes and we won't have the influx of the tin can tourists and campers and what have you." --(Interjection)--Well of course not.

The people of the constituency want to maintain the lakes adjacent to the road for getting away from people, from traffic, to take in the natural scenic beauty and the quietness of the surrounding area. I have yet to receive a request for, you know, as the Member for Minnedosa has expressed a need for opening up a virgin area for the benefit of south-of-the-border tourists or whatever. It gives me the impression that there has been an attempt on the part of the tire companies, the oil companies, the trucking companies, and the International Nickel Company and so on, the NorMan Regional Development Corporation and some of the councils in the areas of the North, to increase the load limits on a road that was never, never structurally designed in the base to carry much more than light vehicle traffic, and I can't for the life of me, even unless there was millions, millions of dollars spent per mile, even consider that this is a legitimate resolution. If you take the railroad service at the present time to many of the areas of the south, you will note that . . . The Member for Virден has indicated that he has two branch lines in his area.

A MEMBER: Four.

MR. DILLEN: Four branch lines? He has four branch lines that are abandoned or are in the process of being abandoned in his constituency. Well, I would have thought that if that is going to create a serious threat to that constituency and that part of the province that depends upon its agricultural base for its livelihood, that the resolution would have dealt with that kind of an issue. But, you know, I don't like to stand before this House and criticize the resolution and not provide any suggested pattern or suggestion of some alternative means of moving goods into the North. You know that at the present time, sir, we have the Lake Winnipeg - and as an example of that we have the refinery right on the edge of the Red River and we're moving fuel from the refinery on the Red River by road all the way up to Northern Manitoba. When the access to the waterway - and, you know, if somebody would suggest building massive storage facilities so that we can move all of the goods and services that you need in the North over Lake Winnipeg during the open water season, it will take us within 80 miles of Thompson at Jenpeg and then it's only a question of moving either a spur line or a pipeline or some other form of movement--(Interjection)--

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member's time is up. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended to get into this debate until the Member for Thompson spoke, and I thought it should be pointed out to the people of the Thompson area the direction in which their present member is speaking. He's speaking against a program of aggressive maintenance of provincial roads and trunk highways.

Mr. Speaker, the former Member for Thompson, the former Member for Thompson was a man who promoted roads in . . . and we don't want to see . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Thompson state his matter of privilege.

MR. DILLEN: Yes. I don't think the Member for Birtle would like the record to show that I am not in favour of an aggressive road maintenance program, because the road to Thompson, I can assure you, is in need of and is receiving constant maintenance.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the Member for Thompson wants that clarified, but if that was the case, then, why would he spend the entire portion of his speech speaking against the resolution? And whether he makes a one line effort to try and get his constituents on side with him again, it's rather pathetic, sir, to see a member who does not want to see the roads in his constituency, or any other part of the province for that matter, maintained in a satisfactory manner. I think it is most distressing to see this happen, sir.

On top of that, sir, he doesn't even want tourists in his area, and when he starts talking about tin can tourists, I'm sure that that will do much to improve the tourist industry in the Province of Manitoba. So I hope that his words aren't taken too seriously by those that are very sincere in wanting to see this great province of ours, and in taking their summer holidays

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(MR. GRAHAM cont'd) and visiting in other parts of the province, parts that they probably haven't visited in the past. So I hope that they don't take too seriously the words of the Member for Thompson.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Thompson says, "Let's talk about railroads," and that is characteristic of members on the government side; they always want to go into the lateral shift to get away from the subject if the subject is embarrassing to them, and I say to you, sir, that this subject is embarrassing because the roads in this province are not being maintained in a satisfactory manner. So I don't blame him for trying to pull the lateral shift and move away onto another subject other than the actual maintenance of roads in this province.

On top of that, sir, he complained to some extent about the 391 and the effect that a 110,000 lb. load would have on the surface of that highway. But I wonder if the member is aware that the surfacing of that road was on an accelerated program implemented by the former Member for Thompson, who felt that it was essential that he be able to show a great number of miles of surfaced road at the end of his fiscal year, so instead of putting the amount of asphalt that was required for one mile on that one mile, he'd spread it over two or maybe three miles. So he would get more mileage showing at the end of the road, but the surface was rather thin. And that, I suggest to you, sir, might have been the reason why there were so many surface breaks on 391.

Another thing that he talked about and it bothered me, sir, when he talked about blowing up bridges, and I was just wondering what school of sabotage he had attended to be talking in a manner such as that about blowing up bridges. Sir, I don't profess nor do I condone actions of that nature.

But, sir, I do want to talk for a very short time about the resolution that's before us and some of the ramifications that it has in my own constituency. In the Department of Highways for many years - and this extends back even beyond the administrative period of the present government - one of the fundamental principles used in determining whether or not a road should be built was a little gadget called a traffic counter, and they would do a traffic count and say, well, that's so many vehicles per day means that a road should be built or should be upgraded because of "X" number of vehicles travelling over that road. I question that as being the sole means of determining the need for additional maintenance or in fact a complete rebuilding project, sir, because everyone knows that anyone is reluctant to travel on a poor road and they will use any other means possible to bypass a particularly bad section of road, so that the traffic count will always remain low on that bad section, and government then says, "Well, we don't have to rebuild it because the traffic count on there is very low." And I refer in my own constituency to a particular provincial road, provincial road No. 577, which travels practically alongside the Riding Mountain National Park on the south escarpment to its junction with PR No. 566, and there have been certain portions of that road built, sir.

But there are some areas on that road that are extremely dangerous, that don't meet the standards that are required by the Department, don't even come close to meeting the standards that are set up for vision or for safety, and nothing is being done to upgrade that particular piece of road. It is extremely dangerous and that is why very few people travel on it. I have been on it myself on several occasions and have had very close calls with oncoming traffic on blind hills and blind curves. I have myself talked to engineers asking them when they would be putting forward rebuilding on that particular section, and so far nothing has occurred. I would hope that the Minister would consider, in the very near future, improvements on that particular piece of road. We realize that there is not much traffic on it at the present time, but I suggest to you, sir, that the lives of those few who do travel on it are just as important as the lives of those that travel on the Trans Canada Highway, and the safety of those that are driving on that road is just as important as those that travel on the Trans Canada Highway. So I would urge the Minister to take that into consideration when he is preparing his estimates and making his programs for the improvement of the provincial road system.

Sir, those are some of the concerns I have about the maintenance and the upgrading of the provincial road system.

But, sir, in any program that is carried out by government, there is always the spinoff and the side effects that have maybe by themselves created larger waves than the ripples that are in the surface of the road, and I want to refer, sir, to the effect that the present policy of this government has had on the construction industry in Manitoba. At one time, sir, we had

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(MR. GRAHAM cont'd) a very viable heavy construction industry in this province. We had numerous small contractors, contractors who were well equipped to do the type of work that has to be done in this province. Well, we have now found that many of those contractors are either no longer in the province or have ceased operations. One must ask the question: why? And when we look at the program in the province, the amount of construction, the amount of rebuilding, and the emphasis, the change in percentages in the estimates, it's not too difficult to understand why. In some cases we find that the contracts that are let are very small indeed so that there is very little competition for them, and in other cases we find that the contracts that are let are very very large contracts, and the small, or the medium-sized contractor in this province has had very little opportunity to work in this province.

At one time, sir, we had half a dozen asphalt-paving companies in this province. A couple of years ago, sir, it was down to two. I believe it is now up to four. But here again, sir, I want to stress the fact that the decisions of government in their highway building programs have the decided effect on the health of the construction industry in this province, and while the government may not realize it, they can quite easily chase many people out of this province or put people out of business by not adhering to a fairly regular progressive highway development and maintenance program. So I would urge the government to take that into consideration as well.

I think, sir, these are some of the reasons why we on this side of the House have brought forward a resolution of this nature at this time, because we feel that it is imperative for the motoring public and for those Manitobans that want to be able to shop in Winnipeg if they want to, that want to be able to visit with their neighbours, and in general, sir, be able to communicate with one another. That is one of the reasons and probably the main reason why we want this resolution brought forward at this time, and I would urge every member in this Chamber, including the Member for Thompson, even though he spoke against it, I would urge him to vote for this resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I had certainly expected one of the members of the Treasury Bench would rise to debate this resolution, but apparently that's not going to happen, because they are not concerned about the transportation system in this province, nor are they concerned that it's a vital concern to the urban, the rural and the northern communities. And I suspect, Mr. Speaker, that the reason likely hinges around they're more concerned about putting 2 cents a gallon on gasoline for Autopac than they are for upgrading the road system in our province. And I'm sure that when we do arrive at that debate, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have some fun, because historically in this province all the gasoline taxes have been levied against the motorist for the construction of highways. That's historically been what the tax dollars that were taxed on gasoline in Manitoba, because that's how we built our highways. --(Interjection)--Well, we'll argue that one when we get there. But historically that's where we got the money from. The majority of the money has come from taxation on motor fuel, and the Honourable Minister of Mines can argue that when we get to the debate on the supposed surcharge that's going to be levied against the motorists in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's certainly time for the government and the opposition to review what transportation system we've got in this province; what in fact has this government done to upgrade and build a better transportation system for the people of Manitoba better than it was when they came to office. And I looked through the Estimates to just wonder if in fact they understand the things that they promised to the people in Manitoba. There was some \$25 million spent in 1970 and this year we're going to spend some \$26 million for the construction of provincial trunk highways in Manitoba. And I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that they have this in the mind of the government that doesn't do anything for the social quality of life, that the Socialists are so-called the do-good, the doers for, who historically know how to save your soul and to give you a feeling that you take from me, the rich guy, and you give to the poor, but we're not going to do nothing about the roads.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is time that the Opposition do get seriously involved in this debate and see if we can't force the government, through maybe this resolution and other vehicles, to take a complete look at our transportation system in this province and come up with some new suggestions.

The first one I would like to ask: what is the condition of the No. 1 highway in this province?

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A MEMBER: Very good.

MR. McKENZIE: Yeah. Compared with some of the others - go and compare it with our neighbours to the west, Saskatchewan. Poor Saskatchewan historically weren't able to afford roads not very many years back due to their limited population and due to the extensive areas that they had to provide a transportation system in Saskatchewan for. It was alleged in those days that Saskatchewan would never get the roads built. But, unfortunately, the standard of No. 1 highway in Saskatchewan is far superior to the standard of No. 1 highway in Manitoba. And I think, Mr. Speaker, it's a disgrace to ask people to drive out of this city in a westerly direction on the righthand lane of No. 1 highway. That is a disgrace to the taxpayers of this province and the amount of traffic that goes over that road every day, and for this government and this Minister to say, and the members of the backbench to say, "We're not concerned about this resolution," I think is one that the people of this province should recognize is a very serious matter. It's a very serious matter.

Let us look at the second highway in this province. What plan has this government got? Where is the policies or the moneys to upgrade the second route? Because if the railway systems are going to be abandoned - and I'm sure they're going to be; they're abandoning them by default whether we like it or not - but where is the second route, where is the second transportation route that we're going to move goods from east to west in this province? And what policy and what plans have this government got for this second highway?

Now I see articles appearing in the country papers about the so-called condition of this Yellowhead route, and certainly there are portions of it that's reasonably well, but it's not ready to be classed as a second highway. But go and take a look at it in Saskatchewan. From Yorkton to North Battleford to Lloydminster on that Yellowhead route, I'm telling you, there is a top-notch highway.

A MEMBER: How did they do it?

MR. McKENZIE: I don't know how they did it. I don't know how they did it, but they did it. They did it and the road is there. And so I again urge and ask this government for some member of the Treasury Bench or the Minister of Highways to stand up in this debate and hopefully give us some ideas of where we're going in this province with transportation. Rail abandonment. And I'm sure that we've been through that one five or six times in the House over the years, the debates on rail abandonment. And I'm sure the Minister of Industry and Commerce is doing his best, with the staff that he's got. But I'm also sure that he's fighting a losing battle, because they had their minds made up years ago that they were going to abandon the railways. Come out and look what's happened in the village in which I live. Weeds up that high. Last year the local people had to go down and phone the Superintendent of Transportation for the railways. The spring runoff had eroded under the track and how there wasn't a wreck I'll never know. But nobody had seen it and all underneath the railway bed was eroded out from the heavy spring runoff; and a local citizen had to go and advise the Superintendent that that peril was there.

The fences are all gone. The train comes when it likes. And not only that, Mr. Speaker, the trains have left us now. Now they come in with a trucking system and they've phased out the trucking system. It used to be a daily service. The truck came in every day, brought goods and services into the village for the people on a daily basis. Now they come when they like, tri-weekly, tri-monthly, they may not come for five days in a row; nobody knows.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the whole transportation system, not only the railways but the method of moving goods and services, the quality of roads, where are we going? What kind of roads are we going to build? What standards? Are the bridges as bad as they're saying, that in this province a lot of these roads can't be upgraded due to the bridges, the bridging system? And I'm sure the Minister, the Minister should in his efforts give us some of this information. We may get it when we get to debating the estimates, but I would think, Mr. Speaker, that the transportation system of this province is of vital concern to everybody, men, women and children, because our whole future, I think, in my opinion is going to hinge around the type of a transportation system that we've got. How are we going to move goods and services?

We were talking here not too long ago about rapid transportation. I wonder maybe if the Minister of Highways has got some suggestions on if they're going to abandon the railway system. Is there some plan for a rapid transportation system? Because to conserve energy, I think it deserves analysis, and I think we in the opposition benches should have some of the

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(MR. McKENZIE cont'd) benefit of the knowledge how the Minister of Highways or the Minister of Industry and Commerce, if they have some studies or information, or the Peacock Plan, in fact, that was discussed at one of the regional conferences - I believe at Calgary that time - and that made a lot of sense and it got a lot of ink on the front pages of the day, but nevertheless it was well expressed at that conference and received favourable reception. From then I've heard very little of the so-called Peacock Plan and I'm wondering if it maybe wouldn't be feasible in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the other matter that comes to mind, maybe more so in Roblin constituency, is the problem that the truckers who are hauling pulp have to abide by the regulations and the highway system. Truckers haul the pulp out of the Duck Mountains area and they have to cross the highway. And the highway inspectors say that they are not allowed to cross only at certain places. Now that's a viable industry for those people. They haul pulp basically the year around. Do you mean to tell me that our highway system in this province is not such that those gentlemen can't haul pulp with those big trucks? But apparently they can't. They have to be regulated, and regulated at a very minimal level, they say, these truckers, so that they can deliver this pulp to the rail site, but apparently they have to be . . . Now, is there something more, should we be doing more for those truckers that's in the pulp industry, to help them get that product to the marketplace? I suspect they are. I think that they have a point that deserves the attention in this resolution, and that would be another reason, Mr. Speaker, why I would think that the members of the New Democratic Party and the New Democratic Government would support the resolution.

I'm wondering also, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with this, what standards of bridges is the Department of Highways providing now? Is it a standard type of bridge? Are they following the lines of all one bridge that that can be upgraded or strengthened if there's additional weights approved for our highway system, or in fact has that matter been discussed at all by the Minister with his engineers? I am told that there are bridgings today whereby the bridges can be strengthened at a given period rather than have to be demolished as - was it the Member for Thompson suggested a while ago in his remarks.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would think that the government should consider the advisability of implementing an aggressive policy to upgrade the provincial roads and the provincial trunk highways in our province, and I hope that they will see fit to support this resolution. I think it's a very sincere one, it's a very timely one, Mr. Speaker, and one that deserves the personal attention of every member in this Chamber.

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

MR. JOHANNSON: Mr. . . . Oh.

MR. GREEN: Shall we call it 5:30?

MR. SPEAKER: Call it 5:30. Thank you. I am now leaving the Chair and the House will resume in Committee of Supply at 8:00 p.m.