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of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

28 Elizabeth II

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, March 2, 1979

Time: 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): I should like to draw the honourable members' attention to the gallery on my right where we have 12 students of Red River Community College under the direction of Mr. Thorsteinson. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Logan.

We also have, or are supposed to have, 25 students of Grade 11 standing from Miles Macdonnell Collegiate under the direction of Mr. Lowden.

And also 28 students from Woodlands under the direction of Mr. Steve Colody. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Lakeside, the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

On behalf of all the honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Sports.

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I have a Ministerial Statement to make. I have copies for the members.

Mr. Speaker, I am announcing today that the operations of Wm. Clare (Manitoba) Ltd. have been terminated. The Wm. Clare Board felt that the company did not appear to have viable alternative and accepted a recommended proposal of termination by Rand McNally and Co. It was agreed that the present market would not give any hope to either partner to earn a return on additional investment.

A loan of \$100,000 made by the Manitoba Development Corporation to Wm. Clare (Manitoba) Ltd. in February of 1971 has grown into a \$2,490,681.37 debt. Only one payment was ever made by Wm. Clare to Manitoba Development Corporation, namely, on November 6, 1975, in the amount of \$44,989.27. This sum was only realized through the sale of the complete program, the film strip program. This amount was credited to interest by the Manitoba Development Corporation. No payments were ever made by Wm. Clare on account of the outstanding loan obligations. Even with the expenditure of approximately \$2.5 million, only 26 of the 40 text book modules were completed in the eight year period.

The Manitoba Development Corporation has further informed the government that it has authorized the write-off of the \$2.49 million loan which was owing by William Clare (Manitoba) Ltd. to the Manitoba Development Corporation.

Total sales to date have amounted to \$52,389.42 and, as a result, only \$4,577.87 has been paid in royalties to authors and editors.

With the exception of passing along any further royalties to the authors and editors, as the same are received from Rand McNally, the affairs of Wm. Clare (Manitoba) Ltd. are now wound up.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I think that it's interesting that the Minister to whom the Manitoba Development Corporation reports feels that the occasion of the problems associated with a particular investment necessitate a statement in the House, and I'm not really —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note that not in the case of any of the failures, and I can list numerous of them, Prairie Foundry, Unicity Steel, Selkirk Navigation, Dents Foods, all of which, Mr. Speaker, and I haven't referred to the biggest one, all of which were companies which were financed by the Conservative Administration under the Manitoba Development Corporation, that it was not found to be a matter to gloat over that the matter did not succeed.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that with respect to this particular development, my learned friend if he, in using the figures that he has used, wishes to demonstrate some type of incompetence, that it is regrettable that he would impute that incompetence to a group of public-spirited citizens. This is not a Part 2 loan, every advance that was made under this loan was made within the terms of reference of the Manitoba Development Corporation. The people who were involved in making that advance and the subsequent advances, because none of them were required under Part 2 and as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, at certain times there was reluctance to approve of additional advances recommended by the Board, but because of the involvement of one of the largest publishing houses in the world, a private enterprise corporation, Rand McNally, who had what we understand to be a similar investment in this sale, the directors of the Manitoba Development Corporation decided to go along with it, and they did, and Mr. Speaker, for reasons which have not entirely been explained, at the level of approximately \$1 million.

Rand McNally assured that their procedures . . . and met with me, Mr. Speaker, and told me — met with me personally and told me that they considered this progr to be one of the best of its kind and one that we should be pursuing and in which they were making a similar investment, that is, at the level of \$1 million not at this level. So, Mr. Speaker, if they want to attribute incompetence to those public-spirited servants, public-spirited citizens, who are serving on the MDC Board, let them also attribute that same incompetence to Rand McNally who thought that this was a very wonderful project.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's listed here as a total write-off. I can tell you that during the same period of time the Department of Education in experimental research would have spent a much higher amount over the period of the perhaps six or seven years that was involved in the development of this program. If the minister wishes to put the gloomiest position, . he can do so because it seems to serve his particular interest. But the program that was developed is a sophisticated one, it is a good one. It should be made available to the Department of Education. I'm sorry I didn't catch the honourable member who won't try to do anything to at least get some value of this program. I have seen the program.

Well, Mr. Speaker, you know if they were trying, I would expect that the Minister would be saying in this statement . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if the honourable member is not debating.

MR. GREEN: No, Mr. Speaker, I am not debating. The member shouted. I have indicated to the government, Mr. Speaker, I have indicated to the government that in the same period of time the Minister's desk mate has spent millions of dollars in research, that this is a research program which presents a module form of pursuing mathematics, that it did not work out in the commercial sector either to the benefit of the Manitoba Development Corporation or to its free enterprise partner Rand McNally that certainly encouraged the program and made a considerable investment in it, unless Rand McNally's principles were telling me falsehoods and surely you don't attribute that to the great men of the free enterprise system.

Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Blake attributes to them falsehoods; I don't. I'm sorry, the Member for Minnedosa. I'm suggesting to the Minister that the entire research for the program which many Canadian academics at various levels have invested a great deal and I gather that it is complete, or virtually complete, being made available to the Department of Education. It is the most sophisticated mathematics program of this kind and we in the Province of Manitoba should try to make use of it. I recognize that it has not been a commercial success. That is something that happens in the commercial field which my honourable friends obviously don't know about.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: In listening to my honourable friend, I rise on a point of order. This places us in somewhat of a dilemma. He complained because a statement was made in this House. Just the other day they were complaining because statements were not made in this House. I wonder if my honourable friend could make up his mind as to whether or not he wants statements made by Ministers in this House or not.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I will deal with that very simply so that even my honourable friend can understand it. When a member on this side gets up in the House and asks a question and the Minister then says he won't answer it, and goes and answers to the Press, that is a matter of privilege. A ministerial statement can be made at any time. I have not complained that the statement was

made; I have brought notice to the fact that such statements have not been made in the past. It is obviously the intention of the honourable member to make statements about things which spread gloom and doom throughout the Province of Manitoba prior to his administration.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question the Attorney General. Can the Attorney General confirm that the Chief Provincial Judge, Mr. Harold Gyles, has advised the Attorney General that the lack of a Provincial Judges Court, lack of central criminal judge facilities in the City of Winnipeg has contributed to the backlog and growing backlog in our courts, including the fact that witnesses flounder about from one court to another, not knowing where they're to appear, with the consequent result that cases are cancelled at the last moment because witnesses are not present to provide testimony on behalf of defence or crown.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I believe the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is referring to a draft report which I discussed with him yesterday, a copy of which he has received which was sent a short while ago to me by Chief Judge Gyles on behalf of provincial judges, a report which I requested from them. The report is a draft report, in fact I met earlier this week with Judge Harris, the new president of the Provincial Judges' Association, who advised me that the Provincial Judges' Association is reviewing the draft because there are some matters in it that they are not happy with it, and they will be forwarding a further report to me sometime this month.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to acknowledge however, that there is a court backlog situation in Manitoba. It's one with which I am seriously concerned about and have been taking some steps to have this matter reviewed by various groups throughout Manitoba, including Crown attorneys, the Provincial Judges' Association, defence counsel and Legal Aid. I hope that within the next few months we will be able to announce some steps to be taken that will solve this very serious problem.

I must, however at the same time, Mr. Speaker, point out that when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition occupied my position in October of 1977, the backlog at that time was six months. I'm not blaming him for that position, but it was in fact six months at that time, and as a number of provincial judges have indicated in judgments lately, once you have that kind of backlog, it simply feeds upon itself because it becomes advantageous to defence counsel to enter pleas of not guilty and set trial dates. And a number of provincial judges have commented on that. I regard it, Mr. Speaker, as a very serious problem and I hope that we will in the next few months, be able to take some corrective action.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: A further supplementary to the Attorney-General. Can the Attorney-General confirm that the chief provincial judge in the draft report submitted to him indicated one of the problems which is being confronted with by provincial judges in our courts, is the fact that due to the lack of Crown attorneys, that Crown attorneys are being assigned cases the final day, the day of the trial, to the effect that they're not properly informed insofar as the facts and particulars of the cases involved, and as a result there is often delays and postponements due to that.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, again I don't have the report with me, but I believe the draft report did refer to that particular problem. The ratio of Crown attorneys to judges has not changed since the Honourable Leader of the Opposition occupied my position, but I think it's a worthwhile point that is being raised. Again, it may very well be one of the corrective actions to be taken, that additional Crown attorneys will have to be hired. But again, I'm waiting the final report from the Judges' Association.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, is the Attorney-General prepared to provide us with his position with respect to the need for a new provincial judges' court at this time, and to lift the freeze that was imposed by his Minister of Government Services?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I am not only awaiting the final draft report from the Provincial Judges' Association, and a number of other reports including a report from Mr. Keith Knox, whom I appointed to review this problem with a number of parties concerned. It may very well be, Mr. Speaker, that additional courtroom facilities will be required. I think there is no doubt that in the future they will be required and as soon as these final reports are received, I'm prepared to attempt to work with and persuade my colleagues to accept that position and proceed with the construction with some new facilities.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to address a question to the Minister of Finance as to what progress he is making with the undertaking he gave us last Friday, to make inquiries as to interviews held with the Council for the Tritschler Commission or with the Commissioner himself with former members of the Conservative Cabinet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, I have referred to a series of questions placed by the Member for St. Johns to the Commissioner for his information.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I am wondering, rather than to inform the Commissioner, whether it would not facilitate an answer to inquire from his colleagues on the Treasury Bench as to whether or not they have had these interviews.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the person who has held the interviews, if there have been interviews, has been either the Commissioner or his Council, and that is the logical place to refer the question to. I expect to hear back from the Commissioner in due course and he will determine when it is replied to.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. John with a final supplementary.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, just a simple question to the Honourable Minister of Finance. Has he had any interviews of this type with either of the two people mentioned?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, as the member may be aware, the Commissioner's function and operation operates through the Department of Finance. There have been meetings on several occasions to administrative matters, and if that is included in the question, the Commissioner, I am sure, would want to define whether any discussions he held in the case with myself, were administrative or otherwise. I can tell the Minister, for example, my last discussion with the Commissioner was in early January with regards to the location of his final hearings, whether they were to be held here in the Legislative Building or outside.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, if I may, on a point of order, point out to the Honourable the Minister, that the questions were specifically relating to the terms of reference. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I suggest that the Honourable Member of St. Johns, that while his question was very specific, there is no requirement on the part of any member to answer a question, and if a member wants to repeat his question, he is wasting the time of the Assembly — the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: I'm sorry. I did not want to repeat the question. I wanted to take advantage of the rules as I understand you explained them just a few days ago, to indicate that when there has been a misinterpretation that can't be clarified, and I wanted to clarify the misinterpretation. The questions asked last Friday dealt specifically with discussions as to terms of reference or as to policies of the former Conservative Government. They had nothing whatsoever to do with administration, and I would think the Minister of Finance would know, from his role in these discussions, the extent to which he discussed those matter which are raised and not have to go to Mr. Tritschler to find out from him what he thinks the interview was.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member will receive his answer. His questions are all on the record. His second question today was whether I had discussion. He didn't qualify the type of discussions, he said whether I had discussions. I'm telling him the last discussion I had was with regards to the location of the hearings. He didn't say what kind of discussions. His original questions are placed on the record which, of course, that I'm sure he's willing to realize and acknowledge. The questions have been referred to the Commissioner who would have been the source of the interviews and he can answer them in due course and with the information that he wants to provide.

With regards to the terms of reference, there have been discussions in the past over the original terms of reference. The terms of reference, as the member knows, were changed about ten months ago to include the specific expanded terms of reference to look at the Public Utilities Board-Manitoba Hydro relationship and we requested an initial early report which we expect, incidentally, in a matter of days to be in the hands of the government and at the earliest possible date, we will have that information distributed.

There were discussions that took place to change the terms of reference and those were discussed with him to try and advise us what he felt he could undertake and complete within that period of time. In other words, we wanted it for this particular session. So there were discussions at that time on the terms of reference.

I can't recall the exact wording of the member's questions but it's on the record, it has been referred to the Commissioner. He will answer, Mr. Speaker, in due course and that will be supplied to

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Meer for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Energy. In view of the announcement that was made this morning that Canada, along with 19 other industrial nations, has agreed to a 5 percent cutback in oil consumption, can the Minister indicate whether there are any contingency plans in the province for how that cutback would be administered or what the allocation of those energy supplies would be?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, we have not in any way had concerns with regards to the supplies with regards to Manitoba which, of course, would be our concern. As the member knows, the bill presently passing through the House of Commons on energy supply allocations will give the federal government the ability to undertake these matters and they apply primarily to Eastern Canada. We do not expect, at this point in time, that there will be any implications for Western Canada and those supplied primarily by the Alberta-Saskatchewan or Western Canada supply of oil. The concerns and the intents of the bill, of course, is to go to the protection of the supply to Eastern Canada.

With regards to the 5 percent reduction, I would not expect it would affect Manitoba but I'm unaware of the announcement this morning, so I can't reply specifically to any announcement that was made this morning because we have not been made aware of it.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I understand the Minister's reluctance in answering if he hasn't seen the actual contents of the announcement, but I am asking whether there is in preparation, or in existence, any form of contingency plans that could be applied or would be applied to go along with any national program to cut back on energy supplies. Maybe I can add to that question to ask whether there has been any inventorying of the energy supplies of petrocarbon that do come into Manitoba, and whether the supplies are considered adequate and what form of regulation or administration could be utilized in that regard.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I would seriously doubt that there would be any supply problem. It's not a matter of question of supply to Manitoba. It would be the question of adjusting to any regulatory applications that may be imposed by the federal government with regards to the use of the resource. But in terms of ordinary supply, Manitoba, like the rest of western Canada, in having access to both natural gas and oil supplies from the west, is not in a supply problem. If there is a pinch, it will be the result of regulations that may be imposed by the federal government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge with a final supplementary.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you Mr. Speaker. As a supplementary, I would simply ask the Minister if he would undertake to gain information from the authorities in Ottawa concerning what the intentions are in terms of the administration of this five percent cutback that was announced this morning, and how it would apply to this province.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt that we will probably be in receipt of telex information today, which is the usual pattern after there is a change in policy at the federal level, in most cases I should add, and if there is information that is of value to the member or the rest of the House, we will certainly pass it on.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for the Energy Council. I understand the province of Manitoba presented a brief to the National Energy Board hearings on the exportation of natural gas. Could the Minister inform us what the position of the government of Manitoba was regarding the exportation of natural gas to the United States?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the presentation that was made last year, in 1978, to the NEB hearings, were a basic request on the part of Manitoba to ensure Canadian supply to the same level that the province of Alberta wished to supply for itself. That was in round terms, a 30-year deliverability guarantee of natural gas supplies. We understand that the 30-year deliverability is being met and has been considered and is being adopted by the National Energy Board as a guideline. And that is for all those areas currently supplied outside of Alberta as well as inside Alberta. So to that extent, the National Energy Board did meet the objectives of the province of Manitoba in setting guidelines for future reserves.

Now, if the member is referring to the current release of the National Energy Board with regard to additional supplies, Manitoba's only concern may be here that the federal government may in fact, in its discretion, be somewhat influenced by using the export of the gas as a stabilizing factor for the Canadian dollar, which in effect would put Canada in the position of having made a decision to trade a non-renewable resource to stabilize the Canadian dollar, and although we don't know that that is the case, we have some concerns that that may be the case. It's not that we are in any way opposed to the stabilizing of the Canadian dollar because it's very much in Manitoba's interest for that to take place. But I think it does indicate that the economic factors may be unduly influencing the conservation principles on this non-renewable resource.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister. What is the position of the government of Manitoba with respect to the further exportation of natural gas to the United States? You said that natural gas is a non-renewable resource. What is the government's position on that?

MR. SPEAKER: Before the Honourable Minister answers, may I suggest to him that he attempt to keep his answers as short as possible. The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the member's question is general and requires a general answer. We are not opposed to the export of natural gas, providing it's done under the right terms and conditions. I pointed out to the member that it's very unlikely that a polar gas line, for instance, will ever be justified without some exports outside of Canada. Now, we've basically taken the position that we want to encourage the polar gas pipeline. I understand that that position was taken by the former government as well.

So it would be somewhat hypocritical for me to stand up and say that we are unalterably opposed to the export of natural gas. It's a question of the conditions, and you have to look at the specifics. In the current case, the requests of the province of Manitoba with regard to 30-year deliverability supply — and although we have not received the NEB report — it appears that our request has been met. That being the case, we don't have a particularly strong case with regard to the two trillion cubic feet that is being discussed at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona with a final supplementary.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. In the light of conflicting reports on the National Energy Board

changing the criteria for determining reserves being one of the issues arising from the report, and in the light of past history where six years ago we were guaranteed 100 years of natural gas supply, then three years ago the Greater Winnipeg Gas Company said that they may not be able to supply natural gas to newly constructed houses in new subdivisions, is the Minister convinced, or sufficiently assured, that Manitobans will get a sufficient supply of natural gas over the next 30 years to warrant the provision of natural gas to new houses being built in Manitoba?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I must repeat, that we have not received this report from the National Energy Board at this point in time. We're only going by the media statements that have come out. So it's not possible to answer the questions with regard to the calculations that would be required on the projections with regard to Manitoba. I would point out to the member that he's correct in that there was not only some danger but in fact for a period of some two years, there were no new connections in Manitoba in the mid-1970s.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. Does the Minister of Agriculture have a legal opinion which justifies Manitoba Regulation 11/79 Clause 5, and I'll refer to the regulation, which gives the Agricultural Lands Protection Act Board the right to completely negate the provisions of the Act by permitting a transfer of land whenever it feels that it will not be harmful to do so, that is, that the board is entitled to make a transfer or permit a transfer under any circumstances where it deems that it will not be of harm. Does the Minister have a legal opinion which justifies the enactment of such a regulation, which I would suggest is illegal?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice and check on that.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in a supplementary, when the Minister is taking this question as notice, would he also consider that at present the Cabinet has the power to do such a thing and would he determine whether the doctrine of delegation, does not permit further delegation, would apply to the regulation which his government has enacted?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Finance. Would the Minister take the necessary steps to make it possible for Manitobans having to do business with government and involving payment of moneys to government, to pay in cash if they so wish rather than imposing upon them the additional tax burden of the effort and expense of getting a certified cheque or the purchasing of a money order?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll accommodate the member perhaps by asking him if he could provide me with the specific instance and he may even want to do it in writing to make it very clear.

MR. HANUSCHAK: To assist the Honourable Minister of Finance in further explaining my question, I'm not sure in what departments this may occur but I do know that this is a problem in the Parks Branch of the Department of the Honourable Minister of Environment where it is not possible to pay in cash in order to submit an application for a campground site.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I don't have any hesitancy on having a look for the member to provide him with assistance but it might be helpful if he could perhaps give me in writing the specific case and we can look into it and then trace it down.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAMUEL USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs whether he has come to a conclusion or decision as to what his department intends to do with respect

to appealing or not appealing the recent decision in court of the assessment problem in the Dauphin area, the case involving farmers who have challenged the Assessment Branch.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, we've not yet received the written judgment and until we do so, we are unable to take a position.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, being that that particular example is only one of a number of anomalies with the present assessment system, would the Minister indicate whether a total review of the assessment system is under way or will soon be under way?

MR. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the Ombudsman pointed out in a report dealing with this particular section, the Director of Assessment had brought this matter to the attention of numerous Municipal Affairs' Ministers and no action was taken. He noted that our government had established a sub-committee of Cabinet to deal with this matter. We are currently reviewing the whole assessment situation, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Can he advise us as to the makeup of this Cabinet committee and as to the target date by which this Cabinet committee intends to bring forth its report to the Legislature and the people of Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: I know the Ombudsman's report, Mr. Speaker, indicated that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition as a former Municipal Affairs Minister didn't indicate any interest in his concerns about this particular section, but I appreciate his new interest in this matter, Mr. Speaker, and the committee is working diligently to review this committee and will bring in a report very shortly.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Municipal Affairs not aware of the Municipal Affairs' Committee which held hearings throughout the length and breadth of Manitoba, including members of and colleagues of his . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I point out to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that questions of awareness are hardly proper questions for this Chamber.
The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of Municipal Affairs intending to follow the practice during the previous government of forming a Legislative Committee of this House to deal with matters involving assessment and to conduct hearings so that Manitobans might bring submissions to that committee in order to bring about changes in the present Assessment Act?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, a Legislative Committee is one alternative to deal with this particular problem. Whatever method we choose, I can assure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that we will not proceed without very active and thorough consultation with municipal organizations as we have done with the Provincial Land Use Policies in holding regional meetings throughout the Province of Manitoba. It is our intention to consult fully and thoroughly with municipal organizations and other groups in representing the public, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Finance took as notice a question from me yesterday. I wonder if he is able to advise the House today which of his colleagues has the responsibility for purchasing insurance on government buildings.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I took the question as notice and therefore I will return the information to the member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Highways. I wonder if the Minister can inform us when the Highway Department will complete the changeover to metrification signs and distances on the Manitoba highways. What time frame is he looking at in this year, 1979?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that that would be an excellent question to ask during the course of my Estimates when departmental officials are available to report to the committee members as to the progress that is being made on this matter.

MR. JENKINS: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. Is the Minister and his department officials monitoring, reviewing, or studying the success of his Buckle-up Safety Program to determine whether there is a reduction in traffic fatalities and accidents on the Manitoba highways?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, we have a safety group working within the department, the Motor Vehicle Branch, but more particular, I suppose, the members are aware that through our Autopac Corporation, there is a very thorough collection of data taking place and when that report is completed, we would have no objection as to filing that in this Chamber.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan with a final supplementary.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My final supplementary to the Minister is, is he setting a good example to the rest of Manitoba by also buckling up?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member I think is infringing on my personal rights on this occasion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I took a question as notice the other day from the Member for Lac du Bonnet. The import quota for beef to Canada, I said an approximate figure of around 150 million pounds at that time. It is exactly 155 million as the beef import quota for 1979.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Yes, I wonder if the Minister would indicate whether that quota has any relevance at the present time, in other words, whether it is indeed restricting supplies into this country at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I can give last years figures 1978 where the quota was 148 million pounds and that was not reached. There was something like an actual importation of 144 million pounds imported.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture just under what terms and conditions that sales of properties that were owned by MACC are now being undertaken. The Order in Council makes reference to tenders being accepted. Are these from the original lessees or are these properties being offered by public tender?

MR. DOWNEY: The land that was offered for sale by tender, Mr. Speaker, was land that did not have a lease on it at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health and Community Services. Last year he indicated that he was initiating a review of the operation of community health clinics in the Province of Manitoba and that the results would be forthcoming in a short while. Can he indicate whether that review is now completed and whether he intends to announce the results of, actually rephrase that, when does he intend to announce the results of that review?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Yes, Mr. Speaker, essentially that review is completed, although in a complex and sophisticated field like that, I suppose it's always desirable to carry on an ongoing review, but essentially the review that we intended to undertake in the department for purposes of immediate government policy has been completed and I would be prepared to discuss it in detail during my Estimates.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister indicate whether the review will be discussed with the operators or Boards of Directors of the community health clinics following the admirable principle just enunciated by the Minister of Municipal Affairs in consulting and discussing with municipal governments before any changes are made. Does he intend to follow the same principle in relation to the community health clinics?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge with a final supplementary.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. If the Minister intends to undertake that consultation, will he be prepared to supply copies of the evaluation or review reports both to members of this House and to members of the Board of Directors of the community health clinics so that those consultations and discussions can take place both in the Estimates and in those discussions with some degree of knowledge of what the reviews say?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice and I assure my honourable friend that I will think about the implications of that over the weekend and I'll give it every consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Mines. In order to apply for a campground lot, is it a prerequisite that one be a subscriber to a newspaper in which the government advertises?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I have no knowledge of that kind of requirement.

MR. HANUSCHAK: If I may assist the honourable minister by asking him a supplementary question, would he then take my first question as notice and in the course of doing so, examine the advertisement published by his department wherein it is stated that application provided with advertisement to be used, which seems to suggest that one could not submit an application written on any other type of paper other than one that is part of the advertisement.

MR. RANSOM: Well, Mr. Speaker, I will determine what the practice has been in the department over the years and see if this particular requirement works any difficulty on the public and if it does then we'll take action to correct it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Health who concerns himself with unfounded charges with regard to the delivery of health services. Would the Minister of Health confirm that in the summer of this year that Grace Hospital discontinued a service relating to certain treatments in its out patients department and I refer specifically to the condition of psoriasis, that they discontinued that service because of the restraint program and that following my bringing this to the attention of the Minister that the service was reinstated.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure my friend, the Member for Inkster, that I concern myself with all charges whether founded or unfounded, one can't determine that they are unfounded until one investigates and I cannot confirm the suggestion that he has just put to me.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, will the Minister accept the fact that I wrote him concerning this matter, that the administrator of the hospital told me that the service was discontinued because of restraint and that subsequently the service was reinstated after this was brought to the attention of the Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I can confirm the incidents as recited by the Member for Inkster, but I can't confirm, I am not in the position to confirm and I am not prepared to confirm the particular rationalization, the particular justification. As far as the decision made at Grace Hospital is concerned, that is up to the Board and the Administration of Grace Hospital. An indication of that nature was not made directly to me.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister confirm that I advised him and that I wrote the Administrator to confirm my conversation with the Administrator, that there was no denial by Mr. Thornhill who gave me the information that that service was discontinued because of the restraint program of the government. That following this advice to the Minister, the service was reinstated.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, will you call the bills for second reading in the order in which they appear on the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that Hansard is late and we haven't a chance to look at any of the introduction in respect to second reading of these bills, would you have the matter stand, all the bills that are in my name.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Very well, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Public Telephones, 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.

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

SUPPLY — MINES, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): I would direct the honourable members attention to Page 63 in Main Estimates, Mines, Natural Resources and Environment. We are on Resolution 81, Administration, (e)(2)Other Expenditures — the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last night you denied my request to ask a question dealing with Administration, and I would like clarification from you as to whether you intend not to permit me to ask my question dealing with Administration until we come to the end of the Estimates of Mines, and deal with the Salary, or whether you did not wish me to proceed last night and wouldn't permit me to do so this morning. I am not clear on your ruling.

MR. KOVNATS: My decision was based that we had passed Administration and rather than go back to it, you had the opportunity to speak on Administration, under Minister's Compensation, so that was the reason, rather than go back to an article that was already discussed.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: So, Mr. Chairman, you are continuing to deny me the opportunity to ask my question now. That is your ruling, and I will not challenge your ruling.

MR. KOVNATS: It is not a matter of denying you the opportunity. I am allowing you to speak at the time we go into Minister's Compensation.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to point out that it is not unusual for the committee to agree to permit a question to be asked out of order when the member has not had an opportunity to do so at the moment. Last night I noted that members on the government side did not impose any objection whatsoever. I accept your ruling, Mr. Chairman.

MR. KOVNATS: We are on item (e)(2) Other Expenditures — the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, when the discussion started on this question, it related to land claims, and I will concede that it broadened out. I don't whether I will accept responsibility for having had it broaden out or whether somebody else did, but it doesn't matter. It was a related matter, and I don't intend to have a full-scale discussion on it, but I do want to indicate to the Minister that I believe that the present position being adopted by the administration, is a non-pro-ductive position, and I am not even going to say that it is substantially different from the position that we adopted, with one definite exception.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that it is impossible to say to the citizens of Manitoba of Indian descent, that we will not provide you provincial services. And I don't care what the BNA Act says. I don't care what the Constitution says. It is not humane, it is not reasonable, and it is not credible to say, that in a community where there is an Indian Reserve and some non-treaty people, which is the case at Cross Lake, which is the case at Brochet, which is the case at Norway House, that half the population or a portion of the population will be entitled to Medicare Services by going to a doctor and receiving their services, and the other people will not be, unless the federal government pays their share of the Medicare.

Now, the Minister may be right in terms of the federal government avoiding its responsibilities, but I say the Minister is not right in saying the way in which you are going to deal with the federal government is to deny services to citizens of Manitoba of Indian descent.

Now, Mr. Chairman, what I am saying here, I followed through with in action. There was a section of The Child Welfare Act, when I was Health Minister, which said, "With regard to certain services, they will be provided (except the Treaty Indians)" and that parenthesis section was never proclaimed. So that shows you how old this problem was. Dr. Johnson, a former Conservative Cabinet Minister, put that in in an attempt to negotiate with the federal government by saying that some day he is going to cut this off to Treaty Indians and all he has to do is proclaim it. Mr. Chairman, no Minister, this Minister, this government, even as critical as I am of them, will not do it, and should not do it. Imagine, Mr. Chairman, if there is a Treaty Indian child, who is out in the cold and being neglected, and is in danger of suffering — who knows what the consequences? The Minister is not going to say that our Child Welfare Department won't deal with that child because it is a Treaty Indian. He is not going to say it, and neither, Mr. Chairman, is it possible for the government to go into those communities and divide them on the basis of Treaty Indians and non-treaty Indians. And when we made the non-conditional grant available — and I think possibly that was us — we said that every community in the Province of Manitoba is entitled to the unconditional grant of, at that time it was \$8.00 — they moved it from \$3.00 to \$8.00 — and then we were provided an additional grant of \$2.00 to northern communities and we said that that would apply to every community including the Indian Reserves.

The Pensioners Home Repair Program was provided to all people. You cannot do otherwise, Mr. Chairman. The Treaty Indian people are citizens of the Province of Manitoba. The federal government is trying to unload its financial responsibility. I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister would be far better off, arguing the question of financial responsibility with the federal government, rather than trying to adopt a position that services that were normally provided by the federal government and which they have abandoned, will not be provided by the province. Mr. Chairman, the consequences of that kind of a policy are horrendous. Are you going to say to a treaty Indian, you can't come into the hospital in the province of Manitoba, that there will have to be a federal hospital, and if there is not we won't let you into the hospital unless the federal government undertakes to pay the bill? Which is what happened with regard to the TB Sanatorium. The federal government announced that it's not going to pay any more for Indians in the sanatorium. If we followed my honourable friend's policy, we would say, well they can't come any more. It would be

preferable to sue the federal government for the money that it costs to serve them. But we cannot deny the service.

And I suggest, with the greatest of respect, that the policy of the MHRC was wrong. We are not going to solve the native question on the basis of separating treaty Indian citizens from services that are provided to all of the citizens of the province of Manitoba. Quite the contrary, Mr. Chairman. If anything, we should be doing the reverse. We should be saying that the citizens of Manitoba should not be divided on the basis of services at all, that all services provided by the province of Manitoba should be provided to all of its citizens, including the Indians, and take up the problem of finances with the federal government.

Mr. Chairman, there will be a further opportunity of dealing with this question. I've indicated that I don't want a full-scale debate at present, but I do indicate to the Minister that if the Conservative government is going to say that we will not provide provincial services to treaty Indians because they are the responsibility of the federal government, that that policy will result ultimately in the province providing all the services and the federal government paying nothing. That the province may as well resign itself to a much more sensible position, that there not be a racial distinction upon which provincial services to citizens of Manitoba are based, and that if there is a financial burden, that it's the federal government with whom we should be negotiating the financial burden, and we should not be trying to withhold services in the interim because it is a non-productive type of negotiating.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I only respond because I believe that the honourable member has perhaps misinterpreted the policy or the statements that I had made last night. I did not in any way indicate that this government was reducing services to Indian people. We have a net cost of \$30 or \$35 million now to Indian people, the particular situation we're dealing with had to do with a service on reserve where the service, I understand this would be available through the federal government. No one would go with a home that was unrepaired because of that. There is no indication that we are planning to treat people off of reserves, to divide them and segregate them into categories, that would be abhorrent to have to do that, Mr. Chairman. We're talking about a service on a reserve where the federal government will provide the services, the one place where they have been providing the services.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I'm somewhat more content with what the Minister has said, but it still doesn't answer the problem. The fact is, we were dealing with a specific program, the Pensioners' Repair Program, Critical Home Repair, and the reason that it's not being provided is that these people are on Indian reserves. And I say that that is not a reason for not providing the service. It is a reason for suggesting that the federal government reimburse the province and that that should be the direction of the government. But under no circumstances should we be saying that a service that is available to any citizen of the province of Manitoba is not given because a man happens to live on an Indian reserve.

MR. RANSOM: If the Indian people, through the federal government, request the service and the federal government is prepared to pay for that sort of service, then we're quite prepared to negotiate delivery of services.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, this is exactly my point. An Indian citizen of the province of Manitoba should be able to apply to the government of the province of Manitoba in the same way as an Anglo-Saxon citizen, a Jewish citizen, a Ukrainian citizen, any other citizen, saying that "I understand my government has a service available to people. I wish to take advantage of it". And I say that the province should work in the direction of making that possible. That where the distinctions now exist — and I'm not blaming his government or crediting our government with having solved this problem — I'm merely pointing out what I think is the direction of solving it, that that service should be provided to that person as a citizen of the province, not as a ward of the federal government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (e)(2)—pass; (e)—pass. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, before we go on from (e)(2) I have a few questions to the honourable minister. I was not here for all of the discussions, so perhaps some of the points that I have to bring up will have already been covered, in which case I would hope he would indicate and I will check Hansard. I believe that there is a considerable amount of conflict between the

Indian Brotherhood position at the present time and the position of the provincial government in Manitoba with respect to the overall Indian land claims of the Indian people of Manitoba, and in particular I believe one of the concerns is the government's intention to hold to a certain provision that the land below a certain elevation or a certain distance from the water level would be held as Crown land, rather than being turned over to the respective Indian reserve, band of Indians in a land claim situation. I wonder if the Minister has already clarified this position or if he would care to comment further on that.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, we did discuss this to some extent last night. First of all, just briefly I would say to the honourable member that we have made guidelines available, under terms of which we feel we're obligated to provide land to the federal government in order that they may fulfil their entitlement to the Indian people. We have discussed those with the Brotherhood, with their Land Entitlement Committee and with the federal government. Both have asked for some additional clarification of the guidelines and then I expect some formal response from them. And I have said, these are Cabinet policies, they are set by Cabinet, they can be altered by Cabinet if there is a compelling reason to do so. But we discussed last night the matter of our inability, or at least the federal government's unwillingness to exercise their right to expropriate.

I said last night that we therefore, in making land available, must be extremely careful that we do not give up land which the public of this province may require for some work and which we then would not be able to get back and we would be placed in a position of having to treat the Indian people differently than we would treat someone else which is the principle we've just been discussing. So that is one reason why we are being particularly cautious in these guidelines and I think it's also fair to say that in many cases there is a public reserve maintained in any case on land that is alienated and we have said to the Indian people, "This doesn't prevent you from getting a lease or the right to build a wharf, or whatever is required, but we'll not give up title."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Just as a short question, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, has he considered the Saskatchewan formula that has been adopted and I believe approved by both the Saskatchewan Government and the Indian people of Saskatchewan with respect to the type of land settlement they have been negotiating in that province, or is he sticking to the one which was adopted by the provincial government here before the changeover in administrations, and/or has he adopted a different position altogether to those two?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: With respect to the population calculations, Mr. Chairman, this also was discussed last night and we are holding with the same position that the previous administration had and that would mean that we would provide approximately 70,000 acres in land entitlement whereas the Saskatchewan formula would mean approximately 600,000 acres. We have not been convinced that there is any reason, any valid reason, to accept the so-called Saskatchewan formula.

MR. BOSTROM: In general terms, Mr. Chairman, I would like to make some comments on what I believe to be the concerns of the Indian people of Manitoba with respect to their Indian land claims. I believe in general their concern is to achieve some form of security, some form of an economic base for the people they represent. For the Indian people in Manitoba generally, I believe it's pretty well commonly accepted that they have been shifted off onto lands that have not been the most productive lands in Manitoba.

Historically, when the reserve systems were originally established, it appears as though the people who negotiated the original land reservation system with the Indian people of Manitoba managed to push the Indian people off into pretty sparse and unproductive lands, generally the most sparse and most unproductive lands in the Province of Manitoba.

If you look at the Indian reserves in the constituency which I represent, the lands are certainly not the best lands in the area. One reserve which is just on the edge of my constituency, the Scantbury-Brokenhead area, the reserve land is low-lying, it's very poor and unproductive farmland. The best farmland is outside the reserve area.

If you look further north from there, the Fort Alexander Reserve is a strip of land on both sides of the Winnipeg River. One of the best pieces of land was early negotiated away from the Fort Alexander band and turned over to the Abitibi mill at some early date in their history, so they're left with two strips of land on each side of the river, a river which is fast eroding the land base.

The land back from the river is very low-lying and rather unproductive land, really not suitable for farming, a very poor forestry base. It has long since been depleted of any good productive forest resource.

If you look further to the north, you will find that the Indian reserves largely are established on quite small parcels of rather unproductive land and they are in fact pretty quickly expanding into covering all of the available area that is available to them in their land base. Mr. Chairman, I believe there is a very serious concern here with the Indian people that they at least have the security of a land base where their community is established, but further to that, I believe that what they are looking for is a land base which can help them to achieve an economic base, a secure economic base for as many people as possible of the population of any particular reserve.

Mr. Chairman, our government, the New Democratic Party government, while in power, established a policy with respect to all northern communities, not only reserves but non-treaty communities as well, that we allocated on an informal basis the area around each community, the resource base around each community, to be — to use a rule of thumb — the general area that fell within the trapgrounds of the northern communities, for example, as the resource base of that community. Now, the community did not have exclusive right to that area, we did not give them reserve status or control status over all of that resource base, or all of the lands within that resource base and all the resources within that resource base, but it gave them first call on that resource base. In other words, if there was going to be any major economic development of any kind within that area, that community, whether it was non-treaty or treaty, would have the opportunity to make their own presentation to the government officials, the government of the Province of Manitoba, as to what they would like to see working in that particular area.

Now, I believe that if this government would continue to follow that policy and, further to that, to continue to provide assistance to these communities to develop that resource base around their communities for the benefit of those communities, so that the people in those communities could achieve the maximum amount of employment possible from harvesting the resources within that resource base, that you would go a long way to answering the general concerns of the Indian people with respect to land in the Province of Manitoba, because I believe their major concern here is not only the security of having a home base, so to speak, for their people, but also the desire to have a firm foundation, a firm economic base for as many people as possible from the individual bands concerned.

I would like to hear the Minister's comments on that and I would like to ask him specifically if he is continuing that policy which was established by the New Democratic government and/or whether or not he has some variation of that policy, if he's discussing this policy with the Indian groups concerned with respect to the claims of the Indian people for land in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I've had a number of discussions with the Brotherhood, both with the president and the executive and with their Land Entitlement Committee to see what sort of common ground there is and, while the honourable member says that he thinks that that sort of allocation would go a long way towards satisfying the demands or the requirements of the Indian Bands, I don't really get the impression that that would resolve the entitlement issue as such. I agree though that no single feature can be treated in isolation from others. Certainly it's desirable that the local people in those areas be able to take advantage to the greatest extent possible of opportunities in resource development. Now how those opportunities are brought about, how they're utilized — I'm sure there'll be some differences of opinion, some differences of approach between the previous administration and our administration.

We tend to want to see individual people be able to achieve some awards for initiative and effort expended, whereas the previous administration perhaps tended more to work on a group basis, on a band basis, so while we have, I think, the same objective, the ultimate objective in mind, we no doubt will have some differences in how that might be best achieved.

MR. BOSTROM: Yes; Mr. Chairman. I believe that the Indian Bands involved here would like to, and the northern communities in general, and many of the northern communities have the split situation where you have half of the community, or more, are Treaty Indian, and on the one side of the community will be a Metis population. I've always tended to look at those communities as a community involved, and tried to deal with the communities as a whole rather than as a split group, and in terms of resource allocation to allocate to that general community and overall area that would be their area of first priority in terms of any resource development desires that they may have. I'm wondering if the minister could be more specific in that area, if he would establish

and confirm a policy to these communities of allocating at least the area that falls within their trap-line zone specifically to that community for the purpose of assisting that community in their economic development — not giving them exclusive rights to that area but giving them first call on the resources within that area, and before the minister or his department allocates any of the resources in that general area to anybody else, he would go to that community and say, "Look, we have this application for this particular kind of resource development in this area. Do you have as a community a desire to develop this resource?" and give the community the first option, the first opportunity to put forward a proposal to develop that resource.

That's not to say that I'm recommending the resources be left unharvested, unutilized, particularly the renewable resource base which can be harvested on a sustained yield basis. However, I believe it's essential that the government have a policy which will assist these communities that are, particularly in the northern area of the province, that are suffering from very high degrees of unemployment and really for the future only have the resource base to look to for potential employment-generating activities, any type of activity, that is, that has a long range employment-generating nature, so I wonder if the minister could be more specific in that area and give us a definite, definitive statement about whether or not he is prepared to make this policy commitment to the people in those communities.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I'd be happy to discuss those issues in more detail when we get into the more appropriate section of the Estimates. This one deals with the Land Claims Secretary, Other Expenditures. I believe that perhaps the resource allocation items might best be discussed under the Resources Planning Group somewhat later.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Rupertland.

MR. BOSTROM: That's fine with me, Mr. Chairman. The only other thing which is related to this that follows from the line of questioning I've already brought up is with respect to land settlements. While the minister and his department are negotiating with the Indian Bands for long range land entitlement settlements, would the minister and his department be prepared to make available to the Indian Bands Crown land on a long term lease basis which would be not in settlement of the land claims, but, pending the settlement of the land claims, certain areas nearby an Indian Reserve could be leased to that Indian Reserve on a long range basis for a nominal fee for them to proceed with housing or commercial development, or land recreational type development, or whatever that the Indian Band wishes to proceed with but has no land base themselves to proceed with and will not have any land base to do this type of activity until a land entitlement settlement is reached which may be ten years or twenty years down the road, no one knows, so while the negotiations are going on is the minister prepared to consider that kind of request from an individual Band that they be able to lease on a long range basis land nearby their community for economic development or housing purposes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: That specific type of request has not come to my attention to this time, Mr. Chairman. I can't say precisely what the reaction would be, but certainly any proposal of that nature would be very carefully considered.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: One more specific question, Mr. Chairman. The Indian Band at Little Grand Rapids in my constituency has made a request of his department that they exchange land on a one for one basis; that is, take a chunk of land out of their Little Grand Rapids Reserve in exchange for land in the vicinity of the community of Pauingassi, which traditionally has been a part of the Little Grand Rapids Band, has split off from the Little Grand Rapids Band and is in a different location at the present time and they now have the status only of squatting on Crown land; they have no official status.

Now they've made a definite request to the minister and his department some time ago, and as far as I know no action has been taken on that. Can the minister indicate what the status of that is, if he intends to accept their request?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, we have a technical advisory group that looks at all such requests, so we have people from Highways and Hydro and Lands, and I think there are nine people, something like that, on this technical advisory committee. They look at all the implications of those requests and then put them forward and the sub-committee looks at them. The sub-committee then makes a recommendation to Cabinet. That particular one has not come to the attention of the Sub-Committee yet. I assume that's it's being processed through the Committee of Inquirers to status of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: One more specific question, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the Norway House Band, which is mentioned in the Annual Report, I note that active land negotiations include the road negotiations with the Norway House Band. Can the minister indicate what the status of those negotiations are at the present time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: All I can say to that, Mr. Chairman, is that there's negotiation and discussions taking place back and forth between the department, the committee and the Band and so far we have not been able to arrive at an agreement. We have had two or three other situations that have been in the mill for some time; we've been able to resolve those. This particular one has not yet been resolved.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. In light of the fact there was some discussion this morning during the Question Period revolving around the Polar Gas application for the proceeding before the National Energy Board, I'd ask the minister to inform us as to which land claims are being held up because of the possibility of being along a proposed Polar Gas route through the Province of Manitoba?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: To my knowledge, none.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: The negotiations I assume have been going on between the Polar Gas consortium and the province for some time now in regard to the proposed route or proposed routes through the Province of Manitoba, one being the route through the north-eastern section passing through Churchill and down around the Island Lake area and the other one passing through the Interlake, and I note yesterday that the minister had mentioned in his Estimates that one of the problems in dealing with land claims and negotiating the land claims was that they wanted to ensure that the land claims that they gave out, that the land that was allocated by the province would not at a later date be land that would be needed for natural resources or land that was needed for activities such as a Polar Gas Pipeline, and I'm wondering if the minister can indicate to us if there's been any progress made in regard to identifying a specific route, one of those two routes for the Polar Gas route and, if they have, which Reserves it would pass in proximity to?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, we're discussing on this item the land claims. I have said that there are no land claims being delayed to my knowledge because of any consideration of Polar Gas. If the honourable member wishes to discuss Polar Gas and a routing then that should be discussed at the appropriate place in the Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: I thank the minister for his direction, Mr. Chairperson, but I wish to discuss land claims and Polar Gas, so I will continue on with your indulgence. Can the Minister inform us as to any negotiations between his government and representatives of the Polar Gas consortium that

would indicate that the Polar Gas Pipeline is going to run through areas that might possibly be looked at by Indian Bands in northern Manitoba as being areas where they might want to include in their own land settlements with the province?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: The honourable member is probably aware that our guidelines said that entitlement could be selected from unoccupied Crown land. If the Band wishes to make application for entitlement on unoccupied Crown land, that could mean it could be just about anywhere in northern Manitoba. If the pipeline is going to come through northern Manitoba then there certainly is a possibility that some Band would select land that would be in the route, but I say again there is no entitlement being delayed because of Polar Gas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Then I would ask the Minister if the route were to come through northern Manitoba and down through either the north-eastern section or the centre section and a Band did decide that traditionally they were entitled to occupy land in that area, and put in for a settlement for land in that area, what would be the Minister's reaction? What would be the reaction of the government in this regard? In other words, would they consider that land claim or would they categorically deny it to the members of those Bands because they feel it might interfere with the routing of the Polar Gas Pipeline?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, that is entirely a hypothetical question. The honourable member should refer to the guidelines which have been publicly released, and they have been discussed, I think, adequately today and last night, and he should recognize the significance of the federal government's unwillingness to exercise Section 35 of The Indian Act.

MR. COWAN: Yes, what I am attempting to do, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of a number of my constituents . . . If that pipeline does run through Manitoba, coming from the north, no matter where it enters the province and no matter where it exits the province, it will run through the constituency of Churchill. And that constituency, as you are well aware, and as the Minister is well aware, has a sizeable percentage of population being treaty Indian people, and the treaty Indian people are quite concerned about the effect that the route of the pipeline and this government's reaction to that proposed route will have on their lands' settlements, which is a very important issue, as I'm sure everyone in this House can recognize, to those people. So what I am trying to do in this instance, is not assess blame. I wish the Minister wouldn't be quite so defensive. I am trying to clarify policy so that I know, so that the members of this House know, and so that my constituents know how to deal with this very serious problem. And there is a problem here.

I would like the Minister to indicate what his government's policy would be in the case that a band in northern Manitoba chose to have part of their land entitlement — and there are a number of outstanding acreages available to them, some of which would quite naturally be near proposed routes of the polar gas pipeline if it would come down through the north-eastern section of the province and Shamattawa, then Tadoule Lake could be a band that might be affected, Oxford House, God's Lake Narrows, Gods River, perhaps even Red Sucker Lake and any of the Island Lake areas. So we're talking about a significant number of bands. If it came down through the centre section, then Pukatawagan, which is not in my constituency, but is nonetheless concerned about this, Brochet, or Lac Brochet could also be affected by the routing down through that area. I believe that most of the bands that I've mentioned have land entitlements open to them and I would like to clarify the Minister's position as to how the possible routing of the polar gas pipeline is going to specifically affect a band that in the future might choose, before the pipeline is routed through that area in the next year or two, might choose to have their land entitlement on an area that might be occupied later by the polar gas pipeline.

MR. RANSOM: The third guideline on the guidelines that were released in October, Mr. Chairman, says that Manitoba will not transfer lands that are clearly chosen for speculative purposes in respect of future public utility or public works projects, for example, highways, pipelines, etc. The best advice that I could offer to the honourable member is that he encourage his constituents to select land at the earliest possible time, because as time goes by, there becomes less and less land available.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairperson. What I have to inform the Minister is that I will

encourage my constituents to choose their land, not at the earliest possible time, but at the best possible time for them. And I would like to ask him in regard to, I believe it was Section 3 of the news release that he read that the province would not turn over land that was chosen for speculative purposes. Who is going to be making that specific judgment, that land chosen by an Indian band is speculative, or if it is land chosen because they consider it to be the best area for them to choose for their land entitlement?

MR. RANSOM: The unoccupied Crown land in the province, Mr. Chairman, is owned of course by all of the people of Manitoba, the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources and Environment has responsibility for administering that land under the Natural Resources Transfer Act, which says the province shall make land available to the federal government to fulfil entitlement from unoccupied Crown land, as may be agreed to by the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources.

MR. COWAN: Then I can just ask him to confirm that he is telling me that he will be the person that is responsible for determining whether a band is making a choice out of legitimate or speculative purposes.

MR. RANSOM: The Minister of this department is the person who ultimately has to decide whether a specific piece of land will be made available or not. And that sort of judgment will have to be based on a lot of factors, such as the presence of resources that can be utilized by the people and whether they traditionally have been utilizing those resources. There would be a lot of factors go into it, but the particular item that necessitates that the Minister of this department be particularly cautious in protecting the public interest generally is that the federal government has publicly stated as a matter of policy, that they will not exercise the right to expropriate unless they have the agreement of the band.

So the honourable member can clearly see the situation that can develop, that if there is a pipeline planned and a strip of land is selected down the route of the pipeline and the government is then unable to expropriate that land, as they would be able to expropriate it from the honourable member or from myself, if the band is not subjected to that same kind of law that all the rest of the people of Manitoba are subjected to, then I am fulfilling my responsibilities as Minister of this department in protecting the public interest in that land, must be very cautious what land is made available.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I think that myself and my colleagues on this side of the House, as I'm sure the Minister's colleague realize the difficult position that he's been put into and empathize with him in many respects. And that is exactly why I wish to continue this line of questioning for a while so as to clarify, in our own minds, that the Minister is responding to that difficulty in the most efficient and effective method.

I'd like to ask the Minister a question. Take the community of Shamattawa, and let's assume for a moment that the polar gas pipeline would run down the north, the first proposed route, run down the north-eastern side of the province of Manitoba. It would pass in very close proximity to the reserve in the community of Shamattawa. It would pass through lands that have traditionally been used by the residents of that community for trapping and fishing that they may want to include in future land entitlements. It would also pass through lands that were traditionally used by the God's Lake Narrows people for trapping and fishing, and which they may wish to include in their future land entitlements. Is the Minister telling us that he will categorically deny any of those lands to the Indian people of those communities because in the future, the polar gas pipeline might be routed down through that area of the province?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I can't answer hypothetical questions. I can say that we have guidelines available. When there is an application for land, then the discussions will take place on the basis of those guidelines.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm wondering if the Minister can inform us if he, or the Indian Lands Claim Committee, or his government, I guess it would be his government, are currently negotiating with either the communities of Shamattawa, Brochet, Lac Brochet, Tadoule Lake, God's Lake Narrows, Gods River, or Red Sucker Lake, St. Theresa Point, Gareen Hill, Waasagomach for the purpose of future land entitlements? Excuse me, Mr. Chairperson, I might add Pukatawagan also.

MR. RANSOM: Well, there are quite a number of bands that have entitlement, Mr. Chairman, and that doesn't necessarily mean that each of them has made application for settlement of the

The list that I have shows the Barren Lands people, the Brokenhead people, Churchill, Cross Lake, Fox Lake, Gods Lake, Island Lake, Long Plains, Mathias Colomb, Oxford House, Shamattawa, Swan Lake, The Pas, and York Factory bands as having outstanding entitlement under the Manitoba formula.

MR. COWAN: Then I would ask the Minister which of these bands is his department or his government currently negotiating with for the purpose of specifying particular lands for the land entitlements that are owing them?

MR. RANSOM: I'll have to take that question as notice, Mr. Chairman, and give a specific answer. I'm not aware of just specific ones we are talking to.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. A number of these land entitlements that the Minister mentioned are in the proximity of one or the other of the proposed polar gas pipeline, the Barren Lands, The Churchill, the Fox Lake, which is in the Gillam area, the Gods Lake band, the Island Lake band, the Mathias Colomb band, which is a Pukatawagan band, the Oxford House and the Shamattawa band. The reason I asked the Minister to indicate which, if any of those are currently being negotiated, is that I would wonder if the proposed route of the polar gas pipeline, either (a) or (b), northeastern corner or interlake, is having any impact on these specific negotiations with any of these bands?

MR. RANSOM: I repeat for the third time, Mr. Chairman, that there are no land entitlements being held up because of polar gas considerations.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Chairperson. Earlier the Minister suggested that I encourage my constituents to make their land choices at the earliest possible time, at which time I reported back to him I would encourage them to make them at the best possible time. But, as part of that statement, he said that there is less and less Crown land becoming available to the Indian bands from which they can choose their land entitlements. I wonder if the Minister would specify just what it is that is occurring in the north that will result in less and less land available to these bands for the purpose of choosing acreage for land entitlement.

MR. RANSOM: Well for example, Mr. Chairman, there are parks and wildlife management areas which are not available then for land to be selected from, and as time goes by there's greater and greater public demand for the use of land and it's going to be into that sort of use and thereby lessen the amount of land that's available for entitlement.

MR. COWAN: I wonder if the Minister, Mr. Chairperson, would specify just what form that public demand for the use of land in northern Manitoba is taking at the present time?

MR. RANSOM: Well, there was a wildlife management area, for instance, established last year on the coastline of Hudson Bay.

MR. COWAN: I would ask the Minister, Mr. Chairperson, if that is the one specific, or if there is other public demand for the use of that land that he can categorize for us at this time.

MR. RANSOM: No, Mr. Chairman, and it's really not relevant to the discussion. I have made a general observation about the disposition of unoccupied Crown land over time and I think that the honourable member even would have to recognize that since the province took over the jurisdiction for resources in 1930, took over land, that there has been a substantial amount of land alienated in that period of time and it is no longer available for entitlement purposes.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Chairperson. I would ask the Minister the Minister then to give us a number of examples of specific ways in which land that would have normally been available to Indian bands for land entitlements has been alienated since 1930 in the northern part of the Province of Manitoba.

MR. RANSOM: I gave two examples, Mr. Chairman, parks and wildlife management areas.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, I would ask the Minister if we could also assume that any sort of mining development would also alienate this land from the acreage that would be available to the Indian people under their Indian land entitlements.

MR. RANSOM: Clearly, if there is a mine established in an area, Mr. Chairman, it is not available for entitlement.

MR. COWAN: So now I would ask the Minister if he can confirm that not only do we have less and less land being available to the Indian people for their land entitlements from public use, but that we also have less and less land being available to them from private development in northern Manitoba.

MR. RANSOM: Indeed, Mr. Chairman, and unlike the Honourable Member for Churchill, the members on this side see nothing wrong with private ownership of property.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, I have to rise to the barb that has been slung across these Chamber floors. My first reaction, Mr. Chairperson, is to go into a bit of a dissertation but I don't feel as if it's necessary to respond to those sort of — if I can quote the Minister of Health in his answers before this House during the Question Period yesterday — incredible allegations from the Minister of Mines and Resources. Notwithstanding whether I personally, my own personal beliefs as to the private ownership of land, and notwithstanding the personal beliefs of my caucus mates, and notwithstanding our public position as an NDP caucus, I would just like the Minister to inform the House as to what is going to be the priority in northern Manitoba when it comes to the allocation of land for land entitlements. Is the priority going to be future mineral development, or is the priority going to be the needs and the wants of the Indian people who have been entitled to this land for quite some time now?

MR. RANSOM: I would expect, Mr. Chairman, that the pace as the Honourable Member for Inkster said, the march of development, will continue, and in the absence of some specific requests for fulfillment of entitlement, then it is going to be difficult to alter the regular course of development. Now, that's not to say that there won't be every consideration given to the wishes of the bands when those wishes become known in terms of where they want the select land. We have to be aware that these treaties were signed a hundred years ago, some of them less, some of them more. The province took over the responsibility for land in 1930. We have not been, to my knowledge, no provincial government has prevented bands from applying for entitlement and selecting lands. That must take place in order for us to know what lands they want.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to correct a misleading and rather incredible statement that the Minister made with respect to ownership of land where he claims his side believes in private ownership contrary to the beliefs of people on this side of the House. Mr. Chairman, it's pretty clear that the position of our party while in government, while in Opposition, is that we believe in both private and public ownership; public ownership where it makes sense, and private ownership where it makes sense, contrary to the belief which is obvious from the Progressive Conservative Party, where they have a dogmatic view that private is always best.

Mr. Chairman, private is not always best. But, Mr. Chairman, when we were in government, we recognized that private was best and necessary in many cases. Right in this report, Mr. Chairman, which is put out by his department, the Annual Report for the year ending March 31, 1978, it refers to the Crown land sales. Mr. Chairman there it says, "As in past years, with one exception, Crown lands were not sold in Manitoba. Land was sold where requested for primary resident purpose in a townsite development on surveyed subdivisions." Mr. Chairman, that was the policy that was brought in, adopted by the New Democratic government while in office. It was necessary and, Mr. Chairman, desirable to have the people in northern Manitoba own the lots on which they were building their own homes. Mr. Chairman, just to correct the record, it is obvious that the Minister's statement is incorrect and that the New Democratic government, while in office, demonstrated its desire to do what was best in each situation, and that is to use public ownership where it made sense to use public ownership and to use private ownership where it made sense to use private ownership. Mr. Chairman, I believe that the record should be clear in that respect.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Earlier the Minister spoke of the march of development in northern Manitoba. I prefer to think of it as the march of the multi-nationals, and I can assure you that the multi-nationals and I march to the tune of a different drummer, so we

may have some conflict of our own personal opinion here and our own particular political perspective.

But notwithstanding that conflict, I would like to direct the Minister's attention to the Throne Speech that said, "In line with the policy which was initiated during the past year, my government has made changes and regulations governing oil and gas exploration, production of lands where mineral rights are held by the Crown," — excuse me, I'm reading off the wrong particular section.

"My Ministers propose to announce a new policy governing the sale of Crown lands which will have the effect of expanding the private ownership of family farmland and in providing Manitobans with additional opportunities for access to recreational and commercial land not required for public purposes."

I'm wondering if this new policy will have any impact in northern Manitoba and, if it does, if it might not be one of the reasons for less and less land being available to the Indian people for their land entitlements.

Maybe I'll put that into two separate questions. Does the government propose to sell off Crown land in northern Manitoba for recreational purposes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: There has been no policy announced, Mr. Chairman.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I might ask the Minister if he can elaborate somewhat on his government's reaction to a band that would come to him for the purpose of negotiating a land entitlement in the proximity of a heavily populated industrial area in northern Manitoba. This would happen in Nelson House, it would happen in Gillam with the Fox Lake Band, it could also happen in the Churchill area. I'm wondering if he would elaborate on just what his reaction would be to a band that came to him that asked for land entitlement around that particular industrial area.

MR. RANSOM: There are, Mr. Chairman, I suppose an infinite number of hypothetical situations that might arise, and if I was to respond to each of those, we would never get through this item. I'm quite prepared to deal with this item and with specific cases.

MR. COWAN: A specific case for the Minister, Mr. Chairperson. Can he inform us as to whether any negotiations are currently ongoing with the War Lake Band in the Gillam area for the purpose of land entitlement, and if so, what the status of those negotiations are?

MR. RANSOM: I will find that out, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that information with me.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Chairman, because I pose a hypothetical question, some more hypothetical than others, and the Minister doesn't answer me, and I pose several specific questions and the Minister takes them at as notice, which makes my job of trying to elicit information from the Minister in this regard on behalf of my constituents just that much more difficult. But I can assure the Minister that as difficult as he wishes to make it, we will continue to try to clarify positions in policies in specific examples. If he wants to cast aside my hypothetical questions and take as notice my specific questions, all he's going to succeed in doing is making me stand up here a bit longer and prolonging this perusal of this specific section of his Estimates that much longer.

I would ask the Minister when he would propose to come back with that specific information on the War Lake Band so that we may know. If it were this afternoon, we could continue on the questioning this afternoon on that specific item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

I rise again, Mr. Chairperson. Perhaps the Minister can inform us exactly what the average length of time it takes from the commencement of negotiations with a band for land entitlement to the actual allocation of land, the turning over of that land to that particular band under his government's administration.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, that is a question that's almost impossible to answer in that the previous entitlements or requests had been made to the previous government and some had been standing for several years when we took over. We have since settled a couple of those so I guess you can say that in those cases it was only a matter of months. I don't know of any specific application that has been made since we assumed office. I believe all applications for entitlement had been

made prior to that date. So it isn't a matter of our government, it's a matter of how long it has taken government and the Indian bands to settle, because it is not necessarily this government, that is, or has, delayed the settlements.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, I want to make it very clear to the Minister that I'm not trying to assess blame in this regard, nor am I trying to suggest that they are taking an unduly long time. All I am trying to find out is the average period of time of negotiations in this regard, whether it be under his government or any other government, and there is a specific reason for asking that.

I would ask the Minister if he has any idea of how long it is taking as a process for the bands to decide with the provincial government, and I realize the federal government is involved in this also, to decide after they have made their initial application for land, for that land to be turned over to them.

MR. RANSOM: I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that historically, it is numbered in years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Earlier, the Minister told me to encourage my constituents to choose their land as early as possible, and I am just wondering if in the instance of a band now, perhaps the Shamattawa Band, choosing as their land entitlement land off to the northeast of their particular community and reserve, if they were to choose land now that might in the future — but there is no definitive answer now — but might in the future be in the path of that polar gas route, would the Minister deny that land to them, not knowing for certain that the land may or may not be in the path of the polar gas route?

MR. RANSOM: Again, Mr. Chairman, that is a hypothetical situation, and I can only explain to the honourable member again, that there are guidelines that are set out for our technical advisory committee. They are available to the Indian people and to the federal government, and when an application is made, the guidelines form the basis of the discussions that take place. As guidelines, they are not regulations, they simply set the framework within which discussions will take place, and it is impossible for me to anticipate on a hypothetical basis what the outcome of the discussions between the band and the government technical advisory committee would be.

MR. COWAN: So the Minister is telling us in that case, that not only should the bands in my particular constituency and the bands throughout the Province of Manitoba, choose their land entitlements early, but they should make certain that they do not choose land entitlements that may possibly be in the path of proposed routes, although there may be a number of different proposed routes, because if they do so, there are going to make the process and negotiation that much longer, that much more arduous, and that much more difficult, because the province is not going to settle those land claims until such a time as they know specifically which route the polar gas consortium is proposing to take through the Province of Manitoba, if they are indeed going to come through the Province of Manitoba. So I would ask the Minister — and I feel it is a fairly important question — if he can assure us, that if a band were to make application for land, which is presently unoccupied Crown land in northern Manitoba, that that land might possibly be in the path of the proposed pipeline, or in the path of a proposed mine, or smelter, or any other industrial activity, that he will give first preference to the native people in this regard, so that he will not keep them on the tenderhooks. Let me rephrase that; he will either tell them a flat no, they cannot have that land, or he will tell them yes, they can have that land, rather than keep them on tenderhooks, waiting for their land entitlements, which are long overdue to them, and through no fault of his own, I don't assess blame, but are long overdue to them because of possible industrial activity in that area.

MR. RANSOM: For the fourth time, Mr. Chairman, we are not delaying any entitlement applications now, and it is a purely hypothetical situation that you are speaking of. The guidelines will form the basis of discussion. I can't make it any clearer to the honourable member, that I cannot anticipate the outcome of a hypothetical situation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps we can make this easier if I could have the assurance of the Minister, that when he comes back to us with the list of the specific bands

that are currently involved in negotiations with the province over land entitlements, if we can have the opportunity at that time, because we will have passed on to this item, and I don't imagine that it would take the Minister too long to come up with that information, if we could have the opportunity at that time to discuss any of those specific negotiations which might be in the immediate area of either the first or the second of the proposed polar gas routes through Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (e)(2) — pass — the Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: All I would ask for, Mr. Chairman, is the assurance that when he comes back with the information that he has taken as notice, that at that time, he will allow us the opportunity for a few brief questions in this regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Well, I assume, Mr. Chairman, that there is opportunity at the end of the Estimates to discuss any item that has not been dealt with as we proceed through it line by line.

MR. COWAN: So what the Minister is telling me then, Mr. Chairperson, is to encourage my constituents to make their choice at their earliest possible moment but not before the Minister's Salary comes up under this item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (e)(2)—pass. Resolution No. 82, Environmental Management, \$4,145,700. 2.(a) Administration, (1)Salaries—pass — the Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Chairperson. I would like some very specific information from the Minister in this regard as to how many people are employed this year as to last year, and what the specific functions of those persons are.

MR. RANSOM: Is the honourable member asking for a list of each person employed and what they do in terms of whether they are accountants, or clerks, or whatever? Well, Mr. Chairman, there is an Administrative Officer II, and there is an Administrative Officer, and a Clerk IV, and an Accounting Clerk I, two Clerk II's, an Administrative Secretary IV, Administrative Secretary III, an Administrative Secretary II, a Clerk Typist II, an Administrative Secretary II, an Administrative Secretary III, Administrative Secretary III, a Clerk Typist II, a Clerk III, and a Clerk Typist II.

Now, it would take some time to go through the specific description of all the activities that these people do, Mr. Chairman, if that is what the honourable member is asking for; then we would have to undertake to put that information together. It would take some time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. In my inexperience in the Estimates, I perhaps phrased that question incorrectly, and took perhaps more of the time of the House that I should have, so I apologize to both the Minister and the other members of the House for that slight oversight. While sitting here and listening to the Minister reading those off very quickly and knowing full well that I would never be able to write them down and then wondering why I would want to write them down in the first place, it came to me that the question should have been: Can the Minister inform us of any changes made this year over last year, in other words, the addition of specific positions or the reduction of specific positions; and in that case, which they were.

MR. RANSOM: Indeed I can, Mr. Chairman, and it is somewhat of a different question. There were 25.25 staff man years in last year's Estimates, there are 24.25 staff man years in the Estimates under review, and the reduction is an Information Officer.

MR. COWAN: That makes much more sense to me right now. I would just ask the Minister then what the duties of that Information Officer were during the past year, the position that has been reduced.

MR. RANSOM: The person in that position had been responsible for distributing, oh, a number of pamphlets having to do with environmental matters, and responding to inquiries from the public and from schools, etc., and I am just shown here that if the honourable member had referred to Page 27 of the Annual Report, then he would see a small description of what the section did, but

with the amalgamation of the department, Mr. Chairman, there is an Information Services Section that comes into the department, and we expect to be able to pick up the work that had been done in this particular position.

MR. COWAN: So, in a very brief perusal of Page 27 — because I hadn't examined it earlier — I notice that my own constituency comes up, and it mentions under Information Services that, "A co-operative program on the Churchill problem of refuse and polar bears was conducted with the Department of Renewable Resources and Transportation Services." I am just wondering if the Minister can assure us that studies such as this, and serving a purpose in obviously this person was the distribution of pamphlets in the increasing of the general level of knowledge and information about environmental concerns in the Province of Manitoba, and this is a very, very important obligation of the governments. It is becoming increasingly more important as day by day we learn of some of the destructive impact that many of the chemicals and many of the new substances that are being introduced into the environment, either through the workforce or through the consumer market, have on the environment. So we would assume that there is a necessity for more of this type of work to be done, and I want the Minister to assure us that this type of work will not be neglected; that there will not be less of this type of public education, because they have decided to reduce this particular section by that one person, the information officer.

MR. RANSOM: Well, I don't disagree on the necessity for public awareness, Mr. Chairman, of these important factors concerning the environment, but I do disagree on the necessity of the government, at this stage, to be providing information at the level that they did in the past, because when those positions were established, the level of public awareness about environmental concerns generally was not very high, and government saw the necessity to distribute information to increase that awareness. Since that time, I think it is fair to say that within the school system, for instance, there is substantially more available today than there was ten years ago, and that the public is aware enough now, there are enough advocate groups, special interest groups, that it is not difficult to obtain information about environmental concerns now relative to what it was a few years ago. We expect the people that we have in the department will be quite able to carry on a satisfactory level of information and distribution.

MR. COWAN: Well, Mr. Chairperson, now I am worried, because earlier the Minister just briefly mentioned, or led me to believe and perhaps I assumed incorrectly that there would be no reduction of services because of an amalgamation of departments. Now he says there is going to be a reduction of services and that reduction of services is going to come about because there is less of a need to inform the public as to the environmental hazards that they may be facing in their everyday life. And I would like to point out to the Minister that we disagree on this very important issue that in my opinion and what little research I've been able to do in this regard points out that there is far more need to inform the environment because we have all sorts of industrial hazards. We have all sorts of environmental hazards entering through the work force, entering through the marketplace, into the environment and that if people are ever going to be able to get a grip on some of the problems that they face just as individuals trying to exist in this very sophisticated and rapidly expanding society, technologically expanding society, they're going to have to have all the information that they can at their fingertips and they are going to have to have all the access to information that we can give them, as a government can give them.

I feel the government has very immediate and a very prime responsibility to concern itself with the environment and if it is truly going to concern itself with the environment then it wants the population as a whole to be as educated as to environmental hazards as they can be. So I can only inform the Minister that I am disappointed that they have obviously not taken on the responsibility of informing the public as to environmental hazards they may face as a priority item. And I think that the debate during the House in the past week or so and especially the discussion of the lead problems during the question period and not to belabour it, I think that is one specific example, that has shown that our environment is being attacked day in and day out from sources that we didn't even know were attacking it a number of years ago.

I'd ask the Minister . . . he mentioned that there is less of a need for this type of an educational service today than when this particular position of an information officer was established. I'd ask the Minister then, Mr. Chairperson as to when exactly this position of information officer was established and how long it has been a position within this particular section of the government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: I don't know precisely the year, but several years ago, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member from Churchill.

MR. COWAN: I would have to narrow that down a bit, several years ago within the past five years? Could I ask the Minister if he could confirm that was within the past five years?

MR. RANSOM: I don't know specifically, I would expect it's at least five, probably more than five.

MR. COWAN: Let's assume then, Mr. Chairperson, that was within the last ten years and new chemicals . . . That's just an off the wall assumption, but my information seems to be as complete as the Minister's because he doesn't know how long it's been either. But let's assume for the sake of discussion, brief discussion, that it was within the past ten years and new chemicals are entering the work force, Mr. Chairman, at the rate of, and depending on which source you listen to, 5,000 to 15,000 new chemicals entering the environment through either the work force or the marketplace per year, so we can assume that at minimum 50,000 new chemicals over that ten year period are now a part of our living environment, our every day environment because of technological advance, because of scientific advances made in industry and made in the marketplace. And with those new chemicals coming onstream there are many, many hazardous substances, some that we knew about a long time ago, such as lead, such as arsenic, such as mercury, which we will be talking about in a bit, some of which are becoming known as hazardous to us just in recent time, in the last couple of years, the PCB's, the polychlorinated bi-phenyls, which is something we discussed earlier is an example of one of those substances where we had in Saskatchewan not too long ago a spill of PCBs from an industry use using PCBs in that province that has created an environmental hazard that will be around for a long, long time. And that to be cleaned up is going to be done at considerable expense to the province and to the industry as a whole.

There's research going on about nickel carbonites that's been considered or there has been scientific evidence recently that links them with cancer and this is an environmental hazard that will be affecting the people in my own constituency, not so much my own as the member from Thompson. But what I wish to point out without going into all the details is that there is far more need today for this type of educational programs so that the public of Manitoba can protect themselves and in the long run that will save the province money. It will save the people agony because I can tell you, I can categorically state here, if we don't have proper environmental control, and part of that environmental control is people knowing the hazards that they face, if we don't have that kind of control we're going to have some fairly horrible industrial and environmental accidents in this province. Because with 5,000 or 15,000, whichever figure you want to use, new chemicals coming in every day, we're going to find that pretty soon we've built up a stock pile of hazardous, a stock pile of deadly toxins, and that we as a public don't know anything about them.

I'll revert back to the polychlorinated bi-phenyls, I don't have the figures before, but off the top of my head I think the Minister said there were 20,000 gallons of that substance currently in use in the province of Manitoba. Twenty thousand gallons of a substance that . . . we know how to destroy it, we know how to get rid of it once we've got it, but we can't because we have no facilities for getting rid of it. So it is being stored in Fort Garry, it is being stored - - I'm certain that if there is 20,000 gallons around it's being stored in some industry's back yard just as it was in Saskatchewan.

And that we as a public . . . the school children, which is one of the places that this information officer was responsible for providing information to. The school children need to know about that, the public needs to know about these hazards which are entering the work force at an incredible rate and which are posing greater and greater problems to not only the workers, because what goes into the work place eventually goes out into the environment. So when I talk about chemicals coming into the work force I'm not just confining my remarks to the work force. You know when Canadian Bronze poisons its workers with lead, okay, they are also spewing lead out through their plant and into the vicinity. And the Minister can't deny that because that is a fact. So we are all at risk.

When we drive our automobiles through this city and we are spewing lead, because lead is in the gasoline we are burning, out into the environment, all the public are at risk because of that. So there are all these environmental hazards, toxins, poisons, in many cases carcinogenic, in many cases deadly, being forced upon as a public .

And the Minister's reaction to that is to cut down the public's access to the knowledge of those environmental hazards and also because if this information officer is going to talk about

hazards, I would also assume this information officer is going to talk about how to deal with some of those hazards. So they are cutting down not only to their access to knowledge of the problems that they face, not only their access to knowledge of . . . it's mind boggling, it's overpowering, the extent of the change, the rapid change, the chemical change that we are going through as a society. The new items that are coming into use. They're going to cut down their access to the knowledge of those items, those hazards and then they are also going to cut their access to the knowledge of how to deal with it. And I think that is reprehensible. I think it's untimely. I think this, perhaps, Mr. Chairman, is a most untimely government that has existed in this province in a long, long time. It is out of sync with everything. It has been brought to its attention every day since this House has sat that there are some very major environmental problems occurring in the province and its reaction is to cut out an information officer that would supposedly, I would hope, that the that information officer would have some impact on the public's level of awareness and the public's knowledge of these problems that are being generated every day.

So what we have is a government that is out of sync with itself, it is out of sync with the times, it should be increasing this specific section, it should be putting more money — and I am not talking about great sums of money, but it should be putting more priority on the services that were provided by this department and in specific, I'm talking about an information officer. It is reacting in totally the opposite manner that you would expect any responsible government to react in.

It has seen a problem and has had that problem brought to its attention in the most specific terms. I mean we have numbers, we're not just saying there is this Juggernaut of a problem that exists, we have numbers, we have chemicals, we have specific instances of problems and how do they react? They react . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Gentleman the hour of 12:30 having arrived, I'm leaving the chair to return at 2:30 this afternoon.