

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Wednesday, 2 July, 1980

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

**PRESENTING REPORTS
BY STANDING AND SPECIAL
COMMITTEES**

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the third report of the Standing Committee of Law Amendments.

MR. CLERK: Your Committee met on July 2, 1980, and considered Bill No. 49, An Act to amend The Ombudsman Act, and has agreed to report the same without amendment.

Your Committee also considered Bill No. 70, The Blood Test Act, and has agreed to report the same with certain amendments.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rock Lake, that the report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time I should like to direct the honourable members' attention to the gallery, where we have 36 exchange students, 18 from Finland Rotary Summer Exchange and 18 from St. James-Assiniboine Rotary Club. These students are under the direction of Mr. Colin Ransom. The Finland students arrived on June 26 and will be returning to Finland with our Manitoba students on July 24. On behalf of all the honourable members we welcome you here today.

MOTION OF CONDOLENCE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might with the indulgence of the Leader of the Opposition propose a Motion of Condolence.

MR. PAWLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, as has been in the occasion in earlier days of this session, it is now my responsibility to ask the House to consider a Motion of Condolence to the family of the late John McDowell.

Mr. McDowell was a member of this Legislative Assembly, having been elected in the general election of October 15, 1945, representing the electoral division of Iberville as an Independent Progressive Conservative. He was re-elected in the following general elections, November 10 of 1949, as an independent Progressive Conservative Anti-Coalition, and on June 8, 1953, as a Progressive Conservative, and he did not stand for re-election in the general election of June 16, 1958.

Mr. McDowell died on the 10th of June of this year, having lived a full lifespan of some 86 years among us. While to the best of my knowledge, no one presently in the Legislative Assembly sat in the House with Jack McDowell, I know that a number of us here had the pleasure of knowing Jack McDowell and of seeing him in action in this Legislative Assembly in the 13-year period wherein he was a member.

Jack McDowell, of course, could not be described by that brief chronological resume that I have just given. No summary of that sort could elicit the kind of character that Jack McDowell was, because in truth, he was one of a kind, and as the newspapers are prone to say on such occasions, he was truly cast from a unique mold which undoubtedly the good Lord broke shortly after Jack was born. He was independent, he was pugnacious, he was a strong devotee of the free market system, whether in grain or in any other commodity that you would choose to think of. He was a man of very strong opinions, and like all people who hold strong opinions, he didn't necessarily always win a great circle of friends as a result of voicing those opinions, but voice them he did, and forthright he was in the advocacy of what he believed in.

His loyalties, once established, were not at all easily shaken, and when you think of Jack McDowell, you think immediately of the Masonic Lodge, because he was a lifelong member of the Masonic Lodge and of Khartum Temple. He was equally devoted to the Winnipeg Conservative Club, of which he had been the honorary life member for some considerable number of years. And while his activities in the Masonic Order and in the Shrine were well known, he was at the same time, extremely well-known and numbered, among his friends, many members of the Roman Catholic clergy and many adherents of the Roman Catholic church, particularly in the area of St. Charles, which was part of the old Iberville constituency which he represented.

It was my pleasure to know him because he was a constituent of mine. I got to know him before I was in politics and certainly had many occasions on which we met during the 60s when he was an onlooker, so to speak, and later on in the 70s when he continued to have strong opinions in his declining years about what was happening nationally and provincially in the province of his adoption.

He was not, in relation to what we would call party loyalty, a strong party man. His relationship to the Whip of the Progressive Conservative Party was probably only a fleeting one in that he chose to go his own course on many many occasions, and as a result could be seen to be something like the salmon, swimming upstream against the current of current thought, whether in his own party in this Legislative Chamber, or indeed in public opinion generally. Anyone who ever heard a speech by Jack McDowell against the Canadian Wheat Board could understand how Jack McDowell alone could make that kind of expression known to the length and breadth of the farm community. And yet at the same time, he represented a rural constituency, and while I daresay a majority of his constituents did not subscribe to that particular view, they respected the right of Jack McDowell to hold that view, and indeed, I think they respected his honesty and his integrity in putting it forward even though he knew it was not the popular opinion.

So he was not a strong party man, but I mentioned before that he ran as an Independent Progressive Conservative. I think the stress should be on the word "Independent" because first and foremost, that is what Jack McDowell was. Indeed, on one occasion I recall, he ran for the federal House against his former provincial leader, and that was merely another manifestation of that kind of sometimes vexacious independence which others came to understand as a hallmark of his character.

He was, in a sense, an old-time orator, and I say that having seen him in operation, not only in this Legislative Assembly, but on the stump, and on different occasions in his own constituency which he gradually came to take over. I think of the annual festivities that used to take place at Lido Plage on the edge of his constituency, sometime usually early in July, and Jack would don a white ice-cream suit of some sort and of some indeterminate vintage, and a pair of white shoes, and he would sit as the head of the family so to speak, while all of the activities went on at Lido Plage that day, everything from Red River fiddling to the jig, and all other sorts of sporting and other activities that took place in that little park beside the Assiniboine River. He was at home in that kind of a surrounding with people from all walks of life, and everybody knew Jack, and everybody in some way or another benefitted from that knowledge of him and there are many, I am sure, who benefitted privately from his private generosity, which was never talked about, and never something that he wore on his sleeve, but something that his constituents came to know was part equally of this great character.

His last years, unfortunately, were years of illness, but I'm told that his good sense of humour never left him. He was, as I said at the beginning, a member, the likes of whom we don't see too often in this day and age. And so I am sure that members of the House will wish to join with me in sending condolences to his wife, Ruth, and to the members of his family who survive, and it is therefore, Mr. Speaker, my responsibility, to move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Government Services, that this House convey to the family of the late John McDowell, who served as a Member of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, its sincere sympathy in their bereavement and its appreciation

of his devotion to duty in a useful life of active community and public service, and that Mr. Speaker be requested to forward a copy of this resolution to the family.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, in seconding the motion before the House, allow me to say just a few words about Jack McDowell, who I remember very well.

I came into public life representing the Constituency of Rockwood-Iberville; it had then been expanded to include the areas of Stonewall and Stony Mountain. I remember Jack very well as, at that point, still a pretty effective campaigner in the former constituency of Iberville. Like so many things, Mr. Speaker, the times change and constituencies change and names change, and the constituency that I now have the privilege of representing, Lakeside, it now includes the greater part of the Constituency of Iberville that Mr. Jack McDowell represented.

The First Minister has very correctly and aptly described the independent nature of Mr. McDowell. I can only add one or two personal memoirs that would indicate that kind of independence of character and that very strong conviction that Mr. McDowell believed in the market system, in the open market system. I still run into constituents in my constituency today who were the recipient of a rather unique way of electioneering in those days. Mr. McDowell, I don't know whether he did this throughout his constituency, but in one of his particular election campaigns, he thought that rather than expend money on too much, what we would call election flim-flamery, provided every family head of a significant portion of that constituency in Iberville with one share of CPR stock. And I still to this day run into some of those families who are very proud of that stock and, Mr. Speaker, I can report that it has appreciated considerable in its value since that time.

I suppose, Mr. Speaker, when we, the latter politicians who spend large sums of money on our election campaigns, we might think sometimes of the durability of some of the balloons and posters and things that we have spent our money on.

On another occasion, as the First Minister also indicated, the former member that we are honoring today exhibited his ongoing feud with the Wheat Board. I forget the precise year it was, I believe it was in 1973 or 1974, when two or several farmers had been charged by the Wheat Board for over-delivery of grain on the quota system, which Mr. McDowell spent a good part of his lifetime fighting against. Well, Sir, these two fine farmers were brought to court and the court ruled against the Wheat Board, and that I would have to say, and Mr. McDowell, who was then already not feeling that well, came to this Chamber to express his appreciation of the fact that justice had been done, at least in his eyes, by these two farmers against that massive marketing organization known as the Wheat Board.

Now the fact that my brother, who was sitting on the Bench and was ruling on that case, somehow or

other made me the recipient of Mr. McDowell's particular feelings on that case and I received from him, I believe, a year's subscription to the Country Guide, which I perhaps should have thought twice about accepting, as perhaps having some conflict of interest involved, were it not for the fact that I respect my brother's position on the Bench, knowing that his ruling had nothing to do with his connection with me as an active politician.

Mr. Speaker, I speak in the vein that I speak knowing that Mr. McDowell would have enjoyed nothing better than to, from time to time in his latter years, to have entered this Chamber and engaged in the debates that he loved so much in this Chamber.

I am very privileged to have the opportunity of adding my name to the motion that is before the House.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wish to join in associating the Opposition with the Motion of the Condolence by the First Minister, seconded by the Minister of Government Services. Certainly, I did not know the late Jack McDowell. I recall though during the 1950s, being interested in politics, when the name Jack McDowell was in the daily newspapers, one paused and read what Jack McDowell had to say, because you knew that what he did say would be something generally that you might very well disagree with quite sharply, but you would know it would be a message that would be independent, it would be a message that would be quite straightforward.

I remember coming to the Legislature in the public gallery and one of the few individuals that one would make a point quickly of ascertaining their presence or not would be the late Jack McDowell, because of the very reputation that Jack McDowell had built as an independent campaigner for that which he believed in.

I spoke to one of the members of the Legislature then that sat during that period of time with Jack McDowell, to ascertain just what sort of individual he was; to which the then colleague described him as a very open, honest and forthright individual, one that you would generally disagree with, but one that you would always give the benefit to as one that sincerely held to his beliefs, was prepared to fight and to campaign for that which he held close to him by way of conviction, and certainly there never was any question as to the late Jack McDowell's personal conviction and sincerity in that which he strove to accomplish.

So I would like to pass on to the widow and to the family of Jack McDowell our sympathy in their time of bereavement, and to join in support of the Motion of Condolence.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of all of the Liberals in Manitoba, I would like to join the previous speakers and other members in extending sympathy to the widow and family of

this dedicated and respected former member of the Legislative Assembly.

I would like to add that on many occasions over the years I have heard former Liberal members speak with considerable respect of Jack McDowell, and particularly of that independence of attitude which has already been referred to here today.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: We are now under Oral Questions.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Consumer Affairs, can the Minister of Consumer Affairs advise whether or not a study has been completed by his department which indicates that the some 50,000 tenants in the city of Winnipeg will be inflicted with an average rent increase of in the neighbourhood of 10 percent?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSON (Morris): There are no definitive figures for that amount, Mr. Speaker. Rent increases will range from as low as 2 percent to a figure somewhat higher than that. It would be somewhat difficult to accept an average of 10 percent. I wouldn't want to do that and until there are more accurate figures available it would be difficult to predict just the percentage of those increases.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then in view of the information which has already been released as to indications that some apartment blocks will have increases of 20-25 percent and more, information released from his own department, can the Minister advise what number of apartment blocks, what percentage of apartment blocks will be inflicted with rent increases of 20 percent or more?

MR. JORGENSON: As I have indicated to my honourable friend, I'm not able to be able to tell that until the owners of those apartments have submitted their indications to the tenants, and at the present time that information is just not available. There have been some that have been indicated, and on the basis of those that have been submitted up to this point, the indications are that there will be a variety of increases from as low as I said from 2 percent upwards.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact there will be significant increases which the Minister has confirmed, is the Minister at this stage then prepared to review the legislation which he's — proposed legislation tabled in this House as to permitting tenants as a right to appeal against exorbitant increases rather than having to proceed through his office for the right to appeal directly to the Rentalsman?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, the intention of the legislation is to permit that kind of appeal, and if that is not contained in the legislation explicitly, it certainly is implicit and if it becomes necessary then I certainly will consider making whatever changes are necessary to make sure that that intention is carried forward.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, the Minister responsible for Consumer Affairs and The Rent Stabilization Act, we would ask, in view of the fact that he's now made public his prediction that rental increases will be in the order of an average of 10 percent on the removal of controls, can he now advise the House what percentage increases were sustained in decontrolled areas affected last year by the repeal of rent stabilization in certain parts of the housing sector, in certain parts of the province?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: My honourable friend is probably aware, there are quite a number of apartments, some 12,000 in the city all together, that have been removed from rent controls up to this point, and although I don't have definitive figures on those increases, we certainly would have heard a great deal about it had they been considered excessive. There is no reluctance on the part of those who are affected by rent increases to communicate those feelings to our departmental officials, so one can only conclude that, in the absence of firm figures, that those rent increases have not been as severe as might have been expected by some people. Certainly, the monitoring that was done in the rural area, when rent controls were removed, and we had a two-year experience in that period, would seem to bear out the fact that rent increases were very modest in most areas. As a matter of fact, in the rural areas, I would estimate that approximately 50 percent of those that were monitored indicated no increase at all during that two-year period.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I would ask whether the Minister will be fulfilling his undertaking of last Friday morning and tabling those rent monitoring reports of which he has spoken in order that all members can be apprised of their contents and study them.

MR. JORGENSEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to provide that information to my honourable friend.

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

MR. CORRIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Minister if he can advise the House what number of the staff of the Rent Review Office will be retained

after the implementation of this decontrol legislation, and can he advise us in this regard how many are currently still with his department?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, since the legislation has not been passed, they are still with the department. Some of them will be redeployed. We intend to increase the staff of the Rentalsman Office, for example, and there will be some people absorbed in that particular office. We are working in conjunction with the Manitoba Government Employees Association to attempt to find employment for the remainder of the staff who may be laid off as a result of the passage of this legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Minister responsible for Housing and Renewal. I wonder if the Minister can give us any figures as to what rental increases have been needed in those rental accommodations that are publicly owned, what percentage increase has been needed to deal with the normal incidence of increased costs?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Is the member is referring to the government-owned housing, could I get that clear, Mr. Speaker?

MR. GREEN: I was referring to publicly-owned housing, yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSTON: The policy hasn't changed, Mr. Speaker. It is based on income and it is a sliding scale that runs between 16 to 25 percent. There have been increases go through, but only on the basis of increased income, which is reviewed every year by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation with their tenants.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to determine from the Minister whether there are not people in public housing who are paying the maximum rentals, and if so, has there been any increase necessary with respect to those rentals on the basis of increased costs?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I don't quite follow and I would like to — if the member could clarify it, the maximum rentals that he is speaking of. The people in the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation public housing or subsidized housing pay 25 percent of income. Now if their income is in such a position that they pay high rent, that is what they are requested to pay. There are arrangements because of so many children or they pay so much because of certain children over 21, etc., all of those are in place and haven't haven't been changed, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Then I would ask the Minister that without respect to income, I was of the impression that there would be a maximum, that it wouldn't be a quarter, no matter how high the income went. But if I am incorrect, can the Minister tell us, on the basis of costs alone with respect to rentals, has the Minister been able to ascertain what the additional cost is in terms of public housing which would require a rental increase if he was charging rent, on the basis of recovery of costs?

MR. JOHNSTON: I have that figure, Mr. Speaker. I referred to it in my remarks when I made the opening statement on Housing. Our costs of operating the government-owned public housing units have gone up considerably in relation to the increased rents, and I will get that figure for the honourable member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the Minister of Economic Development. Can the Minister of Economic Development confirm that 40 employees have received notices this morning, a further 45 will receive notices by the end of the week, at the Manitoba Rolling Mills, a total of 85 that will be laid off by the end this week?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

MR. JOHNSTON: I have not been made aware of that, Mr. Speaker. There could very easily be a letter to my office that I haven't seen as yet today. We did not have any correspondence informing us of that Monday or last week, but it may be there today.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to then pose to the Minister of Economic Development whether or not he has been informed by the Minister of Labour, to whom such notices are referred, of this layoff of some 85 employees by the end of this week?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Labour has received that information, it is usually no time at all before he lets me know about it, or vice-versa. I don't recall any letter or memo to me regarding that, but I will certainly check my office. In fact, I will confer with the Minister of Labour at my first opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a final supplementary.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would then address my question to the Minister of Labour and ask the Minister of Labour whether he has received advice of the layoff of some 85 employees this week from the Manitoba Rolling Mills; if so, when he received the notice?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KENNETH MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, in accordance to the Act, Manitoba Rolling

Mills did the same as Dominion Bridge has done for several years, they gave notice of possibility of some layoffs, gave no idea of numbers, had no idea of numbers, it was contingent on some specific orders they were attempting to get, and they suspect that if the orders didn't come through, there may be some type of layoff, and I believe the letter said some time in September. I haven't received the precise notice of the layoffs that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is making reference to. It could be in the mail today or it might be on my desk today.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I wonder if he would tell us how many tenancy agreements coming up for renewal, effective September 30th, have been referred to the Rentalsman as of this morning?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I don't have the answer to that particular question.

MRS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister assured us that he would carefully monitoring the increases, and I wonder if he would obtain the information for the House, since we all have an equal interest in the matter.

On another matter, my question is addressed to the Honourable Minister of Corrections, and this has reference to the fact that when an individual is booked into the jail, any cash that individual is carrying is taken from him or her. If they are released almost immediately it is returned to them in the form of a cheque. Would the Minister kindly inform the House under what regulations or what legislation this policy has been adopted?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Corrections.

HON. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I'll have to get that information for the honourable member.

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

MRS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, when inquiring into this, would the Minister look into the fact that, for instance, somebody who had over a 100 on him and was taken in and released half an hour later was not even allowed to have enough cash to get home or to make a phone call and, in fact, had to borrow money for a phone call from the judge.

MR. MINAKER: I will look into that, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the honourable member could indicate, was that at the Winnipeg Remand Centre, that took place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour and follows upon questions by my leader in regard to layoffs. Can the Minister confirm that Prasco, a farm implement manufacturer has laid off 27 out of their 60 workers, nearly one half of their work force, just recently?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I thought the Member for Churchill and I had sort of come to some type of understanding that the farm equipment business and the agricultural business is not good business today in Manitoba as far as the drought situation is. The member had asked several questions about companies that were in fact producing agriculture equipment and there has been some layoffs. The precise one he's mentioned, I haven't heard that particular name but I expect this type of layoff and slow down is occurring in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, in that particular farm implement business.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is correct that we had come to some agreement as to the causation of the layoffs. I'd ask the Minister if he can confirm that Red River Brick and Tile, because of the downturn in construction activity in the province has found it necessary to impose a one month shutdown, thereby, laying its employees off for one month; and that they have attributed such a shutdown, in precise terms, to a lack of orders from the construction industry?

MR. MacMASTER: I can't confirm that particular fact but I do know that the head of the construction industry in Manitoba has said there's a great number of projects that are out that are being tendered during the months of June and July and they expect a very significant increase in construction business in the province of Manitoba during the course of the summer months and next fall months.

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

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps that's the increase we had expected this spring and summer. I would ask the Minister if his department is compiling an analysis of the effect of the downturn in construction activity and I quote to him from Inform, a magazine by Inland Cement, that shows that in Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, contract awards for construction and housing starts are all up but in Manitoba contract awards are down 23 percent, and housing starts are down 70 percent, using April 1979, versus April 1980 figures, has the Minister directed his department to review that situation as to determine methods to deal with what seems to be a very serious downturn in the construction industry that is having a secondary affect among, not only construction workers, but among manufacturers of construction materials such as Red River Brick and Tile?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I just finished saying that the head of the construction industry in

Manitoba said that there were a lot of major projects that were out for tender which they hoped would come through during the months of June and July, and as far as the article that the Member for Churchill has read, I haven't read that particular article, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SAMUEL USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask the Minister in charge of mining, whether or not he can indicate why it is, and I know that it's not a new policy but it's been there for some years, why it is that there is continued discrimination with respect to mineral taxes on gravel hauled, or Indian Reservations from municipal use? In other words, why is it that they are not treated the same way as a municipality or a town or the government with respect to gravel for their roads within the reserves?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Lac du Bonnet would be good enough to give me the specifics I will look into it for him.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to suggest that there is anything new. This has been a long-standing practice, but apparently the reservations are the only local authority in Manitoba that are subject to those taxes. I just discovered it the other day but it's been with us for many many decades, I gather, but it's a discriminating feature that I think should be well looked into and perhaps removed, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Health, and ask the Minister of Health whether it is correct that the government of Manitoba last year did not pass on any Guaranteed Income Supplement increase to all old age pension categories in othe province?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): No, Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge that is not true. I think the honourable member would have to check for details with my colleague, the Minister of Community Services responsible for income security programs but, to my knowlege, all increases were passed on last year in income security categories and the honourable member will recall that the same applied to the 200 federal child tax credit.

MR. EVANS: Perhaps a supplementary then to the Minister responsible for the income supplement programs in the province. Has the Minister yet agreed to pass on the federal 35 per month GIS increase to all old age pensioners who qualify in the province of Manitoba for this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, that matter is still under consideration.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, could the Minister advise whether Ottawa has communicated with the province to the effect that the federal government might withhold future increases in the GIS to all old age pensioners if the province of Manitoba does not agree to pass on this particular 35 GIS increase that has been announced by Ottawa?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I have not received any correspondence indicating that and I did have an opportunity to have a short meeting with the Minister when she was in town for the Congress on Rehabilitation, and she did not bring up that subject during the meeting or make any indications to that effect.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister of Labour. In answering earlier questions pertaining to the layoffs at the Manitoba Rolling Mills, the Minister indicated that he had assumed that the notice which he had received was the annual form of notice, and that the notice had indicated September would be the date of the month of layoff. In view of the fact that the layoff has now taken place in July, rather than in September, and in view of the fact that the notice is actual, rather than the usual routine notice, received by the Minister in previous years, is the Minister prepared to investigate and to report as to why the layoff is taking place this year unlike the non-effect of the notice in previous years when in fact there were no layoffs?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, it will take possibly some doing to put all that together, for several reasons. First of all, I understand that Manitoba Rolling Mills has been working on a 24-hour basis for a long period of time, what they call full bore, three shifts, steady employment. Now, I don't know how that relates to other years; I don't know what their stockpile relates to other years; I don't know what the orders relate to other years. If in fact they have been on two shifts for the course of the year 1980, they could possibly have run it through, but they certainly have been running three shifts for a large period of time, going full out. I do understand, and I will confirm that, that they are going through the process now of expanding their plant, so that in itself is somewhat encouraging. But I will attempt to get some of that together and get it to the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Rolling Mills indeed has been operating three shifts for some time, I would still again request that the Minister do obtain the information as to why the

downturn in employment at the Manitoba Rolling Mills at this particular time.

Secondly, I would ask the Minister, in view of the fact that he was not aware a few moments ago of the layoff but had assumed that the layoffs would take place, if they did, in September according to the notice, is the Minister satisfied that the provisions of The Labour Relations Act have in fact been abided by?

MR. MacMASTER: There are two parts to the question, and part of a statement that the Leader of the Opposition said. First, he is talking about a downturn. He hasn't told me and I don't know myself, to tell him, whether in fact this particular mill was working on two shifts or one shift, or what it was a year ago or two years ago or three years ago. That's fairly important, to establish whether it's a downturn. I think the Leader of the Opposition should understand that, if he doesn't.

Secondly, I'm satisfied that appropriate notice was given. I will double check on that, but I am reasonably satisfied that appropriate notice was given.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a final supplementary.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister of Labour, in view of the Minister's answer that he is satisfied that the appropriate notice was given, and yet the Minister would not have anticipated the layoff until September, is the Minister, under those circumstances, prepared to re-examine the provisions of the Act to ascertain whether or not amendments are required in order to ensure that the Minister has effective notice of the layoffs when they are going to occur? Indeed, here we have actual layoffs two months earlier than that which the Minister ought reasonably to have anticipated those layoffs to have occurred if they had occurred according to the notice which he received. Is the Minister prepared to review his legislation and report back to the House?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, there's no need for a review of the legislation. As far as I am concerned, adequate notice was given, to the best of my knowledge. I will double check that for the Leader of the Opposition. There is no need, I repeat, for reviewing the legislation. The legislation is quite adequate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Minister of Labour, and this follows up on an answer that he made previously. He indicated that he received routine notices from a number of companies with respect to layoffs and then intimated that in fact those layoffs ordinarily do not occur. In view of that fact, would the Minister not agree that something ought to be done to provide his office with notice when we are expecting layoffs rather than to have companies simply send in notices every year, just on the off-chance that there may be

a layoff? Surely that is not the intention of the Act and those provisions of notice in the Act.

MR. MacMASTER: I think, Mr. Speaker, that the provision of the Act is very explicit and very clear, if in fact you may be contemplating a layoff of a significant nature and you are compelled by law to give appropriate notification, and that's what's happened, not in many instances but in some instances in the province of Manitoba over the course of many, many years.

The Dominion Bridge one, the parent company of Manitoba Rolling Mills, has been giving that type of notice for the last five or six years. My friends in opposition, those that were there, and the member that just asked the question certainly wasn't part of the benches in those days, they felt it to be adequate in those days. I concur. I feel it to be adequate today.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister confirm that one particular company has been sending this type of layoff notice to the government for the past five or six years, without actual layoffs occurring, and if so, does he not agree that there is not a great deal of point to receiving those layoff notices, because surely when he gets them, he would assume that it's another routine notice that means nothing?

MR. MacMASTER: I see the Leader of the Opposition is still talking from his seat. If he wants to get up and join in this, I'm sure he's quite capable.

The member asked the question of whether in fact this is a routine type of thing. It appears to be, in the case of some companies. I do not happen to be a businessman or a president of a major company which deals with contracts and orders that may or may not be there, depending a great deal on how good your salesmen are, or where they're selling, or what the market conditions are, but I suspect that being pretty heavily involved in manufacturing in Manitoba, which I think we're all pleased with, that this has a tendency to be the case in some of these operations, some of these businesses. I suspect that that's possibly the case with companies such as Dominion Bridge and Manitoba Rolling Mills, and they're acting in accordance with the legislation and I'm satisfied that they're endeavouring to do their best and be as responsible as possible. They notify their employees of the situation. I'm sure their employees are that at certain times of the year that marketing is a bit of a problem and orders are a bit of a problem. The employees themselves are well aware of the upturns and downturns of the particular companies.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Consumer Affairs responsible for the Rent Stabilization Act, and flows from the question and the response I received earlier in this question period relative to the redeployment of staff from the Rent Review office. I would ask, in that regard, Mr. Speaker, whether the Minister can indicate specifically what number of the staff will be

redeployed from the Rent Review office to the Rentalsman's office, within the confines of his own department; can he provide us with a specific figure, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot provide my honourable friend with a specific figure.

MR. CORRIN: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister indicate when we will receive the copy of the monitoring reports that we discussed on Friday and this afternoon again, in order that we can be apprised of when we will have an opportunity to study them?

MR. JORGENSEN: Shortly, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. It's a serious question, although it may not be taken that way when first heard. It deals with this organization of lobby group about high taxes. I think they call themselves Proposition 80, and apparently the fact that they have refused to divulge who are the backers of it. They only have one spokesman who states that, for stated reasons, the members do not want to reveal themselves, and says that the group will need funds to operate, whether by membership fees or for donations, and I quite seriously ask the Minister whether his department is prepared to investigate the sponsorship of this kind of an organization and whether or not it is indeed has integrity or whether it can be used as a means to collect names or to raise funds for purposes other than as stated?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, one would have to examine that to determine whether or not they are in violation of any particular provincial statute, and I presume that my honourable friend is suggesting that it may be a violation of a statute of The Consumers Protection Act. That will have to be determined, Mr. Speaker, before I can commit myself to any particular course of action.

MR. CHERNIACK: As a supplementary then, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister undertake to investigate and report back on this?

MR. JORGENSEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd be happy to.

MR. CHERNIACK: One more question, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Is he now in a position to respond to the question which he took as notice dealing with the proposed Social Allowances Act and its possible use of the proposed amendment to The Family Maintenance Act, as was promised by him last Thursday, Page 5134, Hansard?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend said the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs but I believe he intended to direct it to the Minister of Corrections.

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

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him whether he can inform this House how many more pieces of legislation he will be bringing forward; whether The Farmlands Protection Act will be one of them, and The Health Control Board will be another?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, at this particular point, I can inform the member that one of those pieces of legislation is proposed, and one of them will probably be brought forward.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that the province of Saskatchewan has now brought forward amendments to their Farmlands Protection Act similar to the type that your government removed in terms of restricting non-farmer owned corporations in the purchase of farm land, is the Minister prepared to bring back those amendments that he took out of the legislation, and where he indicated in committee there are problems of individuals bypassing the present legislation?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, those will be one of things that will be considered by the government and of course he is well aware of the fact that, time permitting, if we are able to move on it, we will; if not, we will certainly have a little more time to consider those kinds of amendments.

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

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder, on another topic, could the Minister indicate the scheduling, what type of scheduling is in place in terms of the movement of hay from Ontario?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the hay has been moving for several weeks now; it's just a matter of larger quantities of it now being moved by both rail and truck.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour and follows up on earlier questions in the question period. I would ask the Minister if he can confirm that the intent of the notification process in regard to layoffs is to allow the Minister time and opportunity to try to investigate the layoffs and to put in place, if possible in the co-operative fashion, measures which might forestall or which might, in some instance, lessen the impact of those layoffs?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: I don't think that's necessarily the full intent of the notice, Mr. Speaker.

MR. COWAN: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the Minister would then be kind enough to explain what other purpose there could be in regard to having a notification process included in the Act.

MR. MacMASTER: This notification is to be given to the government in conjunction with the employees, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. COWAN: My question is to the Minister. Is there anything in the Act that necessitates the employer giving notification to the employees at the same time that it gives notification to the government in regard to the layoff? I would suggest that there is not and would therefore be led to the conclusion that the notification process is in order to provide the government with time, and I would ask the Minister in that regard, if he feels that routine providing of layoff notices, which may or may not take place and in fact have not taken place on numerous occasions, will short-circuit the system of trying to provide the government with information that will allow them time to deal with these layoffs in a satisfactory and a comprehensive method, as is happening now?

MR. MacMASTER: No, I don't, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer Affairs, who is responsible for the rent stabilization legislation. In view of the fact that it is necessary and critical to look at the performance of rents in decontrolled units last year before we can make any judgment as a Legislature on this legislation which would abolish rent controls for all apartments in Manitoba, will the Minister give us an assurance that he will table the completed reports that do exist within the department, which have monitored rent increases of those units that were decontrolled last year, in order for us to make a judgment? Will he give us the assurance that he will table those reports before we conclude second reading of The Landlord and Tenants Act, which would abolish rent controls?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated that I would be prepared to provide that information to my honourable friend.

MR. PARASIUK: I assume then that the Minister does concur that he will provide that material before the end of second reading. I would like to ask a follow-up question to the House Leader. In view of the fact that the Legislature unanimously passed my resolution last year providing for a legislative

committee to review freedom of information for both legislators and the general public, can the Minister indicate whether, in fact, he has completed the task given him by the First Minister a couple of months ago to look into why the government hasn't proceeded to set up a legislative committee to proceed with this resolution?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I have already answered that type of question and if my honourable friend would review Hansard he will find the response.

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

MR. PARASIUK: Yes. I've reviewed Hansard and the response was as vague then as it is today. I'd like to ask the Minister, is the government going to proceed with the establishment of a legislative committee to look into freedom of information, an issue which was unanimously passed by all the members of this Legislature last year and which has been stonewalled for one complete year by the government? Will the Minister proceed with that or not?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Transcona can't read the information that's already available to him in Hansard, any more would obviously be too much of a burden for him.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Logan.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a couple of changes on Privileges and Elections, and have the Honourable Member for Elmwood in place of the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre; the Honourable Member for St. Boniface for the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. SPEAKER: Do those changes meet with the consent of the House? (Agreed.)
The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I have a change also. Mr. Filmon for Mr. Cosens on Law Amendment Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Finance. . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I had called Orders of the Day. I believe we are under Orders of the Day at the present time.

MR. GREEN: When you said, Orders of the Day, two members rose who I thought were going to ask questions.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe they are dealing with government House business.

MR. GREEN: I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker, but you often say Orders of the Day and a person rises to ask a question. I didn't know that the people who rose were not going to ask questions. I had a question that I wished to ask.

ORAL QUESTIONS Cont'd

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster, there is still a minute left.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Finance. In view of the fact that there have been statements by government members about the possibility of a moratorium or other ameliorative action with respect to debts, can the Minister assure us that, when this is being looked at, the same consideration is being given vis-a-vis a debt which results from drought will be given to people who over the past two years have had their homes foreclosed against them at an unprecedented rate?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I know the member is referring to one particular factor that was very much influencing this, namely, the high interest rates and mortgage renewals and the impact on individuals.

Mr. Speaker, the First Minister has indicated that the government is keeping a watchful eye on the scene as far as the impact as a result of the drought and any possibility of there being a level of problem arise that has to be addressed by the government. We hope that is not necessary. We haven't excluded anything under that umbrella, including examination of areas other than of course specifically Agriculture and, as a result, Mr. Speaker, we are not excluding any other other possibilities.

It would appear, however, in the case of the problem with mortgages, that case has in part rectified itself. At the present time the interest rates are lower and are still tending to go somewhat lower and, as a result, it has ameliorated itself.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period having expired, we will proceed with Orders of the Day.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call my Resolution on Page 8 of the Order Paper.

RESOLUTION — SPEED-UP MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The Speed-Up Motion standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Elmwood.
The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSEL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister was kind enough to allow me two minutes last day but I have more to say than that. I wanted to say again that I think that it is quite clear that the House runs, to a large extent, on the basis of co-operation and, although the government has a whip or a club with which it can beat the Opposition into the ground, the Opposition nevertheless has the ability and the weapon of talking back or talking out certain measures. So if it is an inclination on the part of the government to simply whip the Opposition into submission, that cannot be as easily done as one might expect.

I wanted to say that I thought that the last day, a couple of days ago when we were in session, that the high-handed manner in which the government did not allow the Opposition to adjourn something in Private Members' Hour was really rather shocking because I cannot think of a similar instance in the history of this Legislature in which that occurred. They have the right to deny us an opportunity to adjourn certain measures, Mr. Speaker, but they certainly do not have the right to interfere with Private Members' Hour and I think that the government did that on a negative reaction to a situation that developed in the House, which was the problem of the First Minister.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention a couple of, I think, significant points that should be corrected, that were left by the false impression left by the House Leader, possibly not deliberately but because of the manner in which he tried to show an escalation of the amount of time taken during a consideration of the estimates in the Legislature. I think what he was trying to demonstrate was that the Opposition just kept talking and talking and talking and talking, and I would like to reply to a couple of those points.

When I came into this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, we spent, in 1966, about 80 hours on consideration of the estimates of the Manitoba government. However, the budget at that time was considerably smaller — (Interjection)— and how many departments did we cover. That's what my friend from Inkster says. That's another good question because, although we spent 80 hours in this Chamber debating departments, what usually happened was, as we got to about 60 or 70 hours, we found out that there were six or eight departments left uncovered and as we finally got into the home stretch . . . Well, my friend from Roblin, I don't know if he's responding to what I'm saying or not but he would remember that in those days, when we finally did reach the 80-hour mark, there were always some departments left uncovered. So half or a third or a quarter, whatever. Then we tried another system, and I was one of those who spoke in favour of that system, Mr. Speaker, namely that what we should be doing is to attempt to allow so many hours per department, so that at least some time was spent on each. There were all sorts of proposals thrown around, like a minimum of two hours on the smaller departments, four or eight on the larger. We tried that for awhile but that didn't seem to work either.

But I would like to make two major points here about what the Attorney-General said, namely that first of all, although maybe we did 80 hours or 90 hours 14 years ago, and we're doing what appears to

be three to four times as much talking today, that is not accurate. —(Interjection)— No, it isn't because there's two differences and I direct part of this historical lecture to my friend the Member for Emerson. The difference is this: First of all, the budget is about 11 times greater than it used to be, maybe 12 times greater than it used to be. So when we go back to the period of '66, you had a budget of 185 million. Now we're talking over 2 billion and this ever-increasing deficit, shocking deficit, in view of all this brave talk and grandiose posturing about balanced budgets. I don't know how you're going to explain that to the folks back at home. But nevertheless, the budget is now 11 times greater. The other point is that the so-called 80 to 90 hours in terms of estimates, one important point is that the score-card is kept simultaneously or concurrently. So though we had 350 hours, some 190 to 200 were in this Chamber and some 150 to 160 were in the other room, so they were running at the same time. We didn't have that before. We only did one committee, in effect. So I think those are important points, Mr. Speaker.

Also, I don't think there's proper recognition given to the fact that government is more complicated today. Certainly it was less complicated the farther back you go, when you go to the kind of administrations run in Manitoba in the times of the Honourable John Bracken and the Honourable Douglas Campbell, that was a different era and it was less complex; governments didn't attempt as much and I think that when we go into the post-war period you see the tremendous increase in government activity.

The other thing that I believe, Mr. Speaker, is I think that the position of the members of the Legislature in regard to the Civil Service should be jealously protected, namely, that the political representatives of the people should have an opportunity to examine, at length or in depth, the activities and the performance of not only the government but of the Civil Service in the past year. It isn't too much to expect — or maybe it is too much to expect — but certainly we should understand that 57 MLAs will require some period of time in which to look over and peruse the entire expenditures of the province of Manitoba and they should not be rushed or bludgeoned into that particular activity. So those are a couple of main points.

Mr. Speaker, another thing that would be very interesting — I wish the Attorney-General were here, he's supposed to be the man who is directing traffic here and, in particular, handling this debate which he anxiously wants to be proceeded with — but I wish that he would also, in his breakdown, provide us with a breakdown of how much time is spent during estimates by the government itself. We know that Ministers can occupy vast chunks of time but it's also true that government backbenchers, who are people I have some sympathy for and some compassion for because of the frustration of being in that position and being more like a spectator in the daily question period and other activities where the opposition is firing rounds of ammunition at the government benches and the Ministers are answering, so in estimates this is often one of the few places where a government backbencher can

participate as in regard to bills. So the suggestion that 350 hours is a great deal and the implication being that it's opposition time is, of course, not accurate. A good portion of that time is spent by Ministers answering questions and by members of the backbench asking questions.

If you look at the amount of time spent in question period and at other times by some of the Ministers, then I think the proportions rise. We have some very long-winded members of the government front benches, Mr. Speaker, among them the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Labour, the Minister of Health, Finance, Natural Resources and so on, some of these gentlemen answer at great length and often disproportionately to the question itself.

The other thing that I find annoying, as a member of the opposition, is that we've seen a development of set-up questions during the question period which has been taken to a high art form. Now I know that other governments have done this and I know that this is nothing new. I have never liked it. When we were in government there were a few members who tended to ask this type of question but it's been taken to a high stage of advancement. The Member for Emerson was one of the early perfectionists of this technique but he's fallen silent and I don't want to encourage him to change his posture. But the Member for Rock Lake, he is the gentleman who has now won the award for most set-up questions asked of a Minister, if awards are given. It's like a baseball pitcher throwing a soft ball right across the plate in the middle of the strike zone for the batter to wallop out of the park. I think, Mr. Speaker, there should really be two question periods — I make this as a suggestion if the Tories keep up this practice — I think we should have two question periods a day, one for them and then one for us. The only alternative to that would be to have them ask questions in caucus, maybe they're not aware of the role —(Interjection)— Well, it's true, he was in fact a member of our group who asked a lot of questions but he's beginning to look pretty good in comparison, in terms of the number and degree of questions asked.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to mention that some of the problems that we're in today, namely, that the session is going on and probably either today or tomorrow there will be a vote on the Speed-Up resolution and then we will be into a two to three-week period of Speed-Up itself, but I say that part of the blame for the so-called predicament, if that's what it is or state that we're in, namely, we're running into the hot month of July, is the government's fault. The government did not start this session until a late date. They talked like all governments about starting before Christmas. All governments have this notion that they can get in a little session in the fall, maybe in October or November, take a couple of weeks, do the Throne Speech and then adjourn till January or the 1st of February, but it always happens that the matter is put off; the people are busy; and that they would have to be ready by August or September, in terms of estimates and so on, or at least they'd have to be well on their way before they could really get into the debate and commence a session. So I say that one of the problems is the government's problem itself. The government commenced a late session.

They used to twig us and I used to feel uneasy, and the Member for Inkster will remember this well. We always used to feel kind of nervous about the fact that we brought in 100 or more bills all the time — I think 80 or 90 bills in New Democratic circles was considered to be light but we brought in far more than that — but we always felt nervous, especially since we were always attacked, by the then opposition, for bringing in all this legislation. Well, have they done any better? I mean, they are bringing in scores of bills, they are bringing in bills, in the dying days of what might be considered the regular session, and this, Mr. Speaker, imagine how shocking this is to us. A government which says it does not believe in legislating, a government that believes that government is best which governs least — that's their watchword. You can find it in any elementary text of political science. —(Interjection)— Oh, they're bringing in bills to remove what we have done, or to modify what we have done. Well, you know, all governments do that but it just strikes me as ironic that you appear to be legislating, that you appear to be introducing measures when you say that you don't believe in that form of activity.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not here to entertain the members of the government. I also want to say that I think some interesting points were made already in the debate, namely, some of my colleagues pointed out that not only is there a lunacy about the Speed-Up motion, which I have to tell you that I personally resent and have either spoken against every session, or spoken against in caucus or in Cabinet.

MR. MCKENZIE: Did you ever vote for it?

MR. DOERN: Well I probably have voted for it but I can assure you that whenever I speak, in private or in public, it is against the lunacy of late hour sessions and three-time-a-day sessions, six days a week. That has been my position and that will never change.

I want to point out a couple of factors there, Mr. Speaker, one that has been made already, namely, that not only do we have to presumably be iron men and women and go round the clock but that the staff does as well and our staff, in general, tends to be older and tends to be retired, not necessarily but in general. I'm talking about some of the people who play support roles to the Chamber and I think that it's asking a lot of our staff to work the same hours but, even worse, to come in earlier and stay longer because they must be here before and after, as well as during this summer madness. In addition to that we have our page boys and girls and they tend to be younger and I don't like to see young people with bags under their eyes, walking around trying to do their job. The other point, Mr. Speaker, is that there is kind of a sinister aspect to Speed-Up and that is that the government attempts to physically break the Opposition. —(Interjection)— Yes, and this is done in a number of ways. It's done by fatigue and, of course, it's done also by heat. The theory being that the hotter the summer, the less likely it is for members of the Opposition to want to stay. So you really get techniques that I guess were perfected by certain military personnel in terms of, you break people by making them stand up and you deprive them of food and sleep and so on and so on, and

sooner or later they'll crack and I think that sort of mentality, you know, belongs to the Middle Ages.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, that I certainly intend to vote against this resolution and I don't disagree with the notion — and now I'm glad to see, well I'm not that glad but I'm at least pleased that the Attorney-General is here, not that pleased but I note that he is present — I simply say that it is the lateness in the evening which I consider to be the most ridiculous notion to Speed-Up. I'm prepared to work three sessions a day; I'm prepared to work six days a week but I think that if we're expected to do a job, you can't have people getting home at one or two in the morning and then coming back the next morning and being fresh. I mean, you know, maybe the Minister of Economic Development can do it, he's pretty tough. He told us, not too long ago, Mr. Speaker, you might recall, that when he comes home late he gets a couple of chiliburgers and then he and his wife sit down and eat their chiliburgers and discuss the day's events. The trouble is that leads to heartburn and other unfortunate ailments.

The other point I make to the government is this, and I say this directly to the Attorney-General, they wanted a realignment and re-arrangement of the days of the week. They said that by working a so-called four day week or a so-called four and a half day week, that ministers would be able to handle their workloads better. Well, I want him to tell me, in this debate when he's closing, how a Minister who presumably could not properly perform his functions in the old system of the so-called five day week and could do it in the four to four and a half, can now do it when he's working around the clock six days a week. Mr. Speaker, I want to say as well that there is a false notion that is sometimes discussed by the media and that is about the number of hours that MLAs work, and I've seen figures like 23-1/2 hours or something like this, but that figure is totally inaccurate because of the fact that members of the Legislature also have, in our case — I can only cite my example because I'm not as familiar with the government's style of operation — we have a daily caucus meeting of one hour per day, we have a one day a week caucus meeting in the dinner hour, and in addition to that we all have our duties of graduations and constituency events. A week or so ago we had a three-day NDP provincial and executive meeting in Winnipeg. In the middle of that week, on the Wednesday, I went to my local high school's graduation. There are committee meetings and so on and so on. So this so-called notion that you add up the number of hours that MLAs are in the Chamber and that's their work week is in fact erroneous. One would have to discuss with the members what other activities they participate in and what their workloads and their schedules are like.

So, I say to the Attorney-General, if he wants good government, if that's what he wants, then he's going to also have to make some concessions. The first thing he's going to have to do, Mr. Speaker, is to withdraw some bills. He's going to have to be tough with his own Cabinet colleagues. I remember every year, in Cabinet, how we would sit around at the end and say, now look do we absolutely need this legislation? And I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if you put that as the test, if the AG goes into Cabinet with some clout and says to his colleagues,

look is it absolutely necessary that this legislation be introduced, I think he could probably yank 25 to 30 bills for starters, because a lot of that legislation is sort of annual, a lot of it is housekeeping and a lot of it is of interest to the civil service, as opposed to the government.

Mr. Speaker, I gather you're going to make an introduction or . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time I would like to introduce to the honourable members, a former member of this Assembly, Mr. Rene Toupin. On behalf of all members we welcome you.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

RESOLUTION — SPEED-UP Cont'd

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I say that the question is: Do you want good government or bad government? If you want good government then you can't expect to pile a bunch of bills in toward the end of the session and then work the Opposition around the clock, that only leads to bad government. I, for one, would not give the government a club and then plead for mercy. Give them a club to beat us into submission and then, due to late hours and round the clock activity, have to yield points.

I'm going to leave some points for my colleague, the Honourable Member for St. Johns, concerning the professional bills and the professional legislation. It seems to make good sense that all or most of that should be held over between sessions. I'm sure that the Attorney-General could, with very little, very little problem, yank several dozen bills. But I have to tell him that pulling bills is like pulling teeth, he's going to have to really lay down the law and have the support of the First Minister. I'm sure that what he can achieve in so doing, is to yank a couple of dozen bills, it doesn't make any difference in the world whether they are introduced or passed six months from now.

So, Mr. Speaker, I also want to mention, and then I will conclude, that my colleague from Logan made an excellent point, he gave a list of bills that were introduced several months ago and then were not heard from in a couple of months. We have this peculiar method of operation, bills being introduced and never seen again and then a whole bundle coming in at the very end.

So I want to conclude on this point, Mr. Speaker, that although the Attorney-General tried to make it look as if — he either did this deliberately or unintentionally, I don't know what — but he suggested that the Opposition was talking a long time on estimates, in particular. That's what he said and I have to say back to him that when you compare the increasing amount of time spent during estimates, over the past 14 years, it is nowhere near as bad as he suggests. And I make these distinctions; in the old days of 1966, when I first became a member, you had 80 hours of debate and that included the Main Estimates, Supplementary Estimates, Interim Supply and Capital. That seems like ancient history but that is what was in effect at that time. The Budget, however, was 185 million. Now we are spending roughly, according to the

Attorney-General, on first glance — and this is I say, not correct — according to his figures, we are spending four times to five times as much, but I mention first of all that the Budget is 11 times greater. So although we are spending more time on debate, proportionately it's not that bad. The second point I make to the Attorney-General is this, and he knows this and I know this but some of the other members don't, the 350 hours that he provided us with is the concurrent score card, isn't it? It's the score of 254 with 150 or 160 hours and the Chamber, so it's both rooms, in effect, the amount of time that they spent. And I say that, therefore, one could argue that we are only spending, in terms of House debate, some 200 hours and that is a more accurate comparison with the amount of time that was spent in the mid to late Sixties. Besides which, Mr. Speaker, we have a more complex form of government today. We have greater activity. We didn't have the kind of Medicare system in those days that we have now. There were no property tax rebates, no Legal Aid; all sorts of things, all sorts of new measures, new social legislation that has been introduced and, in some cases, even supported or not eliminated by the present administration.

So I say in conclusion then, Mr. Speaker, two things. I object and will vote against this resolution because of the elimination of the 10 o'clock evening hour, which I think then turns us into a 24-hour day Salisbury House operation. The second point is that the Attorney-General has the responsibility to cut the number of bills down to size and I say that unless he's prepared to yank some or all of the professional bills and another couple of dozen bills, I think that he is failing in his duty as House Leader. Because I think if he takes a hard look at those bills, as other members of the Legislature have and probably other members of Cabinet, there is no problem whatsoever in eliminating 25 or 30 pieces of government legislation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to, first of all, make it clear that I will not oppose the right of the members of this House to work extended hours. I think it is a useful right. I think that it is helpful and, furthermore, having eyes on power — which has always been my position — I am well aware that a government cannot govern unless it has available to it the right to extend the hours of sittings. If members will not appreciate it, I will say, without fear of equivocation or contradiction, that this province would never have had a public automobile insurance corporation had it not been for extended hours; that this province would not have been able to unify services in Greater Winnipeg had it not been for extended hours; that the availability to the Opposition of debate and the opportunities for it, in the absence of the power of the majority of the members in the House, both to refuse adjournments, to refuse motions to stand and to extend the hours of sittings, would frustrate any government, no matter how strong, with a vanguard of opposition members — 10 opposition members can do it.

I want to distinguish, Mr. Speaker, between the availability to sit extended hours and the suggestion

that bills brought in after estimates are concluded are brought in at a period when they should not be considered or not considered properly.

I object, Mr. Speaker, and I regretfully say that I object to you, Sir, using the word 'Speed-up' because when you called this motion you called it the Speed-up Motion. Members have spoken on the basis that the Speed-up Motion is before the House and I have heard numerous people say, we are at the closing days of the session. Mr. Speaker, I look at the Order Paper and I say we are at the beginning of the session and any suggestion on the part of any member of this House that they are not going to deal with that legislation on the basis of conscientiously considering it, debating it at second reading, debating it at committee, debating it, if necessary, at third reading, does not show irresponsibility on the part of the House Leader, it shows irresponsibility on the part of the members.

I say that, Mr. Speaker, because I will not depart from anything that I said when this motion was introduced when we were in government, when I considered it a useful mechanism, when I said, Mr. Speaker, that I believe that all members wish for the opportunity to work extended hours and I believe that that is true. I furthermore say to the member, in particular, the Member for Elmwood, that the way in which extended hours have worked in the last three years, we have worked less after 10 o'clock during extended hours than we have worked after 10 o'clock during estimates. The extended hours in the past three years have been more of a relaxation for members than they have been an imposition on members.

Now I don't know what the Honourable Attorney-General is going to do. But if he decides that he is going to use extended hours to force a government majority to pass legislation in the hope that he is going to wear down the opposition, Mr. Speaker, that is something that he will have to pay for when he goes to the electorate. I'm not worried about it. It will not be my undoing, it will be his undoing. I can tell the honourable member that in 1973 that if it was not for extended hours, the Opposition would have chosen the date of the election and not the government. If they cannot remember it and if they cannot remember the panic that they evidenced at the notion that the election was going to be decided as at the date that the Opposition chose rather than as a date that the government chose, then I remind them of it, Mr. Speaker, then I remind them of it.

The fact is that we sat in concurrences, not estimates, we sat in concurrences for weeks at a time. This is after the estimates had been concluded — this is after, Mr. Speaker, not dealing with bills — and on one concurrence motion without moving it from one space to another we sat from 10 o'clock in the morning until 7 o'clock the next morning. Mr. Speaker, it was justified because the Conservative Party at that time were determined that, although they were a minority in the House, they were going to dictate that there would be no election in June of 1973.

Now, I don't know whether members on this side of the House say that that is legitimate because I believe it is illegitimate. I believe that where there is — and can demonstrate it to be seen — an effort by the Opposition to usurp the authority of a majority of

the members in the House, that the majority has the right to say, we will govern; and if I happen to be a member of that majority, Mr. Speaker, I will not be governed by the Opposition. I will try to govern the province and I cannot govern the province if I am denied what is normal legislative power on the part of the majority. If members say that you cannot pass good legislation at 1 o'clock in the morning, I want to remind honourable members that for perhaps five weeks in a row not only did we discuss good legislation but it was probably the highest level debate that ever took place in the province of Manitoba, the kind of debate, Mr. Speaker, that saw these galleries filled from the hour of 8 o'clock till the hour of 1:30 or 2 o'clock continuously, that the public was not tired of it, the members were not tired of it and the reason was, Mr. Speaker, is that we were doing something important, that we were legislating on meaningful issues and we were legislating in such a way as would be meaningful to all of the people of the province of Manitoba who wanted something done. You cannot do it if you are going to limit yourself to being governed by the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, the best legislation that I passed was passed in the morning, after 12 o'clock. It was the legislation enacting public automobile insurance. Other good legislation, if it was not voted on in a particular morning — and I happened to think it was — it was certainly debated hour after hour between 8 o'clock and late into the hours of the morning. But that doesn't have to happen, Mr. Speaker, with anything that the Attorney-General has got. Most of it is quite meaningless legislation. If you ask me, Mr. Speaker, if my remarks are intended to endorse the Conservative legislative program, we are talking about something different altogether. It has been a wrong legislative program. It has been a badly brought in legislative program and if my friend, the Attorney-General, says that he can bring it in now because it will be passed in Speed-up within the next two weeks and people co-operate with that or let him do that, it will not be his fault; it will be the people's fault on this side of the House because every bill has to be brought in, every bill has to be debated conscientiously at second reading.

If adjournments are refused, there is an easy remedy for that. The day the honourable member wants to refuse an adjournment, if he is wrong the Opposition can get up and make 23 speeches on that adjournment; they can move a hoist and make another 23 speeches on the hoist; they can move a reasoned amendment to make another 23 speeches on the reasoned amendment. If the honourable member has that in mind and, Mr. Speaker, it's not he who said it but I heard it from the First Minister and I want to repeat it — he said it from his seat but it doesn't bother me — when an adjournment was refused during consideration of a bill which the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge had a perfect right to move adjournment on and that was voted against, if the Opposition was serious about the position of that bill not being forced through, it would not be through the House today. But the First Minister said, you ain't seen nothing yet. That's what I object to, Mr. Speaker. If the First Minister is of the opinion that he can take the Opposition members and run them through a wringer and thereby not get

the proper consideration of legislation, there is an easy remedy for dealing with that situation. If the Opposition is serious they will deal with it, without removing my right and the right of all honourable members to say, we have passed the estimates; it is now better that we sit longer so that we are able to do more in the same work day. I find nothing unreasonable about that.

Would honourable members remember that at least on one sitting we were six weeks in extended hours, or thereabouts? We were in extended hours for a good part of the session and it did no harm. It had to be done. It was done and if I was in power and an opposition was trying to prevent me from legislating, I would do it again, I make no bones about it. A person who is not prepared to do it has no right seeking a mandate from the people of the province of Manitoba to govern the province. Because if you put the government into the hands of the Opposition then why did you run for office in the first place? And that's what will happen.

But let's look, Mr. Speaker, at what could happen to this legislative program. First of all, if the honourable member will call his committees in the evening, and now the most to sit on a committee is 20 members — Law Amendments Committee, I think, has about 20 people — 37 members not only work extended hours but they have the night off and that has been the history, Mr. Speaker, of the last three years. They have had the night off. We have hardly worked past midnight without the consent of all honourable members. There has been the occasion, and I reserve the right of the majority to select that occasion. If they select it irresponsibly then I say that that majority will be punished by the electorate; if the Opposition lets them do it irresponsibly and lays down, then it will be the Opposition who is irresponsible, not the Minister.

Now let's talk about these bills. The Minister says that he wants to pass, is it 50 bills — Have we still got 50 bills at second reading? — and if he says that he's counting on closing or predicting that the session will last until mid September, Mr. Speaker, I have no criticism of him at all, none at all because it is our responsibility to debate those bills, and debating those bills in an ordinary way without trying to force them through the House could perhaps take until mid September. Then, Mr. Speaker, let us hear no one in the House talking about the dying days of the session. That's my criticism. Not the extended hours but from what I have heard, I heard the Member for Elmwood; I have heard the First Minister; I have heard members on that side talk about the dying days of the session. This session has just been conceived. Is it going to be killed in infancy? Because that would be infanticide, Mr. Speaker. So, if we're talking about the dying days of the session, then some of the remarks that I've heard from my friends on this side of the House make some sense. If we are talking about a legislative program where we have the right to sit extended hours, and wish to do so, I do not wish to be in opposition to what I consider to be a reasonable means of putting more hours into the day. I urge the Attorney-General, if he says, Mr. Speaker, that he thinks that what can be done can be done in two weeks, I tell him that I do not consider that it can be done in two weeks if there is

going to be a considered debate on the legislation that he has before us. Therefore, I would suggest to him, if you thought it was going to take two weeks, unthink it. —(Interjection)— Well, the Minister says he didn't think it's going to be done in two weeks. Then I say to the Minister, you have a choice; you can have a session take place in July and August, and everybody will have to accept it as their responsibility. I know that there are members on that side of the House who don't want to sit all of July and August. There are members on this side of the House who would prefer not to sit all of July and August. I can have it either way. If it's to be July and August, fine; if it's not to be July and August, fine, I can have it either way. But if the Honourable Minister thinks that we are in the dying days of the session I would like to disabuse him of that. I would like him to consider, Mr. Speaker, if he has that thought in his mind, to do what the Member for Elmwood said: Withdraw three-quarters of this legislation. Or don't withdraw it, I'm not seeking to thwart the Minister. There are certain important bills, he needs the rent control bill; he needs the education bill. Can anybody think of anything else that he really needs? Supply? Okay, he needs Supply. But of the bills that don't relate to money matters, I believe that he thinks he needs the education bill; I don't need it but he thinks he needs it. He thinks he needs the rent control bill, I don't think he needs it but he thinks he needs it. Why don't you put those bills before Committee; take the rest of the legislation — and now you have got something that I always encouraged the Ministers on our side of the government to do — you've got 30 or 40 or 50 bills, I can't even say how many, either have those bills brought in at first reading immediately, while you are reading the Throne Speech in February, or if you think that that's too long, then adjourn until September 15th, do not finish this session, excuse me, have this session adjourn, not finish, adjourn; pass your money, pass your emergency legislation and come back on September 15th and we'll get the 2-1/2 months that we need to pass these bills.

Now, Mr. Speaker, have it either way, the extended hours is not, in my opinion, either reprehensible or a problem; it is a parliamentary necessity. It is something which I give full credit to any government as needing and, to most members, as wanting. If there is an Opposition who is trying to thwart your legislation, you need it. If you want to engage in your legislative session and have an extra week of summer, you want it. So it is either needed or wanted, either way. If it's your intention to sit July and August, do exactly what you're doing and leave those bills. If you think that you're going to get this through in two weeks, the only way you will do that is if this side collapses, because I don't see that what is here can be done in two weeks. Knowing that this side is not going to collapse and will debate the legislation as they should debate it, why don't you — and I urge this as a consideration to you — pass those bills that you need now, which the former Minister of Finance indicates supply bills, the rent control bill, the education bill, and let's come back here in September and debate this legislation.

Now, what have I said, Mr. Speaker, that would cause the Minister to be concerned? He says, at

least he indicates by the nod of his head, or the shaking of his head, to be more exact, that he doesn't think we're going to finish in two weeks. Does he give it four weeks? Does he give it five weeks? He is unable to say. —(Interjection)— The Member for Virden says three weeks. I tell the Member for Virden, with what is on the plate here, it will be more than three weeks; six weeks sounds fine. Would you rather work six weeks from the 1st of July to the 15th of August or from September 15th to the 1st of November? That's really the issue.

Well, the honourable member says it doesn't matter. I ask you to go to your members, find out which is better. —(Interjection)— Well, there is one member on my side. I got the Member for Crescentwood saying that he will go for the fall. I believe that more members would go for the fall, rather than sitting from July 1st to August 15th. If that's the case, Mr. Speaker, we can finish this up very quickly. And I urge the Attorney-General, I am not opposed to extended hours; I believe in extended hours. I say to you that, regardless of the remarks, some of them quite conscientious, I know that the Member for Logan has always been against extended hours, always. But for the most part legislative members . . . And if I had the Member for Logan in a situation where I said to him, "Bill, unless we have extended hours we're not going to pass Autopac, he'd say 'extended hours'." He would, because he is a member who wants to get things done and he would not see himself being thwarted by the Opposition.

But extended hours for this junk? The Attorney-General has nothing here which is vital to the politics of the Progressive Conservative Party, nothing. Two bills are important, from his point of view, with regard to a legislative program. Supply is important. Let's finish those things. We could finish them in a week, and let's come back on September 15th and finish the rest of them. Or if they are as innocuous as I say, and September 15th is not even important, then you can come in like a real efficient House Leader and on January 15th, you can show that your House is going to start with first reading on the day that the Mover in amendment of the Throne Speech is going to be made, you can introduce 40 bills and you can say to your Ministers, next time have your legislation ready on January 15th, not on June 15th.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I make this as a serious proposal. I am not trying to be facetious. I say to the Minister, I will vote for his extended hours either way, because I believe in extended hours. And I assure the Honourable Minister that as long as I am physically able to do so — and I am only one — that I am not going to handle this legislation any differently in extended hours than I handled it during normal hours. I will get up and I will move, seconded by some member, that debate be adjourned. If the Opposition won't adjourn that debate for me or the government members don't adjourn that debate for me and are unreasonable, I will ask for a standing vote on that motion. If they still aren't reasonable, I will speak to that motion. I will then hope that somebody else speaks to it and moves a hoist so I can speak to it again, because I don't intend to let legislation be pushed through me on the basis of the fact that I can't physically handle it. So why? What is there vital to the interest of Progressive

Conservatism? If you had an Autopac piece of legislation; if you were repealing Autopac, let us assume that the Progressive Conservative Party wanted to repeal Autopac, and these 23 guys on this side said, we ain't going to let you do it; we're going to keep speaking; we're going to hoist; we're going to do all those things. I would say to the Minister he would be perfectly justified saying, this is vital to us, we are not going to let the minority govern; we are going to continue until we get the bill passed.

How do I know that I would allow the Honourable Minister to do it and not criticize him? Because I would do it, Mr. Speaker, and I don't believe that I would be behaving unreasonably, and I would have the support of those people who wanted public automobile insurance. How do I know that, Mr. Speaker? Because I did it and I had it, and they did support it. And we supported it in spite of the fact that the Conservatives let the bells ring for over 1-1/2 hours because they wouldn't come into the House and vote.

All of these things happened and they are legitimate forms of legislative activity, but not for the passing of junk. And if the Honourable Minister will tell me which is not junk, which is vital to the interest of his government, and for which they were elected and need to do it, put them on the table, let's deal with them, there will be a normal debate on them because I don't see anything of that nature. The elimination of rent controls will be an extended debate. It will be. But if those are the only pieces of legislation, then the Minister will accept his majority mandate, he will do what is necessary to pass it, and we will go to the public and say, they insisted it be done. We fought it; we tried to prevent it from happening; they insisted and they finally got it through, and they did it by making us work 24 hours a day. The public will judge that. The public judged it with regard to Autopac and said it was right. I don't say that the public will give the same judgment with regard to the repeal of the rent legislation. But if he is right, if what he is doing is in the interests of the public, then the fact that we have to work 10 hours a day will not interest the public in the least. They will say, you didn't; you fought for 20 years to come for power; you asked me for 50 and a dollar to collect money, and then you didn't pass the legislation because you didn't want to work more than 10 hours a day? It is an inconceivable position. It is an incredible position, and it will never wash, Mr. Speaker. It never has washed in any parliamentary House, except where they don't do anything.

You know, I will tell the honourable member that in some of the states in the United States they've got the Legislature so tied up that you can't do anything if there is a small minority against it. They sit for 60 days, period. At the end of 60 days, they say, the clock says 60 days, boom, go home. — (Interjection)— Yes, come back two years later. Well, I would say, Mr. Speaker, under those circumstances, if I wanted to pass the fact that the public was going to underwrite its own insurance and there was the kind of resistance that we had in Manitoba, it would never have happened. Because if the states they have figured out ways, within the Constitution, within the separation of powers, to prevent significant social and economic change. Fortunately, in Canada it has not yet been done yet

and you can make it. But you can't make it, Mr. Speaker, if you are going to deny the majority the opportunity to legislate.

Now, I say to the honourable member, and I say to him seriously, if there is something vital that has to be done, use whatever powers you have to do it; if you've got nothing vital to be done, then take these bills, start on September 15th, we will work for six weeks and we will pass the bills under normal unstrained circumstances and you will not be in the position of saying, we sure showed those New Democrats, they didn't want to pass the legislation but we forced it through them, because that's all you're getting.

What legislation? Which piece of legislation does the Member for River Heights have to go back to his constituents and say: Look, the New Democratic Party members wouldn't let me pass this bill — this great bill, Mr. Speaker, you know some of them are really wonderful — and therefore we had to force it through them. We had to force them, by parliamentary debate, to pass these bills. An Act to amend The Manitoba Evidence Act, which would . . . not a single person, Mr. Speaker, I've been in politics for 18 years and not a single constituent has ever come up to me and said: When you get to parliament make sure that when I go to the witness stand I have to testify to my own adultery. I have never heard that said, never heard that said, but that's one of these great things, Mr. Speaker. The Law Fees Act, that's vital; The Veterinary Services Act; The Manitoba Club Act; The Wills Act; The Act to amend The Law Society Act; The Defamation Act, all of them, Mr. Speaker. How many of you have been bothered by your constituents with regard to this legislation, and if you have, put it on the table. If it's legislation that requires legislative approval of the housekeeping or law reform nature that we happen to have lived 5,000 years without and can live three more months without, put it over until September 15th, break up this session. It's legitimate. Break up the session. If not, then acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, don't let us hear anybody in this House, I beg of you — I can't stop you, but I don't want to hear somebody — get up and say we are in the dying days of the session, we are in the closing hours of the session, and the twilight of the session. We are in the middle of the session. At best, we may be at the beginning of the session and as long as we all understand that then the extended hours are no harm. But if we think that we're at the end and that we can do all of this by pushing it through, Mr. Speaker, I urge the Attorney-General, who sometimes is a reasonable man — sometimes, we musn't get carried away, sometimes is a reasonable man — let's get through with your vital legislation. Go speak to the House Leader. Tell him that we're going to leave these bills, we're not going to withdraw them. They will stay on the Order Paper. The vital legislation will be passed. We will still be in the middle of the session but we'll start it again on September 15th. The Member for Crescentwood says okay. There are other members on that side who feel that way.

What am I proposing that's unreasonable? I will vote for the motion, Mr. Speaker, but I also say to the Attorney-General that his session and the way in which it has been conducted leaves much to be

desired, but I won't criticize. I know that it's a difficult problem. But as to what you do from here, it should require some rational thinking rather than a determined intent to do, and it's the First Minister, Mr. Speaker — and I say that I have never done that — he said you ain't seen nothing yet, after they voted against an adjournment on second reading, you ain't seen nothing yet. What does that portend? What are we to see?

Mr. Speaker, it never was our position, except — and I will admit it — when the Opposition indicated that they were going to use the session to try to stop us, not to try to debate but to try to frustrate us so that they would say the New Democrats promised you this and they couldn't deliver because we stopped them and they didn't have the guts to put it through. If we do that, I expect a reaction and I expect to push, and if the opposition side did what they did in 1973 and said, My God, they've got such a great budget, they're going to win 45 seats; if we can delay the session three days, they will either have to call an election in the middle of July or they won't call it until the fall and by the fall everybody will have forgotten about the nice budget, so we are going to set the date of the election.

If we did that, Mr. Speaker, it might be legitimate from our point of view but, from your point of view, you would have to say no. We are going to determine it and to the extent that we have a majority of members in the House, we are going to do it, and the election was called from June 25th, and to this day they say it was illegally called. They say that there wasn't 60 days, that there was a day short or something, but nevertheless, the government governed for those four years. And we did it because extended hours were available to the majority of the House and in a proper case could be used. I don't see that there has been any proper case.

There is a case for extended hours, I won't argue that and I'll vote for it. But there is no proper case for denying an adjournment, which you did to the Member for Fort Rouge, none whatsoever. That was an unjustified denial of adjournment and, if that's what the Minister said when he said you ain't seen nothing yet, Mr. Speaker, then I tell the Attorney-General, beware of where you are going, because there is no justification for using extended hours at the present time for overcoming something which isn't there. There is nothing that has been indicated by the Opposition which would indicate an attempt to frustrate.

I don't know what's going to happen on the rent control bill but it seems to me that the debate has been very civilized and I don't expect . . . And if you do have to push that one, you will push it, if you need it that badly. I sort of hope that you will because then there will be more attention to what you are doing in the area of rent control. But for the rest of it, it's not necessary, and I would urge the Minister to reconsider just what he is doing after he gets his extended hours because I intend to support it for the extended hours.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad I'm addressing mostly persons who have not had the

opportunity to sit in opposition because there are some points I would like to make to them, of which they may not be aware. The only Minister present has not been in opposition in the Legislature and of the backbench, I read four that have been in opposition, and one, two, three, four, five, six, who have not been in opposition. I want to address myself particularly to those who have not the experience of being in opposition and point out to them a sort of a dichotomy that exists in attitude to legislation.

I must also point out that usually, in the third year of a Legislature, the housekeeping bills, the bills that have been pressing various Ministers, finally find their way to the surface. The first year or two of enthusiastic government, there is a hard hand kept on the number of bills that are going to be presented and the speed with which they come in. I sometimes wonder if the present House Leader was not sort of trapped into being House Leader in this year, which is a more difficult year, I believe, for a House Leader, because of the volume of bills with which he is being inundated. I believe it's the Ministers who finally get their house cleaned up and say, okay, let's go.

Mr. Speaker, in the government side, you have two groups very clearly defined, the in-Cabinet and the out-of-Cabinet. The in-Cabinet have their job to do, they know what it is, they presumably prepare the bills they have to deal with and once they've done that, then they think the rest is routine. It will go to the Legislature, it will be debated, it will be passed, the bill is well drawn, I know it will be okay. There is the backbench who are not really consulted about the drafting of the bills, who don't have much to do about the specific sections as they are drawn, who are anxious to get out of the Legislature because they've got the most boring job in this Legislature. They have to sit back, they're not expected to debate government bills, as was seen by Bill 31, The Education Bill. They are expected to be here to vote and their greatest function is in caucus, not in the House. In caucus, they have a much greater opportunity to have an input in legislation than they do in the House because it's difficult either to criticize a bill or to try to improve on it, because the person who presents the bill is the one who believes that it is well drawn and ready to go.

So once a bill comes into this Legislature, first reading, the government is pretty well finished with it, and its concern. It is put in the bill, it has been drafted, drawn, printed, it's in, and both the Cabinet and the backbench would like to see it finished and will of course listen to reasonable suggestions and make changes. And they say, and they mean it, that reasonable suggestions coming from the opposition will be considered and, if workable, will accept it.

There is the rub, because to provide a reasonable suggestion, to indeed provide a proper review, the Opposition must have the opportunity to do it and not under the pressures, the ridiculous ones, that we had last Friday where two bills were forced to stay in the Legislature on that day. One the most ridiculous, was the Private Members' Bill that was not permitted to be stood. Mr. Speaker, that wasn't a government bill. As a matter of fact, the government, as such, didn't even speak on the bill. It was introduced, as I recall it, by the Member for Emerson, the government Whip, adjourned debate, and then

announced that the Minister of Labour, for whom the bill was adjourned, had nothing to say on it. So why suddenly the government became foolishly intransigent is a matter, I believe, of some embarrassment to the government. Either it was his bill, it had to go through, but it is naive to think that they could have forced it through.

As mentioned by the Member for Inkster, there are ways of delay and those should not be used but must be used when there are threats made, such as were made by the First Minister on the same Friday. That's foolishness because, Mr. Speaker, if any government takes a position, you ain't seen nothing yet, then the Opposition can reply, and buddy, you ain't seen nothing yet either, because the Opposition can play a role in determining how fast we work. But, Mr. Speaker, the fact is there has not been any effort that I'm aware of to delay the dealing of government business unduly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we deal with the Speed-up. I call it Speed-up, you can call it extended hours, it doesn't really matter. We all know what we're talking about, and the caution made by the Member for Inkster must be taken seriously by members opposite. Those who have been here in previous years know very well you can't force a bill through without proper debate and you can't force, again and again, long hours and late hours. Because as the hour grows longer, the tempers start to flare, and there is a reaction that goes right across the room which is adverse to decent legislation and a sensible House Leader sees very quickly that it would be better to adjourn for the day and come back refreshed and in a different mood. It depends a good deal on the sense of the leadership in the House, and that means the government side, with co-operation on the side of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker, the Free Press had an editorial, I don't know if it was today or a couple of days ago, where they said that while Opposition critics have been quick to point out the insanity of the procedure — and it does become insane after a while, Mr. Speaker — they should recall that their government did, as all governments have done, exactly the same thing. Mr. Speaker, I have to fault the House Leader. I don't recall, and I haven't checked the record of the Introduction of Bills and the relationship to the introduction of the Speed-up motion, but Mr. Speaker, this is one of the worst years and one of the most poorly managed years as far as the presentation of bills to this House.

One of the reasons, I think, Mr. Speaker, that the estimates went for a long time is that there were no bills. It would have been a great embarrassment to the House, to the government, to the House Leader, if indeed we dealt with the estimates more rapidly because the bills were so far behind in coming that there would not have been any business for the House to do. I haven't made a proper check on this. It's not really important. But Friday morning I made some notes which may be wrong but I think are pretty well right, that out of an estimated 130 bills, 28 had been reported from committee; 42, including the 28, had completed second reading. One bill had passed third reading, Mr. Speaker, and it had to, it was the Interim Supply Bill. One bill has been out of the House and received Royal Assent, out of 130. As far as I can see, about 80 out of 130 bills had been

distributed, which means I have 45 not distributed and about 30 not even introduced for first reading.

Now a few days may have changed that, but that's ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, and I have to tell the House Leader that no matter how well intentioned he was, he did not do a good job, either by permitting the delay or by permitting these bills to keep coming in. In my experience, which is extensive in time, there comes a time when the House Leader says, you're finished. He says to Cabinet, no more bills. He says to private members, stay out of the bills, and then, Mr. Speaker, he has to have the support of his leader, the Premier, and of other members of Cabinet. If he hasn't got that, Mr. Speaker, then he has failed in his job because he has not produced the bills rapidly enough. Now how does that affect us?

From my standpoint, Mr. Speaker, I will not oppose this resolution. I'm not in favour of it, but I would not oppose it. But I tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we have to know that we're going to deal with these bills, important or unimportant, garbage or not, we're going to deal with them, but we have to deal with them in a sensible and responsible way. And for the Opposition, this means, Mr. Speaker, that the homework that was done by government up until the day of first reading or second reading, till distribution of the bill, there job is pretty well finished. That's when the Opposition starts and the Opposition has to study each bill. Even though they are told it's housekeeping, they have to study it. They have to look at the legislation that it amends. They have to consult on it with whatever people they believe have a contribution to make. They have to be prepared to make constructive suggestions; they have to be prepared to challenge the philosophy of the bills and they have to be prepared, Mr. Speaker. They have to discuss it in caucus and they have to come back to meet. It's not just meeting in the House, it's caucus meetings concurrently to deal with these issues.

I refer, Mr. Speaker, to a speech made by the Honourable the Attorney-General, the House Leader, on The Blood Test Act. On page 4914, he had this comment to say, "I have to say, on this bill as on the past bill, as on a number of other bills, it is very difficult to deal in a parliamentary sitting with members opposite who can't agree on anything, it would appear, Mr. Speaker. They don't agree on this bill; they didn't agree on the last bill we just discussed. They disagreed on a number of issues."

Mr. Speaker, that shows how naive and inexperienced the House Leader is. For one thing, government must agree. The Whip must be on government because our parliamentary system demands that the government do not lose a vote of confidence and that the government knows what it does, and it starts way back. Government right now, the Ministers today should be looking at next year's legislation and getting it ready. They should be because that's their responsibility. The Opposition does not have that kind of a Whip. On matters of philosophy they review them; on matters of party principle they have to be concerned to have the Whip imposed to present a complete unity in approach to bills of principle. But other bills, the Opposition has the luxury of disagreeing amongst themselves. Nothing wrong with that. But the Honourable the Attorney-General, seems to think

that he cracks his whip, somebody here says we go and we go. That's naive and inexperienced, Mr. Speaker, and I mention it only because there is absolutely nothing wrong with a disagreement on The Blood Test bill. —(Interjection)— Oh, Mr. Speaker, I've just been told, just been told, that The Blood Test Bill was amended or is being amended or will be amended at Law Amendments, by whom, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Attorney-General apparently is or has amended the Blood Test bill, on which he complained that there was not unanimity on the part of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, I don't know the nature of the amendment, I don't know whether the suggestion for that change came from the Opposition but well it might.

The Minister for Consumer Affairs today speaking on The Landlord and Tenant bill, said, "We thought it was it was implicitly stated in the bill, but if it isn't sufficiently explicit, then we would have to make it explicit." He did the right thing, he said I think the bill says so and so but if you people in Opposition say it doesn't say that and since I mean it, I'm prepared to change it, that's what happened. Mr. Speaker, an inconsequential matter, really not too important.

The Charleswood Curling Club was presented by the Member for Wellington. I made what I thought was —(Interjection)— Yes, the Member for Crescentwood, I'm glad I was corrected. The Member for Crescentwood presented that bill, I made what I thought was an important point and, after a period of time, which could not have been allowed if the government had that attitude of you must speak immediately, the Member for Crescentwood came back and said, that was a good suggestion, we will bring in the amendment, we will make the change that was suggested from the Opposition. The point I'm making is that, in recognizing the role of the Opposition, the government must recognize that the Opposition must be given the opportunity to review.

Mr. Speaker, I have nothing planned in my personal life from today until next January and I am prepared to sit throughout these hot summer months. I'd kind of like to sit in the sun and relax somewhat, to take advantage of that part of the year when it is most pleasant to be outside. But I admit to you that I have nothing that stands in the way of my coming here three times a day and debating.

I think the suggestion made by the Member for Inkster makes a good deal of sense. What's wrong with it is that Cabinet wants to get us out of here and what's wrong with it is that members of the back bench usually, and members on this side, often feel that although it may be a full time job, they want to get paid if they come back in the fall and therefore they waffle about it and say, "If you want a special session, we want special pay". That's two different things, Mr. Speaker. If members should be paid adequately, they should be paid adequately but they should be on call throughout the year to deal with business of government. I agree with the Member for Inkster that it would be much more sensible to plan things in such a way that you are not under rush and pressure, to deal with — what is it? — did I say 30 bills, that we didn't even have first reading on. We don't even know the names of the bills and now we're going to be yet be debating them, along

with any number of others, many of which have not even been put in our laps.

Mr. Speaker, all I'm saying is that the government will have the Speed-Up brought in, the extended hours, but I'd caution the government be sure that you don't try to frustrate the Opposition in it doing it's job. In other words, have sensible hours, have sensible adjournments; provide sensible time to discuss it.

I want to acknowledge that the discussions that I had with the Honourable the Minister of Health I think have been useful. I've been told that we've now arrived at an understanding that only three of the professional bills, that is the three nursing bills, will be dealt with this session and dealt with in such a way as to be referred to a committee, a small committee which will deal with these bills in a concurrent way so that there will be some effort made to have uniformity, where it applies, and lack of uniformity where it's not desirable. But the others bills, Bills No. 30, 62, 63, 64, 92 and today I was told of a bill I've never even heard of that is going to be brought in, and any other bills of that kind will all be laid over for an inter-session committee and that committee will then study those bills and, I made the suggestion, Mr. Speaker, any other bills that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council wishes to refer. Because I'm told there may be up to eight more bills that are laying dormant waiting for the next session. I think the logical way is to deal with them all at once in a relaxed way, in a small committee, so that the committee can deal with them and report back.

On that basis, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of that understanding, we in the NDP caucus have agreed that we will not try to delay or in any way show the strength that an Opposition has in delaying the carrying through of business of the House.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I think we're going ahead with this co-operative manner of dealing with the legislation, with the resolution before us, so that we can proceed in that way. But I caution members opposite again, don't try to get too rough and tough on this. Don't try to tell us we ain't seen nothing yet because, Mr. Speaker, some of us have seen all the various efforts that have been made in the past and some of us will know how to deal with it, even though in the end the government, as it must, will conquer, but how it does it will be a big factor in the way it operates.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that we were able to arrange a sensible approach because professional legislation is complicated, it's not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Attorney-General on a point of order.

MR. MERCIER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Member for St. Johns might explain the full agreement, Mr. Speaker, which was to pass Speed-Up motion this afternoon.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, once again, once again. Now I know I became angry, Mr. Speaker, but let me tell the Honourable the Attorney-General, who on Friday yelled out to me "Tell the truth for a change", that there was no such understanding that I'm aware of, that —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, he asked me if it would pass today and I said, "We

have other speakers, we will not hold it up, but we will not be pushed into a vote".

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Honourable, the House Leader, was told that there would be five speakers, on our side and I don't think he was told how long it would take and, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is — how many more? — we have two or three more speakers, Mr. Speaker, as I understand it, and I told that. We do not intend to try to delay it. We do not intend to try to bring in amendments for further debate.

Mr. Speaker, I've got to be careful, and let me tell the honourable member my memo reads, "Recent events convinced me that it is best to rely on written memos, rather than verbal understandings", and that's why, Mr. Speaker, I put it in writing. I put it in writing because I no longer can rely on the Attorney-General's reportage. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Rock Lake can read, if he can read, let him read it because I no longer rely on the word of other people.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. We can only have one speaker, at one time.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns has the floor.

Order please. The hour being 4:30 we are now in Private Members' Hour.

The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, we're prepared on this side, if there is unanimous consent, to proceed with this resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there unanimous consent to proceed with this debate? I'm sorry there is not unanimous consent. We now proceed with Private Members' Hour.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

RESOLUTION 27 — MINIMUM WAGE

MR. SPEAKER: The resolution of the Honourable Member for Point Douglas. The Honourable Member for Churchill has nine minutes.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In nine minutes, it seems so short to say so much and I do believe that there is much that has to be said yet in regard to the government's refusal to accommodate minimum wage earners in respect to providing them with increases that keep pace with inflation; to providing them with increases that provide them with a livable and a decent wage, and I think the record is quite explicit in that regard. That the government came in with a minimum wage of 2.95 and now that minimum wage is 3.15 and in fact, the cost of living, as determined by the cost of living statistics has increased far faster than has the minimum wage. But I had said that already when I spoke to this particular resolution last time it was before the Order Paper.

What I would like to talk about this evening is what the government will be doing if they decide to vote against this particular resolution. What they will in fact be saying is that they are satisfied with a minimum wage of 3.15 an hour, which is no longer the third highest, as it was when the government came into power, but has slipped well behind that

relative level with the other provinces. What they will be saying is that they are satisfied with that and they do not even want to place the matter of minimum wage structures before a legislative committee. Because that's what this particular resolution asks for, that this be placed before a legislative committee for the purpose of designing and implementing an equitable formula for increasing the minimum wage in a systematic and orderly manner. And that is what is demanded in this day and age. A systematic and orderly manner of increasing the minimum wage upon which tens of thousands of Manitobans are forced to survive.

They could amend it. They might say now that they would also be voting against the immediate raising of it, which we have asked for, to a level that will accurately reflect the increases in the cost of living but they could, by way of amendment, strike that particular resolution or that "Be it further resolved," from this particular resolution and thereby pass the first part, which would place it before legislative committee for consideration. And I see no reason why they should not do so.

The fact is that there is some concern and there is some disagreement and there is some differing of opinion as to the impact of minimum wage and, while I believe that much of that disagreement or much of that concern is ill-founded, and I have reviewed the studies and I have reviewed the literature and can also point to the fact that there are others who agree that that concern is ill-founded, I do not deny the members opposite the right to have that concern. Therefore, if they are concerned, they should also — and I hope they would be although I'm not as certain of this as I am of their concern about the ill effects of minimum wage — they should also be concerned about the ill effects of the minimum wage. They should also be concerned about the ill effects of a low minimum wage and the impact that it has on a low wage earner, because it not only impacts upon the earner themselves, or the individual who's working at minimum wage, it has a ripple effect throughout the entire society and that effect provides impetus for other industries to keep their wages down. When the government couples that with their stated policy of keeping wages in the public sector down, what we start to develop in this province is a low wage economy and that is, in fact, what has happened; that the government, true to their philosophical bent and true to their philosophical heritage, want to create in the province of Manitoba a low wage economy whereby employers can pay less than the going rate, in relative terms to other provinces, in regard to the minimum wage, in regard to the public sector wages, in regard to general wages and thereby they believe that gives the employers a competitive advantage. Well, maybe it does but that competitive advantage is at the expense of other groups within the society and that one other group that we're talking about, in specific, are the low wage earners and minimum wage earners. But there are, in fact, other groups that are being detrimentally impacted by the government's general economic policies in concern to the minimum wage and concern to wage levels. We just have to look at the statistics to be able to point a finger to a trend which has developed since this government has taken office, and that is wages in the this

province, increases in wages in this province, have been slipping in relative terms, to increases in wages in other provinces. And why is that? Well, the Minister of Labour at one time indicated it was because the unions were having trouble in negotiating or implied that it was because the unions were having trouble negotiating increases in wages. That may be part of the reason but I don't think that it is a significant part of the reason, Mr. Speaker. I believe the significant aspect of this entire problem — and it is a problem when your wages don't keep pace with other provinces — is that the government, by example and by practice, has provided cause and has provided an incentive for other wage payers in this province to keep their wages at their lowest possible level. I want to talk about that more than I can talk about it in 20 minutes to a resolution. I want to talk about what the minimum wage earner has to go through living on 3.15 an hour. I want to tell the members opposite, I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to tell the public if I can extend my voice that far, what minimum wage earners have told me because it is not a nice story; it is not pleasant conditions under which they live; it is not as they would have us believe, a livable nor a decent wage. I would like to do everything in my power to increase that wage; I would like to do everything in my power to be able to enable those workers, who are toiling for their living like you and I, to enjoy a standard of living that is equivalent to other minimum wage earners in other provinces.

I have come to the sad realization, after I think three go-arounds, this is the third one in this House, of talking in this forum as to the minimum wage increases, that I am having very little impact upon the government on that side, that this is not the particular way in which to proceed. And one of the members opposite says, yes, indeed, that's correct and he is not telling me anything new. I know that we're not convincing them by standing in our place and speaking for 20 minutes to increase the minimum wage because they're not doing it. Even if they were doing it I wouldn't be certain it was because we were convincing them but I would like to take some small solace in the fact that they were motivated to move on this, for whatever reason, but they're not moving at all. So let us find out why they're not moving. Because as it is not an appropriate form for me to stand on this side and convince them, it is not an appropriate form for them to stand on that side and explain to me why we're not moving, because I haven't heard any reasonable or logical argument from any member on that side as to why we cannot increase the minimum wage at a faster pace than we are in the province of Manitoba. I have not heard that and I don't expect to hear it, to be perfectly honest, Mr. Speaker. But if we took it to the committee — and that's what we're asking for, take it to that committee — if we took it to that committee we could, in detail, discuss it; we could have a back and forth conversation; we could have a dialogue and during that dialogue, perhaps through use of statistics, through use of studies or just perhaps through eloquent use of the language, we could convince them that they should increase it at a faster pace. Perhaps, it's a chance, it's a risk, it's a gamble but it's a risk and a gamble and a chance that I'm willing to take on behalf of the minimum

wage earners who have come to me — and I'm certain have come to every member in this House at one time or another — and described their plight. It is a risk that I think government should be willing to take. I think if they so strongly believe in their policies, they should be willing to allow those policies to undergo the scrutiny of a committee hearing where the public are invited; where the public can make representations; where the minimum wage earners can come in and tell us their story firsthand; where the experts can come in and where we can have a fair amount of time to deal with the problem in a comprehensive way. That is why I support the resolution primarily.

But I also support it, and I suggested that before the government could make an amendment to it to remove THAT BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, I would not vote for that amendment because I also support the concept that the minimum wage should keep pace with the cost-of-living increases and it has not, and it has not by a long shot in this province, and that is why I support the BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED. I would understand the government's hesitancy to support that, in light of their actions of the past three years, but I would not condone that hesitancy.

In closing, if I can, because I know that my nine minutes are almost done now, I can only wholeheartedly support this resolution brought in by my seatmate, the Member for Point Douglas, and hope that the government will have the courage to vote for the committee, to have the courage to vote for the forum, will have the courage to vote for the investigation that will either — maybe it won't — but I would suspect would either prove or disprove their particular philosophy that has turned us into a low-wage economy.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member's time is up. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Attorney-General.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might just indicate that the Privileges and Elections Committee will meet tonight and tomorrow morning at 10:00 a.m.

MR. SPEAKER: The Privileges and Elections Committee will meet tonight at 8:00 o'clock and also tomorrow morning at 10:00 a.m. Are you ready for the question?

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR Cont'd RESOLUTION 27 — MINIMUM WAGE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MR. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a privilege to follow the Honourable Member for Churchill and his address because I always seem to have some minor disagreements in some of the things that he puts forward and certainly this bill on Minimum Wage is no exception.

I think that if the intent of the bill, which the Member for Point Douglas has put forward, is to demonstrate concern for those in low incomes, those in low standards of living in the province, then certainly I think that all members on this side of the House share those concerns and are in a position where they would like to assist in doing things to correct that situation.

The resolution seeks to have the government, for instance, consider the advisability of placing the matter of the minimum wage structure before a legislative committee for the purpose of building in a systematic and an orderly manner of implementing a fixed formula increase.

I understand, Mr. Speaker, when honourable friends opposite were in government, that a minimum wage formula was unanimously proposed by the Minimum Wage Board of that day but for some reason it wasn't acted upon by that particular government. So there must have been some concerns and some reasons why they felt that was not appropriate to enact as legislation. Of course, as I think many honourable members know, that particular proposition was adopted by the province of Quebec, in fact, they did institute a formula by which the minimum wage would be increased on the basis of increases in consumer price indices. And problems that were experienced, as a result of that type of formula, led to this method of calculation being dropped by the province of Quebec. So obviously there are reasons why such a restrictive or structured type of approach isn't necessarily the best answer and other jurisdictions have looked at it and I think it's significant that it isn't in place anywhere else in this country.

When we consider the concerns and the status of employees who are on the minimum wage, I think we should look at who is on the minimum wage and what is involved in trying to help these people. Studies have shown that a high proportion of these employees are young, over 50 percent are under 25 years of age. There are relatively few older workers on minimum wage according to the information that our Department of Labour has, in fact, less than 10 percent are over the age of 55. In addition, of course, women hold a disproportionately large number of low-wage jobs and that range is from 69 percent in Alberta and Ontario to approximately 80 percent in Manitoba. Only a small percentage of low-wage earners are responsible for the support of a sizable family, however. The percentage of low wage earners with no dependants is estimated, as a matter of fact, at being close to 80 percent, Mr. Speaker.

One of the objectives of the minimum wage is to reduce the incidence of poverty and to prevent those who are in the work force from being below the poverty level, Mr. Speaker. But it's, of course, only one part in an overall policy package that has to address the needs of those in low income situations. In addition to minimum wage, social assistance schemes, unemployment insurance, government programs —(Interjection)— I said social assistance schemes, that takes in welfare — Government Manpower and Retraining Programs, a very important factor, to assist those in low income brackets to give them the training and the education to put themselves into a higher income-earning bracket, a much more long-range view of things as

opposed to just merely addressing the minimum wage. Family Allowances, Old Age Security benefits and recently our own government's CRISP and SAFER Programs have to be considered as part of the total package.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the record will show that the previous government, in spite of recommendations from the Minimum Wage Board, failed to increase the minimum wage in 1976 and 1977 and it was not until our government came into power that the minimum wage was increased in 1979 and again in 1980. Our present minimum wage, for those not in a position to receive gratuities, is very competitive with other provinces. There are, as a matter of fact, a number of provinces who are ahead of our minimum wage; there are a considerable number who are below our minimum wage at the present time. We are just about in the middle of the range, Mr. Speaker, on a cross-country basis.

The Minister of Labour, I think, has indicated a strong commitment on his part to convene the Minimum Wage Board this fall and to ask them for recommendations before the end of the year, so that we can act upon a reasoned and a totally researched approach, as opposed to a committee of the Legislature or the government just simply picking a figure out of the hat and throwing it on the table, Mr. Speaker. I think that is probably an approach that would be of much greater value and would make much more sense logically, to everybody concerned, because there are many facets to the minimum wage problem and we have to, of course, be concerned about the provision of jobs for those people in the province.

For the most part I'm sure that the provision of jobs and the insurance that those jobs will carry on and will be available for those who enter the work force today, tomorrow and in the future, is of foremost importance. The fact that programs and policies of this government under the Minister of Labour and under the Minister of Economic Development have resulted in almost 30,000 more people being employed today in Manitoba, than were employed in October of '77 when members opposite left government, is very important and something that we look at as a matter that we should all be concerned about, a matter that we should all strive to improve and expand upon.

We want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that as a result of making inappropriate moves on research moves and moves that aren't based on facts and figures and economic analysis, that we don't put people out of jobs rather than attempt to just merely make a move for the sake of saying that we've acted quickly on a resolution. It has to be carefully considered so that we ensure that we don't do more harm than good.

We're concerned, first and foremost, for the interests of all those work in Manitoba, all those who live and work and are productively involved in our society and, in so doing, I believe that it's important to look at all aspects of the issue, before just merely plunging forward with a formula or plunging forward with an increase that's out of a hat. In that respect, I believe that the Minister has shown a commitment. I believe that the Minister's concern has been demonstrated throughout all the various propositions that have occurred in his time as Minister, whether it

be in union negotiations, whether it be in labour relations, safety and workplace or all those things. I think that his concern will come through very strongly on this issue. They say he is committed to calling the Minimum Wage Board together, to having them review the situation in some detail and to having them come forward with a recommendation.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move an amendment to the motion, seconded by the Member for Emerson:

That the resolution be amended by striking out all the words after the word "government" in the first line of the first paragraph of the preamble thereof and substituting therefor the following words:

SAFER AND CRISP Programs have been implemented to increase benefits to low-wage earners in the province of Manitoba;

AND WHEREAS the present minimum wage in Manitoba is competitive with other jurisdictions in Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Minister of Labour and Manpower has indicated a commitment to convene the Minimum Wage Board for the purpose of reviewing the minimum wage and report its recommendations to the Minister before the year end;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the the government await the report and recommendations of the Minimum Wage Board before giving consideration to further changes in the Minimum Wage Board for Manitoba.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would be more ready to speak if I had a copy of the amendment. However, I must say that I will — thank you — not support the amendment because I just don't agree with "await the report and recommendations of the Minimum Wage Board." I happen to believe that this whole matter should be referred to a committee of the Legislature.

I also am in an awkward situation, Mr. Speaker, which is becoming familiar to me in this House because I really would have liked to offer an amendment myself and I know it's very unlikely that I would get a seconder. Therefore, I will say that I would support the first resolution in the original motion and not the second resolution. I will speak to the amendment at the same time, offering my reasons, Mr. Speaker.

As I said, the whereases in the amendment are not too controversial. As far as I'm concerned, the resolution itself is what I would object to, for the reason that I think there a number of alternatives that a committee of the Legislature could be looking at in considering what should be happening on the whole minimum wage issue.

I, in fact, question the value of increasing the minimum wage in view of the fact that the present government's poor economics have not helped the economy of the province. The high unemployment and poor job creation record of the government, in fact, do not justify increasing the minimum wage. I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that while the motion itself

is not acceptable, neither is the amendment. The government has failed to create an economic climate where jobs are plentiful and growth is constant, and out-migration emphasizes this. My party believes that there is a need for a constant mechanism to be put into place to review the minimum wage, not necessarily tied into the cost of living. We believe that a legislative committee should review the minimum wage at regular intervals, taking into consideration some of the social programs, SAFER and CRISP and other programs that have been referred to the Member for River Heights in his amendment.

The need though, Mr. Speaker, and this is what I want to emphasize, the need is for jobs. The minimum wage is only important to those who have a job. My concern is for those who have no jobs and I am disappointed that neither the resolution nor the amendment really has applied itself to the need for jobs in this province. Because until everybody wishing to work or able to work has the opportunity to work, then I suggest the minimum wage really becomes academic. The young people and part-time workers, including women, would rather have a job than be unemployed with a high minimum wage and it's as simple as that.

We know of the number of trained workers who have left our province to go south to Minnesota and the Dakotas, who have gone west to Alberta and British Columbia. It's a matter of public record. Instead of laying off people, perhaps one suggestion that such a legislative committee might look at would be recommending a reduction in the number of hours worked and keep more people working and consider supplementing their income through Unemployment Insurance or other mechanisms if the people cannot earn enough on the jobs to exist on their reduced wages and hours at a level of living which is acceptable in society, according to today's standards. Even a system of reducing hours and having more people working, Mr. Speaker, I'm suggesting would enable more people to retain their dignity. It would enable them to keep their hand in at their trade or their job and eventually, as times become better in Manitoba for the job situation, more people could be working and in the meantime they have kept their hand in it at the particular type of work that they do.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am in again in a situation such as I described to you some time ago where, if we vote on the original motion, I would have to ask for it to be separated so that I could vote separately on the two clauses. In the meantime, I would vote against the amendment.

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

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I had not intended to speak to this resolution, a resolution with respect to minimum wages in Manitoba, but having heard the amendment of the Honourable Member for River Heights, I find it difficult, Mr. Speaker, to resist. The Member for River Heights took note of two programs which now sort of takes, in his opinion at least, the government of the hook with respect to their responsibility in establishing fair wages throughout the province of Manitoba. He made reference and in

his amendment he makes reference, Mr. Speaker, to SAFER and CRISP Programs which have been implemented to increase benefits to low-wage earners in the province of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, the very idea of including that in the amendment indicates that the Opposition was quite right when we criticized their wage policy and, indeed, the fact that they were institutionalizing welfare in Manitoba when they made these programs known to the people of Manitoba only a few weeks ago.

The Member for River Heights now is confirming the fact that this province indeed has a philosophy of low wages in Manitoba. That is part of their economic policy, Mr. Speaker, that they somehow feel that they can be quite comfortable with people earning 3 an hour or less, or 3.10, or 3.15, or 2.95, depending on whether you're in the minimum wage category or out. —(Interjection)— And yes, 2.75 for students and so on. In this day and age, Mr. Speaker, when inflation is running at 10 or 12 percent — 12 percent on food for 1979, as I recall it — to sit on their behinds with respect to wage policy is absurdly irresponsible and not worthy of the kind of contributions that we have had from that side during the Budget Debate and certainly the contribution from the Member for River Heights this afternoon.

I don't know whether the Member for River Heights and members opposite live in a different world than the rest of us, Mr. Speaker. I know that when you go to the grocery store to buy — well, it's not a quart of milk anymore. I usually buy the large carton of milk and you're talking about two cartons of milk for about 3.00. That's really what you're doing nowadays, Mr. Speaker. You know, 25 doesn't bring home one shopping bag of groceries, and they want to perpetuate low wages in Manitoba. They want to dodge the responsibilities with respect to wage levels in Manitoba because they are now going to subsidize low-wage earners through SAFER and CRISP, a welfare program, Mr. Speaker, and nothing else. They do not believe that people should earn their bread. They believe that people should work for low wages and that people should receive their bread through subsidy from the taxpayers of Manitoba. That's really what the Member for River Heights is implying when he makes reference to SAFER and CRISP.

Now the Member for River Heights shakes his head in the negative, Mr. Speaker. The fact is what is the logic of making mention of those two programs and claiming that wages are relatively decent in Manitoba and suggesting that we await the report of the Minimum Wage Board. We have reports from that board many many times over the years, Mr. Speaker, but the fact of the matter is that there has to be a very definitive government policy with respect to income in Manitoba. That's really what has to happen and that we shouldn't slough off our responsibilities with respect to that question by asking an appointed agency of the Crown, an agency of the Crown appointed by the Minister of Labour, to give us some guidance or recommendations as to where wages ought to be. I think, Mr. Speaker, what has to be done here is we have to ask ourselves just what we believe, as legislators and as government, what a decent wage is, how that wage relates to the denominator that is used by StatsCan,

I believe, the poverty line level; and make our decisions on wage policy based on those facts, not on some pressure group that is going to make representations to the Minimum Wage Board from either side, whether it's the employer side or the employee side; not from the fact that there are people with vested interests from both sides on that agency, Mr. Speaker, but from the fact that we ought to recognize our proper responsibility and recognize the kind of economic times that we are living in and admit, Mr. Speaker, that there are tens of thousands of people that simply can't earn enough money, based on the present wage structure in Manitoba, to keep body and soul together, Mr. Speaker, and to keep a roof over their head and to keep their children fed and clothed, and that's the nub of the issue. And expanding more welfare programs to deal with that is a cop-out, it's a cop-out, Mr. Speaker.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite ought to reconsider their dependence on welfare as a means of an incomes policy in this province and get back to their responsibility of providing for decent wage laws in Manitoba so that people who work get paid for their work on the basis of the needs of maintaining a household, the needs of raising their children, their personal needs, or shelter needs, all of that has to be taken into account. Only then, Mr. Speaker, can you have some sort of a wage that has some meaning. The present minimum wage, as far as I'm concerned, Mr. Speaker, is an insult to humanity and I intend to vote against this amendment.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, Abe Kovnats: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a few remarks I'd like to make and put on the record in support of the resolution as proposed by the Honourable Member for River Heights. Mr. Speaker, this is a subject matter that has been kicked around in this Legislature for all the years that I've been here, the minimum wage, and I am certainly never one to quarrel about the need for a minimum wage or a maximum wage, I don't think it solves anything. It's the problem of the reflection from the wages back through the productivity of the plant, etc., etc., and the kind of product that comes out of the plant and what goods and service you can produce and what you can get in the marketplace. Those people who can't shift for themselves, and there are no positions for them, that becomes another subject matter.

Mr. Speaker, a very interesting article appeared recently on the 2nd of June in the Winnipeg Free Press, where "The System Sinks Scandinavia" is the headline, and it says, "Cradle to the grave socialism once was the envy of the world", and I dare say, Mr. Speaker, that there are many members opposite who have watched this model very closely and have patterned some of their legislation, at least their thoughts, along, especially Sweden. I know at different times in the remarks, in the debates over the years, certain members, and I think the former leader, used to refer from time to time that this was the way to go and this was the model in the world that we should be pursuing, especially in this province. This was startling, a very startling article

that appears, Mr. Speaker. It says, "Once regarded by the rest of the world with admiration and envy for their prosperity and stability, Scandinavia's welfare states of Sweden, Denmark and Norway, have run into deep trouble". Mr. Speaker, why did they run into deep trouble? The article, I'm sure, doesn't spell out all the reasons, but there are certainly some reasons in here that has created the economic disaster that those countries are facing. And the first one, this writer, Alfred Zanker points out, Mr. Speaker, he says, "Snowballing costs of social security, high wages, have weakened their competitive positions worldwide, hurt their exports". Well, that's possibly one of the problems that those countries face. It goes on down through the article and says, "These Scandinavian countries are now up against a growing taxpayers revolt, large scale tax evasions and fraud, deteriorating business, low worker morale, widespread absenteeism, encouraged by generous sick pay rules", and so on. "Sweden has just gone through a nationwide general strike that paralyzed the country and threatened for a time to send it into uncontrolled social strife and chaos".

Mr. Speaker, very interesting. It goes on, it says, "Uncertainty and gloom hang over Sweden and Denmark to a lesser extent than Norway", and it goes on, it says, "To regain economic stability the three countries have been forced to tighten their belts and hold down steadily escalating wage costs". Mr. Speaker, that's what makes me wonder about our minimum wage costs in this province. We're certainly not the highest, we're not the lowest, but I understand that we're in the middle of the spectrum, fifth or something like that. We're not setting the way and of course this province, with our economic base, we never were known to be one that set the base.

But I just wonder, Mr. Speaker, in those countries that went through that type of problem, why did they get themselves into a place where they had to tighten their belts and hold down steadily escalating wage costs. I wonder, were they not producing? Was it the problem with the minimum wage? Were the wages too high? Were they not able to sell their products on the world market?

And the article goes on and mentions, "Labour costs have also forced Oslo to adopt austerity measures with stiff wage and price controls", in Oslo. "A nationwide wage deal provides for pay increases of just over 5 percent, with extra benefits for low income workers".

So there may be room in this amendment, as proposed by the Honourable Member for River Heights, to take a look when the Minimum Wage Board is called to deal with these matters to try and ascertain what are some of the problems that were faced in those Scandinavian countries. It goes on, it says, "The same city, that Volvo auto workers are recruiting workers from Finland because there's not enough Swedish labour available locally". That's very strange, Mr. Speaker, in a country that was supposed to be the model of socialism for the rest of the world to be striving for and try to meet their standards. It goes on and says that "The incentive has been lost. From the individuals point of view there are few incentives to move. Unemployment benefits are generous. Marginal taxes, higher taxes, can take an enormous portion of the pay increase that would accompany a better job. This creates

problems for companies because higher pay no longer serves as much of an incentive in hiring".

That generally is the problem with the minimum wage worker, Mr. Speaker, it's one that's concerned me. I have the garage man that I take my car to and you tell him that you're going to increase the minimum wage and he says, well, if he can repair or fix or grease three or four more cars in a day, he's certainly prepared to pay him the minimum wage. But a man can only do so much work in a given day, so naturally, he has to escalate the price up for the repairs to the car, or whatever it is, and the ball rolls. I just wonder, Mr. Speaker, if this system in Sweden is one that we should take a look at when the Minimum Wage Board does meet to try and see if, by increasing the minimum wage in this province, that we will solve some of the problems that are facing us today. I don't know what the percentage of people in our province, as I stand here this afternoon, that are on minimum wage. I don't have any figures. I'm certainly not, in any way, wanting to see any family going without food on their table or their children need clothing, because the father is only drawing the minimum wage. And yet the former member, the Member for Lac du Bonnet, who just spoke, said that he should get enough wages for his work, his shelter, etc., etc., but there are a lot of cases where people who are drawing certain wages are not worth that to the employer, so is he bound then to pay him the wages for all those benefits when he's not producing the goods and services or the incentive or the dollars so the employer can run his place in a productive manner. It is a very very difficult subject and one that certainly isn't going to go away, especially in our province now with the condition of the crops.

Mr. Speaker, I have no problem in supporting the amendment. I don't think that by just following the recommendations of the member who made the motion, the Member for Point Douglas, certainly I support his concerns in his resolution, I don't agree with the way he has it written in the resolution, but certainly one that deserves the attention of this House. I would think that the Minimum Wage Board, up to now at least, I'm satisfied have done a reasonably good job and I see no reason why we should put them out to pasture and set up a committee of the House. Until the House is satisfied or the members are satisfied that they haven't done their job, and as long as I think that they can come up with some recommendations to the Minister, which he says before the end of the year, and I think it is very timely that he does it before the end of the year, because Manitoba will likely face a very difficult and tough economic year. So the minimum wage earner is one that certainly must be considered during the next few months, from now until the end of the year, because he naturally is going to be caught in the problems of the drought where the farmers don't have any extra dollars to spend. When they don't have any dollars, there is not many industries or small businesses. There's a chain reaction that flows through the whole part of our province and the minimum wage earner is certainly going to be caught on the end of the line.

I think the amendment as proposed by the Honourable Member for River Heights is certainly a timely one and one that deserves the attention of

this House and I certainly hope that the members will support it, at least I intend to support it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I must say that it was a very interesting dissertation that we got from the Honourable Member for Roblin, as he took us around the world, in fact, he took us over to Europe. From what we understood the Member for Roblin to say, the fact that they have a high minimum wage in the Scandinavian countries is one of their problems that is causing the economic distress that they are suffering today. I'm not sure if they have a minimum wage in Sweden. Just for the honourable member's edification, I'm going to tell him that in Sweden approximately 95 percent of the working force is organized, and that includes foremen, directors. They all belong to a union in one shape or form or other, and so when the honourable member is trying to leave the impression with the House that it is the fact that a high minimum wage in the Scandinavian countries is one of the things that is causing the economic distress that is happening there, that is not so. I'm not sure, as I say, I would have to check, but I have a suspicion that, within the Scandinavian countries, there is no minimum wage. The five percent or so that are not organized would not work for the wages that would be that much below parity for those who would be working where they are organized.

As my colleague, the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet said, these people who do work at the minimum wage level, we have them at three levels. Those at 2.75 an hour, if they're under the age of 18, receive the magnificent sum of 110 per week. Those at 2.95 who work in service industries where there is a possibility that they may receive tips, get 2.95 an hour or 118 per week; and those at the magnificent sum that the Minister and this government have seen fit, after nearly three years in office, of 3.15 per hour, receive 126 per week.

As the member said, I don't know, when my wife and I were shopping last week, either I'm getting stronger, because I could carry out 100 worth of groceries, one in each arm; 100 worth of groceries. I couldn't do that 10 years ago. So I must be, in my old age, getting stronger than I was 10 years ago because these people who have to live at this subsistence level, the cost of transportation is just as high for those people, the cost of food is just as high, everything that they consume as consumers in this province are just as expensive as they are for us and for others in society and for the Member for River Heights to say that the SAFER and CRISP programs are going to be the panacea that are going to solve all the problems, that is nonsense, that is nonsense. What they're going to receive on SAFER and what they're going to receive under the CRISP programs are not a substitute for a decent living wage and, as we have seen with the people in the retirement area, who are eligible prior to the new program coming in, which is to take care of people on low incomes, the government estimated that there would be 20,000-some, I believe, originally, that

would be taking part in this SAFER program. I believe the last figures that I heard from one of the Ministers over there, it was approximately 2,500 people.

Many of these people who are working at this minimum wage level have their pride, too. They want to be paid for work that they do, and feel that they are vital and producing members of society, just as well as the rest of us. As I have spoken before on the minimum wage, there is no one out there to speak on their behalf. They are not organized as a lobby. They are not organized as a lobby group in any way, shape or form. The only people who can speak on their behalf are we, in this Legislative Assembly; there's no one else to speak for them. They're not members of trade unions. They're not members of lobby groups. Unfortunately, they are the forgotten few within our society. There is no one out there that speaks on their behalf unless it is members in this House.

The resolution as it is worded, the Minister of Labour and Manpower, that he will bring in a report. Well, we've already seen one resolution that was adopted unanimously in this House. That was one dealing with the freedom of information and that committee hasn't even been called, even though it was adopted. So what guarantee, Mr. Speaker, do we have from this government, especially in our dealings in the last few days with them, what guarantee do we have that this committee will even meet?

As I said the other day, I'm getting to the point that I don't believe anything that emanates from that side of the House. —(Interjection)— Well, if the Honourable Member for Crescentwood wishes to make some comments in this debate, when I'm through and sitting down he can get up and make his little pitch. But I say to you, Mr. Speaker, that this is not the answer. These people, as I have said, are in the unfortunate position, very unfortunate position, everything rises. The cost of living rises. They are dependent upon the political whim of the day, whether they will have their minimum wage increased.

I introduced this resolution the past two sessions. I indicated at the time, before we had votes on it, that if the Minister of Labour or any member on that side could come up with something, come up with some formula; it didn't have to be the formula that was recommended by the Minimum Wage Board. What if the Minimum Wage Board comes up and says, we recommend what we recommended to you in 1972 or 1973? Are you going to live by it? I doubt it very much, Mr. Speaker, I doubt it very much. I don't think they will.

The 60 percent of the industrial average wage complex may not be the right method. There may be other methods. But surely these people, with their cost of living rising . . . Members of this House are saying, well, look, we need more money too, to operate and nobody's arguing that point, but we're in a beautiful position, Mr. Speaker; we can vote ourselves increases. Those people out there cannot. We are in the position here that we can control our own destiny as far as the remuneration that members of this Assembly will receive. But to those out there, those who are the unfortunates of our society, and to say that they're all school children

under the age of 18, that's nonsense. There are approximately I think somewhere around 40,000 to 45,000 people who are having to exist at the minimum wage levels, as we see them here in the province of Manitoba.

We can take great pride in saying, well, ours is no worse or no better than anyone else's. But because somebody else has got a rotten minimum wage, we shouldn't go around patting ourselves on the back saying that we run around fourth of fifth spot. Certainly we can take no kudos for that, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly nothing to congratulate ourselves about or puff our chests out and walk around swaggering and saying, well, what a tremendous minimum wage we have set out here in Manitoba.

One of these prime arguments that used to come across from this side of the House when you people were over here, to us over there, was never mind what happens anywhere else. Inflation didn't take place anywhere else. It just took place here in Manitoba. That was the argument. Don't talk about any place else. Talk about Manitoba. Well, I'm talking about Manitoba. I'm taking a leaf out of your book. If you want to deal with this problem, never mind what they do elsewhere, let's make sure that the people here, our constituents, our people in our province have a decent living wage.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hour being 5:30, when this subject matter next comes up the honourable member will have nine minutes.

The hour being 5:30, the House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. (Thursday)