

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Friday, 4 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 . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills.

ORAL QUESTIONS

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

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister for Community Services and ask him whether he is now ready to respond to the questions which I asked him last Thursday, June 26th, which he undertook to investigate and report on, and that is the application of the proposed Bill No. 77 on Family Maintenance, to proposed Bill 39, dealing with the definition of financial resources.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I raise this matter. There seems to be a tendency in this direction of asking questions about bills that are before the Legislature. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that these kinds of questions are out of order. These bills are before the Legislature. They are appointed for debate. Questions and matters pertaining to them can be raised in that debate on second reading in committee, etc., Mr. Speaker, and I think they should be ruled out of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. PETER FOX: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order that the Attorney-General raises. I am sure he is well aware that there is some co-ordination and co-operation in respect to some of these bills which overlap into other departments, and one cannot get answers from the Honourable Minister who is introducing the bill often because they are very brief, very cursory, and they do not cover the particular areas. Unfortunately what has occurred in the past, Mr. Speaker, is that the government Ministers have not been replying and have not been debating the bills. If the Minister who introduces it doesn't give us the answers, then how do we expect to get any answers by debating it when we don't know what we're debating. It is pertinent that we have the information before we can debate rationally the bills.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, on that point order, we have here, for example, a bill that was introduced. There were concerns expressed. Those concerns can be expressed by members opposite in

the debate and then will be the responsibility of the Ministers responsible for the bill to answer those questions when he concludes debate on second reading, for example, in this case, or if there may be matters of detail, they can be dealt with at committee.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, it's very well for the Honourable Minister to say that a Minister has introduced it, but this particular bill happens to cover two or three areas that overlap into other Ministers' departments and he, when he introduced it, didn't include all the pertinent answers that are necessary.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I refer honourable members to Citation 360 of Beausnesne dealing with questions. It says, "Some further limitations seem to be generally understood. A question may not (1) ask a solution of a legal question such as the interpretation of a statute."

On that basis, I would have to rule the honourable member's question out of order.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, rather than challenge a ruling, I will ask the Minister of Community Services not for a legal interpretation but for a policy indication on the part of his department and his government to relate the application of Bill No. 77, which he did not introduce, to Bill No. 39, which he did introduce, which involves an apparent connection. I believe the Minister is anxious to answer but, Mr. Speaker, I know the rules. He doesn't have to answer if he doesn't want to but I think he wants to. So why doesn't the House Leader give him a chance?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I was prepared to answer on the question with regard to policy and that's why I was trying to get the attention of the Speaker. With regard to present policy, Mr. Speaker, of the government and department which is similar to the policy of the former administration dealing with maintenance payments, any person receiving social assistance who also receives maintenance payments from either a spouse that has either separated or is divorced or, I guess, in the case of if it was a child who was prepared to support the parent to some degree, they are counted as income. There's been no change in policy with that regard at all.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister for his answer. May I ask him, since proposed Bill No. 77 deals with an application which may be made by a parent or any person on behalf of a parent, whether it is the policy of his department to make applications on behalf of

parents to force children to contribute to their support?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge, I don't believe that we have followed through in any case in that regard. I believe that apportion still exists in an Act where it is the responsibility of the children to look after their parents to some degree. But to my knowledge, I don't believe our department has ever sought maintenance under that particular ruling.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, in view of the contribution already made this morning by the Member for Wellington on Bill No. 77, would the Honourable Minister of Community Services consider reviewing what was said relating to work that comes clearly within his department and participate in the debates?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, I will give consideration to that. I was not present at the time when the Honourable Member for Wellington took part in the debate, so I'll have to have a look at Hansard.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns with a fourth question.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the Honourable Minister. I did not try to follow the rules, not to mention that I knew he wasn't here, but he said he wasn't, and I do appreciate the fact that he is willing to read what was said and consider participating.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Agriculture with respect to the lending procedures of Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. Yesterday I asked the Honourable Minister a number of questions about assistance for farmers who don't seem to fall into the categories of assistance announced by the Minister and I asked specifically about those farmers who didn't qualify for crop insurance, who had no inventory carry-over and who were being hurt by the drought. I asked whether there was any possibility of assistance for them to overcome cash hardships, i.e. hardships from a shortage of cash right now, and the Minister referred to MACC assistance. My question is, was the Minister inferring in his reply that MACC is prepared to lend, over and above the normal limits of that organization for people who are hurt directly by the drought?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): No, Mr. Speaker, it's just ongoing programs that are available to the farm community through the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation.

MR. EVANS: This is then the crux of the matter, Mr. Speaker. What can the government offer, if anything, to those people who unfortunately are

growing crops, especially crops that don't, at this time at least, qualify for crop insurance — I'm thinking specifically of lentils; I understand that is not, at the moment, covered by crop insurance — and who are being hurt by the drought and who are in a very tight cash situation. I'm advised that there's enough people, that they'd like to come as a delegation to see the Minister regarding their particular problem of cash shortage. So I'm wondering, would the government be prepared to lift the loan limits on MACC so that these people can at least get some kind of assistance, not necessarily a cash handout but a loan at a reasonable rate of interest, which will be paid back in due course?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the member refers specifically to a crop known as lentils. I would suggest that we have, as a government, been trying to enlarge the numbers of crops that are available to be covered under crop insurance. It's unfortunate that we haven't been able to cover a wider range to this point. If the member is suggesting or inferring at this particular time that it is too late or that the crop is lost, then there may be a possibility of looking at the Green Feed Program which is available for all farmers. If they want to work up their lentils and sow a crop, they would get a minimum of 15 an acre or 15 a ton for Green Feed Program. So there is a program in which they could qualify if they want to work down their crop. If it is just a shortfall in the lentil crop, then there's very little we can do because we have other people who are not in crop insurance that will have to suffer reduced yields because of the drought conditions. It's very difficult to introduce another program that would cover the shortfall between those who are insured and those who aren't. We've tried to do that with our Green Feed Program and I would say it has been working very successfully to this point.

MR. EVANS: I appreciate what the Minister has said and I'm not critical of that program but, just for clarification then, is the Minister saying that he or the government is not prepared to look into the matter of lifting the loan limits by MACC? This is a very specific suggestion, lifting the loan . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. May I point out to the honourable member that one of the privileges that exists to members is to ask questions of their choice, but when they start trying to put words in other members' mouths, that is unparliamentary, and I would ask the honourable member if he wishes to rephrase his question.

MR. EVANS: Would the Minister clarify the government's position with regard to the matter of providing financial assistance to the farmer category that I described earlier, and specifically would he advise whether or not the government is preparing to lift the loan limits for those who are hurt by the drought, who are not able to qualify for any other kind of assistance that has been made available to date?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I don't know of the specific case that the member is referring, however, I don't believe it would be a matter of restrictions on the maximum amount of loan that they would be restricting those people from getting financial assistance from MACC, that they would probably qualify just under the normal terms of any program that's in place, and if it's a maximum, there is a maximum comprehensive loan guaranteed package of up to 200,000.00. If it's a matter of raising the maximum from 200,000 to something greater, consideration could be given to them, but I would think a 200,000 loan maximum should be sufficient to cover a fairly substantial shortfall in the loss of crop.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for the Communities Economic Development Fund, and I'd ask the Minister if he can confirm that the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood has seen necessary to withdraw their representative from the Board of Directors of the CEDF because of what they termed discriminatory practices of the government in refusing to provide CEDF loans to Treaty Indian persons.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. DOUG GOURLAY (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I have received some correspondence from the MIB representative on the CEDF stating that they did not wish to participate on the board until further clarification.

MR. COWAN: I'd ask the Minister then if he can advise the House as to what action he is taking in regard to what has been termed, and I believe appropriately so, a discriminatory policy on the part of the Minister and his government and the Communities Economic Development Fund.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, I've answered these questions during the course of my estimates and I don't have anything further to add at this point.

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

MR. COWAN: My supplementary, although on the same subject, would be directed to the Attorney-General, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask the Attorney-General, is he prepared to direct his department to investigate the allegations that the Communities Economic Development Fund, under the advice and consent of the Minister responsible, is acting in a discriminatory manner towards people of Treaty Indian ancestry in the province of Manitoba? Would he direct either his department or the Human Rights Commission to review that particular situation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any such allegations.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Cultural Affairs and ask her whether she personally favours a smaller and more manageable board for the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have made comments to that effect. I think a board of around 50 is unwieldy.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would also ask the Minister whether she would concur that the main concern in the community should be for the orchestra itself, which not only plays but also backs up other cultural organizations and groups and that therefore the future of the symphony is more important than any individual manager, conductor, or member of the board.

MRS. PRICE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly concur with the Member for Elmwood and I think that the orchestra is by far more important than any individuals.

MR. DOERN: I'd like to ask the Minister, in view of the success of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet in bailing itself out of a deficit position, whether any consideration has been given to either imitating or emulating their fund-raising programs, or even encouraging any of the people who participated in those programs to move over to the symphony and help bail them out?

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, I don't have anything to do with their fund-raising per se but, as I mentioned last week, to the Member for Elmwood, I will have some statements to make in about a week's time concerning the future of the symphony orchestra.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Could the Minister confirm or indicate whether people other than Metis or Status Indians can qualify for the special ARDA grant and, if so, whether this is not reverse discrimination?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GOURLAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the special ARDA grants, there has to be a certain percentage of native or Indian people employed before anyone can qualify for such grants.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Municipal and Northern Affairs. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether the Minister could tell us

whether there have been any other changes in government policy and government programs that relate to Treaty Indian people, in light of the fact that the Critical Home Repair Program has been cut for Treaty Indian people and CEDF has been cut for Treaty Indian people. We, on this side, didn't find out about these from the Minister but from the people affected in the field. I wonder if the Minister could tell us whether any other policy changes have taken place, or any other programs no longer apply to Treaty Indian people that used to apply to Treaty Indian people.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, if the honourable member would like to be more specific, I'd be pleased to answer his question.

MR. McBRIDE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I assumed that the Minister would be aware of those programs that have in the past applied to Treaty Indian people. I could ask the Minister specifically whether there's been any change in the unconditional grant, whether the unconditional grants still go to Indian bands. I could ask the Minister whether the Special Northern Affairs grants still go to Indian bands in northern Manitoba or whether they don't go to them any longer?

MR. GOURLAY: With respect to the per capita grants to the Indian bands, this particular funding has been discontinued, with consultation with the federal Department of Indian Affairs, back last fall and there was also funding allocated on a per capita basis to non-status Indians as well and this funding has been incorporated into the grants to the northern communities. Consultation did take place with the federal Minister of Indian Affairs at the time with respect to the per capita grants and the Indian Affairs people agreed, or the Minister agreed, that if further funding was required by the Indian bands that he'd be pleased to discuss this issue with them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRIDE: Mr. Speaker, I'm not positive whether the Minister is referring to the Special Northern Affairs per capita grant or whether he's referring to what's been called the unconditional grant. I would assume that the unconditional grant still applies to reserves but if I'm incorrect the Minister could inform me.

I'd also ask the Minister whether there is still in existence the tripartite committee or the committee between the province and the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood which was looking at federal-provincial funding to those organizations in order to ensure that Treaty Indians were also considered citizens of the province of Manitoba, which this government doesn't seem to be doing; is that committee still ongoing or has that committee now been cancelled and the government, on its own, withdrawing from programs of Treaty Indians?

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, that committee is still in place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: I'd like to address a question again to the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, on another matter dealing with railway line abandonment — perhaps it should have been addressed to the Minister of Economic Development but, in his absence and knowing the interest of the Minister of Agriculture, perhaps he can answer anyway — and that is with regard to the Rosburn Subdivision of the Canadian National Railway being perhaps, and I say perhaps, threatened by an intention of the federal Minister of Transportation, Mr. Pepin, to remove it from the guaranteed status. My question to the Minister, is the government prepared to do anything in particular to assist the area in assuring the continued guarantee of the Rosburn Subdivision?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question is hypothetical.

The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, let me ask a question then. Has the Minister been in communication with the Rail Branchline Retention Committee in that area? Has the Minister been in touch or has the committee been in touch with the Minister on this particular matter and has the Minister been able to assure the committee of some assistance?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, we have in fact, and I can't speak for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. I know two of the other subdivisions that were affected by the threat of a change in decision by the federal government have been in contact with me personally. The Rosburn Subdivision Retention Committee may have been in contact with the other departments but let me assure the member that that was one of the No. 1 items on our agenda at our meeting in Victoria on June 3rd was the request to ask the federal government to maintain the policy of the last government, to keep the Rosburn Subdivision, the Morris Subdivision and the Deloraine Subdivision in the permanent network; a decision that was made by the Clark government, a decision that was put through Order-in-Council, and I brought the case to the attention of members of the House shortly after returning that we told the federal government that they would be in for a big political storm if they, in fact, change that decision. So we have indicated publicly and we will continue to make sure, to the best of our ability, that those lines are kept in the permanent network, as the decision was made by the federal government.

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

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the Minister, along with his western colleagues, have taken that public stand. My question then, has the Minister on behalf of the government or has any Minister of the government written directly to Mr. Pepin about the matter? The second related question is, has the Minister or the government received any assurance, thus far, from the federal government

that, indeed, these subdivisions would remain part of the guaranteed network, at least, guaranteed to the year, 2000, I believe?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, there has been a communication, I don't know how much written communication, but there has been a certain amount of verbal communication to the federal Minister. I have directly made requests of the Minister to live up to the decision that was made by the last federal government and, as far as further decision on those lines, the question of how the final decision was made was of some question to the federal Minister, that in fact the Neil Report was not a public document and that was the basis that the decisions were made. We've assured him that the communities that have been involved, Rosssburn, on the Rosssburn Subdivision, on the Morris to Hartney, and on the Deloraine Subdivision, that those communities did put forward a good case, that they had fought the battle of maintaining those lines. They had satisfied the federal government and all other authorities that in fact those lines should be maintained and that they shouldn't be put through that exercise again. So we consider the matter closed and are expecting further confirmation of that. I will be further communicating to the federal Minister of Transport to get that decision in writing.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. I wonder if I may have the indulgence of the House to introduce to honourable members the Honourable Solicitor-General of Canada, the Honourable Robert Kaplan. On behalf of all members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

ORAL QUESTIONS Cont'd

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, I've been asked to pass on a question to him to clarify on the hay movement from Ontario whether the government is, with his partners — hopefully with his partners — is planning to pay the transportation cost entirely to the delivery point to the farmer in Manitoba or just into Manitoba. In other words, who will take the burden of the transportation costs within Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the initial discussions and agreement between the railroads and the government where that the hay would be delivered to any point in Manitoba, that program that was introduced would provide hay to the nearest point to the farmer. If it's on the rail, then, the nearest point to that particular farm. There is also an assistance program for interprovincial hay movement that assists in the movement of hay from one part of the province to the other, which was announced some time prior to that. But the program, as announced, will deliver the hay to the closest point to that farmer.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, before the Minister tells me I know nothing about farming, I want to assure him I don't pretend to, but I would like to know if he could clarify whether there is an actual contradiction, conflict, confusion or, on the other hand, co-ordination between the announced federal program and the provincial program dealing with drought problems and, specifically, whether there is an actual working arrangement for the distribution of the federal program, as suggested through the newspapers as being one which will be handled by the province?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, if I can understand the question, the work that is anticipated to be carried out by the federal government and the provincial governments is in two areas. I would assume in two areas, in assuming the announcement and some of the discussions we've had. We look at co-operating on their participation in our programs and the administration of them, in which we've been told they will be a part of, and we are prepared to help them in the new program that they've introduced and that is the per animal subsidy or assistance program that they've introduced. But we have to have some more discussions at the administrative level so both levels of government, in conjunction with the local municipal governments, know the types of programs and how best they can be administered to be most effective for the farm community.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, from the official statements by both the provincial and the federal government dealing with drought support and by the unofficial reported comments, would it be fair to infer that neither government consulted the other government and received support for the program which it has developed?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, some several months ago or several weeks, I should say, I contacted the federal Minister of Agriculture by letter indicating to him the severity of the drought conditions in Manitoba and requesting federal support for those programs. We've had our technical staff working on such programs as the PFRA Water Program, assistance for pumping dugouts and well development. We've had some discussions on the different feed assistance programs at a technical level.

I have indicated to the federal Minister of Agriculture, prior to our announcement of the transportation program, by Telex to him that we were introducing that program and we expected federal government support. I further communicated with him by direct contact in Ottawa some week ago before they made this announcement. He agreed that the programs had been discussed at a technical level or was aware of the fact but we had not personally done a lot of discussion over it, or had a lot of discussion over it. He indicated to me the overall general thrust of the program that he would be announcing this week, along with the indication that he supported the programs or would be supporting

the programs that we had announced, that they were favourable kinds of programs and that he would be prepared to further work out the details of these programs, as indicated by having a senior member of his staff coming to Manitoba next week, a man by the name of Mr. Frank Payne.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns with a fourth question.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, would it be correct to assume that both Ministers of Agriculture appear to be supportive of the program, each of the other, and that the programs are in some way co-ordinated and not in conflict and not overly — I don't want to use the word, generous, because you can't be generous under these circumstances — but an over-expenditure rather than two separate efforts by two separate governments? Can we assume that it is a co-ordinated and accepted program, each by the other?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I think, if I could put it this way, that both Ministers of Agriculture at both federal and provincial level are sincere about helping the agricultural community; I would say, yes, and that as far as he is concerned about overlapping, I think that we have tried to co-operate and put those programs in place that would best suit the needs of the farmer without an overlapping situation developing.

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

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Education and it arises from an undertaking that he gave during his estimates to provide this side of the House with copies of summary sheets of school division budgets. Is it still the intent of the Minister to provide this information and when can we expect to receive it?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Definitely, Mr. Speaker, and I would expect that can be ready by Monday or Tuesday of the week following.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable, the Minister of Health. Can the Minister of Health tell me whether it is still a departmental policy with respect to people who are chronically in need of certain drugs, such as diabetics, are able to have those drugs supplied at social rather than individual expense despite the fact that they might not, in other respects, be available for social assistance?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Yes, Mr. Speaker, the lifesaving drugs program is still in place.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if that would include drugs that are required by diabetics.

MR. SHERMAN: It doesn't include insulin for diabetics in the normal instance, Mr. Speaker. There are conditions related to diabetes that project the ailment into the lifesaving category and the lifesaving drug program is then available. But in the main, the lifesaving drug program applies to rare, remote, highly costly and unique ailments. Diabetes does not now qualify and has not for some years. In fact, I don't know that insulin for diabetics was ever included under the lifesaving drug program. It might have been some years ago. It certainly hasn't been since the early 1970s, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, with respect to diabetics, has there been any other change in the program reducing the availability of certain drugs within the last three years?

MR. SHERMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, no changes and I might just say that we have not had, to my knowledge, any entreaties or approaches from diabetics with respect to insulin, requesting that it be included in the cost-free lifesaving program. If a diabetic has, as an extension of his or her condition, a further ailment that requires some particular relatively rare drug, then that person comes under the lifesaving program, but not just for insulin for diabetes, and we've had no entreaties requesting it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Deputy Premier concerning the historic national convention of Liberals which is meeting in Winnipeg. According to the literature that I have from one of the candidates for president, Mr. Speaker, over 2,000 dedicated Liberals are descending on Winnipeg. I don't know if they're dedicated to having a good time or dedicated to reelection, but in any case, we're glad they're here.

My question to the Deputy Premier is, has a hospitality grant been given to this national convention?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I am advised that the Liberal Party had some concerns that they might do like the Canadian Labour Congress did; they might have to accept the grant and then deny the Premier the right to speak, so they'd be, for starts, they should not ask for the grant.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not quite clear on that answer. I realize that it probably would require a 12,000 donation to get the Premier a speaking engagement, but has a request been made? Was a request forthcoming and did the province consider such a grant?

MR. CRAIK: Not that I'm aware of, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOERN: I would also ask the Deputy Premier whether they intend to have observers at the convention.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I heard the Member for St. Boniface say from his seat that he was going over at 4 o'clock, so I think that's as close as perhaps either the Member for Elmwood or I will get to being an observer.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance whether he would be prepared to let us have a copy of the letter of intent concerning the Mandan project which was apparently signed on June 27th?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the Mandan agreement is entered into between Hydro and the Nebraska Public Power District. I'll refer the question to Hydro and ask them what their practice has been on these matters. Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the Member for St. Johns that the formal point at which the government gets into an agreement is following the Letter of Intent when there will be an Order-in-Council, of course, accompanying it. But I will pass that on to the utility and it would seem to me that perhaps it should be a document that should be publicly available. They may wish to discuss it with NPPD, who are the Nebraska Public Power District, who are a similar body in Nebraska.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, the question was asked because I understand that a Legislative Assistant for the Minister participated in the signing ceremonies, and I thought that the Department of Energy and Mines was indeed involved in negotiations, as apparently is the sole negotiator in relation to the Western Canada grid. Accepting the fact that the Minister, I believe, I hate to words in his month, but I infer from what he said, Mr. Speaker, that it was a Hydro negotiated transaction and I accept that, would the Minister attempt to get a copy of the earlier agreement signed between the two parties, so that there would be an indication of the changes, improvements or otherwise, that have been made between the two agreements?

MR. CRAIK: I'll inquire into that matter, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MR. GARY FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might, on a point of personal privilege, I believe the Member for St. Johns indicated that I participated in the signing of the letter of intent; I attended but I certainly did not participate in the signing.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: On the point of order, if the Honourable the Legislative Assistant to the Minister

would have listened, he would not have put words in my mouth, he would have heard me say, participated in the signing ceremonies, and I believe that is correctly described of what he is purported to have done.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you would call Second Reading of a Bill, No. 99, on Page 7 and then proceed with the Adjourned Second Reading Debates commencing on Page No. 6, with Bill No. 78.

SECOND READING — GOVERNMENT BILLS

BILL NO. 99 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE TEACHERS' PENSIONS ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Second Reading, Bill No. 99, the Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli) presented Bill No. 99, An Act to amend The Teachers' Pensions Act for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, the amendments contained in this bill fall into several groups. The first group consists of a series of amendments correcting errors which undoubtedly have occurred as a result of amendments made to the Act since the last general revision in 1966. Most of these, members will see, consist of correcting errors in syntax, faulty references and missing words.

A second group of the amendments proposes repeals of certain sections of the Act which are no longer operative. Among these are sections which dealt with the cost of living adjustments from 1970 to 1975, inclusive. Under this heading, also, is a proposal to repeal Section 49 of the Act under which school boards are required to contribute toward the government's share of pensions where they employ teachers who are not subject to Canada Pension Plans, and these people are mainly members of religious orders. The total collected under this section averages only 10,000 and it is estimated that procedures, relative to collecting it, cost the board nearly that much. It is felt that the time and effort expended by staff in collecting this relatively small sum could be otherwise more productively employed.

A third group of amendments ensure that deferred pension rights are not adversely affected. We propose to amend The Teachers' Pensions Act so that a person who has pension credits in both the civil service plan and the teachers' plan can, if he leaves Manitoba and becomes employed by a reciprocating employer elsewhere in Canada, transfer accumulated benefits from both the Manitoba public sector pension plans to his new pension plans. Parallel amendments have recently been proposed

by my colleague, the Minister of Labour in a bill to amend The Civil Service Superannuation Act.

The fourth group of amendments, Mr. Speaker, are the result of nearly four years of discussion between representatives of the government's Task Force on Superannuation and Group Insurance and the Manitoba Teachers' Society. During the 1976 session of the Legislature an amendment to The Teachers' Pension Act implemented a separate account within the Teachers Retirement Allowances Fund from which annual increases and pensions could be paid to retired teachers. The fund's share of these increases was financed by a 1 percent increase in the contribution rate, from 6 percent to 7 percent of annual salary. Each month 10.1 percent of contributions were allocated to this special account. A similar amendment in the Civil Service Superannuation Fund provided similar benefits for retired civil servants. It was found, however, Mr. Speaker, that the 10.1 percent of contributions would not provide retired teachers with the same pension increase which could be provided for civil servants. Since that time, discussions have been conducted with the Manitoba Teachers' Society to try to find a solution to the problem and at the same time address certain concerns which teachers have about their pension plan. As a result of these discussions we propose to amend The Teachers' Pensions Act as follows:

For service up to June 30, 1980, each teacher's pension will be determined by using the average of the salary received by the teacher in the seven years in which his or her salary was the highest, where the seven years are obtained from the last 12 years of service.

For service after July 1, 1980, each teacher's pension will be determined by using the average of the salary received by the teacher in the five years in which his or her salary was the highest, where the five years are obtained from the last 12 years of service.

We propose to continue discussions with the Teachers' Society to ascertain if there is a method whereby each teacher in service could be allowed to make extra contributions to pay the fund's share of applying the five-year determination to service prior to June 30, 1980.

We propose also to amend the Act, so that if a teacher is in receipt of a disability income from a group insurance plan, no disability allowance would be paid by the pension plan. Such a person would, however, be eligible for a retirement pension at age 65, or on retirement date, if he or she retires early. This amendment has the effect of deleting a duplication of disability benefits which has arisen as a result of the growth of long-term disability income plans in school divisions.

We propose also, Mr. Speaker, to allow disabled teachers to continue to contribute to the pension plan while in receipt of an allowance from a long-term disability and to receive credit for time on disability as pensionable service under the plan.

We further propose to eliminate another duplication which exists in the area of survivor income. Where a teacher dies prior to retirement and his or her surviving spouse is entitled to an annual income from a group life insurance plan, no survivor income will be paid by the pension plan.

The surviving spouse will be entitled to a return of contributions made to the plan, together with interest at a rate to be determined by the board.

I wish to emphasize, Mr. Speaker, that the rights of certain groups who cannot participate in group insurance plans, providing disability incomes or survivor incomes, are protected. They will still be entitled to disability and survivor benefits, only those who have access to duplicate protection are affected.

These amendments will ensure that retired teachers will receive an annual increase in pension comparable to that which is received by retired civil servants. Increases in benefits, Mr. Speaker, are achieved without increases in cost. Part of the cost to the fund of the improved benefits will be offset by the removal of the duplication in benefits which I have mentioned earlier. Part of the cost of the fund will be offset by a change in contribution rates. We propose to increase the contribution rate from 7 percent of annual salary to 7.3 percent of annual salary.

We further propose to amend the Act to provide a similar type of floating guarantee of return on investments that is presently a part of The Civil Service Superannuation Act. Instead of a fixed rate of return on investments we propose to provide a guaranteed rate of return of 1 percent greater than the rate used by the actuary in his most recent valuation. I wish to emphasize again, Mr. Speaker, that the proposed amendments concerning benefits are the result of continued consultation between The Teachers' Society and the Task Force on Superannuation and that they continue a longstanding policy of consultation with representatives of members of the plan before changes are made to benefits.

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

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would entertain a question. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask of the Minister whether clinicians employed within the school system are eligible to be included in this pension fund and if so, could he explain the procedure for being included in it? If he doesn't have the information immediately, could he get it for me?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I have asked for that particular information. As I believe the honourable members knows, there's been some change in the status of clinicians in the last few months and, in that case, it may have required some of them to change their pension plans. I've asked for that particular information this morning and I do not have it as yet. I will certainly communicate it to him as soon as I have that information.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Flin Flon that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 78, An Act to amend The Executions Act, The County Courts Act and The

Provincial Judges Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 79, An Act to amend The Expropriation Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 80, An Act to amend The Payment of Wages Act and The Real Property Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 81, An Act to amend Various Acts Relating Courts of the Province, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 82, An Act to amend The Clean Environment Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 84, The Lotteries and Gaming Control Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to deal with Bill No. 85 and Bill No. 93 and also with Bill No. 51 and Bill No. 76.

BILL NO. 85 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE MENTAL HEALTH ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 85, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, I adjourned this debate on behalf of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

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

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I think that we've looked at this bill, we agree with the change in this bill, which was something that has been prepared in the department for a while. We have some concern and unfortunately the Minister is not here. —(Interjection)— Will he? Is he coming? Well then I don't want — well maybe he can read it in Hansard or maybe somebody could talk to him.

I wish to say at this stage that we will support it going through second reading. There's concern and it might be that the Minister might be able to look at it and to see if he has the same concern. It might be that he will wish to bring some amendment and I realize, Sir, that this is on second reading, it is the principle of the bill, but I must refer to a section; that's the only way that I could really express my concern. I'm talking about the bill on page 5, the emergency action by a peace officer. I personally welcome this addition, where you can protect people from themselves or from harming themselves or harming loved ones at times. The only concern, and I know that this is not what the bill is aiming at and I know that's not what the Minister wants, but you could have a situation where, for instance, somebody at a boxing match or wrestling match, or a hockey game, can get pretty wild and then if a peace officer takes him to the station, takes him out, he could decide, because it only takes a peace officer to decide, the peace officer could then decide that this man is going to harm himself or harm somebody else. He could be quite an avid fan and he could have him locked up for awhile or get him in a

psychiatric hospital. So this is a concern that we might have, Mr. Speaker. It might be that you want a little more protection than that to make sure we don't have this abuse.

I must say, Mr. Speaker, that I've never heard of this abuse. This was brought to my attention as a possible abuse and I would ask the Minister, before we come to Cabinet, to see if there's something that could be suggested, to make sure that there is not this kind of abuse in the bill. Other than that, Mr. Speaker, we think it's a good bill, we welcome it and will support it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could, on behalf of the Minister, indicate we will pass on the concerns — pardon me, there may be other speakers — expressed by the Member for St. Boniface to the Minister of Health, in order that he might be able to respond to them at committee stage.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, everytime you have laws which enable somebody to interfere with the liberty of somebody else, I don't think any member in the House would feel that there shouldn't be serious questions asked to see what this will do that is not presently available with respect to the manner in which we try to control these things.

Now I would imagine that peace officer must possibly be defined in the definition section of the Act. I don't see it in the area that my honourable friend the Member for St. Boniface has referred to, but I suspect that we are talking about policemen, RCMP officers, people who have supervision and who are generally engaged in the keeping of peace in society. Such an officer, Mr. Speaker, has, I would think, authority to arrest somebody, without this Act, for behaving violently towards another person or causing another person to fear bodily harm for him. I believe that would fall within the possibilities of the peace officer within the Criminal Code. I stand to be corrected but I believe that it's there. I can't think now that a peace officer can't arrest somebody who is causing bodily harm to somebody else or causing somebody else to fear bodily harm, has threatened or attempted, or is threatening or attempting to cause bodily harm to himself. Well, we know that attempt suicide is a crime.

I suppose that one could argue that this would extend the power of a police officer to deal with a person even though the bodily harm that he is doing to himself may not amount to attempt suicide. I suppose that a peace officer cannot now arrest somebody and take him to a doctor if he sees a person, let us say, hammering his own fingers or something because that's not attempt suicide and that this would permit a peace officer to do that.

The other part, Mr. Speaker, scares me. "Has shown or is showing lack of competence to care for himself. In addition, the officer is of the opinion that the person is apparently suffering from mental disorder of a nature that will likely result in serious bodily harm to the person, serious bodily harm to

another person or imminent and physical impairment of the person." Insofar, Mr. Speaker, as protecting others are concerned, I don't think that this section is necessary for the purpose of making arrest. I am not certain that is necessary with respect to making an arrest of oneself and I am very concerned that we ask peace officers or give peace officers the authority to make a decision with regard to mental competence, and in this section it doesn't exactly do that except insofar as it involves harm to somebody else or himself. If it's only harm to himself or somebody else, then the question of mental competence needn't come up.

I am suggesting to the Minister of Health that we should be as circumspect — is that the right word? — as is possible in what we are going to permit somebody to do with regard to the mental health of another. I ask the Minister, wouldn't it fulfill his purposes if he said that where a person is going to cause harm to somebody else or to himself that a peace officer is entitled to arrest him? If we got down that far, then if a person causes harm to somebody else, he can already arrest him, so we don't need that. So it leaves it, if a person is going to cause harm to himself, a peace officer can arrest him and take him to an appropriate place for examination by a physician.

In all other cases that are referred to in this section, it seems to me that there is a responsibility under the Criminal Code or a possibility under the Criminal Code and that possibility takes him into custody. Once he is in custody, I think that it is possible to get mental examinations by various proceedings before the magistrate or by various other proceedings. We are dealing with immediate arrest.

Mr. Speaker, some of the horror stories I have heard are how people have their liberty taken away from them on the basis of mental illness. It is the standard form of deprivation of liberty in the Soviet Union to say that somebody suffers from mental illness. We are now going to have a peace officer determine on mental illness and I am scared. All I am asking the Minister to do is to satisfy my fears, discuss with the Attorney-General. If somebody is threatening to cause harm to somebody else, you don't need this section. Mr. Speaker, I'm quite certain of that. If somebody is in a position where he is going to cause harm to somebody else, he can be arrested by a peace officer under the Criminal Code to prevent that harm from taking place.

Mr. Speaker, it is an assault to threaten somebody. Well, then, the section says, threatened or threatening, or attempting to cause bodily harm to another person, is behaving violently towards another person, is causing another person to fear bodily harm from him. I mean, Mr. Speaker, we are talking about the arrest of that person and if it is not now possible to take a person into custody because he has attempted or threatening or attempting to cause bodily harm to himself, then maybe that's all the Minister needs. I am certain that the law officers of the Crown can have the misgivings that I am relating looked at and show me that these things are necessary. If they are absolutely necessary, then maybe we will have to risk them.

MR. DESJARDINS: Would you permit a question?

MR. GREEN: The Member for St. Boniface wishes to ask me a question.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, isn't it a case now, and I'm asking the Member for Inkster, that if somebody injured somebody or caused bodily harm or threatened, yes, there's no problem, they could be arrested, but what if they behave in a way that the other people might fear. It's not a threat but they are a mental disorder of a nature that they might cause problems. I think that's the addition.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, that's what bothers me. I mean we're not actually talking about the threatening of bodily harm; we're not talking about the causing of bodily harm or the imminent indication of bodily harm. But we are now making it possible for somebody to be arrested because somebody says he looks violent. —(Interjection)— Well, I can tell my honourable friend that is a very very subjective thing and I am not certain that I want police officers arresting somebody because somebody else says that guy scares me. Because the dangers . . . Mr. Speaker, should we not have some instances where trouble arose or examples as to how we are powerless to deal with a particular situation unless we have this section.

I don't want to disagree with the Member for St. Boniface that there are circumstances in which we would all want a person who has mental problems to have that corrected. But the possibilities of abuse the other way should also cause us to make sure that we are not doing more than we absolutely have to do. My mind has been given some exercise with respect to whether or not you can arrest somebody who is causing harm to themselves. If you can't do that, and that's what the Minister wants to correct, that's fine. I am fairly certain you can arrest somebody who is in a position of causing harm to somebody else but that should be demonstrable. It shouldn't be merely that the other person says, "I fear that person, arrest him" and then put him in a mental institution and have him examined by doctors. The fact is that it is not hypothetical as to whether people who had been well had been put away in mental institutions and kept there. There are recorded cases. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Speaker, they have kept them for many years.

MR. DOERN: I might ask the member a question here. I wonder if he could comment on the instance which is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. I don't believe it's proper to ask the member as to exactly what the member is doing.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think that I have made my concerns . . .

MR. DOERN: I wanted to ask a question of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: because I think it's a very important point. There are many instances or at least we have heard of instances where a woman has complained, as an example, that her husband has been

threatening to kill her and she has sought police protection and so on, and then the attitude of the police is that they can do nothing, and after a number of recorded instances or concerns, it has turned out that that woman was then murdered by her husband. I wonder whether the Member for Inkster could comment on a situation of that nature.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm not able to rectify or deal with every possible circumstance. I can tell the honourable member that many people have phoned the police and said this guy is threatening to kill me because they want to get that person in trouble, and the person has never threatened to kill them. So the police will investigate — you say they won't — they will. They will go down and say, did you threaten to kill her and he'll say no. Then they probably will not institute a prosecution because they will have a witness saying, he's threatened to kill me; they will have a witness say he didn't threaten to kill me, and in their mind they will be wasting the court's time. So it will happen as you say, that one of these cases will result in it.

But I'm not going to put everybody into a mental institution on the basis that somebody said, he threatened to kill me, because that way we will have to build many many more mental institutions and you will have lots of people phoning up saying, this guy threatened to kill me. I tell the honourable member that if that was the basis upon which people are put in mental institutions and arrested, then everybody who doesn't like the Member for Elmwood would phone the police and say, he threatened to kill me. Before you know it, you're being arrested. So there are problems.

There are problems in society which cannot be entirely corrected and which we are not going to solve. But I'm looking at the possible abuse — and I know that there is a possible abuse — and I know, Mr. Speaker, as sure as I am standing here, that if you passed this type of law somebody is going to say that I can get that person arrested by saying, he's a violent person, and I don't know who they're going to call a violent person. I'm concerned. I always read every one of these things, Mr. Speaker, as if it applied to me and I'm going to be the one arrested, and that's the way we should be reading it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health. The Honourable Minister will be closing debate.

MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all I want to express appreciation to those members who have participated in the debate on the bill up to this point in time, the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, the Honourable Member for Inkster, and also to thank all members opposite and all members of the House who have given it consideration up to this point in time and will be continuing to do so through subsequent stages of legislation.

I want to say that I agree with the concerns raised by the Honourable Member for Inkster in the past few moments and I do not minimize them in any way. This is a difficult condition to try to deal with in responsible and yet humane and compassionate and

sensible terms. It may well be, Mr. Speaker, that with the opportunity between now and Third Reading for me to look again at this particular section, Section 22 of Bill 85, and to discuss it with my colleague, the Attorney-General, and with other members of the House and with the members of the committee who will be dealing with it on a clause-by-clause basis, that we will be able to produce a form of wording respecting this particular situation and condition that will be more acceptable to the Honourable Member for Inkster, to myself and to all members of the House. I will undertake to make that study, that evaluation and that attempt, Mr. Speaker.

I would say though, that I think that perhaps the Member for Inkster is not entirely overlooking but to a certain extent minimizing the protection that is written into the proposed section of the legislation, which specifies that the peace officer in question must have reason to believe that this dangerous conditions exists. Further to that, that officer must be of the opinion that that person is apparently suffering from mental disorder. Now I know that is still a pretty broad description of parameters of responsibility and I know that what it comes down to is the discretionary call of the peace officer. It becomes a subjective and judgmental decision, but it is not quite as unencumbered as perhaps some members might fear.

It does not specify that a peace officer can arrest a person simply because that person has threatened or is attempting to threaten either himself or herself or somebody else. The Peace Officer must have reason to believe that the person is doing that and must be of the opinion that the person is apparently suffering from mental disorder.

The other point that I would raise with the Member for Inkster and ask his consideration on is, we collectively consider the pitfalls that he has properly identified, is the question of emergency action and apprehension as opposed to what he perhaps may have in mind by the use of his term "arrest". What we're talking about here is technically an arrest, that's true, because the peace officer would be apprehending this particular subject. But it is an arrest for the purposes of taking him to an appropriate place for examination by a physician, that is a necessary condition of the proposed section. He must be taking that person to an appropriate place for examination by a physician and a jail or a correctional institution, I submit and suggest, Mr. Speaker, does not in my view qualify as such an appropriate place.

Nevertheless, the Member for Inkster identifies a problem and a pitfall that I want to assure him I acknowledge. I believe many of us in this House are sensitive to the potential problem that he has raised and I assure him that in the succeeding stages of the legislative process, I will work out with all members of the House who are interested, a wording and a form of wording that is more acceptable and still provides us with what we believe is desirable and necessary protection for individuals suffering from mental disorder themselves; not merely for other members of society exposed to those persons who are ill, but for the protection of those individuals themselves.

The Member for Inkster doesn't feel that this section offers that kind of protection, he feels that on

the contrary it carries the potential for more danger than protection — he has a point and I am fully prepared to attempt to arrive at a more acceptable wording.

Over and above that, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments offered on the legislation, I don't think there are any other points of contention that have been identified as being particularly serious of this nature. No doubt there will be additional views and comments brought to bear at committee stage and I would hope we can move to that stage now with this bill.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 93, The Dutch Elm Disease Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan.

BILL NO. 93 — THE DUTCH ELM DISEASE ACT

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, I adjourned this debate on behalf of the Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, we had examined this bill and are prepared to let it go to committee. However, we do have one concern about it and that is the fact that the Minister has the power to make unilateral decision without notice, without right of appeal, without the need for compensation, a decision to remove a tree that he may suspect of having Dutch Elm Disease; but, Mr. Speaker, on occasions the Minister may be wrong, his department may be wrong, and it may be found that the tree or the trees that were removed in fact, were not afflicted with Dutch Elm Disease. Now surely, Mr. Speaker, in the case of an error in judgment, in cases of error in a diagnosis of the health or the ailment of the tree, there should be some provision for compensation and for which there is none. There isn't even any recourse, any form of appeal to which an individual may go, or may resort to, who may consider himself to be aggrieved by the actions or action of the Minister.

So that, Mr. Speaker, is the one reservation that we have and I mention it at this time and I hope that the Minister would take this matter under advisement and in fact I would hope that at the time that the bill reaches committee, that the Minister would have reconsidered this section and come in with some appropriate amendments and failing that, well it may well be that we from this side may bring in amendments and certainly will speak against that particular portion of the bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister responsible for this bill, whose attending a funeral, out of town, I can indicate to the Member for Burrows that we will bring his concerns to the attention of the Minister so that matter can be dealt with at committee.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Go back to Bill No. 51, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan.

BILL NO. 51 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE HIGHWAYS PROTECTION ACT

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I adjourned this debate on behalf of the Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, in the case of this bill, upon examination of it we have no reason why we would not wish to let it go to committee. There might be some questions that we may wish to raise with specific sections. But I would like to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that comparing the provisions of this bill with those of another bill introduced by this Minister, namely The Highway Department Act, there is somewhat of an inconsistency. The Minister may recall, in Law Amendments Committee, when I expressed my concern about one particular section which allows the Minister to make unilateral decisions without any opportunity for appeal, insofar as the Minister's right to remove plants, trees, structures, whatever. Now it's interesting that in this bill, it's the Highway Traffic Board that serves notice on the property owner and says, we feel that there's a structure within a controlled area which should be removed and if you feel that it should not, you may appear before the board at a certain time and show cause why it shouldn't be removed.

Well, at least that's a bit of an improvement but certainly it's inconsistent with the general tenor and philosophy and thrust of the other bill to which I have referred. So I'm simply mentioning that difference, Mr. Speaker, because with respect, I don't want to get into a debate on the two bills at one time, but on the Highways Department bill we will pursue that matter further and there again I will remind the Minister of the inconsistency with this particular section of the Highways Protection Act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I said that this section, which allows recourse to the Highway Traffic Board, is a bit of an improvement, and I underline the expression "a bit of an improvement", because it's a reverse onus section, Mr. Speaker. By that I mean this: The Highway Traffic Board says, we feel that a certain structure, within a controlled area should be removed, and it must be removed unless you, the owner of that structure, could give some reason or reasons, to our satisfaction, why it should not be removed. And if you read the bill, Mr. Speaker, you will find that there is no obligation resting on the Highway Traffic Board to give the reasons why that particular structure should be removed. In other words, the owner of the structure, is put in a position of having to play a guessing game, you know, he has to be able to read the Highway Traffic Board's mind — what it is about that particular structure that the Traffic Board finds objectionable, and prompts it to direct him, the owner, to remove that structure. And in addition to that, not knowing what the reasons are, that the Traffic Board may have for directing him

to remove the structure, he has to build a case in his own defence to show why he would rather not remove the structure.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the onus should be the other way. If the Traffic Board feels that a certain structure should be removed, that it's either obstructing the view or whatever, then let the department prove its case to the Traffic Board. In other words, let the department go to the Traffic Board and say, we feel that such and such a structure in Mr. Jones' property within a controlled area, should be removed, we want to widen the highway, or it obstructs the view, or it blocks snow in the wintertime, or whatever. Then the Traffic Board should say to the department, very well, you appear before us on such and such a day and give us the reasons, all your rationale, why you feel a certain structure should be removed and we'll also call upon the owner of that structure and let him present his side of the case; why he feels it shouldn't be removed. But then at least the owner would know what case it is that he's fighting. What it is that the department is taking exception to.

So, as I said, Mr. Speaker, in a way this bill is a bit of an improvement over the Highways Department bill, in that under this bill the Minister can not just march in and remove a structure without compensating the owner, as he has a right to do under the Highways Department Act. But nevertheless, there still is that defect, that it has the reverse onus section, that it puts the owner of a structure in a position of having to guess what the reasons are that the department may have for getting the order via the Traffic Board to have him remove the structure and it puts the onus on him to satisfy the Traffic Board why the structure should not be removed, rather than putting the onus the other way; putting the onus where it should be, on the department and have the department satisfy the Traffic Board why that particular structure should be removed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER:(McGregor) The Minister of Highways will be closing debate. The Honourable Minister.

HON. DON ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the Member for Burrows for proceeding with this bill this afternoon. I'd just like to clarify a couple of things, that I wouldn't expect him to appreciate how the operation of the Highway Traffic Board, or my department, the system under which they work in regard to this bill. In fact, what he is concerned about does happen.

The Highway Department Act and Highway Protection Act establish certain do's and don'ts, shall we say, within a right of way and within the control lines of that right of way. If members of my district staff, for instance, note that, and I'll use as an example a farmer has located a grain bin right next to the ditch, so that in the winter time, with prevailing winds, that location of that grain bin is going to cause drifting snow and a potential hazard to the driving public, members of my department will go the Highway Traffic Board and they will say, we believe that this building is going to cause problems, here's the problems it is going to cause, here are going to be the costs to the department, therefore,

we would ask you to issue an order for removal — and often, Mr. Speaker, that building or that structure has been placed there without the necessary permit to locate the building there. This legislation enables the department to go to the Highway Traffic Board and based on their decision, and their decision is going to be based on the facts that the department presents — and they have to be legitimate facts, they can't be flim flam facts; have to be legitimate concerns and based on those legitimate concerns, the Highway Traffic Board, as specified in the bill, may take one of three courses of action, including ordering the removal of that structure that may have been placed there with or without a permit. So that in fact, the onus is first on my department people to justify the case for removal to the Highway Traffic Board and in the case of the Highway Traffic Board's action, they are required by one section in this bill to provide the person who is owner of that structure to appear before them within a certain number of days to indicate why that building should be there and if he can come up with more persuasive reasons for it being there, than what my department personnel can come up with for it not being there, then I would suggest that the Highway Traffic Board —(Interjection)— oh, yes he does. The Highway Traffic Board is going to point out that that is a hazard to snow drifts etc., etc., as outlined by — well commonsense will tell you that you don't have every little nitty gritty detail of activity of the Highway Traffic Board laid out in legislation. There are procedures which they follow and they have to justify. You don't have a law saying that a court of law has to explain the charges to the person. It is there. It is understood that when you are charged with something, it is explained before you in the courts what the charge is.

When you are asked to appear before the Highway Traffic Board to justify why a building shouldn't be removed, you are given the reasons why the building is going to be removed and request that it be removed. Only common sense dictates that that happens. Mr. Speaker, that process that the Member for Burrows is so greatly concerned about in his discussion on this bill is in fact part of the normal process, and I look forward to the passage of this bill through committee.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill No. 76, An Act to amend The Consumer Protection Act, standing in the name of the Member for Logan.

BILL NO. 76 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to make a few brief remarks on this bill. We have examined the bill and most of the amendments that are proposed here are of a housekeeping nature dealing with the inflationary trends where fines are now being increased from 7,500 to 25,000.00. There are sections dealing with notification for the right to cancel a sale to a retail sale, where it will appear on

the agreement that the person has four days in which to cancel the agreement, and tells him how he will have to make this notification known to the vendor and he will receive his money back, and that is a good one.

The Minister took some pride, I guess, in dealing with one section which was a result of a private members' bill that I introduced in this House last year dealing with the unit pricing code. The Minister, while he really hasn't dealt with it, he has dealt with it in a way that gives himself and of course the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council the authority to pass regulations that will stipulate that unit prices will be on every article that is being sold, and that is what we are led to believe.

However, since we don't know what the regulation will be and the Minister said when he was introducing this bill that the regulation could only be introduced after consultation with the Consumers Association of Manitoba, which seems to be the people who are in the forefront against the use of the unit price code system that we have here in three stores in Manitoba and the retailers concerned. It will be very interesting to see what kind of regulations, if retailers are determined to carry on with this type of retail sales and are adamant in their contention that they are not going to mark individually the prices on articles for sale within that retail store.

After all, that's the whole idea of the thing. The whole idea of the thing, I think, was when it came into the United States in the main, I guess that's where it was introduced first, the strated lines that appear on all the packages we see in stores, and it was put in there for the one reason, which was to save costs. We have no guarantee that when these savings are made, there's no guarantee, and I think that if you check the prices at the three stores that have this universal pricing code in place in the Greater Winnipeg area, I dare say that you are not going to find any cheaper prices in those stores than you are in any other stores of comparable type, even of the stores of the same chain. I believe one of the national chains has a store here in Winnipeg.

If the Minister had really wanted to deal with this, I think that the proposed bill that was introduced last year as a private members' bill dealt with it quite adequately. It will be very interesting to see just how the Minister is going to come to an agreement and play Solomon between two people who are adamant, especially if the stores are adamant that they are going to put in the universal pricing code and not individually mark the items and the Consumers Association of Manitoba and the consumer public, and especially our senior citizens, are adamant that they want the prices marked on the individual products.

So with those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to have this bill go to committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Roblin that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Acting Government House Leader.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that we had earlier indicated that we would not be dealing with Bill No. 83, but I believe there is disposition on the part of a member opposite to speak on Bill 83 at this time. I would ask you to call Bill 83.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 83, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster.

BILL NO. 83 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT AND THE CONDOMINIUM ACT

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the bill that we are presently considering and debating is perhaps the one which, from the point of the view of the public at large, is the one which attention is focussed on by people in the province of Manitoba to see how their rights and lives are going to be affected by an Act of the Legislature. I would think that even, Mr. Speaker, The Education Act pales in comparison insofar as to how the public generally is affected by what is happening here. I briefly, Mr. Speaker, wish to try to analyse just where the situation lies with respect to the control of rents in the province of Manitoba at the present time.

It is my conclusion, Mr. Speaker, that at the present time there is a Rent Stabilization Act. Under that Rent Stabilization Act there are certain areas where rent has been decontrolled, meaning that the landlord and the tenant themselves agree as to what rentals will be paid without any governmental control, that there are other rents, and this, I would think, would be a majority — particularly of lower and middle-income groups living in more than single family residences, at any event, all apartment dwellers — where rent is controlled by an Order-in-Council that was passed by the Conservative government and which controls the amount of rental increase that a landlord could charge until October 1st, 1980, that within that area of control that there is still, Mr. Speaker, available to the landlord room to convince a publicly-appointed body that a higher rent is necessary than that which is a chargeable immediately by the control.

Now I hope, Mr. Speaker, that I have not misrepresented the situation, that some rents are subject to the so-called free market, some are controlled by an Order-in-Council, and that within the Order-in-Council or The Rent Stabilization Act there is still room for a landlord who felt that the Act did not give him sufficient to pass through his costs to convince a board of that and hopefully to get an increase in rent.

It is not a case, Mr. Speaker, and I think that this has to be emphasized, it is not the case that The Rent Stabilization Act expires on October 1st, 1980. The Rent Stabilization Act is in existence at the present time, will continue to be in existence, and the government of the day, the present government, is able to pass a regulation under that Act similar to

what has been passed over the past several years dealing with rent increases from October 30th thence forward, that to suggest that The Rent Stabilization Act is no longer in existence, and I'm not saying anybody used those words, but the opinion has been about that rent controls, and The Rental Control Act discontinues as at October 1st, 1980, is just not so. The Act is still in existence, the Act cannot be eliminated without the vote of the members of the Legislature in this province, and the government has the power today to deal with rents beyond October 1st, 1980.

The only thing that will remove that power, Mr. Speaker, is a vote of the Legislature and indeed, the Section 37 of the Act which we are now discussing, says, "the following Acts are repealed. The Rent Stabilization Act being Chapter 3 of the Statutes of Manitoba, 1976, An Act to amend The Rent Stabilization Act in Chapter 41 of the Statutes of Manitoba, 1978." So rent stabilization is the law in the province of Manitoba today. It did not expire. It is the law today and the government of the province can act under that law and it will not expire until the aye votes are recorded, if indeed they are, and it is my hope that we are going to convince the government that if they have any chance of commending themselves to the people of the province of Manitoba in the next election, and I really don't think that there is much chance left, but if they have any chance, that one of the things that they are going to have to do, and they're going to have to swallow, even on the dubiously rewarding rationale that they were forced into it by the opposition, they're even going to have to take that by not proceeding to record the aye votes on this piece of legislation. And they're going to have to, Mr. Speaker, do something with regard to the rental increases that are unjustified.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with that. There is nothing in the present Rent Stabilization Act which does not permit a landlord to get a fair rental even under controlled rents, that there could be a rental increase passed by Order-in-Council, and there is further the authority of the landlord to obtain increased rents if that rental increase doesn't deal with it. And the only thing that takes that away is the Royal Assent being given to this bill.

Mr. Speaker, it will not surprise some of the honourable members, it will not certainly surprise some people in my own group, that I will say, *prima facie*, *prima facie*, and that I go further than that, that it is desirable that with regard to private property, that the agreement made between the owner of a property and a person who wished to have occupancy of that property for a period of time should be a private matter between the owner and that person, that that is the most desirable state of affairs, and that I would normally, Mr. Speaker, be happier if we were able to see to it that satisfactory rental accommodation was obtainable at reasonable rates without control. And in this respect, Mr. Speaker, I take no different position than I take with respect to labour relations.

I say that it is most satisfactory. The best situation that private people exercising free judgment, both the employer and the employee, should not have their remuneration set for them by a third party but should come to free agreement after bargaining with

one another as to what their rate of wages will be, and that, Mr. Speaker, was the position of a great many people with regard to the Anti-inflation Board controls, which were actually the rationale by which rent controls had to be imposed; and once they were imposed it was said at the time, it will be difficult to remove them and indeed it will be, Mr. Speaker. It's not as if it will be impossible to remove them but I am going to advance the thesis — and I believe I'm going to try to prove it — that now is probably the worst possible time to remove them under the circumstances under which the government has proceeded. And even the government has that feeling, Mr. Speaker.

The sort of give-away of this Act is the suggestion that there is rent control within it. There is a suggestion that after we move controls the Minister can appoint an arbitration board and the arbitration board can freeze rents. I don't even think it says how long he can ask that a rental be rolled back. But there is the notion being presented through this bill, because the government wants to try to gracefully deal with the situation, there is the notion that rentals will be controlled under this bill, and I say, Mr. Speaker, that you do not stand on one foot waiting for rents to be controlled under this bill. This bill is meant to decontrol rents and, Mr. Speaker, it would be, under proper circumstances, an honourable course.

When we were enacting rent controls — I believe that the honourable members will find this on the record — I said at the time that it is not the best way of providing rental accommodation at reasonable rates. It will result in bureaucratic involvement which will never catch up to the problems and will ultimately, if you don't have houses, result in the type of thing that those of us who grew up in the Forties were able to witness without any embarrassment. Mr. Speaker, the phrase is "key" money and these private arrangements that were made between landlords and tenants in order to obtain the accommodations were matters of public knowledge and public ridicule with respect to how the controls work or will work. And ultimately, Mr. Speaker, it is not the best way. That the conduct be self-regulating is a desirable thing and from my point of view, I have always indicated — in speaking to landlords, in speaking to this Legislature or speaking to constituents — that rent control is not ultimately the best way of dealing with the subject.

The best way of dealing with the subject, Mr. Speaker, is to make sure that there is sufficient housing accommodation available that landlords are seeking tenants and giving prizes, Mr. Speaker, to the tenants who will occupy their premises and reducing rents in order to attract them. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, the only way — (Interjection) — Oh, yes, my friend says that's what's happening. Mr. Speaker, I want that recorded. If I was convinced that that was what was happening I would vote for this bill. But you know, my friend the Minister of Housing is — and I'm going to use this figuratively, I don't want you to get mad at me — deaf, dumb and blind if he says that what is happening is that rents are coming down, landlords are giving prizes for tenants and landlords are going out to attract tenants rather than vice versa. The situation that we have all been flooded with — and I don't disbelieve them, Mr.

Speaker — is that rents are going up and going up dramatically on the basis that there is no satisfactory alternative for the tenant in those places but to either pay the increased rent and there is no alternative accommodation, and the government has seen to that.

Mr. Speaker, when I was a member of government I said that I did not believe that we should be involved in rent controls and we didn't go into it until the AIB. I said build houses of equivalent quality in each of the areas, not public houses which merely have a stigma on them that people only who are in a position of having to apply for a subsidized grant, but build full recovery houses, rental accommodations of different levels so that there are vacancy factors in every area, which are sufficient, Mr. Speaker —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, in sufficient areas . . . well, Mr. Speaker, so that landlords would be pursuing tenants. And if landlords are pursuing tenants — and I, too, do not wish to have the situation such that there isn't a fair return. But that hasn't been the case, that hasn't been the analysis of the government in this case, Mr. Speaker. We were told that they want to get out of rent controls. I believe that there was a report brought in by the previous Minister, Mr. Speaker, a report that was — talk about open government — this one was alleged to have been written by Rubin Simkin. Mr. Speaker, probably the most sinister and cynical and scurrilous document that ever was tabled, was tabled as a report of Rubin Simkin, which the Minister dictated what had to be in the report and filed it on the desk as having come from a group headed by Rubin Simkin. —(Interjection)— It is worse than the Tritschler Report, because I believe that Mr. Justice Tritschler and Dick Scott and his aides wrote the Tritschler Report — but that's not what happened with the Simkin Report. That was written, edited and told to be changed by the Minister before it was tabled in this House, and as a result —(Interjection)— I regret to say it, it was the Member for Brandon West, the Minister who now sits without portfolio who had that report edited.

In any event the government decided to dry up its public housing program. Furthermore, the program never did as much as it should have done, Mr. Speaker, and therefore, we have a situation where we are involved in rent controls and ultimately we have to get out of that situation; because ultimately, Mr. Speaker, rent controls will not provide housing. If you are going to be involved in rent controls and you are not building the housing, you will not have low rents; you will not contain rents; you will merely create all kinds of liars and cheats out of honest people who have to try to figure out a way around the control. That is not the existing situation, Mr. Speaker.

The existing situation is that there is a stock of housing; that the people who have that housing have been assured, over the past several years, that they are not going to suffer; the rents have always increased far enough to pass through the costs. They have also had under the Act, the opportunity to appeal to a board when those things were not happening. What the government is doing is, without any rationale merely because they say that they have to get out of rent controls, without anything really changing in terms of housing stock, without them

giving us any kind of assurance or evidence that there is sufficient vacancy factors within the market to take care of the fact that the market will provide for reasonable rents, they have asked us to pass a bill which will repeal The Rent Stabilization Act, Mr. Speaker, on the specious suggestion that there is going to be an opportunity for people who have had excess increases in rents, to have those submitted to an arbitrator, who will then, Mr. Speaker, be able to order that rents be reduced — and I don't even know how that vehicle is going to take place or for what length of time or how, Mr. Speaker, it's going to operate — what I believe is that it will not operate because in every case the landlord will show that there are other apartment buildings in the same area charging similar rents; and that being the case why should he not be entitled to obtain the same rent.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, this government is proceeding headlong into an area, which I repeat, there is no legislation before us — I can't think of any, I'm trying to mull it over in my mind to see if I'm talking in hyperbole — but I cannot think of any area by which the average person will be more affected than by this bill. That being the case, Mr. Speaker, I think that there is an obligation on the people in the Legislature, to discuss what good will be achieved by this bill and what harm will be achieved by the bill. And I am not one, Mr. Speaker, who says that I want to have rent controls so that the tenant will be able to get a free ride from the landlord.

One of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, and the big reason — well, I shouldn't say that — one of the reasons, an important reason, why I believe that there should be an aggressive public housing program is that I think that it is sometimes too facile for the public to say to somebody else, we'll tell you what rents you can charge. We'll tell you how you should be towards your tenants. We'll tell you what you have to undergo in terms of bad tenants. Because, Mr. Speaker, there are problems and when you lean over backwards and make every decision in favour of the tenant as against the landlord, you create more problems.

One of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, that the public should be in housing, not only from the point of view of making the vacancy factor strong enough so that the market keeps rent at a reasonable rate, is so that the public should know what it is to be dealing with tenants; the public should know what their costs are. I asked the Minister yesterday, what are the increases that are going on in public housing? And I had a reason for that, Mr. Speaker, and it wasn't because I was trying to fight the case of the tenant as against the landlord. I believed that the tenant should be aware that no matter who supplies the housing there are going to be rental increases and that even in public housing there has to be rental increases; and that anybody who is going to go out and tell tenants that on the basis of their position, there will be no rental increase and it will be a tenants' haven as against the landlord, will not do these people a service because there will not be satisfactory accommodation provided under that. So one of the reasons, Mr. Speaker, that I've been talking about the public housing program is that I know, Mr. Speaker, that once the public becomes involved in renting houses and somebody comes in and says that they are having problems and that

please listen to my problems as a person who rents houses rather than as a tenant, the public then has a better understanding that there are two sides to the question and that that question has to be resolved on the basis of some equity to either side.

This is, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that I say that that should take place. I am of the opinion that none of that kind of consideration has been given to this legislation by the government because they are not interested. The government takes the simple position as follows, Mr. Speaker: We're going to dry up public housing and we're going to decontrol rents. It's the worst of all possible worlds because if you dry up the housing — and we know that construction has been dried up, we know that public housing, we know that private housing has been dried up — then the decontrol must lead to excessive increases in rent, because we have been told by the people who own homes, the landlords, that they will not charge rent on the basis of their initial investment. They will charge rents on the basis of what they have to get, given the fact that that house can be sold today. And if a person bought a house for 30,000, or a unit for 30,000 and can now sell it for 60,000 — he doesn't charge rent on the basis of 30,000, he charges rent on the basis of 60,000 and he must, that is an investment imperative; but what we do know, Mr. Speaker, is that given the actual investment nobody is losing money if it was charged at as 30,000, other than what they could gain if they were immediately able to realize the capital gain on that particular piece of property.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make these points in summary. The present rent control is available, that it is necessary, that it will not be repealed unless and until there is Royal Assent given to this legislation; that it would be desirable, Mr. Speaker, and in this I will agree with members of the other side, that it would be desirable if the rights as between two people, one of whom wishes to rent a premises and the other who wishes to be the tenant, that it is more desirable that they set their contract on the basis of the free arrangement as between the two of them; that given an adequate housing market and given a housing program which sees to it that there is alternative and satisfactory and reasonably-priced accommodation available, that would prevail; that the government of this province has seen to it that that situation does not prevail, that said situation not prevailing, the government is feeding one group in the marketplace to the lions if they decontrol rent without anything being done about the satisfactory situation.

MR. DESJARDINS: Just the one "Lyon".

MR. GREEN: Well, my friend, the Member for St. Boniface indicates to me that I inadvertently made a pun. For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I would urge that this particular piece of legislation not be adopted. But in view of the fact that the notion of a private arrangement as between owner and tenant would be more satisfactory, that that notion is not available or that desirability is not available given present circumstances, I would accordingly, Mr. Speaker, wish to move a reasoned amendment as follows.

I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Member for Winnipeg Centre, that the motion be amended by striking out all of the words following the word "that" in the first line thereof, and substituting therefor the following, "This bill be not now read for the following reasons: (1) This House has not received satisfactory evidence or assurances that if rentals are permitted to be decontrolled there would not be immediate and unjustified rental increases beyond which are necessary to cover the investment and maintenance costs of rental accommodations. (2) The government has not taken steps concurrently with its intention to decontrol rents, to engage in a program of public housing which could provide both alternative accommodation and also create market conditions which would ensure maintenance of reasonable rents. (3) The provisions of this bill do not provide adequate mechanisms for dealing with excessive rental increases, although expressing a need to do so."

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I probably would be better advised to allow the bill to stand in somebody else's name, rather than to make any contribution to the bill before us and now the amendment as moved by the Honourable Member for Inkster. However, I couldn't help but reflect on the manner and way in which the Member for Inkster just finished presenting his case. Mr. Speaker, any of us that will take the time, and I would suggest that some of us do take the time in reading Hansard, will have to acknowledge and we'll be struck by the concurrence that the Honourable Member for Inkster expressed not once, not twice, but throughout his remarks this afternoon about the obvious and known disadvantages of a prolonged rental control program has in what it's supposed to do, a provision of shelter for our citizens. Mr. Speaker, at the time of the introduction of this measure, which was introduced in tandem with the anti-inflationary measures then being introduced across this country, it was always perceived at that time to be an interim measure, that if in fact we were imposing wage, price controls across the country, that shelter being a major aspect of costs to our people, that some controls ought to be imposed on them as well.

Mr. Speaker, particularly for the benefit of some of the newer members, that's how we got into rent control, but the Hansard of that time is filled with doubts about the program and its long-term effects. There are reams, Mr. Speaker, of the situation in those jurisdictions, in those countries, particularly some of the European countries that have engaged or have found themselves in a rental program, a control program, never had the political courage to get out of it. That you talk about horror stories, you talk about money having to be slipped under the keys or front door mats, I would suggest that the best place to experience that is if we spent and rented some quarters in Sweden right now.

First of all, housing is not available in Sweden, period. A waiting list of totally unacceptable proportions in that otherwise well-to-do country, a

well-regulated country, and with stories abounding of the kind of under-the-table, the very things that the Honourable Member for Inkster suggests which were in place some years past when we had other wartime control rentals in our situation which inevitably come with this kind of legislation.

But, Mr. Speaker, I rise only because I remember the debates of that time and the generally held consensus by all sides of the House, including the government that then brought in the bill, that it was in fact an interim measure, a measure to coincide with the imposition of wage and price controls being brought into this country as a whole. Well now, Mr. Speaker, what we are of course seeing demonstrated, and I suppose that's fair ball by an opposition, a very callous opportunism that now leads people to believe that there cannot be legitimate rent increases, that somehow that sector of our society can escape the rising energy costs, the rising costs for building homes, the rising cost for servicing homes, the rising costs for everything else. Mr. Speaker, they can't have it both ways. They on the one hand challenge this government to have the courage to increase taxation which includes property taxation to provide for the necessary services for School Division No. 1, for our hospitals, for health services, and somehow these costs have to be passed through.

Mr. Speaker, really at the heart of the matter is the honourable member's third contention on his amendment that he says that the Act, that the provisions of this bill do not provide adequate mechanisms for dealing with excessive rental increases, although expressing a need to do so. Mr. Speaker, surely that's a matter of difference of opinion. I have every confidence that my government, the Minister that is responsible at the time that we are dealing with this bill in committee will demonstrate very clearly that unjustifiable, excessive rental increases will not — will not, I repeat — be allowed to happen. As the bill says, without having specific reference to it at this time, that the bill will — and if it doesn't now that it will, because I know of the concern of the Minister on this part, I know the concern of all members of this House including the government, that there is a desire to be able to deal with excessive rent increases.

Let me put it on the record, Mr. Speaker, that this government will deal with them. And if the present provisions in the bill aren't specific enough for the Member for Inkster to comprehend, and they may not be, then I have that assurance that the Minister responsible will entertain and will look at necessary amendments perhaps to the bill to ensure that the bill does precisely what the Member for Inkster says it does.

The Member for Inkster does say that there is a mechanism in there in the current bill to deal with excessive rental increases. He simply doesn't believe it. He says, "Show me, I'm from Missouri." Well, Mr. Speaker, we'll have to await a demonstration of what I've just said, but in the general and in the main, I don't believe that a member or particularly this member can really be at peace with himself with the position that he's taking on this matter. He acknowledges openly and honestly and forthrightly all the problems associated with rent control. He

acknowledges that prolonged, protracted rent control can only worsen the problem with respect to availability of housing and having it available at reasonable rates of rent. He, of course, fails to acknowledge that there is, of course, another group, essentially the private sector that for the last number of years, partly because of this bill, have withdrawn from the housing market, have withdrawn from the apartment building market, not to a total extent but certainly to a substantial extent.

Mr. Speaker, that's not surprising because that was all predicted, that was all acknowledged at the time the bill was passed. We knew that was going to happen. However, understandably his answer is that the only other source of housing is the government. The only source of housing, the only other people that can build houses in this province, is the government through the tax dollars that we would have to raise through that. Well, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is privileged to take that position. We don't share that position. We believe, Mr. Speaker, and as is demonstrably proven in those jurisdictions where a reasonable return on investment for shelter is available, housing, apartments, individual housing are being built. Mr. Speaker, there are other reasons, of course, and I wouldn't want to oversimplify the situation.

There are other reasons why at this particular time the housing starts are not where we would like to see them at. That has to do with current interest rates; that has to do with current demand. But the solution that my honourable friends opposite suggest, that the only alternative to the provider or provision of housing is the government, is something that he will have to accept and acknowledge that we, on this side, will just not buy. But, Mr. Speaker, I would like at least if the honourable member is in an agreeable and co-operative mood this afternoon, to acknowledge that a prolonged housing control doesn't solve the problem. It adds to the problem.

So what is our concern? Are we simply now concerned about, you know, it doesn't take too much political moxie to be able to pass out petitions and say, "Do you want to see a rent increase or don't you? If you don't, you know, support, sign this petition and vote NDP." That's I suppose what you'd call the short-term quickie of political opportunism that's being exercised by honourable members opposite at this time. But, Mr. Speaker, at least we have it on the record. We have it on the record by a former Cabinet Minister of the former administration that put rent control onto the statute books, that says that rent control is not the answer, that rent control is a poor alternative to what we are trying to do and that is to provide shelter at reasonable costs to our citizens.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend the Hansard of this afternoon to us for reading from time to time, despite the fact the honourable member filled it with other extraneous matters. But it's perceiving the truth out of what anybody says from time to time in this House that's important and I will always be able to pick up the Hansard of today and say that Sid Green — pardon me, Mr. Speaker — the Member for Inkster supports the Conservative Party and my colleague the Minister of Corporate and Consumer Affairs in the withdrawal of rent controls in the

province of Manitoba, because he acknowledges that that's not a solution to the problem that we face.

Mr. Speaker, it would be asking of course too much for him to also acknowledge that once again this government, my government, is demonstrating political courage of the kind that they are not accustomed to being demonstrated from time to time in the House. —(Interjection)— Well aware, Mr. Speaker, that the politics of it are of course not on our side in this case. Nobody has to draw me a graph and nobody has to tell me that there are more renters than there are landlords. Nobody has to draw the current Minister that kind of a graph. We can do our arithmetic on that score just as well as anybody else.

But, Mr. Speaker, we believed and, Mr. Speaker, that opinion was shared by the government of the day that introduced rent control, that it was to be an interim measure. It was introduced in tandem with the general anti-inflationary laws that were brought into power at that time — and I'm referring to the wage and price control measures that were introduced, I suppose you could say that the then or the present Liberal Prime Minister in Ottawa was fulfilling a long-held election promise of some three weeks when he introduced it in '74. But, Mr. Speaker, it was also acknowledged at that time that it was precisely an interim measure and that in the long run it could only hurt our overall and general housing situation.

Mr. Speaker, on the question of time and the question of notice. Mr. Speaker, two years ago, within the first six months of assuming office, the government's intentions were clear and were announced in this Chamber and publicly with respect to the gradual phasing out of rent controls in the province of Manitoba. Surely, Mr. Speaker, no honourable members opposite will dispute that statement. —(Interjection)— No honourable member opposite will dispute that statement. The time schedule, the dates, the months were spelled out by my deskmate, the then Minister responsible for Housing, the Honourable Member for Brandon West. Two years ago in this Chamber he spelled out the times and the dates.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the action that the government is taking in this regard is acknowledged, not the sweetest medicine to have to take from time to time as responsible government leaders, however, one that comes as no surprise to the citizens of Manitoba and one that is acknowledged by many members opposite in their more reflective moments when they spoke on the subject matter over the course of years, and particularly the time the bill was introduced, as one that would have to be withdrawn in a manner that it is now being withdrawn, to avert a serious and chronic crisis in shelter in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I'm confident, I repeat in conclusion, that the doubts that honourable members have, and particularly as expressed by the Member for Inkster, that there will not be a mechanism in place to deal with excessive and unjustifiable rents; that he is mistaken in that view. I'm satisfied that the Minister and the government will be able to demonstrate when we come to committee stage that we have no intention, absolutely no intention, of allowing unjustified excessive rent gouging to take place in

the province of Manitoba, that there will be the necessary teeth put in the Act to prevent that. Mr. Speaker, if they are not there now, they will be put there, of that I can guarantee the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Would he submit to a question?

MR. ENNS: No.

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

MR. LEN DOMINO: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Elmwood would like to know about my riding and I think in terms of my riding there's one point that's very pertinent, and that is that I have a majority of the people who live in my riding rent their accommodation. The roof over their heads doesn't belong to them, it belongs to someone else and they pay for it by the month. But, Mr. Speaker, I am still, having said that and being aware of that, I am still in favour of the removal of rent controls. If I thought that the removal of rent controls over the next few years would hurt my constituents, I wouldn't support it, not unless I wanted to self-destruct as a politician.

Rent controls in the long run hurt tenants. I believe that's what the Member for Inkster said. He went on to qualify it and say some other things, but rent controls do hurt tenants. I want to quote from an economist and the quote reads: "Rent control has constituted the worst example of poor planning by governments lacking courage and lacking vision." Who's the economist? —(Interjection)— Fraser Institute, that's Myrdal, the Swedish economist, socialist economist, who said those words. He went on to say: "In every country examined the introduction of rent controls has done more harm than good in rental housing markets by perpetuating shortages, encouraging immobility, swamping consumer preferences and fostering delapidation of housing." Not an economist from the Fraser Institute. —(Interjection)— Maybe later, but not right now.

Mr. Speaker, Myrdal should know, as an economist, what the situation is because he'd a Swedish economist and in Sweden they've had to put up with rent controls for a long time. I don't often find myself in the position of having to correct the Member for Lakeside. —(Interjection)— No, no, I'm afraid not. That member, I find myself always in disagreement with, the Member for Transcona. But the Minister of Government Services was a slight bit in error. He had the right idea. I think what he was suggesting was —(Interjection)— But, however, he mentioned that they have rent controls in Sweden and they have a problem in Sweden. They don't have rent controls in Sweden now. They've removed rent controls in Sweden and do you know why they removed those rent controls? Because in Sweden they have a very active and aggressive National Tenants' Association and that National Tenants' Association fought and lobbied against rent controls because — just recently in the last 18 months — because rent controls over the last 10 years had hurt the Swedish tenants. —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, if you want to take a look at the British experience, the American experience, the Quebec experience even in this country, when you get into rent controls it's difficult to get out. But if you don't have a government that has the wisdom and will take the courageous step of removing itself from rent controls, down the road you pay for it and God knows in this country we've seen a whole succession of federal governments in particular, who didn't want to face hard decisions and who kept postponing the hard decisions and one day we're going to wake up — the day hasn't come yet, but we're close to it, when this country is going to be in very serious trouble and when my options, or certainly my children's options, are going to become very very limited because the governments over the last 30 years, in a whole number of areas, have refused to take the hard decisions, have always just looked for the easy vote, have always just looked for the next four-year period, when they can score some points.

Now, things have changed a lot. When the members opposite sat on this side, I guess the feeling of responsibility to the province of Manitoba was stronger with them because then they realized what rent controls meant and there was a justification for rent controls when they first came on, because salaries and wages were controlled and they have to control the basic necessities like rent. However, let me quote too, and they had a different opinion altogether. The then Premier, I'll quote from a press article, Winnipeg Free Press, May 8 and I'm quoting: "Mr. Schreyer, speaking at a news conference Friday said, the province's rent control was part and parcel of wage and price controls. When those guidelines are lifted, so would all components, he said". It was clear at that time that rent controls were short-term. They were meant to coincide with wage and price controls and in the opinion of the then Premier — and I'm sure in the opinion of his caucus at that time and of his chief civil servants, for the Member for Transcona's information — I'm sure they all agreed then because they are responsible and they felt the need to be responsible to the citizens of Manitoba. — (Interjection)— Winnipeg Free Press, May 8, 1976. They've changed a lot, and I think it's just a matter of wanting to get elected. — (Interjection)—

The facts and figures of rent control haven't changed. Rent controls still supply the same problems. They still result in the long-run shortage in private rental accommodation. They still inevitably result in property not being properly taken care of by the landlords. They still result in consumer preferences being swamped, consumers having a hard time choosing what they want, and so does public housing for that matter, too. Public housing is not the solution. The solution is an aggressive private rental market. I agree with the Member for Inkster. The most happy, the most positive situation we could have is the situation where we have an excess of rental accommodation so tenants can move easily.

The rental situation in the province of Manitoba right now is about 5 percent vacancy rate. When I read the reports from the urban institute, from the Social Planning Council of Manitoba, they all say the same thing, there is no actual shortage of rental accommodation in Winnipeg today. There is an

affordability problem. There is a certain segment of our population which cannot afford to pay the rents necessary to obtain proper accommodation and that's what SAFER purports to do. It's not that we've abandoned the tenants. It's not that we've abandoned low-income tenants. SAFER is there. To be exact, SAFER was just extended to a large area of people, to low-income single parents, to those who are retired between the ages of 55 and 65, SAFER will cushion the immediate blow for people who have to face rent increases which are higher than their increase in income. — (Interjection)—

You're subsidizing the individual people so they can afford to purchase the rental accommodation, and it's there. The rental accommodation's available, that we just have to get the cash into the hands of the individuals so they can afford to buy it. — (Interjection)— It allows them choice. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Elmwood suggests that SAFER is going to subsidize the landlords. Mr. Speaker, if someone is going to subsidize low income people, it should be the state. You certainly don't suggest that we ask the private owners of apartment blocks to subsidize the poor. — (Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate just very quickly what was said by the Member for Lakeside. This bill has certain flaws in it and I recognize them. — (Interjection)— The Minister will be back, he's away on government business. There's flaws here in this bill. We have to have protection for those landlords — and there are few of them I believe — who would because of very specific circumstances, who are going to try and raise rents way beyond what they have to be raised and those circumstances are — I'll even outline what those circumstances in most cases will be. They'll be the elderly long-term tenants in a few cases, who can't afford, who can't for social reasons or reasons of habit, who don't want to move from where they've been living for 30 years into another apartment block, even though vacancies are available and rents might be lower. In that situation we have to have some sort of arbitration process, I agree. It has to have teeth and there's no way in which a landlord can simply write himself out of it easily. — (Interjection)—

Never asked why this bill got through caucus. Why wasn't it caucused, I was in the committee meeting at the time and as you know there is often in this House more than one function happening at a time. It's not uncommon and don't pretend that it's something new that we should alter a bill at committee stage. It happens often, and there's usually more than one alteration made and often the alterations result in better legislation. — (Interjection)— It's all a matter of perspective.

However, let me assure you that I, for one, don't believe that this caucus will allow the bill to go through the way it is now. I don't think the Minister wants it to go through the way the bill presently reads and I won't vote for it. Point blank, I will not vote for the legislation unless there is some guarantee in the legislation that will protect people who have excessive rent increases.

Mr. Speaker, I would only ask the members opposite — I feel almost guilty about this but I share many of the views of the Member for Inkster — I think this is probably the politically most sensitive bill

that we are going to deal with, this session, and I would ask the members opposite show a little responsibility because God knows and God forbid, they may end up being on this side again some day. Maybe for Manitoba's 200th birthday or something, they'll be returned. I don't see why the Member for Inkster is pounding on his desk; he's not part of that caucus any more; his seat won't change. — (Interjection)— And drawing up shabby legislation.

MR. MERCIER: His seat will change.

MR. DOMINO: Yes, and probably will be moved to the back. Mr. Speaker, when the members opposite consider this legislation, I don't think it's funny, I think it's very serious and I think the scare tactics that the Member for Wellington and the former candidate for Fort Rouge were indulging in on the radio shows and the newspapers recently, I don't think that's happiness at all. I don't think it's a responsible position for a politician to take. — (Interjection)— I think they should realize and they should own up to the fact that they have admitted in this House and they are publicly on record as saying that rent controls were short term and that they hurt tenants in the long run and that we have to remove rent controls. There is now in place SAFER, there is now sufficiently large vacancy rates, and further, accept the government's word that we are about to propose some sort of binding arbitration process that will protect those few tenants who will face inordinant rent increases and will give them protection. Those people who are so immobile that they can't move and they can't take advantage of the fact that there are other suites in the same neighbourhood that are available and by doing that force the landlord to make only reasonable demands on them in terms of rent.

Members opposite are playing a cruel game because there are a lot of citizens outside of this Legislature who don't understand the intricacies of the process here and don't understand the real value of rent control, when rent control can be used, and for what purposes, and who allow themselves in their naivety to believe that they can continue living in the same suites with no rent increase for year after year or four percent rent increase when inflation is running in 10 percent. I, for one, am willing to take the courageous stand of going out to those people and saying to them it can't be so, you're living in a dream world, that the government will do everything that's reasonable and responsible to protect you and to take care of you, but you still must face the fact that increases are inevitable.

MR. DOERN: The government hatchetman.

MR. DOMINO: No, not a government hatchetman, the Member for Elmwood says that. Not a government hatchetman, somebody who realizes that in the long run the people don't appreciate being fooled. They don't appreciate being tricked and they don't appreciate you playing with their emotions the way you have been. I have more confidence in the voters than that. I know they'll respect me for telling them the truth and for taking the steps that I honestly believe will be in their benefit over the long run, and for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, and after what was said by the Member for Lakeside, I think

the Member for Inkster should withdraw this resolution. The only thing in this resolution that carried any weight, that made any sense, was his complaint about the lack of some binding arbitration or protection for tenants. The government has given a member of the Treasury bench, has given an assurance that we will, at committee stage, correct that.

If our corrections, if our alterations aren't sufficient at committee stage, there is then yet further opportunity to then propose a hoist, but not now, not at this point. Just the laying, the process of Legislature, you're not helping the tenants at all; you're not helping the orderly flow of legislation and you're not even contributing anything to debate because you're creating one more opportunity to debate, it will be just one more opportunity down the road for us all to repeat ourselves again, because there are still lots of opportunities to discuss this legislation, so I'm not going to support it. And I suggest the Member for Inkster should right now withdraw that resolution.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Would the member submit to a question? I wonder if he could indicate or define an exhorbitant rent increase? I gather he said, Mr. Speaker, that he would not support legislation that would permit exhorbitant increases. I wonder if he could care to put a figure to that figure of speech.

MR. DOMINO: I don't think it's possible for me right now to define an exhorbitant increase because of the fact —(Interjection)— Well, certainly 100 percent or 80 percent is an exhorbitant increase. Whether 20 percent is or not, would depend, and I'm not sure what procedure can be established, what mechanism can be established but I'm sure that we can come up with one in the next few days that will work and it will operate to protect tenants. What's an exhorbitant increase would depend on what the base rent is, it would depend whether that apartment block has been controlled over the last five years. No one particular figure. If I give you one figure, it might be correct for one percent of circumstances, but it probably wouldn't cover them all.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Affairs that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call Third Readings, Amended Bills?

THIRD READINGS - AMENDED BILLS

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Third Readings. The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Bills No. 18, 20, 28, 41, 53, 70, were each read a third time and passed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, on Third Readings on Page 2 of the Order Paper, would you call Bills No. 4, 5, and 6?

THIRD READINGS - GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill Nos. 4, 5, 6, were each read a third time and passed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call third readings of the bills as they appear in page 3 of the Order Paper.

Bill No. 11, An Act to incorporate The Brandon General Hospital Foundation was read a third time and passed.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 13, the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GOURLAY: I move, seconded by the Attorney-General that Bill No. 13, An Act to amend The Defamation Act, be now read a third time and passed.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

Bills Nos. 14, 16, 17, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 33, 34, 35, 36, 42, 43, and 45 were each read a third time and passed.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 46, The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GOURLAY: I move, seconded by the Attorney-General, that Bill No. 46, An Act to amend An Act incorporating The Regent Trust Company, be now read a third time and passed.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. ENNS: I move, seconded by the Attorney-General, that debate on this bill be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

Bills Nos. 49, 50, 52 and 73 were read a third time and passed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call, on page 2, Bill No. 2, 3 and 7 —(Interjection)— No I don't want to call Bill No. 9.

MR. SPEAKER: Third Reading, Bill No. 2. The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GOURLAY: I move, seconded by the Attorney-General, that Bill No. 2, An Act Respecting the Operation of Section 23 of The Manitoba Act in Regard to Statutes, Loi sur l'application de l'article 23 de l'Acte du Manitoba aux teste legislatifs, be now read a third time and passed.

MOTION presented.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, for information, is that the one, Loi sur L'application de L'article 23 de l'Acte du Manitoba aux textes legislatifs, is that the same one? I would like to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Logan, that the debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

Bill No. 3 was read a third time and passed.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 7, the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. GOURLAY: I move, seconded by the Attorney-General, that Bill No. 7, An Act to amend The Manitoba Evidence Act be now read a third time and passed.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I was inclined to move that the House adjourn, but I want the bills that are now being distributed.

Perhaps I could indicate that the Privileges and Elections Committee will, as previously announced, meet tonight at 8 o'clock, tomorrow from 10:00 to 12:30, and then from 2:00 to 5:30, if necessary to complete hearing the numbers of delegations.

Mr. Speaker, of course, the House will be adjourned until 10 o'clock, Monday morning. I think there's only one more . . .

THIRD READINGS - GOVERNMENT BILLS
Cont'd

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I don't think that we should start a precedent. I think that the House Leader usually announces the time of the meeting, but not necessarily from what time to what time, because for some reason or other the committee is master.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: That's fine, Mr. Speaker. The notice paper that indicated that committee would meet at 10:00 and I just didn't want there to be any confusion. It was the intention to meet also in the afternoon if it was necessary to be there that long to hear the number of delegations who wish to make submissions on Bill 31 and they now have Bill 19.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services, that the House do now adjourn until 10:00 a.m., Monday morning.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 10:00 a.m. Monday morning, but the Committee of Privileges and Elections meets at 8 o'clock, tonight.