

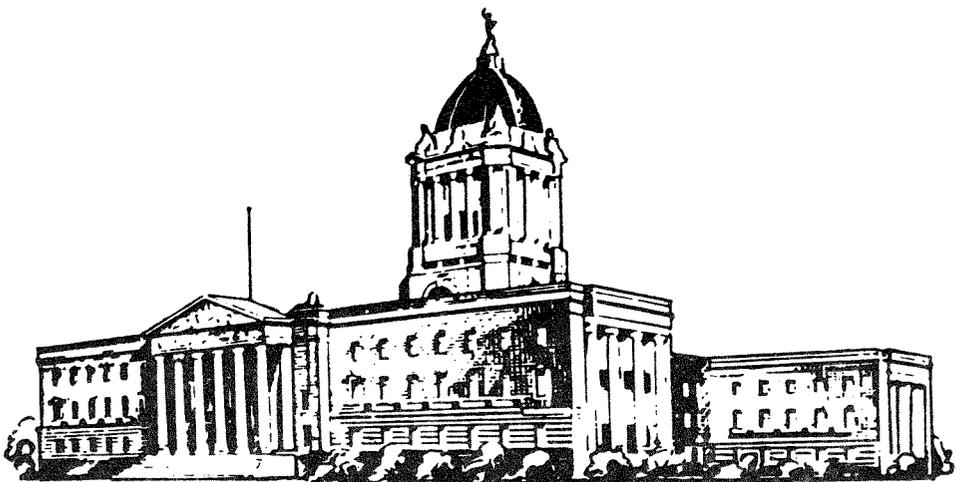


Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

31-32 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, Hon. John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	NDP
DOLIN, Hon. Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virden	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, Hon. John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Hon. Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 4 August, 1983.

Time — 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: 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

Crow rate

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Highways and Transportation. In view of the fact that the Federal Government are having Crow rate hearings in the City of Winnipeg today, will the government be making presentation to those hearings?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be making our presentation at 2:30 this afternoon.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, what will the Government of Manitoba be telling the people on the committee? Will they, Mr. Speaker, be forwarding the report which was presented to this Assembly after the Crow hearings, or are they taking another approach? Possibly the approach that was presented from their New Democratic Convention, is that the kind of approach or what precisely will they be saying to the federal hearings?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe the hearings are open to the public and I would suggest that the members opposite may want to be there. I think that I should indicate that our position will be that of Government of Manitoba and will not be reflecting the position of the committee, although the position of the committee will be attached as an appendix to our submission as information.

MR. J. DOWNEY: That being the case, Mr. Speaker, why were the taxpayers of Manitoba put to all the expense of travelling throughout the province to listen to the issue of the Crow rate when, in fact, they are not going to use that as part of their presentation other than an attachment?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Arthur must realize and should know that there are many briefs with different suggestions from different groupings in Manitoba, and our brief will indeed encompass some of the suggestions that have been made to the committee although not necessarily all of them.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister makes reference that any member of this House can go to the open public hearings. He, as well as the rest of us, is aware of the fact that this Assembly is still sitting and debating legislation which we are all very interested in and want to represent our constituents, and it is difficult for most people to attend the hearing.

The question is, Mr. Speaker, why did the Minister of Highways and Transportation not lay on this table this morning the precise position and the paper that he'd be presenting to the committee this afternoon?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, the former Minister should know that when government presents views to a standing committee of another parliament, that it's unfair to that committee to have that committee pre-empted by an advance distribution of the brief. I believe it's fair that that committee be the first to receive that. Now, as soon after, I will be tabling a copy of it in this Assembly.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in other words, the Minister of Highways and Transportation is saying that the committee of the Federal Government that is hearing the proposals on Crow rate is of more significance or more importance than the Legislative Assembly which represents all of the people of Manitoba? Is that what he's telling us?

I again would ask him to table the presentation this morning so that we're aware of what he's going to be introducing this afternoon.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, I believe the member should understand the process that we're involved in. We are presenting a brief on behalf of the Government of Manitoba which indeed represents the Province of Manitoba to a parliamentary committee, and that information will be made available as soon thereafter as possible, but I don't believe it's proper to do it in advance of that committee hearing.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, is the Government of Manitoba supporting the proposed Crow changes that are being presented now in the House of Commons? Is his government supporting that proposed change?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the Member for Arthur to attend at the hearings this afternoon.

Excise tax increase on spirits

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney-General in his capacity as Minister responsible for the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission. My question to him, Sir, is: Has he objected to the Federal Government's excessive increase in the excise tax on the sale of spirits in Manitoba by some 13.3 percent?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, what I've done is taken this question up with the Minister of Finance, who I feel is the appropriate person to raise our very serious concerns. Indeed, we think that the federal policy in this area is wrong. We felt that it was wrong last September when, after having proudly announced 6 and 5, they then almost immediately thereafter made it clear that it didn't apply to the long hand of the Federal Treasury.

We realize, looking at what is one of the biggest earners for the Province of Manitoba, namely the operations of the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission, that where at that level of pricing, where the kind of impact which an excise increase of the kind contemplated would have on spirits and beer and wine, the kind of price impact that would have brings us perhaps beyond the line of marginal returns and it could begin seriously to impact on sales and on the profit margin for the province.

This is another example where the Province of Manitoba particularly has been hit hard by, I would say, unilateral federal policies with respect to a whole number of things, established programs, the equalization formula and this kind of breach of what the Federal Government itself is trying to impose on the rest of the country in terms of a 6 and 5 or similar type of formula.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Attorney-General for that answer. By way of a supplementary question to the Attorney-General: In view of the fact that it is this government's action in the 1982 Budget that has caused Manitoba prices to be among the highest in Canada - second highest, I believe, with respect to spirits - and in view of the fact that the Attorney-General and this government increased the markup to some 138 percent, does the Attorney-General intend to instruct the Liquor Control Commission not to imply this government's imposed markup of 138 percent, for example, on spirits which, in addition to that caused by their sales tax, will cause an increase of some 20 percent on the price of spirits? Does he intend to take some action so that the Provincial Government will not take a further 20 percent, if he indeed considers the excise tax increase of 13.3 percent to be excessive?

HON. R. PENNER: That's a question which I will discuss in due course with the Minister of Finance. We simply are not in a position as a province through this year and arguably next, because of the action of the Federal Government, to willingly suffer a revenue loss when we don't have to suffer a revenue loss, but certainly that is a question to be discussed.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary. There would be no revenue lost. It is because the excise tax increase, 13.3, has come into effect that the Provincial Government is taking a further 20 percent. A decision has to be made by the government prior to September 1, and probably very soon, because the Liquor Control Commission will be taking the steps to impose that markup. Does the

Attorney-General intend to take some steps with his Cabinet or in his own ministerial responsibility to instruct the Liquor Control Commission not to impose further provincial markup, which will cause a further price increase of some 20 percent?

HON. R. PENNER: I'll take that question as notice and thank the honourable member for his suggestion. As I said at the conclusion of my last reply, that is something I will be discussing with the Minister of Finance and subsequently it follows with Executive Council.

Bilingualism - advertising

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the First Minister I direct a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and ask him if he can advise the House this morning as to how many municipalities received a letter from the First Minister with the so-called typographical error in reference to Section 23 of The Manitoba Act? Also when were corrections sent out to those municipalities?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information, but I'll take it as notice.

Motor Vehicle Branch - drivers' licences

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister of Highways who is responsible for the Motor Vehicle Branch. During his Departmental Estimates a number of months ago, I raised a concern which I had and seems to be one which is growing throughout the province. I've had a number of constituents call me in the last little while, I know some of my colleagues have, with regard to the problems of getting appointments when people wish to take drivers' tests. I'm wondering if the Minister could inform the House whether or not he has undertaken any further studies or actions with regard to the lengthy lineups and the long time that is required for people to finally get their drivers' licences and their tests done.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, it was drawn to my attention a week ago that some people have had some difficulty in getting through the lineups or being able to be accommodated in a time frame within which it was reasonable and comfortable for themselves, given their own time constraints. I've asked the department to indicate to me what methods might be employed by way of appointment to make it more practical to accommodate those people that have rigid time schedules and have some difficulty under the present system.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: I wonder if the Minister of Highways could check to see if there has been an increase in the number of applications for a new driver's licence and the number of testing that is taking place.

In talking to people from his department, I believe they indicate that they are processing more claims under the system which was implemented roughly a year ago and yet there still seems to be a backlog. In other words, the testers seem to be busier, and yet the backlog seems to be growing.

I wonder if the Minister, on a supplementary question, could also undertake, in order to provide the residents of southeastern Manitoba with a better service, would it be possible to station one or two of these driver testers in that southeastern area, so that particular area will be better served and that the public won't have to wait two months to get an appointment with regard to driver testing.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would presume that when I have a report back from the Motor Vehicle Branch with respect to how we might deal with that problem, that area will be covered in that report for that kind of a question.

I do have to indicate to the honourable members however that we do have budgetary constraints beyond which we are not able to escape, or from which we cannot escape, and we must live with that reality.

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the final comment, but I would ask the Minister, in his study of that particular matter, since the testers now have to travel, spend two or three hours on the road just getting to the location where they're intending to do the testing, would he be able to, in his study, see if it wouldn't be more economical and more feasible to have these people located right in the region so that maybe there could be some cost savings with regard to this particular department and the activities of these particular individuals?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I want to repeat what I said a moment ago, and that is that I hope to receive some kind of recommendation from the Motor Vehicle Branch on this issue and at that stage I will explore it further with the department.

Nelson River-Cross Lake bridge

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation. Can the Minister confirm that a bridge will be built across the main channel of the Nelson River at Cross Lake?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm not certain that I can give that information. I can take it as notice, Mr. Speaker. I'm not aware as to the status of that project at this point in time.

MR. A. BROWN: I wonder if the Minister then, at the same time, could maybe take as notice as to who is going to be picking up the cost of that particular bridge and what the estimated cost of that bridge would be.

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will have that information for the honourable member.

Jobs Fund - allocation of funds

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the First Minister and the Minister of Finance I direct my question to the Minister of Labour. The government had approximately \$72 million in the Estimates placed before this House for their Jobs Fund. The First Minister has advised that the money has all been allocated. The question to the Minister of Labour is: Have there actually been more commitments made, more money committed than the \$72 million which is available through the Estimate process?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, for the kind of breakdown that the member is asking for I would have to take that part of it as notice, but I would like to clarify that certainly when you allocate money within a particular fund, you allocate it to programs that are ongoing or that have not yet been announced and to say now that the capital money has been allocated is to say that, yes, we have said that this program should go and that program should go, but whether or not they will all use the money that has been indicated as being necessary for the program, whether there will be some money available for other programs and so on, is something that we can't know. It's an ongoing process and to say at one point in time, yes, this is all allocated and this is the end, would be a falsehood and I would not want to mislead anyone into thinking that is the situation.

Whether or not the portion of the \$200 million that he is referring to is a portion that has been allocated, that has been spent or that is still going to be spent, is something that is an intricate sort of question and would have to be dealt with probably at the end of the fiscal year when we can actually see and give accurate information on exactly where the money went.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the Minister raised the question of falsehoods. Is the Minister saying that the government has actually announced more projects, more dollars worth of commitment than they actually have budgeted?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: If I understand the question correctly, the member is asking if we announced more programs or programs that would use more money than we actually have in the budget, and the answer is no.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the Minister of Labour. Can she advise the House

whether any Jobs Fund projects that would use what is known as the non-budgetary capital, whether any of those projects have been initiated in response to action by an outside agency or an outside institution or an outside private business?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, again I will take the specifics of that question as notice. I am sure that the member is aware that we are constantly in consultation with the Advisory Board and with outside groups who have suggestions to offer to us about what kinds of programs they would like to see go forward. That relates to all aspects of the \$200 million.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Labour give an example of even one project which uses the non-budgetary or self-sustaining capital, which is actually being shared with an outside agency, an outside institution or with the private sector, or are they all within the ambit of government itself?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Again, Mr. Speaker, I will take that as notice. There are programs that have, as I said, not yet been announced. To announce them now in response to a question would certainly not be appropriate when the guidelines have not been thoroughly developed. Those things will be coming onstream, and I will be glad to announce them at the appropriate time, or the appropriate Minister will announce them.

Whether projects that have been announced in the past were initiated from outside, many of them were initiated from outside, as the member knows, through many aspects of the \$200 million Jobs Fund. I can point to the NEED Program in which we are expending \$12 million. Certainly the vast majority of the expenditure of that money has been initiated by businesses and community groups that apply under that program.

The Manitoba Employment Action Program certainly was money that was available there for outside interests, for business and farms, as well as community groups, but particularly businesses and farms, to come forward with ideas on ways to spend the money. That's exactly what they did.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise the House then whether or not any of the money that has been committed under NEED projects, for instance, is of the non-budgetary or self-sustaining category?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the member is talking about loan authority money or exactly what he is talking about, but the NEED money, as I understand it and I'm not the financial wizard in this particular question series, but without getting the answer specifically for him, I would have to say that it is my impression that the NEED money came out of the capital authority.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, perhaps it would help to clear things up for the House if the Minister would undertake to supply the House with a complete listing of the approvals under the Jobs Fund, and indicate for each approval whether or not that money is to come from the budgetary side, from the \$72 million which

the government has budgeted within its Estimates, or whether it will come from the non-budgetary side, which is money that will be borrowed by the government for self-sustaining purposes. Could the Minister undertake to provide that information at the earliest opportunity?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Certainly, Mr. Speaker, that information will be available, but it will be available in due course. When the projects and programs are announced, then it will be clear where the money comes from.

Bilingualism - advertising

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Labour, who is responsible for the Civil Service Commission, in regard to an advertisement that appeared in last Saturday's Free Press. We are all familiar, Mr. Speaker, with the term "official languages" and with the Provincial Government's desire to make French and English the official languages of Manitoba, but in the ad it refers to "the official minority," the expression, "the official minority."

Mr. Speaker, it indicates that the Cultural Resources Branch of the Cultural Affairs Department has a responsibility to design and deliver cultural heritage programs to the ethnocultural organizations, the official minority, etc. Who or what is the official minority?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that question as notice. I don't personally place the ads, and I don't know what he is referring to.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would then direct a question to the Minister of Cultural Affairs, who did place the ad? What is the official minority?

MR. D. ORCHARD: It's got to be the NDP after the next election.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen the specific ad, and the question has been taken as notice by the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission. The answer will be given in due course, Mr. Speaker.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Doesn't anybody approve ads over there?

MR. R. DOERN: I'm sure the "official minority" would also like to find out who they are.

I would like to also direct a question to the Minister of Labour in regard to this ad for the Civil Service. I notice a line appearing in the advertisements. There is a logo that says, "Manitoba" at the bottom, and it refers to an equal opportunity employer. Can the Minister explain what is involved in being an equal

opportunity employer? Are there certain groups, for example, that are being designated?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, the member questioning has certainly been around this government and this Legislature longer than I have. I am certain he is aware that an equal opportunity office and an equal opportunity program has been in place for many many years. We have an Affirmative Action Program that has been announced by this government, which will target directly women, the physically disabled and Native groups.

Now if that is the kind of question he is asking, that's the answer I can give him, but I would refer him to the Equal Opportunity Office, which has been in place for a number of years, for specific information on their activities, rather than give a lengthy answer.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would also ask the Minister whether linguistic or cultural groups are presently included in that definition, or whether they will be in the future?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, equal employment opportunities or affirmative action deals with the employment disabled. If a person is employment-disabled because of a language disability, then certainly we would do everything in our power to help that person overcome that employment disability, whether it's through English as a second language in the workplace, or whatever other means we could find to assist that person. But affirmative action and equal opportunity employment offices deal with the employment disabled.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, a final clarification. Does this exclude - or let me put it the other way - would this include, for example, if a particular group in Manitoba was found - for the sake of illustration, the Icelandic people were found to have fewer Icelandic people working in the Civil Service of Manitoba, would the Minister be interested in that, or is that sort of factor not included or not considered in the concept of equal opportunity?

HON. M.B. DOLIN: By way of illustration, perhaps I can point out the assistance that we have given to a union that operates within the garment industry that is quite aware of the difficulties that their members have in either gaining or advancing in employment. They have a program for assisting these people that will give them the language capability to pursue their careers, whatever they happen to be. That's the kind of program that is involved in equal opportunity and affirmative action.

MTS - computers

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System. Approximately four weeks ago, we completed the Annual Report of the Manitoba

Telephone System. At that time, the Minister was to provide information to myself as to the ability of the Manitoba Telephone System to offer retail competitive projects, such as the VIC-20 Commodore computers, and information as to their tendering practices on school division orders, and I wonder if the Minister might be able to provide that information to me at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, as I recall, those questions were asked of the general manager at the hearings, and I would assume that the general manager has provided that information to the honourable member. If he has not at this time - and I have not received a copy so I assume it has not gone through at this time - I will ask the management of the Manitoba Telephone System to provide that information as soon as possible.

MTX employees

MR. D. ORCHARD: A second question to the Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephone System. At those hearings and later in a question period, the Minister undertook to provide further details to allegations appearing in the media that employees of the Manitoba Telephone System working for MTX, the subsidiary operation in Saudi Arabia, the Minister was going to provide details as to disciplinary action taken on MTS employees in Saudi Arabia for violation of religious laws. Could the Minister now provide that information to the House?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, we had explained at that particular time that this was an isolated incident that had occurred inadvertently and, although the employees had been versed and briefed in the laws of the particular country that they were working in, they had a minor violation of that and had indicated clearly that is not going to happen again. They've been told that it's not going to happen again and there have been some steps to improve the orientation of people who would be going over there and also considering a trial period and so on, so that the people that are selected, along with their technical expertise, are also people who are sensitive to the culture and the laws of other lands that they happen to be working in and will be compatible with that country; so that is also being considered and worked on.

I have received information from the employees involved that they have suffered anguish and embarrassment at the way this has been, in their estimation, blown out of proportion for political reasons. I can't see any other reason why it would be and they have indicated that they are feeling very upset about this themselves. They've indicated that they're very sorry it has been played up in the media the way it has and I just want the honourable members to know that. It is an isolated incident and certainly will not be happening again.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, this government does not have a particularly good record in investigating

concerns with Crown corporation operations in this province, as has been witnessed by questions posed on McKenzie Seeds over the past number of weeks.

The question to the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System some weeks ago, which he undertook to provide further information and report to the House, was as to whether allegations which appeared in the media as to disciplinary action taken by the Saudi Arabian police officials, under the auspices of the Saudi Arabian Government were in fact true or not. Could the Minister please provide that report and information to the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I don't think it's really proper to ask a Minister of the Crown to confirm an allegation appearing in the press. In any case, the incident the member's referring to happened in a foreign country, for which the Minister has no administrative responsibility. Furthermore, it's the Federal Government which has the interest of Canadians overseas, which again is not within the responsibility of this particular government.

Perhaps the honourable member should confine any questions that he has to a Crown corporation operating in Manitoba.

The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The questions that were posed to the Minister involved questions surrounding the operations of a subsidiary of the Manitoba Telephone System, namely MTX, a subsidiary I might indicate to you, Mr. Speaker, that was created by an Order-in-Council some 15 months ago by the Cabinet of the current government. It was given . . .

HON. R. PENNER: Question.

MR. D. ORCHARD: This is a point of order, Mr. Speaker, in case the Attorney-General and House Leader is not aware.

The second point, Mr. Speaker, is that Bill 78 provided legislative authority to legitimize the creation of MTX to operate offshore as a subsidiary of the Manitoba Telephone System. If, Mr. Speaker, we are not to inquire into activities of MTX, which is a creation of this government and the Crown corporation, Manitoba Telephone System, then how can we assure that the taxpayers' investment, now close to \$1 million, is being adequately protected by the MTX people and MTS and ultimately by the the Minister responsible for the Crown corporation?

If we are not allowed to question the operations . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. He is venturing into an argument.

The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain on a point of order.

MR. B. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Pembina has been asking questions about a subsidiary of a Crown corporation. We have always had the right to ask questions in this House about Crown corporations and their activities. If we are to be denied

that right, Sir, then certainly we have no opportunity to prevent these corporations from becoming out of control, other than a brief opportunity provided when they come before a legislative committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I clearly heard you advise the Member for Pembina that your concern was not about his right to ask questions, but that he was asking a question about an allegation appearing in a newspaper and you, Sir, with respect, properly drew to his attention that particular kind of question, and one need only peruse Beauchesne to demonstrate that you're right, that particular kind of question is inappropriate.

No one is suggesting that the honourable member may not ask questions, but he's been in this House long enough to know how to ask appropriate questions within the competence of a Minister as to the operations of that Minister's department or any operation for which the Minister has ministerial responsibility.

A Minister cannot answer and ought not indeed to answer for allegations in a newspaper; otherwise, the House becomes a rumour mill, a body commenting on hearsay upon hearsay, and that is an entirely futile and an improper exercise.

You were not, Sir, as I understood it, attempting to tell the member or any member of this House that he cannot ask questions, only that questions must be within the parameters that have been clearly established over a long period of time in order to give some sense of focus and direction to question period.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same point of order, the Minister currently responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System undertook to provide to this House further details and information regarding charges that were laid in Saudi Arabia against MTX employees. I was simply asking the Minister to provide to the House the information that he indicated he would provide when questioned and unable to answer those questions at the time.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe that was not a point of order. The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can provide some additional information for the honourable member on the situation. I can inform the House that there's been no reoccurrence of violations of prayer time in Saudi Arabia by any MTX employees; that there were other people involved, including local people; that other companies have also had similar incidents in the past with regard to prayer time violations in that area; the local baker and butcher were also involved in this particular violation.

It involved a total of six individuals, two of which were MTX employees, Mr. Speaker. They consider this a personal matter; there has been no specific disciplinary action. The incident in itself has been sufficient disciplinary actions for the employees. One

of them has returned back to Manitoba for other reasons non-related to this particular incident and is no longer in Saudi Arabia.

I can say that under Saudi Arabia law, the Saudi sponsor, in this case Al Bassan International, is completely held responsible for the actions of any employees, and so therefore MTX is not directly responsible for this under Saudi law. It's the responsibility of Al Bassan and, lastly, I can mention that MTX employees are, as I said earlier, being well versed in local customs and laws and so on. The MTX contract specifically states, and I quote: "You will have to comply with the laws, regulations and customs of Saudi Arabia." So they are aware of that and, as I have said, there is a commitment that this will not happen, certainly not intentionally, in the future.

Manitoba Beef Commission

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday I asked questions of the Acting Minister of Agriculture. Further to those questions, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister of Agriculture today how much money is left in the fund that is available for the Beef Stabilization Program and, as well, are there any plans to either lower or to increase the support level?

As well, Mr. Speaker, could the Minister of Agriculture tell us what percentage of cattle are going to what packing house industries - the numbers, as I asked yesterday, of the cattle that are being handled by the Beef Commission - slaughter cattle - and the packing house industries that are buying those cattle, and how the price striking mechanism is established through the commission?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member, in terms of the three separate questions that he has posed; first of all, in terms of stabilization fund, I will take the specifics of that question as notice as to how much money is expected to be paid out this year out of the fund in terms of stabilization.

There is a separate fund through MACC dealing with advances that can be made to cattle producers who wish to either place their cattle in custom feedlots or to retain their animals for finishing purposes. That fund has drawn down several millions of dollars, but I will get those figures as well.

In terms of the questions dealing with - the second question - that information that was asked of my colleague yesterday, we still have not received the information from the Beef Commission and as soon as we have it, I'll provide it to the honourable member.

The honourable member, if he wishes to state the second question, I'll try and answer it for him.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, how is the price established by the Beef Commission and what is the breakdown of the purchases? What packing companies are buying the cattle from the Beef Commission?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I indicated that we will be providing that information for him. The honourable

member did raise a question with respect to whether the support levels will change and when do they change. Under the terms of the program, Mr. Speaker, support levels are triggered under the formula to be changed on January 1st and July 1st of each year. There was a change and a revision made in the support level on July 1st, which is, I believe, approximately a 3 percent increase over the last change that was made last January. So there's been an upward revision in the support price in line in terms of the way the formula operates.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the referral resolution or, more appropriately, the amendment to the referral resolution as it stands on the Order Paper, Pages 12 and 13, standing, I believe, open for debate.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON MOTIONS

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT RE: OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General and the amendment thereto proposed by the Honourable Member for Fort Garry - the Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to speak today on the amendment to the referral motion. Yesterday, I had the opportunity to speak on the sub-amendment proposed by my colleague from Gladstone and was in support of it, and indicated at that particular time that I was as well in support of the amendment which was proposed by my colleague from Fort Garry.

Mr. Speaker, we have to look at the referral motion as one of extreme importance to not only this Legislative Assembly, but to the people of Manitoba. It goes right to the roots of democracy, Mr. Speaker, and that is why we as an opposition, and I think rightfully so, are standing and defending our constituents and speaking out to protect what basically is our democratic system.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of the Day have a mindset. They have set their minds to the point that they believe that they are right in doing what they are doing. Mr. Speaker, the main reason that we have to continue to debate this issue and point out to the people of Manitoba as to the importance of it is the long-term effect that it will have on the future of Manitobans and the direction in which our young people will have to take.

Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the intersessional hearings that we are urging the government to go ahead with, we aren't doing it lightly as can be seen by the many speeches that have been presented to this Assembly.

Why, Mr. Speaker, is this government so set on pushing this resolution through? Why, Mr. Speaker? Is

it because the Member for Ste. Rose is getting tremendous pressure from his constituents saying, Mr. Adam, the No. 1 issue before us is the fact that we have to have this resolution? Is that the reason why they're proceeding? That it's the grassroots people from Ste. Rose are saying that? Is it the Member for Lac du Bonnet's constituents that are coming forward and saying we aren't concerned about the economy of Manitoba? We're not concerned about the highways that have gone to Hades; we're not concerned about the payroll tax; we're not concerned about all those economic things that are bothering us today. It's the resolution on bilingualism that has to be passed so that Manitoba is a better province to live in.

Why, Mr. Speaker, are they proceeding to go on the path on which they're going? Is the Member for The Pas when he goes home - if he goes home anymore - does he go home to talk to his constituents about the Saskeram area, Mr. Speaker? The Saskeram area - is that their main concern whether it's expanded for agriculture use, or whether it's used for Ducks Unlimited, or is the main issue, Mr. Speaker, the bilingualism resolution? Is that the thing that he's facing when he goes back to his constituency?

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture who is proceeding to put in bilingualism services within the Ag. Rep. districts of the province, which we aren't opposed to in a great way - there's a service needed. If the need is there, Mr. Speaker, we aren't opposed to it, but why entrench it in our Constitution so it is taken out of the hands of the Minister of Agriculture? He's pointing his finger at us. If he had listened to what I had said, Mr. Speaker, what is wrong with proceeding in the way in which is being done on a demand basis rather than entrenching it in a Constitution, taking the power out of his hands? That's where he should come to his senses, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that there aren't any constituents coming forward to the members opposite. Well, I shouldn't say any, but there are very few constituents coming forward and saying the priority of their day, each day when they get up, that the No. 1 thing they want their government to do is to provide them with the bilingualism service and the resolution as it's presented by this Assembly. I believe, Mr. Speaker, it's very much the opposite, and I believe it's their democratic right through the Legislative Assembly to present their thoughts and their views, and that's what they are doing.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, as much as a lot of people think that we are here to obstruct what the government is doing, is not so. We are not here to obstruct the government. We are here as responsible legislators to protect and to use the democratic system in the best interests and the long-term advantage of this province. That's what we are going to continue to do, Mr. Speaker. We're going to act responsibly as legislators. We're going to make sure the views of our constituents are laid before this Assembly even though honourable members opposite are not, Mr. Speaker; and I challenge them to stand and show the petitions, to show the numbers of people in hundreds that are supporting what they're doing because there is a member, a former member - we don't really know what his status is - can stand and give lists of thousands of names that are opposed to what they're doing.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that information would be made public. I would hope the Member for Elmwood would make that information public so that it is to the advantage of the people of Manitoba, the majority of Manitobans, to know the kind of information that is coming forward through the kind of polling that is taking place. That's important, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not giving any great credit to that socialist from Elmwood because he is a socialist. He won't deny that he isn't, but he's a smart enough politician to know that he has to survive, and this is the one issue that he can survive on standing alone outside of the New Democratic caucus room. Mr. Speaker, what I'm saying to him is it's important that that information be put forward.

Mr. Speaker, why do we have to stand so firm on this issue as an opposition against the government's intentions? Because, Mr. Speaker, once this change is put into our Canadian and Manitoba Constitutions, it is almost - I say this and I'm not completely convinced of it, but I believe it to be almost the case - once it is entrenched in the Constitution, it's irreversible.

Mr. Speaker, it has been our tradition, it has been the tradition of this Legislative Assembly to pass all the laws for the people of Manitoba within our provincial jurisdiction. Why would we give that away? Why would we give that away, Mr. Speaker, when we know the best government for people is the government that's closest to the people. The government that understands what the people's needs are your local and your municipal governments and then your Provincial Governments, and the least of all government we need to handle our affairs is either the Federal Government or the judicial system, Mr. Speaker, because it's without our reach.

We cannot control what happens after it leaves this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and that's the major concern. It's going to have an impact on every one of our constituents. I say that, Mr. Speaker, whether they are a minority group or whether they're a Francophone society; because if we were to proceed as we want them to, to go to intersessional hearings, all sides of the issue can come forward and would do a proper job and it would be a credit to all members of this Legislative Assembly.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I would say the NDP are doing a great disservice to the legislative process in the province because of their belligerent approach on this particular issue. I call it a belligerent arrogant approach, and they are caught in a web that they can't get out of, Mr. Speaker. I think they could save face and I think they could do good for the people of Manitoba if they were to back off a notch and have those intersessional hearings.

Why, Mr. Speaker? What can be accomplished by intersessional hearings? What can be accomplished? First of all, it would remove the rush. It would remove the pressure to deal with that particular issue at a time when we've got how many other legislative bills before us? We've got the seat belt legislation before us; we've got the farm land ownership legislation before us; we've got The Elections Finances Act before us; we've got the conflict-of-interest legislation before us; we've got a multitude of heavy heavy legislation, Mr. Speaker.

I know that there are a lot of first-term politicians - first and last, Mr. Speaker - there are a lot of first-term

politicians who didn't understand before they entered into a legislative process how heavy the legislative process can be. I, Mr. Speaker, learned that lesson as a new member of this Assembly, and as a new Minister coming in in 1977. It is heavy; it is extremely heavy to pass even one or two major pieces of legislation. I sympathize with what they are trying to do, Mr. Speaker, as human beings, because they can only take so much of it and they are to the breaking point as Ministers, particularly the new and inexperienced ones who are trying to do something of a heavy nature. They are, Mr. Speaker, inexperienced and I would advise them so that they don't make the gross error of allowing the Attorney-General, the Premier, the Member for Radisson to continue to push this legislation or this accord through without having the public input is a very dangerous path. It's a dangerous path because I do not believe, with the other responsibilities that they have to carry, that they can honestly - and I mean honestly - deal with it the way in which they should.

If they didn't have public hearings, Mr. Speaker, surely they would be wise to go back to their constituents and have meetings within their own organizations. They can't have those meetings when they're sitting in this Legislative Assembly for six days a week - which we're now into - to try and deal with all the legislation. They cannot do it, Mr. Speaker, and I would plead with them to back off, to go to intersessional hearings. Mr. Speaker, there would be a lot more credit to them if they were to do that. So the rush, Mr. Speaker, that we're being asked to be a part of is totally, totally unacceptable.

HON. B. URUSKI: What kind of rush?

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture says, what kind of rush? Well, Mr. Speaker, because of the magnitude of the change we are being asked to make, I would expect - and the precedent setting, the mechanism that they're using - that a change like this could take up to two years, Mr. Speaker. I would expect the government to have laid out a White Paper on policy that this is what their intentions were and to have debated through intersessional committee hearings, and then, Mr. Speaker, a year down the road present this resolution not at the end of a heavy Session, not at the middle of a heavy Session, but announce it in their Throne Speech.

Did we see this in our Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker? No, we did not, and that is an indication of what government policy is for the coming Session, but we didn't have the privilege of seeing that, even though it was probably being negotiated at that very time. So they haven't treated us fairly, Mr. Speaker, and if there's acrimony in this House, that is why we haven't been given a fair opportunity to deal properly as legislators. If they'd have only put that in the Throne Speech Debate, if they'd only told us that this was the kind of issue that we'd been facing, then we would have been prepared for it.

So that is why I'm saying it is a rush. You cannot go through this kind of a process in this kind of a Session with the heavy legislative program that we have and deal effectively in the best interests of all Manitobans, particularly when it has the long-lasting effect that it's

going to have, because as I say I would doubt if it would ever be changed back because it is a constitutional amendment.

How many times has the Constitution been changed in this country? Not very many, Mr. Speaker, and when it is it should be well thought out, and capable and qualified people dealing with it, and the recommendations of the people of Manitoba should be listened to.

When I refer to the other duties of the House, well, Mr. Speaker - the Minister of Agriculture, I'm sorry, is not here at this particular minute to hear this - what other duties of the House have we had to perform? We have had to find out the information, the statistical information on The Farm Land Ownership Act ourselves, Mr. Speaker. He alluded to the fact that they had meetings and information that he had support, which it comes in through this Chamber and in our debate that he hasn't got support.

Mr. Speaker, we were dragged around the province as an agricultural committee to find out about the Crow rate when in fact the Federal Government hadn't even established their final position on what they were doing, and it's evidenced today, Mr. Speaker. It's evidenced today we see another waste of our time and the taxpayers' money because the Minister of Highways and Transportation is going to the hearing with the government's own position and its own mind made up, and my colleague from Roblin-Russell said, who is presenting the Agriculture Committee's report? Well, Mr. Speaker, no one is, it's being attached as an attachment to the NDP government's approach which is of course to nationalize the CPR. That's the position that we've said all the way along that they believe in, that they really weren't going out to listen to the people on Crow rate, other than to political posture.

Well, Mr. Speaker, now is the time when they really can go out in a meaningful way and have an intersessional hearing, not to rush the people of Manitoba, because what do the people of Manitoba do in July and August, Mr. Speaker? Their children are out of school, many of them go for holidays, they go to the lake. They kind of just say we're going to enjoy this nice 35 degree Celsius or 90 to 95 degree Fahrenheit temperature at the lake. Are they worried, Mr. Speaker, at this time of year what the government are doing?

Well, I'll tell you, I think this year maybe they are. This year maybe they are. But why don't we give them a chance to come back, to have their children go back to school, for them to take part of their daily activities, to read the paper, to listen to the news media and say, my goodness, is that really what's happening? We want to present a brief on the bilingualism proposal at that particular hearing that could be set up in Flin Flin, The Pas, Dauphin, Brandon, Boissevain, Winkler, Steinbach. What is wrong with that, Mr. Speaker? Because it's the normal process, it's working within the daily habits of people's lives; and that, Mr. Speaker, is important that we as legislators accommodate the public to some degree on such a massive change to what will be a change for their future generations to come.

The other duties, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, I know, as being a former Cabinet Minister and member of this Assembly, that they can't accurately deal with the majority of the Legislative Assembly bills that they

have here as well as the constitutional accord that they're proposing. I know the Minister of Agriculture, I know he hasn't had the opportunity to find out the full impact of what he is proposing on his constituency in the North Interlake area. He hasn't had the time to find out what the impact is. The Member for The Pas for sure hasn't. He is more preoccupied with what is happening to the Saskeram area, and he should be, Mr. Speaker, to increase the land base in that area. So it's important, Mr. Speaker, that they back off and give this a fair chance to be aired and aired properly within the proper process that is available to this Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, who will gain by the course that the government are proposing? Who will be the gainers? Let us look at why we do it. We do it because the government are bound and bent they're going to change the Constitution of Canada, of the Province of Manitoba, dealing with introduction of a bilingual program that will make us a bilingual province. It's outlined, Mr. Speaker, as plain as can be in the agreement that has been signed.

One has to ask the question, why? I've gone over that. It appears it's a court case that they believe that it's a "what if" situation. What if we were to go to court and be defeated? The chaos that could be created by the Supreme Court. Mr. Speaker, any commonsense thinking person would know better than that situation. And what if, Mr. Speaker, the court case were of a far more serious nature than a speeding ticket that Mr. Bilodeau has agreed to drop if, in fact, this accord is passed. What if it were of a lot more serious nature, would we still be dealing with this kind of a massive issue in the way in which we are? - because I call it frivolous, Mr. Speaker.

We are spending the time and putting people in Manitoba through a lot of anguish because of what I would consider a frivolous case which this government has yielded to and hasn't followed the procedure that the Honourable Duff Roblin suggested we should have. Let the thing go through the process of court and law, and then, Mr. Speaker - if we have to deal with that situation.

I said yesterday and I'll say it again today, what if it had been a lot more serious charge? — (Interjection) — Pardon?

MR. B. RANSOM: I'll say it tomorrow and the day after.

MR. J. DOWNEY: That is right. My colleague from Turtle Mountain says I'll say it tomorrow and the day after. We will say it until we get this government to yield and go to the intersessional committee hearings that we would say is in the best interest of democracy, Mr. Speaker, and the people we represent. That's what it's in the interests of, Mr. Speaker.

What I'm saying is we are dealing with a what-if situation, which is the worst possible platform that any Legislative Assembly or any government should work from. Goodness sakes, we cannot work from that kind of base. You have to work from a solid understanding of a given fact, Mr. Speaker, and we are not dealing from that. That's why I plead with the government to reconsider their position, I plead with them. As I said, particularly the new and the younger members who

are Ministers carrying a load which is far greater than they ever thought when they entered their jobs as government Ministers. I know the pressure they're under, Mr. Speaker, and they cannot be of the right mind to deal with all these situations in a current legislative Session in the middle of August or the beginning of August.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, our members have other constituency work that they could be doing. Mr. Speaker, we all have other activities, but our priority, the Progressive Conservative priority is to protect democracy and make sure the people of Manitoba are heard on such a basic constitutional change that will affect their lives, their children's lives and new generations thereto come afterwards. That, Mr. Speaker, is why, because a constitutional change is one which is irreversible in most people's opinions on this kind of issue, so the magnitude of the issue is far greater than I'm sure any one of them are aware of. I would hope they would yield to the pleas.

Mr. Speaker — (Interjection) — the Minister of Agriculture said let's go to hearings. That's what we're saying, let's go to properly constituted intersessional hearings where we're not rushing. How many members of this Session can leave and go out on hearings throughout the province now? How many people are still at the lake, Mr. Speaker? How many people are away on holidays and are not really aware of the magnitude of this problem? Mr. Speaker, the government is trying to quick trick the people of Manitoba on the procedure on which they're following, and it won't wash.

I'll say it again, Mr. Speaker, the NDP Government can be defeated next election, and we know that's a given right now on the path that they're on, but what about the longer term? The longer term, Mr. Speaker, is the important issue here because the people within the province, who are legislators, who are trying to make peace with their neighbours have to live with one another in a mixed social arena of different ethnic backgrounds. With this kind of forced attitude, forcing the bilingual proposal on those people, Mr. Speaker, is not going to add to the strengthening of our social fabric, but will continue to tear it apart and that's in the longer term.

Every member of the Legislative Assembly shouldn't just look at the next election or at the next day, they should look at what they can benefit, the long-term benefits, that they can contribute to society when they are performing their public duties.

MR. G. LECUYER: That's what you should do.

MR. J. DOWNEY: The Member for Radisson said that's what I should do. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is what I am doing. I, Mr. Speaker, believe that the majority of legislators here should have the longer-term objective and do.

I do believe there are certain people who have entered this Chamber to accomplish one or two things in as quick a term as possible, because they know they aren't going to be here, and what they do will in fact take the province the way in which they want to go in the longer term, not the wishes of the majority of even their constituency, not the majority of Manitobans, but

their own personal self-satisfaction. Mr. Speaker, when it becomes that narrow, it is very obvious that you cannot properly debate and persuade people to change their mind. It's unfortunate that people have that kind of mindset, because I do not believe they make good legislators for the people of the Province of Manitoba. I believe, and I'm sure many members that are here would say that their minds have been certainly fixed, or fixed in a certain way, on a particular issue when they've entered this Chamber. I'm sure that members of the media as well have entered this Chamber and listened to debate and have gone a complete change of 180 degrees.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, that's what this Assembly is about, and if you come in with an intransigent position that you're not going to change, then I don't believe that you are worthy of representing your constituents in the way in which is honourable, which we are called as members of this Assembly, to in fact do in our best interests of living in the social arena in the Province of Manitoba.

So, I ask, Mr. Speaker, who is going to gain in the short term, a few members who have a personal thirst to accomplish this. I know many members of the government side, Mr. Speaker, have second thoughts in their mind about the path that they're on, I know it. I've talked quietly to some of them and they've indicated that they feel that they are in a trap. They are in a trap, Mr. Speaker, but it's not an impossible trap, and that's what I am speaking today to try and do. What they need is more time to talk to their constituents, to be able to find an honourable way of backing off the position that they have taken, so that they can stand taller in their communities, so that they can stand taller in this Legislative Assembly as representatives of the people, which they are here to do, not to represent them incorrectly.

Mr. Speaker, far be it if it were the right direction for us to stand up here and continue to debate this issue, but we are being told daily by phone calls, by petitions, by direct contact with people that whatever you do as legislators, please give us the opportunity to be heard, please don't allow the government to ramrod through this constitutional change which will change Manitoba forever. That is not what we are used to within this province. We have not had that kind of tradition. Let us not set the precedent for constitutional change in this manner. I say it over and over again, there is a mechanism, whether it be a presentation of a White Paper, whether it be the whole process of going to the public on a major plebiscite, or whether it be calling of a general election, Mr. Speaker, because that is the magnitude of this issue.

I again go back and say why weren't we told in the Throne Speech? Every member of the media knows that the government, when they introduced their legislative program and their intentions or what they're going to do in the coming year, highlighted within a Throne Speech Debate, but were we told about that, Mr. Speaker? Were we told about that during the Throne Speech Debate? My goodness, the Throne Speech Debate is so far away. What did they tell us they were going to give us in the Throne Speech Debate? — (Interjection) — Well, I see some of the evidence of it, Mr. Speaker, that we're getting, like a 6 percent provincial sales tax, like a payroll tax, like farm land

ownership protection, not farm land ownership, farm land ownership control. Control of who owns property in this province, Mr. Speaker. Those are the kinds of things, and we are still debating them, Mr. Speaker.

What I am suggesting is, with that kind of a legislative load, let us give the people of the Province of Manitoba a chance through their legislative people to go to them through the hearings. I'm saying, and I've said it again, Mr. Speaker, who are the people that lose in this kind of an exercise? The people of Manitoba - whether you're for, or against, or whatever position you take, whether you're a minority, or a majority, Mr. Speaker, we all lose because of an improper process. We're all losers, Mr. Speaker, because those who are in support of what the government is doing can stand up and present their views in a normal process. Those that have some questions of it, can have those questions answered and then can swing to support, and those that are vehemently opposed can come forward and relieve themselves of that particular feeling towards it. That's why we have to go to the people through an intersessional committee hearing, Mr. Speaker.

There is another particular area that hurts, Mr. Speaker. It hurts not only the process, but the individuals to some degree involved. I'm sure there are a lot of Manitobans saying, what are the legislators of Manitoba doing sitting in the Legislative Assembly into the longest Session in history of this province, when in fact it would be so easy, so easy for them to back off as a government and allow the opposition to have the intersessional hearings.

We produced a sub-amendment yesterday that suggested, or the other day that was introduced by the Member for Gladstone, that we have it dealt with by December 31st. But no, Mr. Speaker, they voted us down on what is a solid and a sound approach. Not trying to shelve it forever, but they wouldn't hear of that kind of a recommendation, and I again plead with them, Mr. Speaker, why?

Mr. Speaker, could you tell me how much time I have left please?

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has 10 minutes remaining.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I honestly feel that we as legislators, representing our constituents, who are voted here by majorities of the people that we represent in that area, are particular issues like this wondering why, and saying, can you not do the business of the Province of Manitoba in a less amount of time? Can you not do the legislative program that has traditionally gone through in probably 100 days or less.

You know one has to wonder when you look across the border at the United States, where under their system, and I'm not advocating it for here, but one has to ask the question, that they sit every two years, they don't sit every year, Mr. Speaker. They apparently are able to live as a free and democratic society. They aren't, Mr. Speaker, dealing with constitutional change in a hurry-up, get-along situation. No, Mr. Speaker, one would have to question how many constitutional changes they've ever had south of the border. Probably very few, if any, that would cause this kind of a confrontation within their Assemblies.

What happens in other provinces, Mr. Speaker? What other provinces sit the length of time that we sit? We look at other provinces, Mr. Speaker, and we say, can we look to other provinces to speak out on this issue? No, Mr. Speaker, this is not another provincial issue, this is Manitoba's issue. Mr. Speaker, the other provinces will automatically say, if the people of Manitoba, through the Democratic system, have agreed to this process, that this is what they want in the province, why should they stand in the way?

Five years down the road, if the Government of the Day happened to decide to change it back, are they going to say, "Do the people of Manitoba really know what they want?" That's why it is so important, Mr. Speaker, that before we continue on the path that we continue, let us hear from every Manitoban that wants to be heard, Mr. Speaker, that wants to put their thoughts forward.

I go back to the loss of the prestige of the Legislative Assembly and that's what's happening. The prestige, the honor, in which this building has been kept by the majority of people in Manitoba, I think, is somewhat being lost because of an intransigent government that just won't back off in a common sense recommendation by the opposition of the government.

It is a reasonable request, and the Member for Radisson, if he would get out of his shell, Mr. Speaker, and come out and speak on the process, rather than the content, he would be contributing something rather than taking away from this Legislative Assembly. He hasn't added one constructive recommendation on the way in which this could be handled other than with a bulldozer, Mr. Speaker. That's not the traditional manner of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, and he should learn that, Mr. Speaker. If he isn't prepared to learn it, then he'll have to suffer the consequences at the next election. Mr. Speaker, there is give and take in Manitoba and he'd better learn that. It's not all one way, but he thinks it is. — (Interjection) — Well, it isn't, Mr. Speaker, there is give and take and our government have proved it in our term in office, and we will continue to prove it when we get back in. But when you take that belligerent bulldozer approach, you gain nothing for the people that your working for, Mr. Speaker, you hurt them and that's what he is doing. He is hurting their cause, Mr. Speaker, that's what he's doing and I hope he's proud of himself for it.

Mr. Speaker, the Legislative Assembly, the process here is not and should not be degraded by anyone in this province, or in this Chamber. It should be held as the most precious thing that we have to protect our rights and freedoms. I again go back to saying that's what we're doing as an opposition. We are responsibly standing here speaking to protect the democratic rights of the people that sent us here. That's what we're here for, Mr. Speaker, that's why we are insisting, and will continue to insist until the long weekend in September if we have to. I'm sure there are many of my colleagues that will be prepared to sit here on that long weekend in September to debate this issue. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Ste. Rose, if he won't back off, will be here as well unless he can't continue the pressure of the Main Street Manitoba Program which he's undertaken.

Mr. Speaker, so it is the legislative process that we have to protect and that's what it's all about. Mr.

Speaker, I believe firmly that all members of this Assembly, I mean all members, have to reassess what they are doing. We have to reassess, Mr. Speaker, the long term effects by not going to hear the people of Manitoba in an intersessional hearing. We have to consider the short term effects on the daily lives of our communities that are living together

Mr. Speaker, I therefore, in the firm belief that we, as legislators, have to go to an intersessional committee to protect the democratic rights of the people we represent so this issue can be firmly and fully spoken to, I want to move a further sub-amendment to the amendment. I move, amended by the Member for Turtle Mountain, that the amendment be further amended by adding after the words "next Session of the Legislature" the following words, "and in any case not later than December 30, 1983."

MOTION presented.

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

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to address the sub-amendment introduced this morning by my colleague, the Member for Arthur.

In addressing this new sub-amendment, Mr. Speaker, I wish to appeal once more to the Premier and to the Attorney-General of this province and to the other members of this government on the other side of this House. If you have any shred of respect for the people of Manitoba, you would go to the people in intersessional hearings, in committee hearings, and let the people have their say; let them tell this government what they think of the proposed amendments to this Constitution.

Let the people tell this government, in an unhurried way at intersessional hearings, their opinions and their questions to the Attorney-General. They have lots of questions to the Attorney-General. There is a great deal of unhappiness with this government, Mr. Speaker. People are suspicious. They're very suspicious, and rightly so, that this government is not telling them everything. It is not coming clean; not telling them all the ramifications of this agreement.

Why is this government determined to rush headlong into oblivion with this ill-founded amendment? Can they not tell from our position and our sincere efforts to convince this government that we mean business, that we sincerely believe in what we're doing? If we did not, why would we be sitting in this House day after day, night after night, hour after hour, trying to convince you to schedule intersessional hearings, schedule them throughout this province. This is one of the most important issues, I believe, to ever face this Legislature. Then why are we hurrying and rushing headlong into it? Why don't we give the people a chance to express their opinions?

The First Minister tried to save the face of this government by dragging in the subject of entrenchment of human rights. They'll do anything to cloud the issue, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is once again trying to fool the people. He's trying to fool them into thinking that he did a great favour to them when he held the so-called information meetings. He's trying to make the

people believe he is doing them a great favour by holding hearings during this Session. What favour in the heat of August?

Now, he's trying to say that he might hold hearings outside the city. He might. Just what does this Premier intend to do? This is a far cry from the stance that he and the Attorney-General took when they first introduced this motion into the House. At that time, the Attorney-General and the First Minister made it very clear to this House that this matter was to be debated in this Chamber, that it was to be passed quickly and it was going into the hands of the Federal Government immediately. The die was cast, there was an agreement, consultation was over, period, that was it.

Well, now we have the Premier every so often - well, he did get up once, yes, and he says well, maybe we'll have hearings outside the city. He didn't even intend to have the so-called informational meetings at first. It was only on the urging of the Leader of the Opposition and some of my colleagues that that was even done. So how are they going to know from one minute to the next what the Premier of this province plans to do?

Now we have this government yelling at us in all their speeches, telling us to hurry and pass this motion. Hurry, hurry, they say; pass the motion so it can go to a committee of the House. Hurry, they say; the people want to be heard. They do indeed want to be heard. They want to hear from this Attorney-General the answers to a great many questions. They want to state their opinions on this matter, as I am sure they have stated their opinions to many members of this House, many members who have not risen and said what their constituents want, as my colleague for Arthur said. I haven't heard the Member for The Pas telling us what his constituents say about it.

The people of this province, Mr. Speaker, don't trust this government and they have every right not to trust this government. Why should they? This government has done very little to woo their trust on this and many other subjects. We have seen over the long long days of this Session many times, Mr. Speaker, that the opposition has risen to ask them questions and they have evaded giving forthright answers to the questions that were posed. Now this is the government that is shouting at us to hurry; pass the motion, they say; pass it quickly. Yet this is the same government which would not allow the vote on Saturday. They didn't want to vote on it on Saturday. They filibustered their own legislation, Mr. Speaker, and now they're making a big show of protest that the opposition is holding them up.

If this government would tell us that they will vote in favour of our amendment to hold intersessional hearings, then we would be delighted to pass this motion. So far, Mr. Speaker, we have heard nothing from this government to indicate that they are in agreement with that amendment. We have seen no valid reason that has convinced us that we should hurry up and proceed with this voting; not one shred of evidence that would convince us that they should hurry this through or ram it through as some of my colleagues have said, like my colleague from Arthur just referred to bulldozing it through. That's probably a more apt expression.

Unless this government can produce a plausible reason why this should be hurried through, then we'll

continue to debate their motion until we have a clear indication stated in this House, Mr. Speaker, that they will hear the people of Manitoba in intersessional hearings. We want them to get up and say so and put it on the record, not meetings, Mr. Speaker, like the ones held by the Attorney-General when he was shamed into it by the opposition, not meetings at which people could ask a few questions in a limited time and be given only one-sided answers by the Attorney-General. The meetings were short. They weren't allowed to go past a certain time. People were frustrated by the process of those meetings. We are insisting on intersessional hearings. Hearings are a great deal different from the meetings that were held. Hearings, Mr. Speaker, at which time the people can present briefs stating their concerns and wishes with regard to this matter.

How can this government, which tells us over and over again that they are people who listen, they listen, they listen, they listen, how can these listeners vote against an amendment which will allow them to listen and listen to all the people of Manitoba who wish to be heard? Perhaps these listeners, this group of incompetent listeners, are listeners and listeners only. Perhaps they can't hear anything that's said to them. Perhaps they can't hear what the opposition is saying and what the rank and file of Manitobans are saying. Perhaps they are listeners only. Perhaps they're so bewitched by the fact that they have a majority government that they feel they don't have to listen any more, that they know everything. They don't have to listen. They do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have to listen and they have to hear what the people have to say.

My constituents, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're phoning me and asking, why does this government not want to hear us? What's wrong with this government? Why are they forcing us into something we neither want nor need? They asked me the same thing about the seat belt legislation; they're asking me the same thing on The Farm Lands Ownership Bill; they're asking me the same thing about The Municipal Conflict-of-Interest Bill. They phone and they write and they say: What is going on in that Legislative Building? Doesn't the opinion of the majority of people in Manitoba mean anything any more?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: Order please, order please. Order please.

MRS. C. OLESON: Is there no way we can stop this government in their head long rush to legislate every aspect of our lives?

One woman who phoned me the other day in a voice of desperation asked: When is the next election? And I had to admit to her that it couldn't come a moment too soon to stop this government.

Some people, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have never paid too much attention to government activities or whether or not the Legislature is sitting are asking, what's going on in there? Why is this government pushing this bilingual business through the House? Why don't you adjourn and hold hearings in the fall when we have time to go and listen to them and present briefs, and

when we're available to go to the committee hearings? Why aren't the hearings going out into the country? Does this government think everyone lives in Winnipeg? That is indeed a good point, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Some of the people in the country often have the feeling that the government agencies and the government itself feels that there is no one living beyond the Perimeter of the City of Winnipeg. They have that feeling and they are quite rightly entitled to have that feeling with the way they are treated at times. These are the sort of questions that are being asked, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're being asked throughout the length and breadth of this province.

The Minister of Highways in answer to a question by the Member for Elmwood told us that the people don't understand the issue. They don't understand this issue of bilingualism.

Mr. Speaker, I think that remark by the Minister is an insult to the people of Manitoba, and I think the people of Manitoba understand the issue far better than does the Minister of Highways and far better than the rest of his government colleagues. They understand the implications of this legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They understand it much better than the members opposite seem to understand it. Nothing that they have told us indicates clearly to us that they really understand the people and their fears and expectations. Some people have very high expectations from this legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I heard not long after the resolution was announced, someone on the radio in excited tones telling people that now we would have bilingual stop signs. Well is that the intention? Are we going through all this exercise so that we can have bilingual stop signs? I think probably there are, and I know there are, bilingual stop signs where they are needed. This is not the issue, but some people think it is.

So, it's important to go to the people in these intersessional hearings, allay their fears, hear what they have to say about this. It may turn out that they're all in agreement with it. Why are you so afraid to hear what they have to say? If you had the feeling that they were all in agreement with it, why would you be so concerned? What's the problem?

One of the people who presented a brief to the Committee on Statutory Regulations and Orders spoke at some length in opposition to Bill 60, the amendment to The Highway Traffic Act. Remember those hearings? We remember those hearings quite well. Those were the hearings that were closed down by a government majority, high-handed government majority, I might add. There were several people waiting to hear it and to be heard at those hearings. Now one wonders if this might be the thing that happens to these bilingual committee hearings and the presentations that are to be made to them? It certainly makes one wonder. After all, we've seen in the days of this Session, we certainly wonder if this government can be trusted to give a fair hearing to all who wished to speak. We certainly wonder.

Now, I . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: I was just wondering if the member would permit a question at this point in time.

MRS. C. OLESON: I'll try to answer it, I won't guarantee anything.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the honourable member wouldn't want to have left on the record an untruth, which was just stated, in that hearings were closed down while there were people wanting to be heard. I'm sure the member is aware that we have exhausted all the people who wanted to be heard on that day and we adjourned the committee an hour ahead of time. The members surely wouldn't want to leave that on the record.

MRS. C. OLESON: I certainly wouldn't want to leave on the record, Mr. Speaker, if I had uttered an untruth, but my understanding at that committee was that there were people who wished to be heard, people who understood they were to be heard, and people that had been told at very short notice that that meeting was being held were unable to go because of other commitments, had sat for long hours in the heat of many days and nights to be heard.

There was a speaker that came to the podium and his words clearly indicated that he expected another meeting to be held. There were people who weren't able to be contacted for those meetings, and it was clearly my understanding that there were other people to be heard. I may be proved to be wrong, but I will take that because I firmly believe that there were people waiting to be heard.

My concern is with this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the people of Manitoba will suffer from the same sort of high-handedness when it comes to these hearings. We have seen enough from this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we wonder, sincerely wonder if everyone will get a fair chance. It has come to a sad point in the Province of Manitoba where people cannot trust their government, and I know that is the case. The people expect and have expected over the years, no matter who was in power, that they could trust them when they spoke. I think that is a sad state of affairs when it comes to something like this in the province where people cannot trust their government. That is a feeling that has been cultivated by this government. If I am in error in that, I will apologize to the Minister of Highways later, but I do not feel that I am in error in stating that.

I referred a moment ago to a gentleman who spoke at those hearings, and who presented a brief, a very very lengthy brief. He started I believe in the afternoon and carried on long into the evening. Very interesting speaker. In his remarks he spoke at some length on the philosophy of governments and the way they deal with issues that they're asked to deal with, or that they feel they should deal with.

One of the theories he brought out was that a government sometimes acts in a paternalistic way. They feel that, you know, here's daddy, he's going to help you, he knows what you need, he knows what you want. — (Interjection) — Yes, the big brother, I know better than they attitude. Well, Mr. Speaker, this is what we have with respect to this issue of bilingual entrenchment. This government thinks that they know exactly what the people should have, and they imply by their very actions that the people don't know what is good for them.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of this province do know what is good for them. They want a chance to be able to say so. They want a chance to be able to tell this government in no uncertain terms how they feel on this issue, and what they feel is right for the future of their children. Their children yet unborn are going to be affected by this legislation. We are concerned, we are very concerned. It should be quite evident to this government at this time that we are concerned, and we intend to stay here as long as it takes to convince them. We are concerned because of some of the things this government has been doing. We are concerned that all of the facts haven't been given clearly to the people of Manitoba.

They've sent out these brochures, very attractive looking brochure. One of the things on the back of it says, "Manitoba is not becoming bilingual, nor introducing the Trudeau Government's bilingual program." Yet, the very first section of the proposed resolution reads in Section 23.1, "English and French are the official languages of Manitoba." Well, we would like to hear from the Attorney-General a clear concise explanation. When we ask for a clear concise explanation of this, he stands in his place and he talks and he talks, and we still have not got a clear concise explanation of how these two statements, how they wash, what they mean.

We see in the actual resolution that something is going to happen, but then he says it is not happening. We would like to have people go and express their opinions on that and be told exactly what this means.

We are concerned also with another statement in here. It says, "Putting this agreement into the Constitution guarantees exactly what services are legal rights and, therefore, is not the beginning of creeping bilingualism." — (Interjection) — I'm being interrupted by the Member for Springfield again. He's noticing me, I'm so thrilled.

This statement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is another one that we're concerned about. We want this statement explained to us at intersessional hearings. Intersessional hearings is what we're complaining about. That information doesn't seem to have crept through to the people on the backbench, intersessional hearings. If this guarantees exactly what services, then why this hazy area over the municipalities? People in municipalities are concerned about this and I'm sure they'll want to come when the harvest is over and they have time to prepare a brief and think this thing through. They will want to come and hear an explanation of that, I'm very sure they will.

Of course, they've written already to express some feelings to the Attorney-General and the Premier on this subject. I'm sure they'll want to take time to study the thing through. I'm sure if they feel it will be a benefit to everyone in their municipality, they will be delighted to come to these intersessional hearings and say so. So what is the government afraid of? They're afraid of intersessional hearings, that's what they're afraid of. They're afraid that people may have time to really study and really be able to do something about this. — (Interjection) — Well, if they talk to them, they should also listen and hear what they're saying. We hear it all the time. We get phone calls from people, we get expressions of people and their fears of this.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

MRS. C. OLESON: We know what the people are thinking. We hear them every day, but we do not hear members from the other side of the House get up and tell us what their constituents are saying about this, except for the Member for Elmwood who certainly tells us, and rightly so. — (Interjection) — Right, he's not really a member of their party anymore. I guess we shouldn't paint him with that brush anymore. — (Interjection) — Right.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of Manitoba know what is right for them. They know what they want. They are living in apprehension about what this government is doing to them. They do not trust this government. As a gesture of faith and trust, I think this government should agree with these intersessional hearings, get on with the rest of this Session, close it down in a reasonable sensible manner, and then get on with these intersessional hearings, so that the people can be heard.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think that's all I have to say at this time. I think probably there'll be several opportunities for me to express more opinions on this matter.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It is a pleasure to rise again and speak on the issue. Many of the things I have to say will no doubt be a repeat of comments I made yesterday, although it's amazing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as each and every one of us speak on the issue again, new points do surface and do arise. Of course, the members opposite, if they took part in the discussion, they may even have more to add to the issue.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I posed the question as to why the government - I also gave I believe some of the answers - is so frantic on this issue, and why they're so desperate in saying it has to move forward at this time. I think I was pretty accurate when I said that from their viewpoint it may be now or never, and that they were terribly concerned, of course, with the potential referendums coming forward this fall, certainly in the rural areas and maybe even some of the major urban cities in our province.

I think, Mr. Speaker, we also see something else happening. I'm almost positive that some of these same groups who are requesting of the government that this process be allowed to develop to a point where everybody not only has a proper opportunity to be prepared to make presentation to a committee, certainly preferably in the fall, they're also saying, give us an opportunity to vote on the issue. Of course, that's what this government is desperately afraid of.

I guess it harkens right back to a comment made by the Attorney-General on one of his presentations last week, when he said words to the effect, as I remember, that the consensus, although it's an ideal to strive for, is not always the important goal. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll come back to that issue a little later on.

I think it's incumbent, at least, upon the members opposite to realize that we're not speaking as a party

just for ourselves; we're not speaking for our political future, but that we believe we're right. Of course, any politician that believes they're right very rarely walks away from what the vast majority of the people really believe to be right also. I think the people, in majority, are saying, give us an opportunity to speak to the issue, and that is entrenchment or not.

Mr. Speaker, this government is frantic. It'll be very interesting to see the response and their reaction to this new sub-amendment as has come forward. I honestly believe that they're not totally surprised at the action that has taken place here this morning. It seems to me last week they hurled comments across the floor to the effect that they might be expecting some additional amendments.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they well understand our resolve on this issue. As a matter of fact, I would have to say, as a group, we're looking extremely healthy, we're well rested. And as I hurled a comment across the floor to the Member of Springfield, to those of us who are used to pitching sheaves, this represents a cool relaxing respite from that hard, hard physical work.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wanted to clarify a comment that I made yesterday and I don't know whether it was fully understood or not. It was to do with the municipalities coming forward by way of press release, and making the indication that they were not prepared to accept the government's argument that there would be a cost saving if we followed through with this so-called agreement - the agreement by the way, Sir, which we have never seen spelled out on paper in totality. I think the municipalities had a very sound point. They were saying that if you're asking us as municipalities, the first order of government within the province, if you were asking us to endorse specifically the issue which you have placed before us, you can't use as a justification the fact that there are a few millions of dollars coming from Ottawa, or that some few millions of dollars may be saved in translation. I think specifically what they said was, at \$4 per person - that was the saving that, I think, the government has used if we follow this quickly by the approach developed - that at \$4 per person you cannot use that as justification for selling this program. It just won't wash, and I think in great numbers rural councillors and rural municipalities are saying they will not accept that argument. I think we'd be wise if we put aside the cost saving principle that is espoused by the government.

Again, Mr. Speaker, to put it into perspective, how can the government in all honesty attempt to sell something of this nature, something that's going to require a change in the Constitution. How can they put a \$4 per person price tag on it and say it represents a saving, when this same government increased the debt to some \$600 per person the past fiscal year.

Really, let's not even use that argument, please. Just because you're the government and attempt to use that, all you're really saying is the people really have no understanding whatsoever of the financial plight of this province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I covered some of this material yesterday. I'd like to move onto an area that I didn't delve into to a great deal and that was the whole amendments area. Mr. Speaker, we've challenged the government to sort of put up or shut up when it comes to this whole amendment area. They keep telling us

that if we move this along quickly into committee that they then will, at their pleasure, bring forward a so-called tightening of wording the amendments towards this whole area. I think it's incumbent upon them to lay them on the table right today. Or are they saying really that they're not prepared, or are they saying that they may not even really consider them? We don't know what they're saying. But I think it's vitally important that whatever amendments they are considering, not only on this issue but some of the remaining bills, be put forward and presented right now. After all, who has the first right to know and to see some of these amendments, so-called? Certainly it has to be the House, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that if there is a desire to work towards a solution of this impasse at all, certainly one of the first areas in which the government has to be prepared to concede is the tabling of those amendments. Not only to suit our request to see them, but I believe also other interested parties; specifically, I say, the MGEA and, of course, hopefully the so-called amendments will make some clearer understanding as to what this whole issue will mean to the municipalities, because they too are looking for a much clearer delineation of the new bilingualism as it applies to them.

Mr. Speaker, I think that they have to bring these amendments forward. The other night the First Minister alluded in some manner, at least in my interpretation, that maybe numbers could be entrenched. I'm not saying that's what he meant, I don't even know if he knew what he meant, but I took out of the meaning of which he gave to us an inferral that maybe the government was considering entrenching a specific number or a specific percentage. I have no way of knowing, but if that is part of their thinking, lay it before us now and lay it before the people of the province now so that we can do away with some of the mistrust, and I think that's a first course of action and I think it should be taken by them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I've said before and I'll say it again, only briefly this time, that I find it incomprehensible that the government really would ask people to come forward and make representation on their own behalf without not having before them two things: First of all, the specific agreement that has been struck with the Societe Franco-Manitobaine and the Federal Government; and, secondly, the latest government thinking on the issue by way of the amendments.

I think it's ludicrous, Sir, that a government would expect people to come and make representation and not be prepared to address the latest amendments. Again, I allude to something that happened on the Crow rate hearings where many people and much time was spent by those of us on the committee, posing questions about the latest federal proposals which we were not even mandated to do by this Legislature on that Standing Committee of Agriculture. We were mandated to refer to committee a specific proposal. What happened, Mr. Speaker, we found ourselves out in committee discussing proposals that were not even referred to it by the power and the authority of this House.

On this issue, if we would see the very same thing happen, whereby people would come forward and would be asked to come forward and to make presentation on the issue and yet would not be fully cognizant of

what the government was really thinking, I think would be a terrible disservice, certainly on the most important issue of our time.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I remember, and I believe some of our other members will be quoting the original comments by the Attorney-General, and maybe they have already, when he first introduced the issue, that we had two choices in this issue. It was either to accept it completely as it was or to reject it, totally out of hand. Of course, nobody on that side wants to dispel or challenge me on that comment, but that was the original comment of the Attorney-General in introducing, I don't know if it was the referral motion or if it was the main resolution, but something's happened over the last three or four weeks and, of course, we take some pleasure in the fact that the government, at least, is amenable to consideration of some further amendments.

We wonder again why they will not spell them out now, because it almost leads us to believe that there's something hidden or something that is not being presented to us. Although we say on this side, rhetorically, Sir, we say, what is the rush - we may have said that again in the first instance is rhetoric - we are now seriously beginning to believe, particularly in view of all the pressure not only from the House here, but from outside sources that are putting the government and in the face of that, the government wanting, against all advice, to continue - we're wondering, what is the hidden agenda. What is not being told to us and to the people of Manitoba? What agreements have been struck that we are not aware of, with Ottawa in particular?

I think as long as the government remains intransigent to this whole issue, that question will take on greater and greater weight not only within this House, but within the confines of the boundaries of this province.

Mr. Speaker, we wonder why the government will not accede to our wishes in this particular case and to those of the Province of Manitoba; and I know they feel they have the political majority and they do. They were given the right to govern the province in the election of 1981, and I realize how upset they are when they see the minority party frustrating them and I can share in some of the frustration if I were on their side, but that's what oppositions are in place to do, I believe, at the proper time and by the methods at their disposal, is to prevent governments from pushing through legislation that is totally unwanted by a vast majority of people.

It's on those two areas then that I guess we gain our new wind in this issue; we dig in our heels and our toes with even greater spirit. We wonder what the hidden agenda is, we wonder what arrangement has been made with Ottawa; and, secondly, we wonder why the government cannot see the wisdom in waiting two short months and calling an intersessional committee.

Not one speaker on the other side has told us why we're wrong in wanting to hold the issue to follow; not one, Sir. We're not asking to drag this out for two or three years. We're not asking that the so-called magical December 31st deadline - we're not asking, even though we do not know on what basis it comes forward or on what solid ground it stands. I guess we're even prepared to accept and meet that deadline, although we don't even know on what basis it comes forward; but, Mr. Speaker, we say that the people must be heard.

Many of my colleagues from this side have made reference to remarks made by a former Premier, Mr. Roblin, and I'm not going to dwell in great length on that particular report, but I just wanted to add a few comments to those made by the Member for Arthur when he says that he remembers the issue in his area, and although he's older than I am, I can tell you, as a very young person, I remember the issue in my area. As a matter of fact, I can remember the person that came out to speak and address that issue in my little hamlet, and it may or may not surprise people opposite to know that the person that came into my particular town - and of course I didn't attend the meeting, but my parents did - was my present leader, the Member for Charleswood.

I can tell you, Sir, that the vast majority of people in our area were terribly upset with the Conservative Government of the Day, which they supported in overwhelming fashion in our local poll, but they were upset with that issue because they saw autonomy again being removed from them. I don't know when that began; I would defer to some of my older colleagues where this action, either legislatively or voluntarily, where autonomy began to be removed from local areas, and it not only happened in the former government, but also it happened in the form of grain handling companies and many other aspects of rural community life.

At this particular time when you had Provincial Government spokesmen coming forward and saying that there was a tremendous advantage into consolidating school districts and it represented an advancement in education and, in the long run, into efficiencies as far as funding, I can remember the people in our district totally rejected that out of hand. They did for two reasons. First of all, they saw some of their local authority being removed; and, secondly, they saw that spectre of the heavy hand of government beginning to come toward them.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the only thing I draw from that comment was that on that issue, which was very important in its time, but I think, as history will record, was of meagre importance relative to this one; but the Government of that Day had only one way of selling it before it went to a vote of the people, at which time it was overwhelmingly accepted, and that was to go individually out to the areas involved and to sell the particular system of consolidation. That's the rightful way, Sir.

As former Premier Roblin indicated, that was the proper method, and I'm wondering how society has advanced in 20 years, or 25, where all of a sudden that's no longer the proper way, because I believe on this issue that if the proper process had been followed, you'd have a lot less divisiveness and, more importantly, you would have some major acceptance, at least, in principle.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I only mention that because I think it's very important that whether people have an opportunity to pose the question directly to individuals within the confines of their own hall or within their own community club, people throughout this whole province want an opportunity to speak to the issue. Of course, the only opportunity that will be afforded to them under the particular process we're in is one by which they come forward and speak to committee; something

which I'd say is a little bit foreign to many many citizens of this province. So, Mr. Speaker, it's on that basis that we remain so resolute also, and it's on that basis that we continue to dig in our heels.

Well, Sir, I had mentioned it briefly yesterday, the issue of credibility. Quite frankly, Sir, there are a vast majority of the population in this province who do not believe any of the written remarks of the NDP by way of pamphlet, by way of ad on billboards, by way of ad in the papers. Frankly, they do not believe. I'm not going to go into the history of how the government was elected in the material they floated at that time to become elected, but I can tell you that there are a large large majority that do not believe this government. When they say they know where it's headed, I believe they believe the government to be sincere in their attempt to bring it forward - I don't deny that - but I honestly believe that the vast majority of Manitobans do not accept the government's word that they know where this issue is headed and how the province will have to deal with it in some 20 or 30 years. I think that's a major pointed issue, because after all, Sir, it's something that's being entrenched and it'll be with us hopefully forever, as all aspects of the Constitution will be.

Again, I ask the question: Why is the government so frantic on the issue? More importantly - and of course this is in retrospect, Sir - but why did the government not consult us before they struck the agreement? I know the Attorney-General did send correspondence over to us last December and then after that, but why didn't the government see fit to include members of the opposition; not only to this issue, Sir, I say on any issue dealing with constitutional change. Does it not make eminent sense to anybody that looks at the issue, that if you're going to change any aspect of the Constitution - and I don't care what it is - dealing with any subject that you would want to include through all the stages of the process, even through the conceptualizing aspect of trying to work around the problem, wouldn't it be abundantly wise to include some people from the opposition?

I think it would be, and I suppose if there's anything that I've learnt through this whole issue, I can tell you, Sir, because of it and many other things, that our party expects to be in power for many years in this province; that any constitutional change that is being considered by the government - I think I would at least argue within our group - should include input from the opposition.

So, Sir, I think in retrospect the government can blame themselves to a great degree for where we're at in this issue, because they could have easily included members from this side in attempting to hammer out that so-called agreement, the one which, of course, we have never seen.

If they didn't want to do that, why then didn't they float a White Paper, something where everybody could react to; something that everybody had an opportunity to know what was on their mind before they introduced the resolution to the House? That, I understand, is done quite often in Ottawa, and I don't know when the last time it was done here. I'll defer that to people with more experience. Of course, Mr. Speaker, we've never amended the Constitution, but I know White Papers have been floated on other subjects in Ottawa.

Why wouldn't the government do that? Then they can say, with all justification, that people have known

not by way of press report like the Attorney-General gives us the catalogue of all the news releases that have spoken to the subject in the paper over the last year, not by that way, Sir, but by the proper legislative procedure of bringing forward a White Paper so as to introduce the whole subject to the people. Again, in retrospect, I'm sure they question themselves.

But, Mr. Speaker, the greatest blunder the government made in this whole issue is that they misread the opposition, not only the opposition in this House, but the opposition outside of it. I don't know what their thinking was; that they believed, first of all, that as a party we had certain bounds on us not to speak out to the issue, or that we would dare speak against it. I don't know why they were lulled into that belief, firstly; and then, secondly, I can't believe for one moment that they thought the municipalities, as an organization and as a group with all that grassroot power and everything good that rural Manitoba stands for behind them, could possibly accept it without delving in it in greater depth and all that could have been dispelled to some degree by including that organization in the beginning also.

Mr. Speaker, the government misread the opposition badly and they have the hard decision to make as to whether, in spite of all the people being against them - or the vast majority - whether to steamroll them or use the bulldozer approach, as the Member for Arthur said, or whether to give some ground and let the people be heard properly.

I'd like to slide a little onto the issue. I pride myself a little bit that I've attempted to speak toward the process on this issue, but I'd like to slide onto the issue for a little bit. I don't really want to, but I will. Mr. Speaker, aside from the legal questions on this whole issue, which have been so well covered by our leader, and I give credit also to the Attorney-General in the way he approached the subject from the legal aspect, I think that what's at cross purposes here are the question of two realities. Of course, we have the historical reality and I know that's foremost in the minds of those who want to see the resolution go forward and, of course, we have the reality of today's world. Mr. Speaker, it's on that basis that this whole issue is at cross purposes.

Sir, the people must be heard and they must be allowed to speak to both of those ends because today's realities are not at all consistent with the historical reality of which, particularly the Member for Radisson and others, hold so dear and so close. I understand that, Sir, and I can tell you that when it comes to speaking to the main resolution, whenever that is, and how many days or weeks that may take to come, that that will be the main thrust of my presentation.

So, Sir, the issue is not cost, and again, as I indicated earlier, it's not cost and I think that's borne out by many comments and probably borne out best by an association which the government listens to, I know, very attentively, and of course that's the Manitoba Government Employees Association, who, on July 12th, sent a letter to the Premier and who, on Page 3, made this comment, and I quote: "We further support a limited extension of those rights in the provision of practical bilingual government services. Any extended rights must be implemented in a realistic and workable manner in order to avoid future conflicts. We believe our suggestions will help to achieve that end."

Mr. Speaker, that's what is at issue, of course, is something that's realistic, if something can be developed that's realistic and something that can be developed that will not bring into being future conflicts, something that will not, as has happened in New Brunswick - and I think colleagues of mine have quoted from that particular article extensively. An aside, Sir, it's those types of articles that one does not like to see, but they are written and they come into the homes of many many Manitobans and they represent, in the minds of Manitobans, a very real threat and one that must be dealt with. So, Sir, it's on the basis of that type of comment and a wish to avoid future conflicts that the government has not proven to the opposition, nor to the people of Manitoba, that they have thought the issue forward that far. How long is future? I think that's the question. I mean, is it something that we'll have to grapple with in 10 years or 20 or 30, or will it not be an issue? Nobody can answer that question, absolutely nobody can answer that question with total confidence, but we only have experiences to work with and today, Sir, we've seen something that happened in the nation, something that was brought into being to make the nation a more unified country and which through many great regions of the country has done just the opposite. Those are the experiences that we work with and there's nothing that can move them out of our mind when we try and give logical thinking to the subject.

Sir, the issue is not cost. It involves history, but not in totality. Anybody that says history is the only issue is ignoring today's world and where we are and where we may be going. The issue is entrenchment; the issue is who will have the ultimate say, and the issue, of course, in the minds of many rural people is municipal designation and what that really means and how it will impact upon, not only those of us who come into contact with provincial agencies and Crown corporations on a more frequent basis, but those in our midst who come in contact daily with their own local governments. Sir, that answer has not been adequately answered, and until it is, I think this issue will always remain live and open.

People need time; they need time to prepare for the resolution; they need time to prepare for the amendments which will hopefully be laid before us; they need time, Sir, to come back from their holidays; they need time to dispose of the harvest; and they need time to adequately prepare. That's all we're asking for, nothing more. On any other issue, I'm totally convinced this government would see the logic of our request and would grant it, on any other issue, Sir, but not on this one.

A MEMBER: They're not a logical government.

MR. C. MANNESS: Again it begs the question, what do we not know? What is being kept from us, because in our view our request is so pure that we can hardly believe that a government would not accept it.

With those few comments I'll close my discourse on the subject for now, and again I question why the government is so frantic on the issue and why it has to be done by way of their timetable. I think there are many unknowns, which could help this process greatly

if they would just tell us completely what's on their minds.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. R. NORDMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to commend the previous speaker for his well chosen words over the past few moments.

It's so long since this particular bill was brought before us, or this resolution was brought before us, that maybe some of us are forgetting what it's all about; and the amendment that Mr. Sherman, the Member for Fort Garry, has put before the House, really all it says, after the words of committee in the last paragraph, is that we sit during recess, after prorogation, and report to the next Session of the Legislature. There is another amendment that was made, but was turned down, and we now have another amendment before the House.

Maybe we aren't really remembering what The Manitoba Act says. The Manitoba Act of 1870 says that either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the House of the Legislature, and both these languages shall be used in the respective records and journals of the House, and either of those languages may be used by any person or in any pleading or process or an issuing from any court of Canada established under The British America Act of 1867, or in or from all or any of the courts of the province. The Acts of the Legislature shall be printed and published in both these languages.

Mr. Speaker, I don't think anyone on this side of the House, the opposition side of the House, has denied that the French linguistic rights were written into the bill when Manitoba entered into Confederation in 1870. We also acknowledge that in 1890 that the Legislature of Manitoba altered the Constitution of the Province of Manitoba and passed an Official Languages Act that was not challenged until 1979, when the Forest case went to the Supreme Court of Canada and The Official Languages Act of 1890 was declared invalid.

Then again in 1981, Mr. Bilodeau took his case before the Manitoba Court of Appeal and now into the Supreme Court and it still sits there. Many cultural changes have been seen since 1870. The Francophone population of Manitoba in 1870 was approximately 51 percent. Today, the Francophone population of Manitoba is in the neighbourhood, I believe, of 6 percent, Mr. Speaker. Immigration of other ethnic groups such as the Icelandic people, the Ukrainians, the Polish, the Germans, the Filipinos, the Asians, and the Anglos have relegated the Francophones to a minority position, but to the letter of the law their rights under the bill of 1870 has been agreed to by the opposition.

In fact, the government headed by the now Senator Duff Roblin took steps to accommodate some of the disparities and inequities that were taken from the Manitoba Francophone and following the decision the Supreme Court of Canada in the Forest case the Honourable Sterling Lyon and his government took the necessary action to restore rights of the Francophone minority that had been denied them since 1890.

Just as an instance, I have some documents here as to the steps that the Provincial Government led by

Mr. Sterling Lyon enacted to follow in the translation services and so on that became necessary when that bill of the Supreme Court decided that the 1890 act was invalid. I have here the News Service of the January 25, 1980, "Translation services to be expanded. Manitoba move to meet courts language ruling. The Manitoba Government is expanding its translation services substantially in what Attorney-General Gerry Mercier describes as a major first step to meet both the spirit and the legal requirements of the recent Supreme Court decision on Manitoba's language legislation." This goes on for two pages.

Then we have another on April 11th. "The French Language Bill of 1980 introduced in the House; measures restore French status in Legislature." In the first paragraph, "Premier Sterling Lyon has introduced a bill to implement the use of French as an official language in Manitoba's Legislature." I don't know at this point, Mr. Speaker, whether that official language should be part of - because I don't know that French or English are the official languages because in The Manitoba Act it never classified either English or French

as being the official language. These languages, both either English or French, may be used by any person in debates of the House of the Legislature.

So I guess it's a case of interpretation of whether that is deemed to be official or not. Then on April 18th of 1980, "Lyon wants Quebec to join in renewing the Constitution." Then again on October 6th of 1980, "French language services in Manitoba. By a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada made in December of 1973, Section 23 of The Manitoba Act was restored and to the degree of its effectiveness Manitoba became a province in which the French and English languages are recognized. Subsequently a large interpretative bill was passed by the Legislative Assembly which gives legal effect to French versions of statutes."

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. When this resolution is next before the House the honourable member will have 33 minutes remaining.

The hour of adjournment having arrived, the House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until 2:00 p.m. this afternoon.