

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
9:30 o'clock, Friday, August 7, 1970

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A question had been brought to my attention regarding the content of the Order Paper and in particular the fact that a motion, a proposed motion by the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, which I had taken under advisement yesterday, does not appear hereon; and the reason why the motion of the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition does not appear is because it was my impression that pursuant to the statement made by the Honourable Minister of Transportation yesterday afternoon that that closed the matter so

MR. WALTER WEIR (Leader of the Opposition)(Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, in my view it doesn't; Mr. Speaker, not in terms of the subject matter of the amendment, and I would propose to have something to say about it at that time and would likely seek leave if the motion was ruled in order, but we had another significant question whereas there was a very strong difference of opinion as to whether or not the motion was in order and whether or not it was a decision of the House, in terms of the satisfaction, rather than that of the Speaker. There's differing thoughts on both sides and I was hoping that your ruling whether or not the motion was in order would settle, for future situations in the House, whether it was in order or whether it wasn't in order, and I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that something that is taken under advisement by the Speaker can be handled in this way. I think we should go through the formal process of either finding it in order or finding it out of order and then we have our precedent. It will become very difficult to handle in the future if it's left like this and all there is is a matter that the Speaker took under advisement and never reported to the House. That's another bad precedent I'd hate to see get started.

HON. ED. SCHREYER (Premier)(Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, listening to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition's remarks, it is not clear to me whether he wishes a determination made of the acceptability of his motion for purely theoretical reasons and also so as to give better definition to the rules for future time, or whether he is wanting it to be ruled upon because of something that he might regard as still current before us. If it's the latter, I would have to take issue, I think, on the basis of the advice I have.

MR. WEIR: Mr. Speaker, again we're really arguing the point of order and I've indicated that it would likely be my intention to seek leave of the House to withdraw the motion if the motion was in order. Now in doing so, I would make just a short statement and I'll tell you right now what the statement would be, and I have no desire to enter it and I'm speaking on the point of order, Mr. Speaker; I'm not trying to transgress the rules of the House. But there were statements made by the Minister of Transportation which followed, again outside the House, the discussion of the motion yesterday, and I was going to point out that I would assume that the statement that he made was intended to cover all of the statements that he had made up to the point that he made this statement, and just ask for the assumption of it, and if leave was given to withdraw it, to withdraw the motion, I would accept that as the fact that nobody objected and that this was the understanding that the House had and the motion would be gone, but in the meantime we would have found out via a Speaker's ruling how to operate in terms of this situation again if it in fact arises, and I am one who hopes it never does.

HON. SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C. (Minister of Mines and Natural Resources)(Inkster): Mr. Speaker, there were two matters. The first is why the motion was not on the Order Paper. As I recall the proceedings, the Minister of Transportation read his renewed statement - the Leader of the Opposition had indicated that he would prefer not to put a motion if the Minister would have made a statement - the Minister then read a new statement; the Speaker said - as I recall it and Hansard will or will not bear me out - "I take it that the statement of the Honourable Minister is acceptable to all members of the House," and there was silence, and I take it from that that the Speaker regarded the matter as having been dealt with.

With regard to the second point that the Leader of the Opposition raises, that is that it would be nice to have a precedent. I don't wish to be definitive on this question except to say that the ordinary procedure is to not have a precedent on a moot point - that is, a point which is not really before the Chamber. If an argument is taking place and the members agree that it will be resolved in a particular way, then both in court and in the Chamber it is my impression that it is not only not done but that it establishes dangerous precedents because they are

(MR. GREEN cont'd.) . . . not made in real situations but made to determine a future rule. Now the best way of determining what future conduct will be is for the House to get together and make a rule, and that will of course decide what the conduct will be in the future; and I would certainly undertake, if my honourable friend would accept this because I think that in the last analysis the House can make whatever precedent it wants, I would be certainly urging on all sides of the House that this kind of a question be taken up immediately by the committee which is being set up as between sessions to consider the rules, and direct the House's attention to come back with a suggestion as to what the rule will be. Now that's a better way, in my view - and I ask the Leader of the Opposition to consider - it is a better way to determine future conduct by the House saying what should happen rather than the Speaker making a decision on a point on which we are not at issue.

MR. WEIR: Mr. Speaker, I must say that there's another point of issue that we are at odds, and that is whether this means of receiving a Speaker's decision -- because the matter was taken under advisement by the Speaker. It was taken under advisement by the Speaker, and this was before the fact. It isn't trying to deal with something, it's not taking under consideration a moot point. Mr. Speaker, I submit that the activities of the House allowed my presentation of a motion, the motion was then taken under advisement by you, and I would suggest that procedure dictates that it should come back, and I don't care whether it's on the Order Paper as printed or not, I believe that the motion is before the House until the matter is dealt with and I hope to be fair and reasonable in dealing with it if it's there, but again we find ourselves in a position of the Speaker taking something under advisement and then if everybody forgets about it and it goes away, it's just left off the Order Paper, no decision is forthcoming, I don't really think that that's good practice in the House.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, if I might offer some suggestions to you, Sir. It would seem that once a motion is moved and is taken under advisement, it does require some subsequent action, either a request to withdraw it by leave or an indication from you, Sir, as to whether it is in order or out of order, or whether in your view it has simply lapsed because of preceding events, but it does require some form of action, and so in that respect the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition I would concur is quite right. It would seem on the basis of yesterday's proceedings, Mr. Speaker, that the motion really has no further purpose, but I do not presume to attempt to make a ruling for you, Sir.

MR. WEIR: Mr. Speaker, I don't raise the point because of what the ruling should be. I don't care how it's disposed of. I don't care how it's disposed of. I think it's a matter that's before the House and I think it should be properly dealt with in whatever way that you see fit because it's in your name, it's not in my name now, and until some direction is given by you, Sir, I think it's out of my hands.

MR. SPEAKER: I will then retain the motion under advisement until such time as I've had opportunity to check the authorities and review Hansard what has led up to the proposal of the motion.

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

REPORTS BY STANDING COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: Adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface, and the proposed motion of the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition in amendment thereto. The Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney.

MR. EARL MCKELLAR (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, as I was speaking last night on the motion of my leader, after the debate or the vote had taken place on the House Leader of the Liberal Party, I was trying to bring home to the members of the government how important the Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company is to the Dominion of Canada, the Province of Manitoba and the Village of Wawanesa, and I don't think I really stirred up many feelings among the members opposite because Wawanesa is only a small village, 512 people. It's not the City of Winnipeg; it's not the City of Toronto; it's not the City of Montreal; but it is the largest mutual insurance company in Canada and it was started by pioneers back in 1896. Now do the pioneers of our community mean anything to us at this present day? I would say yes, because we and each community celebrated - and it took place this summer. We are congratulating our pioneers for their efforts and their work in providing a standard of living second to none for our people, and the Wawanesa Mutual has provided a living second to none for the

(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) people of Wawanesa for the last 74 years, and they're still providing and will always provide for the people of Wawanesa this standard of living, and I would plead with the First Minister, I would plead with him at this time on behalf of these people because I want to tell you what's going to happen to this village.

Last February we opened a new elementary school, over half a million dollars, that was approved of by our government. A brand new school. It adjoined a third of a million dollar high school, so there is presently a \$900,000 school that stands to be a ghost if this bill passes. There's little or no chance of it staying open. And what about the hospital? What about the doctor? What about the bank? What about all the businesses in the Village of Wawanesa? Are the people of Wawanesa district, including myself, going to have to go to Brandon for everything? I would hope not. But I can see no other way out if this bill passes.

Now Mr. Speaker, I would like to also plead the cause of our three Manitoba-based companies, and one I did not mention last night Canadian Indemnity. We are always interested in the Province of Manitoba, and as members of the Legislature, in bringing in new industry into the Province of Manitoba, and we are proud, we have been proud, as every government has, in bringing new industry into our province, no matter whether it comes from United States or other parts of Canada or Europe or wherever it comes from, and when we're dealing with this vote here, what are we doing to our local-based companies? We're saying to them that you're no longer wanted - no longer wanted in our Province of Manitoba. Mr. First Minister, do you want these companies in the Province of Manitoba? Do you respect these people who have established these companies that are carrying on the high positions they have been as good corporate citizens of our province, paying your taxes in our province? I would hope that you do respect these companies but you won't respect them if you pass this bill.

MR. SCHREYER: Would the honourable member permit a question?

MR. McKELLAR: Sure.

MR. SCHREYER: The honourable member asks me if I respect the people who are on the companies of Canadian Indemnity and Wawanesa and so on. I would ask him if he thinks that the City fathers or previous governments of Manitoba disrespected the people who were on the company boards of Winnipeg Electric, for example.

MR. McKELLAR: Did anybody lose any money in Winnipeg Electric? Did anybody lose any money?

MR. SCHREYER: May I ask the honourable member is it a sign of respect whether or not one loses money. Is that what respect amounts to?

MR. McKELLAR: Well Mr. Speaker, just a red herring, not the basic what we're talking about -- we're talking about insurance in communities in the Province of Manitoba, two of which are established in rural Manitoba, the City of Portage la Prairie and the Village of Wawanesa, and if you're not concerned about the rural parts of Manitoba, well I am, and I am pleading the cause of these people, and one of the reasons why I'm pleading the cause is because I have the privilege of representing these people in the Village of Wawanesa, I have the privilege of being an agent of the Portage Mutual Insurance Company, and I'm well acquainted with the operation of both these large companies. These are the people here that have carried on this tradition. You can go to Toronto, you can go to any part of Canada, and they will tell you that these people can be respected all across our Dominion of Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the one important thing that we're discussing here today - do the people of Manitoba want a monopoly or do they want freedom of choice to choose the company that they decide on? Some members of the government side say there's no differential between rates. The only difference you got is agents. I would like to say right now there is a difference in the rates, and I have right in the office in there and I can bring you two rate books out - the differential of 10, 15 percent in lots of rates. But this is not the point. Do we want freedom of choice or do we want a monopoly? Nobody after this bill is passed will ever know whether you're saving money, and I mean it; effectively from the day this bill is passed, you'll never know whether you're saving money. You'll never know whether you're getting the proper service because you'll have to take the kind of service that you're getting, and I for one, speaking on behalf of the local-based companies in the Province of Manitoba, say that you are getting taken care of right now, and you have freedom of choice and you have a differential in the rate systems among these companies.

To the First Minister I would like to also say that the three leading companies selling insurance in the Province of Manitoba are Wawanesa, Co-operative Fire and Casualty, and

(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) Portage Mutual, three of which set their own rates, which set their own rates, have nothing to do -- and we're not dealing here with companies that are far away. Each one of them set their own rates within their own Province of Manitoba at their head office. Now, Mr. Speaker, if we vote -- if the members of the government vote for this bill, can we look with pride at the City of Portage la Prairie and the Village of Wawanesa? Can the people be proud of their government? I would like to say that they won't be proud of their government. They destroyed the image that was created back 74 years ago in Wawanesa and 86 years ago in Portage la Prairie, that these pioneers established, as I mentioned before, and I for one hope that the government has second thoughts on this matter before this motion is passed. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. AL MACKLING, Q. C. (Attorney-General)(St. James): Mr. Speaker, once again we are hearing arguments which we've heard in this House before. Some of the arguments have the odd little twist. Oh I'm sure the honourable member can speak more eloquently from his chair than he can when he's standing. I would like to reflect that perhaps it's a loose calf in the north forty, but you know, out of respect, I think it might be the Honourable Member from Morris who uttered those braying noises.

Earlier on, Mr. Speaker, we were favoured with a dissertation from the Member for River Heights again, and amongst some of the things he said is that we were going to all this trouble, going to all this trouble over a little bit of money and what nonsense it is. Now here's a man who, like the Honourable Member from Souris-Killarney, evaluates things in economic terms only apparently -- what respect we have for industry, what respect we have for vested interests. This political party has respect for the people of Manitoba and what the people of Manitoba expect from a government to protect their interest, to protect their lives, to protect their time, to protect their bodies, and that's our paramount concern. It's not anti-industry, it's pro people and that's the position.

Now the Honourable Member from River Heights again has made his speech in another day and he's not interested in listening to someone else -- he's out of the Chamber again; but in his oration he referred to some learned spokesman in some other jurisdiction -- he talked too quickly unfortunately for me to be able to catch the author, but the gist of it was that there was an analogy that we had a selfish will to govern. I would like honourable members to reflect, and particularly the Honourable Member from Emerson who says "that's right," that it was in May of 1969, May of 1969, that a government that was secure in this province, had a working majority, wasn't in a minority government position, had a selfish will to govern. They had 62 pieces of legislation on the table that honourable members had worked and spent many hours discussing, but what did they do? They saw that their political image was right and their selfish will to govern demanded that they went to the electorate to have a secure tenure in office. Now should the Honourable Member from River Heights, who I am sure counselled this move, suggest that this government has a selfish will to govern because we dare to produce legislation in this House to the benefit of the people of Manitoba, legislation which we promised, to which we are dedicated, legislation which not only covers the wants and the needs but provides in a meaningful way for humane treatment for the people who were involved? And that's the position of this party and we are proud of it. And for the Honourable Member from River Heights to say or to reflect and suggest in any manner that we on this side have a selfish will to govern, is really talking out of the other side of his face.

Honourable members continue to say "all we're talking about is a savings of -- oh, and the Member from River Heights, now it's at the most 10 percent. We're not talking in bare economic terms; we're not talking of \$6.00 a car, as the Honourable Member from River Heights seems to want to define the issue, or \$6.00 a motorist. We are talking about human frustration, time, effort, the tremendous dissipation of resources that exist in our society because of the malaise in this industry, and I for one -- the Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney sits and he's an expert in this field. Well, will he recognize that I'm an expert in connection with claims that have been brought by people in my constituency to my office? I know the frustration. I know the anxiety. I know the pressure.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Filibuster.

MR. MACKLING: Filibuster. There's another very eloquent spokesman from his seat. The Honourable Member from Riel speaks much better when he's sitting than when he stands.

MR. CRAIK: Filibuster.

MR. MACKLING: And you know, if you know in your own conscience if we talk about conscience, about the people who have been requested to sign release forms by adjusters when the insurance industry know that there is a likelihood that that compensation is inadequate. They are anxious for a quick settlement in some instances. If they can't get that quick settlement, then you wait. You wait until your car is repaired. You can't even get your car repaired because you've got a personal injury claim. Sign the release first please - and not once - oh he shakes his head - not once, innumerable times this plight occurred, and as eloquent and as persuasive as I tried to be, and I admit that I don't succeed as well as the Honourable Member for Riel does sitting in his chair; when he nods his head it's much more eloquent than when he speaks, but let me assure you that the insurance industry, represented by the adjuster, wouldn't accept my plea that my poor client at least be able to get his car repaired so he could drive to work and we'd settle his personal injury claim later. That isn't what was allowed. You had to sign on the dotted line.

And this didn't just occur; this is a condition that has been existing in this province, in this country for decades. Now they say, well, some companies don't do that. Well this government hasn't got any fight against the Wawanesa Mutual Insurance Company, the Portage Mutual Insurance Company. No. No. That's right. We are concerned for the people of Manitoba. My honourable friend knows that in Saskatchewan the private insurance industry is still alive, still functioning, and apparently - and the honourable member knows, and he waves his fingers - the honourable member knows and he said in the House here just a while ago that some of the staff in Wawanesa are involved in the sales of automobile insurance in Saskatchewan, the package plan. Well, what's the great problem? What's the great problem?

The Honourable Member from Souris-Killarney and all of the members of the opposition, apparently, recognize the precept, and when I have asked them, when they have made their speeches earlier, they all admitted to it readily that they are in favour of compulsory automobile insurance. They are in favour of compulsory automobile insurance. That then puts a duty, a duty on you and I -- no, he said -- puts a duty on you and I to make sure that that section of compulsory insurance is provided at the lowest possible cost, and that's the principle we're dealing with. Now the honourable members want to say well, no that makes it a utility and, you know, we can't accept that insurance is a utility. When you make it compulsory you make it much more of a utility than is Hydro or Telephone. You don't have to have a telephone.

MR. McKE LLAR: You don't have to have a car either.

MR. MACKLING: So you don't have to have, you don't have to have a utility. And the Honourable Member from Rhineland, oh he'll accept ferries in British Columbia; he'll accept the railroad in British Columbia owned by the state; he'll accept a lot of things in British Columbia owned by the state. Ah, but that's Social Credit; that makes it good; it's got a Divine Blessing. -- (Interjection) -- Yes, you'll get after me; you'll have to get after me with God because you're going to need lots of help.

MR. McKE LLAR: Pretty weak argument.

MR. MACKLING: The honourable members know the logic; they know the logic; they know that when they accept the principle of compulsion then they have to come through; but no, they say, that's going to hurt; that's going to hurt industry; we don't accept that argument; we said that the industry and the agents - the agents - and the agents were the vehicle of the industry all through this debate. The agents under the government plan will not be hurt, will not be hurt. And the Honourable Member from Souris-Killarney tells us about Wawanesa. I have been in Wawanesa. I know that town; it's a lovely little town; and certainly this government has demonstrated in its fight -- oh don't just smile and nod your head. This government has demonstrated in its fight with the Federal Government about the location of the fish marketing plant that we mean what we say when we say that we want regional development. We are not all for one huge Metropolitan Winnipeg and damn the rest of Manitoba.

MR. J. DOUGLAS WATT (Arthur): Could I ask the honourable member a question?

MR. MACKLING: You can ask your question when I'm finished because that's the way you treated me. No, you haven't got a point of privilege. I know that from your past performance and I won't yield.

MR. WATT: Can I ask him what is the reason for the filibuster? Why is the government filibustering now?

MR. MACKLING: No, you just sit down. You just sit down and listen and you might learn something. You might learn. I have a little bit of faith that you might learn - yet.

(MR. MACKLING cont'd)

But the honourable member talked about Wawanesa. He talked about Wawanesa, and it is a good little town and we want to preserve it, but the suggestion that this would destroy that town is completely unreal. Yes, oh it's right there - it's completely unreal. And this is the kind of technique that has been used. It's not logical, it's emotional, and in their conscience they can't fight the argument so they give us these stories.

But, as the Honourable Minister of Labour said the other day, and he said it far more eloquently than I could, we know what's happened in the past; what about Elliott Lake in Ontario? What happened there? What about the present town of Esterhazy, for example, in Saskatchewan? And the communities around? And I know that, for example, there are quite a number of employees of the Esterhazy mine who live in the Town of Russell and who commute daily, and it's a matter of 40 miles, 35 to 40 miles. My honourable friend thinks that's impossible. Well I can assure you that these people in Russell welcome the opportunity to work in Saskatchewan and have been doing it, not for one but for some years now, and they welcomed employment there and they still live in Russell, and Russell has seen some benefit from that mine in Esterhazy. There hasn't been a complete gravitation to Esterhazy but right now what has happened is that because of the problem of international marketing and the prices of potash, and in part I think in some of the unwise decisions of some of those responsible in our sister province, there now is a real problem in respect to the mining of potash, and not one, not seventy, but hundreds of employees have been laid off. And what did they do there? What has that got to do with insurance? Well, we're talking about what happens in industry, we're talking about what happens in society when changes come about, changes over which there is no control, and yet the Honourable Member from Emerson says, oh yes, but you are not doing enough. Sit down, sit down please.

MR. GEORGE HENDERSON (Pembina): It's Pembina. Let's get the record straight.

MR. MACKLING: All right, Pembina. Well really, your contribution is the same from where you come. I know it's the hills anyway, George. But this government hasn't been callous; it hasn't been cruel. It's provided the basis of compensation for adjustment, but the honourable members don't want to recognize that. They want to continue to argue the logic, to argue emotion, and they are concerned about the economic interest of the insurance company - and I welcome, I welcome an argument on that basis. You are concerned about the economic interest of the insurance companies, how that's going to affect the province, and I don't ignore that, but of much more paramount importance do I place the value to the motorist, to the pedestrian, to the passenger, to the person in Manitoba affected by a damage claim in an automobile accident.

As I have indicated, Mr. Speaker, I know from personal experience of this frustration, the delays, the anxiety, the terrible losses, not just in dollars and cents, that the people of Manitoba have suffered for many, many years, because of a sick situation in this industry. Now this government moves in a responsible way to remedy that problem and we get the hue and cry that we're going to hurt an industry. I don't think that that's valid.

My colleague the Honourable Minister of Finance has, I think, touched on one of the problems. Even though the present insurance industry can show some percentage, some 40, 50, 60 percent loss ratio as having been paid out from year to year, some years a little higher, where did it go? How much of it went to middle men, to adjusters, to claims agents, adjusters? How much of it went to lawyers? I happen to know. I happen to know from my personal experience that many, many people can't afford, can't afford to engage a lawyer if they are involved in an accident, so under our system in Manitoba they can go into a contingency arrangement, and some clients have come to my office, and it's too late, when they have indicated to me accident claims and settlements where they have got a pittance, and the reason they got a pittance is that after the case had dragged and languished through the courts and all the court fees had been paid, and when the lawyers' fees had been paid, there was very little left for them. And this happens not in isolation, not in isolation in many, many instances, and this is something that is highly regrettable. (I'm shocked, Mr. Speaker, that although I had the courtesy to sit and listen to the Honourable Member from River Heights and others of the Conservative caucus when they have been speaking, that they have left this Chamber and left a couple of members in this House out of 22, and let Hansard record the complete disinterest - three of them, pardon me. I forgot the Member from the hills. Let Hansard record the complete disinterest. Oh they're getting some relief. Here they come.) You know, Mr. Speaker, we talk

(MR. MACKLING cont'd) about integrity, and the Honourable Minister of Labour touched on this the other night. I wonder, I really wonder whether or not the insurance agents, of which I would suspect the Honourable Member from Souris-Killarney has some friends in the Association, I wonder if they had a meeting, if they had a meeting and discussed and deliberated on the proposals that were enunciated by the Premier and came to a decision, and then that decision was conveyed and Mr. Tatlock, who apparently represents the agency, made his statement the other day in the Press. I doubt that. Now I might be wrong but I doubt that very much, and here is an association that claims to be fighting the cause for a great number of agents and I doubt very much that there was any democracy in that pronouncement, the agents just can't accept this. Obviously it's a completely undemocratic organization or else they have closed minds, and, you know, nothing, nothing that any change that the government could make would satisfy this organization. Now, it's either one of the two.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin): For six bucks.

MR. MACKLING: Here's another one of the "six bucks" boys over there. There he is. That's how the Honourable Member for Roblin defines things: how many bucks are there? Perhaps he's one of those that figures that everything in life, everything in life should be measured in dollars and cents.

MR. MCKENZIE: Shoot her down the drain for six bucks a car.

MR. MACKLING: That's an indication of his thinking. --(Interjection) -- I wish the Honourable Member for Churchill were here because much of what I've said reflects on the argument that he advanced. -- (Interjection) -- I can hear incessant chirping across the way and I don't know whether an elephant is loose in the henhouse over there or what it is, but I wish that they would either lay eggs or go out and scratch somewhere else.

A MEMBER: Why is the House empty?

MR. MACKLING: The Honourable Member for Morris, as one of the experts on hens, should be able to regulate that . . .

MR. ARTHUR MOUG (Charleswood): Why is the House empty?

MR. MACKLING: I don't know why he isn't present and looking after the hens.

MR. MOUG: Just answer me, why is the House empty?

MR. MACKLING: I wish you'd stop grovelling round in the dirt and not make so much noise.

MR. MOUG: We've heard that dozens of times.

MR. MACKLING: Again, I can hear continual scratching noises over there and they're awfully irritating but they're not irritating to me. -- (Interjection) -- They're irritating that that sort of thing should be carried on in this Chamber. -- (Interjection) -- Oh, yes, I can hear those irritations.

The honourable members have been talking about figures: show us figures, show us facts. The fact is and the facts are that the insurance superintendent's figures which my colleague the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs has related to this House, reveal loss ratio. These are the facts; these are the economic determinants; and what did that picture show? It showed that in Saskatchewan the loss ratio was consistently substantially greater than in Manitoba. That's fact. That's not emotion. And they were much higher until the Provincial Government made an arbitrary assessment in respect to administration costs so that the loss ratio figure couldn't go higher.

I suppose part of this arbitrary assessment that was made was a saw-off, a saw-off with the insurance industry in Saskatchewan. I suspect that. I suspect that very much. But these facts speak eloquently. They said how are you going to prove these statements? Prove the savings. The savings have been proved.

MR. MCKENZIE: Six dollars a car.

MR. MACKLING: Here's the six bucks boy again.

MR. HENDERSON: May I ask a question?

MR. MACKLING: No. You can Bray later.

There's a suggestion, a constant suggestion that there be more time - more time for study." Oh, we need more time." Apparently what we're doing is such a horrendous thing, it's so novel, so devilishly new and daring, it's something that we ought to think about for years and years. Perhaps we should have a commission sit for three years. I don't know, I don't know what would ever satisfy the honourable friends across the way, but the fact of the matter is that, you know, governments work, sometimes legislators break new ground, but

(MR. MACKLING cont'd) most often it's possible to look to another jurisdiction, reflect on the experience there and follow a course of action which obviously has found the acceptance of the environment and the society there. And I would accept these arguments for delay, hold off, study it longer. That's reasonable if there were no precedent to follow, but the precedent of our sister province is clear. Oh, I know there are arguments that there are differences there, but this government hasn't accepted the Saskatchewan system per se. There have been variations to suit the geographical and the population differences that exist in this province and there's been no argument to disprove that. This government hasn't followed a slavish carbon copy of the Saskatchewan scheme. Not at all. But the precedent, the working example is there. It's not something -- we're not going out on a wild new course and this system hasn't been accepted only by Social Democrats or CCF; it's been accepted and advocated and articulated by responsible people of other political faiths in the Province of Saskatchewan. And surely this is cogent, logical argument that has to be faced by members of the Opposition.

MR. MOUG: Six bucks a car; six dollars a car.

MR. MACKLING: Here we get the six bucks boy muttering again.

And the Honourable Member from Rhineland - I don't know; I keep trying, I keep hoping, I keep hoping that he's going to change, that he's going to become a little more pragmatic, a little less rigid. I keep hoping that maybe those sunflower festivals that he attends and that sunny climate and those sunny people will gradually inject some warmth into his being that will create a new thinking, a new response to logic, but no; he says that we're cruel; we're cruel. And I can't accept that when this government goes out of its way to provide for a technique for delivery of public auto insurance that will ensure fair treatment of agents involved, but this logic seems to completely escape him. He refuses to accept that what we say is so and I can't understand that because I think the honourable member is intelligent enough to understand. The only explanation I can say is that his heart must be hardened and he must be blind in his refusal to accept logic and persuasive argument because he has to hold true to a very doctrinaire position, and the people in this Legislature who are the doctrinaire ones are the persons like the Honourable Member from Rhineland, and I implore him some time, perhaps with Bill 56, to spend some time in reflection on how doctrinaire his position has been.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I have reflected on some of the misstatements, some of the misinformation, some of the weaknesses, I think, in logic and argument that have been contributed by other members in this debate, and I only suggest to them that if their votes are on the basis of hard political lines, then I ask them to reflect on what is good for the people of Manitoba. For our part, we have done this soul searching. We're satisfied that the people of Manitoba expect and need a better system of automobile insurance. We're not doctrinaire in our position, and those who reflect on this matter as a question of conscience, I'd like them to in conscience think, not just of the industry, the economic interest that might have some adjustments to make, but think of the people of Manitoba and the human suffering and frustration and delay that can be eliminated by a proper system, a proper system for which, apparently, in part at least, every member of this House has accepted some responsibility, because we've said, even the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has said the industry needs substantial adjustments. But the adjustments he suggests certainly will not cure the illness that he has reflected in his speech. And I suggest that if you accept the principle that substantial changes are necessary and that insurance must be made compulsory, that anyone who drives a vehicle on the road must be bound to protect others, that we insist upon compulsory insurance, that then a duty is cast upon us which you as members of this House cannot escape. You have a responsibility to ensure that this imposition that you make is done at the least hardship, at the least cost, to those on which you impose it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. HENDERSON: Would the honourable member permit a question? You've stated that I'm not interested in facts and figures. Can you tell me what my insurance would cost today under your plan? I have the cost of what I'm paying now and what it is under the present Saskatchewan Plan, and it is far more under the Saskatchewan Plan. Can you guarantee me that my insurance will not be more? You produce the facts then I'll tell you; but you have not produced . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. Is the honourable member asking a question or engaging in debate?

MR. HENDERSON: My question is: will he guarantee me that my insurance will not be more under your plan?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member from Pembina for his very enlightening speech and his question. I don't like giving guarantees and guarantees are generally given in writing. However, I could give him a written guarantee. I would guarantee him this, that in respect to the handling of his insurance policy the administrative costs in respect to the handling of that policy could be and would be reduced by 50 percent under - just a moment - he shakes his head. I don't know the intricacies of his policy and it's unfair for him to ask me to go into his private insurance contract, but what I assure him is that the economies of mass handling are fact, and private industry accepts this and that's why we have mergers; that's why we have conglomerates for marketing and for development of products; and this is an economic fact. Maybe that escapes him, but the economic fact is that if all of these policies, all of the provisions, are written under one technique and one system, one simple, codified, and perhaps utilizing the most sophisticated equipment that is available, will produce substantial savings, and in accordance with the best information I have - and I'm prepared to accept that - those savings, administratively, will amount to 50 percent. What that will mean to the honourable member's individual contract for which I cannot be expert, I don't know, but that's my undertaking to him.

MR. GILDAS MOLGAT (Ste. Rose): . . . question of the member who has just spoken, particularly in regard to his reply. He says that there are very major savings from the administration - did I hear him say 50 percent? Fifty percent is what the member said. Would he then relate that to what the Wootton Commission states - and I had obtained the copies of the Wootton Commission from the Library; they are presently borrowed by the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources who is going to speak on the subject, I understood, and I allowed him to have the copies, but if the Minister would look in that report, the statement there is very precise, that there are no significant economies of scale and that it is not a natural monopoly. Now, can he relate then his reply to that report?

MR. MACKLING: I would like to refer on the section of the Wootton Report which my honourable friend refers to, but when he talks about experts and those who have reflected upon this - and that's a matter of judgment; it's a matter of judgment - then I reflect upon the argument of Dean Otto Lang, former Dean Otto Lang, Dean of the Saskatchewan Law School, now the Minister without Portfolio who reports to the Wheat Board, who indicated in his article that there is no question that automobile insurance lends itself and ought to be a public monopoly, and it's a judgment matter. It really is. It's a judgment matter. That's right. That's right, and it's the fact of the administration of the Saskatchewan scheme which was the sole criteria for, I think - well, the major criteria for Otto Lang to measure, and it was on the measurement and the analysis of that scheme that he made that statement - and he's familiar with it - and it was on the criteria and reflecting on the criteria and the example of that scheme that the argument has been advanced, which I accept, that the administrative costs under that scheme are reduced and have been reduced as against private handling by 50 percent.

MR. SPEAKER put the question on the amendment and after a voice vote declared the motion lost.

MR. McKELLAR: Ayes and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Call in the Members.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

YEAS: Messrs. Barkman, Beard, Bilton, Claydon, Craik, Einarson, Enns, Ferguson, Froese, Girard, Graham, Hardy, Henderson, G. Johnston, F. Johnston, Jorgenson, McGill, McGregor, McKellar, McKenzie, Molgat, Moug, Patrick, Sherman, Spivak, Watt, Weir and Mrs. Trueman.

NAYS: Messrs. Allard, Barrow, Borowski, Boyce, Burtniak, Cherniack, Desjardins, Doern, Evans, Fox, Gonick, Gottfried, Green, Jenkins, Johanson, McBryde, Mackling, Malinowski, Miller, Pauley, Pawley, Petursson, Schreyer, Shafransky, Toupin, Turnbull, Uskiw and Uruski.

MR. CLERK: Yeas 28, Nays 28.

MR. SPEAKER: Being a tie, I'm voting in the negative and I declare the amendment lost.

The question on the main motion. The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. JACOB M. FROESE (Rhineland): Mr. Speaker, I will be very brief, but the Attorney-General this morning when he spoke, he made reference to what I had said and my position in the House and he also made reference to some of the corporations in B. C., and I

(MR. FROESE cont'd) would just like to mention a few things in relation to what he said. The Crown corporations in British Columbia are doing quite well. In fact, some of these would never have been brought about had the private industry cooperated. This was one of the reasons why the government did take the action that they took, and since doing that, they have really shown a very remarkable position and really have done well for the province, and I would like to tell the honourable member that as far as the British Columbia ferries are concerned that the province had a revenue

MR. MACKLING: Would the honourable member yield to a question?

MR. FROESE: Pardon?

MR. MACKLING: Will you yield to a question?

MR. FROESE: As soon as I'm finished, sure I will. I have no I would first like to make this statement; then I am willing to answer questions; that the province had a revenue from the British Columbia Ferries Division of \$24,654,000, so this is certainly something that is worthwhile and certainly that we cannot discount, and it was largely because of the Social Credit government there which took action and brought about a service between the mainland and the island so that people could commute. If the private industry had been willing to bring about the service, I am sure the government would have never stepped in because it gave them ample opportunity to do so but that is quite a contrast to what has taken place here.

Here the industry is there and they are willing to give the service. There is not the matter of giving adequate service. The service is there. When we take a look at the other, the railway, we find again that the railway is doing well now too and it has been extended to serve the northern part of the province of B. C. additional investments have been put into the project there. And additional investment of \$35 million was put into the Pacific Great Eastern Railway in the year as of March 31, 1970, and this is another thing that I would like to mention. The British Columbia government produces quarterly reports that give you up-to-date information. Here I have been asking year after year to give us that very service and it's being denied to us as members. They come out with quarterly reports, up-to-date as to the revenue, the income, the expenditures and detailed information. Why can't we have this in Manitoba? This certainly would provide us with a lot more information.

We also know that the amount of the assets in the B. C. province are very substantial. As at March 31st it was \$1,280,000,000 - this is in round figures - whereas that same figure in 1952 when Social Credit took over was only \$180,000,000, so you can see the vast development that has taken place in British Columbia over the years that the Social Credit administration has been in power. And also the net assets over liabilities are very high. In fact, their assets over liabilities are in the neighborhood of \$953 million. That took place in ten years of time. So we have had very able government, very good government in British Columbia, that have certainly provided the necessary administration on behalf of the people of that province and I only hope and wish that we would have the same type of administration here in Manitoba.

The matter of the provincial home owners grant, too, is a very important factor and I only hope and wish that we had something of the like in Manitoba. The provincial home owners grant of \$54,817,369 were paid in the fiscal year ended March 31, 1970, to reduce 1969 property tax levied by local government on resident home owners. The individual grant in 1969 was up to \$150.00. It is now \$160.00. An estimated \$49,325,000 of the provincial home owner grants awarded was applied to local school taxes as levied. The balance of \$5,492,000 was applied to reduce other local levies. As a result, many provincial home owners paid a minimum property tax of \$1.00 for local services. In 1970 the full provincial home owner grant is \$160.00.

Here is another item that is of great importance. How many people in Manitoba pay \$1.00 in taxes? I don't know of any, and I know that the taxes, the school taxes in my riding are very, very high, the highest on record, and it is very doubtful whether farmers will be able to pay them this year. I know many of them won't be able to because of the flooding that occurred in southern Manitoba, and here we have the people in B. C. paying \$1.00 in taxes on their real estate or property.

I could go on and on and mention other things. The British Columbia Ferry Authority which has an investment of \$56,844,000 has a like amount in sinking funds so there is no debt on the Ferry Authority, none whatever. And they showed a very substantial earning, as I quoted before. The matter of the Great Eastern Railways Company; the gross revenues were

(MR. FROESE cont'd) . . . at a record level in 1969 at \$30,470,000 and resulted in a net profit, after full provision of interest and depreciation, of \$764,131.00. This development railroad continues to make a great contribution to the expanding economy of the province. This has been a big asset to northern British Columbia and it is doing a terrific job. When Social Credit took over, the railway started nowhere and ended nowhere, just somewhere there was a stretch of railway and it was a liability; it was a white elephant as far as the Province of B. C. was concerned. Social Credit took over and they made something out of it. Today it is a paying proposition and I feel that a lot of credit is due to the people responsible for the administration of the affairs in British Columbia. -- (Interjection) -- Yes.

MR. SCHREYER: I take it the honourable member is referring to the Pacific Great Eastern?

MR. FROESE: Yes.

MR. SCHREYER: Could I ask the honourable member, did he mean to say that this railway which had been losing money is now a paying proposition and became so after it came under public ownership?

MR. FROESE: It did so when it came under Social Credit administration. They brought in the proper policies that were conducive to an environment that was there so that development would take place, and we know that this is a good government Crown corporation.

MR. SCHREYER: Would the honourable member permit one more question?

MR. FROESE: Yes.

MR. SCHREYER: Without, Mr. Speaker, without arguing in any way the honourable member's contention that because of Social Credit administration, leaving that side, could I ask him: would it be fair to deduce, then, that public ownership isn't necessarily inherently inefficient but can be made to work well, depending on policies, etc.?

MR. FROESE: Well, policies have a lot to do with administration and I maintain that this applies in any business, in any corporation, and even in government to have the proper policy

MR. GREEN: Would the honourable member permit a question?

MR. FROESE: I couldn't hear you. -- (Interjection) --

MR. GREEN: I didn't ask you; I asked the honourable member. I want to know whether the honourable member would be more inclined to favour a public automobile insurance program if he were a member of the administration, because that could be arranged.

MR. FROESE: I would definitely think so but if I was on that side it wouldn't be made a public utility; I'm sure of that. We'd make sure that we had the proper environment so that private business could flourish in Manitoba and that people would want to come here and live here and develop this country. This is what we need. This is why, when people leave Manitoba or Saskatchewan, where do they go? They go to Alberta or B. C. By far the most of them. And what is the reason for it? As I've just quoted you from this book, that they have the proper policies; they have the initiative there and the drive and the opportunities for development, and this is what we need in Manitoba. We need the proper environment that will be conducive for development, and when we do what we're trying to do with Bill 56 we're not doing the proper thing. We should, instead of killing an industry, we should allow it to flourish, and we can still bring in amendments to the Insurance Act to provide what you people want to have done. We can bring in no-fault, the no-fault principle. We can reduce litigation costs. We can reduce the amount of advertising costs. This can all be done without making it a government monopoly corporation, and I feel that this is what the government should have done and not bring forth Bill 56 as it's being brought in and asked us to pass.

I'm sure that if they had done that there would have been no trouble, the House would have supported them, and we would have been out of here long ago and it certainly would have provided a much better attitude toward the people of this province. It would have been much more conducive all around.

MR. McKE LLAR: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Member for Rhineland. Who won the last election in B. C.?

MR. FROESE: Well, that's a very interesting question. We all know that the Social Credit administration was returned by a very large majority. They hold now a very strong mandate given to them by the people of British Columbia, and I'm sure as a result that we will see much more development take place in the coming year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. HARRY SHAFRANSKY (Radisson): How many, would the member care to answer, how many Conservatives were elected in B. C. ?

MR. FROESE: I don't think they've had a Conservative elected there for quite a number of years.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines and Natural Resources.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, would the honourable member permit one further question? Would you partially attribute the success of the Social Credit administration of British Columbia to the fact that they have gone into the public ownership of the power company and the public ownership of the dairy company and the public ownership of the railroad that you are talking about?

MR. FROESE: I must say that there has been a large amount of development outside of the Crown corporations in B. C. If it had been completely dependent on the Crown corporations we wouldn't have had the development, but I'm not discounting the fact that because the Crown corporations did well, but I'm sure that the private industries did much better yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Since the Member for Rhineland and myself enjoy exchanging views, I wonder if I could ask him two additional questions. First -- may I?

MR. FROESE: Yes.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, the first question is, when the honourable member is talking about the possibility and practicability of introducing no-fault and other modifications but under existing framework, can he advise whether in British Columbia the Honourable Leslie Peterson, who is the Minister responsible for insurance matters, is satisfied with the arrangements and the modifications that were made there under the existing framework about a year ago? And whether there has been any significant, if any, premium reductions or savings in British Columbia?

MR. FROESE: I haven't conferred with him recently. There might still be some grievances there and I will not say that there aren't because certainly I don't think you can clean up all the difficulties over night. I know that they are working toward a harmonious situation and one that will be to the benefit of the people of the province. Surely there's always room for improvement and I'm sure that they will be working toward it.

MR. SCHREYER: My second question is to ask the honourable member whether he is aware that, after the Honourable Leslie Peterson stated that under the modifications and the new arrangements that he had reason to believe on the advice he received from the industry, and he was taking the industry's word for it, that the average motorist would pay - I repeat, the average motorist - would pay \$24.00 less, that 20 days before the new regulations went into effect that the industry not only did not reduce the rates by on average \$24.00 but jacked them up to \$22.00. Now, can he understand why the Honourable Leslie Peterson feels dissatisfied?

MR. FROESE: I don't know whether I can answer that to the First Minister's satisfaction because we know that from time to time insurance companies have to increase their rates because of the experience that they have. On the other hand, maybe they did raise them too high; I will not say that they didn't; but -- (Interjection) -- Pardon? Certainly there are changes being brought in all the time, and I will leave it at that because I would like to inform myself a little more of the exact current situation as it exists now in B. C. and what has transpired lately on this matter.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I've passed to the Honourable Member for Rhineland a document which I hope he would read, and would he undertake to give me his comments either publicly or privately on it.

MR. FROESE: I will do so.

MR. SPEAKER put the question on the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. WEIR: Ayes and Nays, Mr. Speaker, please.

MR. SPEAKER: Call in the members.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

YEAS: Messrs. Allard, Barrow, Beard, Borowski, Boyce, Burtniak, Cherniack, Desjardins, Doern, Evans, Fox, Gonick, Gottfried, Green, Jenkins, Johannson, McBryde, Mackling, Malinowski, Miller, Paulley, Pawley, Petursson, Schreyer, Shafransky, Toupin, Turnbull, Uskiw and Uruski.

NAYS: Messrs. Barkman, Bilton, Claydon, Craik, Einarson, Enns, Ferguson, Froese, Girard, Graham, Hardy, Henderson, G. Johnston, F. Johnston, Jorgenson, McGill, McGregor, McKellar, McKenzie, Molgat, Moug, Patrick, Sherman, Spivak, Watt, Weir and Mrs. Trueman.

MR. CLERK: Yeas 29; Nays 27.

MR. SPEAKER: I declare the motion carried. Notices of Motion. Introduction of Bills. Orders of the Day. The Honourable House Leader of the Liberal Party.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the, I believe it's the Minister of Agriculture responsible for the Flood Compensation Board. I'm not sure which Minister. The Minister of Mines. My question relates to those applying for compensation from flood loss. What appeal has a person who is not satisfied with the award that he's receiving? What is his procedure?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I couldn't be sure but I'm not aware that there is any appeal. The Flood Compensation Board is a board which is set up ad hoc to administer flood compensation. It is a payment which is given by the province to the citizen, not as of right but as a matter of compensation. I'm not certain that there is an appeal. I believe that there is not.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. STEVE PATRICK (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce. I wonder if he can report to the House if there's any further development in respect to the Convention Center in the downtown core Winnipeg. Is the government prepared to proceed with a Convention Center or has there been no further undertakings by the government?

HON. SAUL CHERNIACK, Q. C. (Minister of Finance)(St. John's): Mr. Speaker, may I answer that question. There have been two specific locations suggested in the sense of general developmental proposals, and I say specific locations but the proposals in both cases are not fully developed. We are in close communication with the promoters of both. I use the word promoters with a small "p" because people are interested in trying to develop and we are still at the stage where we don't have full confirmation of their progress. We've indicated to them that we are anxious that either or both developments proceed and we want to participate but one of the other problems is we have not yet got a proper costing for the province on either of the two. We have some - you can debate whether the word is estimates or guesstimates, but neither proposal has really come to the stage of really specifics, and that's something we are waiting for, it's not something that we are holding back on. Now actually we've met with both and they've met with each other in an effort to see whether their specific locations can be reconciled into one. I have to report that there is not yet an indication of that kind of reconciliation but at the same time there's no concrete proposal or statement that it cannot proceed with. In other words, we are told "give us a little more time, we are still trying to firm it up," and all we can do at this stage is repeat what we've done a number of times that we are most interested in development of a downtown core and that we want to play our role in that development though we still don't know the costs and we still haven't arrived at a location, and may I say I think one of the newspapers reported that the Provincial Government had made a decision as to "a" location rather than alternates, and that's absolutely untrue. No decision has been made.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. GORDON W. BEARD (Churchill): Mr. Chairman, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs. In respect to the Federal Government's dissolving the National Harbours Board and the transition that's taken place, will it stop the announced urban renewal that is to take place in Churchill proper?

HON. HOWARD R. PAWLEY (Minister of Municipal Affairs)(Selkirk): If the honourable member is referring to the housing that was slated or planned for Churchill, I would prefer to take this question as notice so I can deal with it more accurately in the next -- this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BEARD: Mr. Speaker, one supplementary question also then. Would the Minister check to see whether the Advisory Council of Churchill have been involved in this type of programming?

MR. PAWLEY: Yes I will, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture)(Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, on July 20th, I believe it was, the question was put by the Honourable the Member for Birtle-Russell and I think I should read it into the record so that all members would know what I'm making reference to. The question is and I quote: "Could the Minister inform me if any change in the premiums set in the crop insurance program will be made to enable farmers who are not in effect seeding at least 10 acres of wheat this year to maintain their continuity for discount privileges in ensuing years?" I want to inform him that the Crop Insurance Board has extended that period of contract to be two years instead of one.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. MOLGAT: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources with regard to pollution. I had understood, when we had discussed the matter earlier this session, that legal proceedings were being considered against pollutant firms in Saskatchewan. Has this been proceeded with?

MR. GREEN: There were three proceedings against one firm in Saskatchewan and one firm in Ontario. Instructions have gone to the department to proceed. Anybody who has dealt with lawyers will know that sometimes it takes a little longer than you think it should take, but instructions have been given to proceed.

MR. MOLGAT: Any proceedings against any firms in Manitoba?

MR. GREEN: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a question of privilege at this time. I shall try to be brief. I rise to publicly protest the gross misrepresentation of the Liberal Party stand with respect to Bill 56 by the Winnipeg Tribune. I understand the reporter who is responsible for the story wrote it the way it was and had a copy and filed the story the way it was given in the House by myself, and I would suggest to the people of Manitoba who have written and phoned in protest to me our stand as they'd read it in the Winnipeg Tribune, I suggest, to get the straight reporting as written that they read our stand in the Free Press or any other newspaper or any other radio station or television station.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, if that is raised as a question of privilege I think it is in order, then, for me to say that while I can understand and even sympathize with the sense of inner frustration that the Member for Portage la Prairie may have, nevertheless, if that were a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I would be rising here every day, because newspaper accounts have not in many cases, particularly editorial comments, been what I regard as fair and accurate. However, that is something that in our way of life we must learn to live with. I am not suggesting that the Member for Portage is wrong in expressing his indignation but it is not, I suggest to you, Sir, a point of parliamentary privilege.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Well Mr. Speaker, if I may respond briefly, a precedent has been set by the Minister of Transport this session. Other Ministers in the House have made public corrections of the stands that they have taken.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the Honourable House Leader is correct - that a correction can be made. I do not recall one having been made. I think it was simply a matter of reaction to a newspaper report and I believe that the Honourable First Minister's point is well taken. Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. BEARD: Following up on the pollution, I'd like to address a question to the Honourable Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. Has any further testing been done on the Nelson River System and is there any proof that it is disturbing the sturgeon fishing?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that tests are continuing but I have no further information to give to the House. That's not because there may not be further information, but I just don't have anything further to what I had last time. I know the Member for Fort Rouge asked me about whales and I have an answer for her; I'll try to remember to bring it this afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs. The federal Minister has made, I believe, \$100 million available for housing starts for the balance of this term, or this year. I wonder what percentage is available to the Province of Manitoba. Can the Minister tell?

MR. PAWLEY: I'm unable to provide the honourable member with the percentage. I'm pleased to indicate, however, that presently we are looking into further housing starts this year because of monies that were slated for housing in other provinces that had not been used. We've used our full limit that was allotted for us in Manitoba and I do expect that we will be proceeding with further housing starts this year over and beyond that which we'd planned.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise the House what it represents in a matter of dollars or units in the Province of Manitoba?

MR. PAWLEY: I'd be unable to provide that information for the honourable member at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Yes, my question would be directed either to the First Minister or to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. I think it's the First Minister. It's in connection with C. F. I. When Mr. Stewart passed away, I think the matter of an audit was to continue. Will there be a report tabled before the House prorogues on this matter?

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated in the House before and as I believe the Honourable Member for Rhineland knows; subsequent to the death of Mr. Stewart, we had that work handed over - accounting auditing - handed over to the Provincial Auditor's office and it was carried forward that way. I believe that a report is forthcoming, it will be forthcoming very soon. I cannot give the exact day though.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. MOLGAT: I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Youth and Education regarding the boundaries of school divisions. There was some discussion on this earlier in the session and I had asked some questions then. Have decisions been made regarding any changes in boundaries?

HON. SAUL A. MILLER (Minister of Youth and Education)(Seven Oaks): They have not been finalized, Mr. Speaker. We are working on them now.

MR. MOLGAT: Mr. Speaker, a subsequent question. Have any decisions been reached regarding the boundaries in the Interlake?

MR. MILLER: Those are the boundaries I was discussing. No other boundaries are being examined because we have not yet received a final recommendation from the Boundaries Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable House Leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY - GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC BILLS

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, will you call Bill No. 134, please.

MR. SPEAKER: Third reading, Bill No. 134. The Honourable First Minister. BILL NO. 134 was read a third time and passed.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, would you call the bill standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose on Page 4 of the Order Paper.

MR. SPEAKER: Adjourned debate on second reading, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, and the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Labour in amendment thereto. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. MOLGAT: Mr. Speaker, I had adjourned the debate at that time because the Honourable Member for Rhineland had indicated to me he wanted to speak. I will be speaking on closing the debate but there's no point in my speaking twice and repeating my comments.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: I'm sorry, I hadn't got my notes with me. I'm not prepared. I haven't got the bill before me either. I'd like to speak at some other time. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have leave to have the matter stand? (Agreed)

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, if it would suit the convenience, and I believe it would, of the honourable member and others to have someone else speak at this time, I should like to do so.

Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to the subject matter of Bill 114, An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly Act proposed by the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, I have a number of brief but very definite observations to make. First of all, it seems that the Member for Ste. Rose -- and I don't quarrel at all with his motives and I even agree with some of his reasoning, although I must say that I cannot agree with all of his reasoning in connection with this bill, but what the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose is proposing is quite a significant departure from some pretty basic and longstanding parliamentary practice in usage in customs and conventions. Now that's not a sin. That's not a sin at all, and as one who regards himself as being quite prepared to look into the face of change and even to adopt some change, it certainly would ill behoove me to oppose a particular measure simply because it meant that there would be some basic change. The reason, though, that I find it difficult to agree with the entirety of the contents of this bill, is because I think that the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose wants to, if I may say so, have it both ways. He wants to follow up on a position I have taken last year and he wants to follow up quickly and remove all of the long-standing customary prerogatives of Cabinet government at one fell swoop.

Let me explain what I mean, Mr. Speaker. It has been a long-standing custom, convention of parliamentary government, that the Premier, the First Minister of the Cabinet, has the right, the prerogative under this old long-standing parliamentary convention to ask for an election, to ask for the issuance of writs in other words, just about any time he pleases. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose shakes his head in agreement. That was my understanding of it as well. Now last year I said, both before the election campaign, during the election campaign, after the election campaign and ever since, that this was a long-standing parliamentary convention and practice of Cabinet government that I thought should be changed, and one way, of course, to change it is to begin by the Premier himself saying that he is wishing to surrender it, and I in effect have done so. I've indicated that I would under no circumstances ask for the issuance of writs except if there is a defeat on a major government bill, public policy, or if the normal four years have passed. I have to assume that the Member for Ste. Rose is in agreement, is in substantial agreement with that course of action which I took. He must be, because he follows it up now with a second step which is to remove the judgment from the Cabinet and Premier as to asking for the issuance of writs, the calling of an election, even after a defeat in the House on a major government policy bill. And that, Mr. Speaker, I regard as being an unnecessary course of action to follow. I quite agree that Cabinet government over the years has evolved to the point where it has caused some danger to the efficacy of the legislative branch; and I've said that many times.

I think that one of the abuses was where a Premier or First Minister could simply make up his mind that he wanted an election at any time, regardless whether the Legislature was dealing with legislation, not threatening the government, etc., but to call an election at any

(MR. SCHREYER cont'd.) time at his whim because he deemed it to be most expedient to do so. And by many this was considered the ultimate, the zenith of political ability for a Premier to just decide when the right time was to call an election regardless of the circumstances of the moment, whether or not there was a majority in the House and the the government and House were continuing for another two years or three, call an election.

Those days are gone. At least insofar as I am concerned that is gone; that is behind us. But I certainly find it difficult to take a course of action which the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose is proposing in this Bill which would be to remove entirely any judgment from Cabinet as to whether or not a proposal it was putting forward was important and in the public interest or not. I think that there is nothing unfair about a government saying that certain bills are an integral of its policy for social and economic development, of its policy for rationalizing certain ways of doing things, etc., and that therefore if it cannot be accepted by the House it is tantamount to saying that the House really does not have confidence in the government, and at that point in time it is only normal and the best way, to let the people decide.

Now the Member for Ste. Rose, to be sure, has put in certain safeguards here which would require that if a government were defeated on what was a substantive motion, a significant policy issue, that it could be that the question as to whether or not the government remains in office or an election is to be called, is to be decided not on the issue, but on a separate motion of stating simply confidence or non-confidence in the House, that if the separate motion of confidence is sustained, is affirmated, then the government continues.

I think that adopting such a proposal would have some very bizarre and well certainly interesting, but I venture to say some very bizarre effects that would make it very difficult for parliamentary type government to continue to function in an effective way. It seems to me that if governments cannot make it clear what are major policy positions and proposals and legislation that it holds, that it can have these defeated and yet sustained in office by a separate motion of confidence, that a government would carry on month after month, with great handicaps - to put it in colloquial terms, with sort of one hand tied behind its back; that the Legislative Assembly could keep it in office while denying it the right to implement legislation that is basic to its over-all program, or important to its over-all program. So the government carries on being incapable, being denied the right, the authority to do the things it thinks are important and yet it carries on in office. It seems to me that that is a rather bizarre way of proceeding. And then after several months, if not a year or a year and a half of carrying on in office while being denied the right, the authority, to proceed with what it considers to be important, the Opposition decides that it is then really the right time for them to bring about an election.

There has been a lot of discussion, debate and discussion both in parliamentary circles, in university circles, as to ways and means by which the legislative branch can be given more meaningful function relative to the executive branch. As I say - and I don't mind repeating - I do believe that the executive branch in recent years has grown in strength relative to the legislative branch, there are some ways worth looking at to give the legislative branch more meaningful function, but I really cannot accept the proposals in Bill 114 as being an effective way to do that, certainly it being a way that would be consistent with Cabinet parliamentary type government as we know it.

Certainly, there was no need, I suggest, to have had the balance so much in favour of the executive that they could call the election at any time even if not defeated by the Legislature, and as I say that change has been made here and with the passing of time it becomes a custom or a convention of our proceedings here.

Maybe what the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose is proposing in Bill 114 is something that might be compatible with a congressional system of government, or at least one that is operating on a definite fixed term basis, because it seems to me with a fixed term basis the balance of advantage goes neither to the party in power nor to the party in Opposition; the calendar decides. So I can see the proposal here being perhaps compatible with a fixed term arrangement; but if there is no fixed term arrangement then I suggest that what the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose is proposing really tips the balance of timing advantage and everything else to the Opposition. I'm suggesting that the government having surrendered one timing advantage, and I think rightly so, because it was being used increasingly in a more blatant way, nevertheless I think we are more at the point of equilibrium now than if we adopt Bill 114.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. WEIR: Mr. Speaker, I think that I'd like to say a few words on this but in view of the fact that I'll say right off the bat that it's my intention to support the amendment and that if the government supports the amendment and the members from this side support the amendment, there's going to be all kinds of opportunity in committee for expression of opinion so at this stage of the session I don't propose, I don't propose to go into any great detail except to say I can associate myself with some of the remarks that were made by the First Minister.

Needless to say anyone that's been paying attention would know that I can't associate myself with all of them; but in terms of the effect of this Bill, I agree in large part with the things that he said. I, too, am prepared on any occasion to consider changes that are appropriate, but I think that sufficient consideration needs to be made to know really what the effect of the change is and I tend to agree with him as to what the effect of the changes suggested within the Bill, what it would have, and so outside of saying I'll be interested in giving it further consideration, if indeed, the effect of the amendment to have the subject matter of the Bill referred to the Special Committee of the House on Rules, I have some reservations about that having any effect because they reported it this session and we haven't got around to looking at the report from the time they sat between the sessions last time, Mr. Speaker, so on that basis I don't know even if the Rules Committee made a recommendation whether it would have any effect if this is the way we're going to consider the reports from the Rules Committee.

So without going into any further detail I will look forward to taking part in the discussion on any improvements and suggestions that could be made at that time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. BUD SHERMAN (Fort Garry): . . . to add one word to what's been said, Mr. Speaker; since I spoke on the main motion I do want to add a word on the amendment. My reservations are accommodated by the amendment proposed by the Honourable Minister of Labour and I think the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose will agree with me when I say that in expressing my original opposition to hasty procedure or hasty proceeding with the kind of serious and profound proposal that he has made here, I qualified my reservations by saying that I did think it was deserving of close attention and scrutiny, hopefully between sessions of the Legislature.

I simply felt that for all its merits it was too important, too profound to proceed with at this stage of what has been a very tense and heavy session of work in this Chamber. So I reiterate that position and repeat that my reservations are accommodated by the eminently sensible amendment proposed by the Minister of Labour and I think that with the kind of scrutiny that can be brought to bear during a reasonable period of consideration, we can work out improvements that would meet the aims and the goals and the objectives of the Member for Ste. Rose. We all would agree, I'm sure, that some streamlining, some improvement in terms of efficiency of our operation in this Legislative Chamber would be welcome.

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

MR. FROESE: Mr. Speaker, I do not want to hold up the Bill any longer and I've had a chance to briefly review the Bill. I prepared some notes on it previously but I don't have them with me; however, I think in recollection that I can make several of the points that I would have made had I had my notes with me.

It seems to me that the Bill and what it provides for is that members of this House should have its cake and eat it too, to have it both ways, and I'm not so sure at this time whether this can be done. I've always had the same idea that if we could incorporate some of the aspects of the American system and combine it with our parliamentary system it would be very worthwhile. What I've so often felt and thought is that I always wished that we could vote on the merit of the legislation that is before us without having to defeat the government or that government members likewise could vote on legislation on its merit and not be subject to be defeated.

I think this is one very valuable thing that the American system has in that measures can be defeated without toppling the government. In attending sessions in North Dakota and Minnesota and also dropping in at one time in the Wisconsin Legislature where they are much more informal, the way I see it they have not only the one House, they have the two Houses, and legislation is being introduced simultaneously in both Houses. I know that North Dakota, the one time I visited them they had 460 pieces of legislation introduced at that one session and they have only 60 days in which to complete their work.

I understand what they do after 60 days is stop the clock and then continue to work. I don't know whether this is a very good thing; maybe they should bring about some changes but apparently a lot of this is constitutional and when they put it up for the people to vote on it

(MR. FROESE cont'd.) people refuse to endorse it so the practice continues. We don't have that situation here but as I have already stated, I would certainly like to see that all legislation should be voted on its merit by all members of this House and that would be similar to our free votes that we have occasionally in this House, and also it would mean that we would, as members of this Assembly, would be more or less independent members. I think this is what probably the sponsor of the Bill has in mind. He sees that there is advantages enjoyed by members elected on an independent basis or even party members who are here by themselves, that they are free to vote on any issue as they please and this is certainly a great advantage in my opinion.

It has its disadvantages as well. I don't want to enumerate the disadvantages that I sometimes feel are restricting us as members by themselves in this House. I could refer to the rules, I could refer to many other instances but I feel that there are also advantages and as I pointed out earlier, this is one of them that I can vote on any measure and on the merit of that particular measure or legislation that is being brought forward.

Another provision in the Bill is that when the government is defeated in committee that it could always redeem itself when a formal vote is taken in the House. This is also subject to question because I think it could lead to much greater absenteeism on the part of members attending the sessions. I think the very reason that a government could be toppled, under our present system, under present rules, accounts for greater attendance in this House, and I like to see and have a good attendance, because I have been over to the Federal Parliament and seen what is happening there. I have been there on several occasions and counted 38 members present, 40 members present out of 265 and I think this is deplorable. I don't think that the business of this country should be conducted in that way.

Mind you, they claim that a lot of members are attending committee meetings and that committee work is going on at the same time and they cannot be there. This may well be true and considerable committee work has to be done, but I think for people attending the sessions of the Legislature, looking in as we've had from time to time, especially these latter days we have had a full gallery, and if only a few people should be attending the sessions and doing the work on behalf of the province, I don't think this would create a good image. Certainly people would rather have the feeling that there was a great disinterest and that matters were not cared for and looked after properly. So there could be this come about to a much greater degree than is presently the case in the House in Manitoba.

On the other hand, how can we bring in some of the good things of the American system and still make it workable in this Legislature. The amendment before us is that this matter be referred to committee and I think it's a good one. I think it should be considered much more before anything is voted on and finalized in this House. I think it needs much further study and much further consideration by members of this House before it can be put into legislation and into force.

Mr. Speaker, these are some of the points that I had intended to bring forward earlier. I probably missed some, but since no doubt the amendment will be supported, we will have further occasion to deal with the various aspects that are contained in the Bill, and while not discounting the Bill completely, I think there are ideas in there that should be considered and I'm sure that members of this House when they will be discussing it will have other ideas to contribute and bring forward when the matter will receive further consideration.

MR. SPEAKER put the question on the amendment and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question on the motion as amended? The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. MOLGAT: I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for LaVerendrye, that the debate be adjourned.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. PETER FOX (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Crescentwood, that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the report of the Special Committee on the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceeding of the Legislative Assembly referred to this committee by resolution of the House on Wednesday, April 1, 1970.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried and the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole with the Honourable Member for Elmwood in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour)(Transcona): If I may make a few comments on the motion to receive the report of the Committee on Rules that was established to sit in between the sessions since the New Democrats took over the government of Manitoba, we have had from time to time some discussions during this session on the matter of the rules of the House and there has been, and I think to a considerable degree justifiably so, criticisms as to why this report had not been considered and some of the recommendations possibly acted upon - and I say justifiably so, Mr. Chairman, in the normal process of the receipt of committee reports.

We did have some discussion when the report was first moved by the Honourable Member for Kildonan on behalf of the Speaker, the Honourable Ben Hanuschak who was the Chairman of the Committee on the Rules, and I have very diligently read the remarks made by the honourable members who did take part in the discussion on receipt of the report. There were a number of points raised by the honourable members but there was one reaction, I thought, of all members that spoke, and the members incidentally who did speak were the Honourable Members for Fort Garry, Morris, and I believe, Rhineland - I think those were the only three honourable members that did take part in the discussions on the receipt of the report - but threaded throughout their remarks was one point in common, and that point was that the committee should continue to consider the rules of the House. If I recall correctly - and I could quote him from his remarks, the Honourable Member for Morris - he made the observation at the time he was speaking that it was really needed, that is the continuation of the consideration of the rules of the House, because of the conduct that was prevailing in the House at that particular time, which goes back of course to the early days of this session. I think, Mr. Chairman, having gone through this very lengthy - no, not gone through but being in session for such a long time this year already, I'm sure that honourable members will have other observations and suggestions to make as to our conduct and as to our rules of the House.

The Honourable Member for Rhineland was opposed to the report basically and generally. If you recall, Mr. Chairman, contained in the report was reference to changing the time limit that one may be allowed to speak on any question from our present 40 minutes to 20 minutes. This did not find favour with my honourable friend from Rhineland and he stated so in no uncertain terms.

There were a number of other changes and I'm sure honourable members will be aware of them, that were on the committee, for the consideration of the House. I think one of the other important recommendations of the committee was that the hours of committee, that is outside of the House, should be the same as those that prevail inside of the House, that is insofar as the hour of closing is concerned.

There was a suggestion from the committee, too, that there should be a change in the Orders of the Day and the Routine Proceedings so that it would be possible to have, as a separate item on the Routine Proceedings, for Ministerial statements and the tabling of reports. As we know, at the present time these are done just prior or on going into Orders of the Day.

There was a suggestion, too, Mr. Chairman, which would be a change of considerable magnitude in our daily operations, and I'm referring to the change that one hour per day be given over to consideration of Private Members' Resolutions instead of what we do at the present time. Then there was a recommendation from the committee, too, that would prohibit members from standing their resolutions standing in the name of an honourable member. This, I suggest, Mr. Chairman, would be a very far-reaching change and would necessitate the necessity of - of course if it did "necessitate" it would be a "necessity" - of the Order Paper having to be brought up to date a lot quicker each day in respect of Private Members' Resolutions than is the case at the present time when only two days or two half days are allocated to private members. I can see that there would be problems for the Clerk of the Assembly in preparing the Order Paper for each day if we have an hour assigned to private members, but of course this can be overcome. I would suggest that if the proposal is adopted, the hour for debate be the first hour of each day following routine business, or alternatively, the last hour of each day. I make this suggestion so that the continuity of business may be as at present, that is we would not have to have proceedings, say in Committee of Supply, interrupted to have private members' business and then go back to Committee of Supply afterwards as we do at the present time in consideration of our estimates.

(MR. PAULLEY cont'd.)

I mentioned honourable members who had made contributions, and I may say that the Honourable Member for Morris, if I read him correctly, did not comment on this particular point when he spoke in the House. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry accepted the report basically, and really because of the continuation of the committee report itself.

There were a few other matters that the committee considered and reported upon, that is the conduct of the committees of the House in order to make them more effective, and considered the possibility of whether or not it might be possible to have two or three committees meeting at the same time in order to speed up the consideration of the committees and at the same time give everyone an opportunity to be on a committee.

Another, I think, major suggestion that was made, Mr. Chairman, was that pertaining to the composition of the committees, the membership of the committees. At the present time, once the House establishes a committee that will say, for instance, meet between sessions, the committee has not the power itself to change the personnel of that committee; only the House can change it by order of the House. A suggestion and a recommendation coming from the committee was to the effect that where it became obvious that either through prolonged illness, resignation or death, a member was unable to continue in the committee, then the committee itself would be empowered to name an alternative or a substitute and that particular substitute then would continue as a member of the committee until it reported back to the House itself. I know, Mr. Chairman, from experience that there have been a considerable number of occasions when the committee has not had the advantage of a full complement because of this fact.

All in all, Mr. Chairman, the committee itself, I think, performed a useful function and I heartily agree though, with the Honourable Member for Fort Garry and the other members, that the committee should continue to study over the next session, or between sessions. I do this for two or three reasons that are very obvious, I think, now. We already have passed, I believe, three resolutions referring additional matters and subjects to the committee for consideration, one being the amended motion of the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose dealing with the question of the defeat of the government, that we dealt with this morning. Another has been the matter of consideration of the questions raised early in the session pertaining to so-called kickbacks, etc. referred to during debates.

There are also a number of other items that the committee took under consideration, Mr. Chairman, that do not directly relate to the rules of the House but rather to the conditions under which the members of the Assembly meet and also the conditions of the House itself. These of course do not require action other than by the department, I would suggest, of the government itself, and I'm referring to the accommodation in the galleries, the question of seating plans and the expenses, then the more attractive surroundings in the members' lounge so that the members can have at least some place where they could sit quietly and privately. Then there were another two I omitted. Another resolution, Mr. Chairman, that has been referred to the committee for action and I suggest that it should be one of the first matters to be considered by the committee is the resolution that was made during this session that the Committee on Rules of the House should appoint an independent commission to investigate into and to report on the matter of legislative remuneration and also the remuneration and expenses of members of the committee. So there is a lot of work.

I might say, too, on that very point, Mr. Chairman, I was interested the other day to receive a letter, unsigned, giving the New Democratic Party of Manitoba Hades because of the fact that we had recommended that a committee of New Democrats consider the matter of the indemnity. It was . . . of course out of context.

Another matter that we gave consideration to during the committee hearings was whether or not some of the proceedings of the House should be carried live through the TV media or the radio media direct. On reflection, some of the deliberations this year I would question whether that may be advisable, but again the committee itself would have this under consideration. So I say, Mr. Chairman, by and large I think that the committee did do a reasonable job; maybe we may be faulted because some of the rules were not changed for this particular session, and we may be faulted as a government for not taking the initiative in that respect, but I do recommend, Mr. Chairman, to the honourable members that the report be received and that the committee consider, particularly in the light of this particular session, as to whether or not there should be additional recommendations.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. BEARD: . . . pose a question to the Minister of Government Services. I didn't catch it; but I had hoped that the Private Members' resolutions would rotate, so that one would not be able to be kept at the top of the list for weeks at a time. Have we any hope that they will rotate after each discussion?

MR. PAULLEY: I think, Mr. Chairman, this is a very worthwhile suggestion of my honourable friend the Member for Churchill and I am sure the committee appointed would give every consideration to that. We have tried in our present rule to make some accommodation this way in that if a resolution is not proceeded with, I believe after the third time it's out and after the second time it goes down to the bottom and I think possibly that methodology could be improved upon and I believe that is the suggestion of my honourable friend.

MR. BEARD: . . . in further speaking of it, then Mr. Chairman, what I really did have in mind was after the resolution had been spoken on that day, it can be now adjourned and brought up the next day and it can take up that whole day or the whole hour. Now if it was spoken on on Monday, I would hope that it would then go to the bottom of the list and No. 2 would become the resolution facing the committee for Tuesday, the first one . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Morris.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Chairman, just a few brief remarks on the adoption of this report. The Minister of Labour who was a member of that committee along with a few of us on this side of the House and members on the opposite side, did give some considerable thought to changing of the rules, not merely for the sake of changing rules, but for the purpose of attempting to improve the manner in which business is conducted in this place, to expedite the processing of legislation and the consideration of spending estimates of the government without - and I want to emphasize this - without in any way impinging or circumscribing the right of members to speak in this Chamber on any subject that they choose, and if you start considering the rules in that light you are considering something rather delicate. We felt that in the recommendations that the committee had made, that we had achieved that kind of balance and it's always desirable to ensure . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: . . . ask honourable members to not discuss other matters so loudly. Please proceed.

MR. JORGENSEN: It is always desirable to ensure that the rights of members are maintained in this House, having in mind the desirability of attempting to get through the business that is before us in a reasonable length of time.

The question of ministerial statements was raised by the Minister and I would like to just touch on that briefly because I feel it's a very important one and is one that has consumed a great deal of unnecessary time in this House and a great deal of confusion. I don't necessarily point to the House of Commons as a model of how business should be expedited, because the circumstances in this Chamber are somewhat different and many of the rules that apply in the House of Commons could not apply here because of the different composition of membership, because of the nature of the Legislative Chamber as opposed to the House of Commons, but here I believe is one rule that could very well be adopted without detracting in any way from the manner in which business is conducted here.

I noticed the first day I think that I was in this Chamber during the question period when a ministerial reply to a question said "Oh by the way, while I'm on my feet, I have a statement I'd like to make" and the tradition in the parliamentary chambers is that when a ministerial statement is made, that the opposition, the recognized opposition parties in the House have a right to comment on that statement since it is generally a statement of government policy. The rule is that the ministerial statement itself is brief and to the point and that the replies by opposition members are brief and to the point. It could be the leader of the opposition or any one designated by the leader of that political party who is entrusted with the responsibility of replying to a ministerial statement; but the practice here, by accident or design, has been that several people undertake to comment on ministerial statements during the question period and it has created a great deal of confusion when you mix up the question period with ministerial statements and replies thereto.

The intention of the committee was to separate the question period from ministerial statements so that authorized people in the Chamber have an opportunity to reply to that statement. If there are questions then they are delayed until the Orders of the Day arrive and the proper time for asking questions so that there is a clear distinction between whether you have a right to reply to a ministerial statement or the right to ask a question. It was for this reason that

(MR JORGENSON cont'd.) the rule was suggested and I think it will do a great deal to clarify a great deal of the confusion that exists at times when ministerial statements are being made as well as the tabling of reports by ministers.

The Member for Churchill has posed some questions concerning private members' hour and if I may, I would like to deal briefly with the, not only the suggestions themselves, but the reasons for the suggestions, because I think that members should have an understanding of the purpose that we had in mind when we proposed that rather than having private members' hours being dealt with two days a week, with approximately a total of five hours per week, it would be far better to have them dealt with on the basis of one hour a day which would give them equivalent number of hours to deal with them but in a far more effective way. If one wants to consider the real purpose of private members' resolution, if there is to be an attempt to assist members of this Chamber, other than government members, to participate more fully in the forwarding of ideas and resolutions and suggestions for improvements in the manner in which business is conducted and indeed in promoting ideas for legislation, then it's far better that that idea and that thought be given an opportunity at regular intervals during the conduct of the business of this chamber, rather than being crowded into two days. By limiting the length of speeches from 40 to 20 minutes it gives at least three people an opportunity to speak on that particular resolution, and if the speeches are less than 20 minutes then more people will have an opportunity to participate in the debate on that particular resolution.

I think that we must make it clear that there was no suggestion that the speeches be limited to 20 minutes on the regular conduct of government business. It was only on two occasions that we made that recommendation. One was on private members' hours and the other one was on amending Rule 26. These are the two occasions that we have suggested that the speeches be limited to 20 minutes and I think that there is a good and valid reason for the limiting of speeches on those occasions.

Now the practice in the House of Commons, which I think could well be adopted here insofar as Private Members' resolutions are concerned, is at the beginning of each session every member who has a resolution or who has an amendment, or a bill that he wants to recommend to the House, and more particularly a resolution, they go into a container and the order in which they will appear on the Order Paper are drawn with representatives from each of the parties present, just prior to the opening of the session. That gives everybody a fair chance to have their resolution appear on the Order Paper in a proper order. They remain in that order then until the session begins and if there are further resolutions being proposed from time to time then they are just added to the bottom of the list. But the initial batch of resolutions that are proposed are drawn from a hat in the presence of members of each of the parties, so that everybody has a fair chance of getting their particular resolution to appear in the first batch of resolutions on the Order Paper.

Each day a new resolution appears and if a member is not present, or chooses to allow his resolution to stand then it drops down to the bottom of the Order Paper and will come up again when its turn comes up. That means that each day we will be considering a different resolution, that means that each day you know in advance or have a reasonable assurance what resolution you are going to be dealing with. As it is now, you have no idea because you don't know how many times a resolution is going to stand; it adds to a great deal of confusion; it prevents members from dealing with the resolutions as they appear on the Order Paper in such a way that there is no delay in standing resolutions, no delay in wondering who is going to speak on one. I might also add that if you want to look up the record of what was said on that particular resolution in Hansard, you have no difficulty in finding it as you do today. The present system is so cumbersome, so ineffective and so lacking in order that it becomes almost impossible to deal coherently with the private members' resolutions that are spoken on during the course of debates in this Chamber. So we felt that by having the resolutions appear in that particular order, by allocating one hour a day it would be a far more orderly way of dealing with private members' resolutions, and I might add, it's generally known that on private members' afternoons there is a pretty heavy exodus of members of the press gallery as well as members of the House. This at least will give a member an opportunity to get some press, some coverage on his particular proposal or his particular resolution, which is the purpose of private members' resolutions in the first place to try and activate public opinion on any given subject. You then, with the kind of press that you hopefully will get as a result of the introduction of a resolution, will be able to judge public opinion by the reply that you get in the

(MR. JORGENSEN cont'd.) form of letters or telephone calls on any proposal that you might make.

We found that when the change was made in the House of Commons it added to the effectiveness of private members' contributions to the introduction of resolutions; it enabled them to get some coverage on the suggestions that they made; it provided for an orderly transaction of the business of the Chamber and generally was far more satisfactory than the old system that we had.

I recall on one occasion in the House of Commons when the Member for Selkirk at that time, Mr. Stefanson, had a resolution on the Order Paper and at that time we dealt all day with one resolution, and this particular resolution dealt with the need for a lighthouse on Lake Winnipeg someplace. Now there was only one member in the entire composition of 265 members of the House of Commons who was really interested in a lighthouse on Lake Winnipeg and yet for a whole day the House was taken up in discussing that particular resolution. It turned out to be one of the dullest debates -- (Interjection) -- Here we go again.

MR. SCHREYER: I'm asking the honourable member since he mentioned Lake Winnipeg and since Lake Winnipeg was in the riding of Selkirk, was the honourable member suggesting that it was I that took up the whole afternoon?

MR. JORGENSEN: No, I mentioned the member by name - Mr. Stefanson was the member at that particular time; it was before my honourable friend the First Minister was in the House of Commons, but it turned out to be - it will go on record as one of the dullest days that anybody's ever sat through. It was a painful experience right here and I think that by changing the method which we deal with Private Members' resolutions . . .

MR. PAULLEY: Might I ask the honourable member if the lighthouse was erected?

MR. JORGENSEN: I think by the end of the day everybody forgot about whether or not that lighthouse was needed and I don't really know whether it was ever built. Perhaps a sequel to that was some time later when the Honourable Minister of Transport, Mr. Hees, came over bouncing in his usual jaunty way, bouncing over to my seat in the Chamber and slapped me on the back and said, "Well, Warner, we've got that lighthouse for you." He mistook me for the Member for Selkirk. I didn't know what to do with a lighthouse on the baldheaded prairies around Morris, but I accepted it because you can never tell what you can do with a lighthouse. I might have been able to trade it for something else. But I couldn't answer the Minister's question whether or not that lighthouse was actually built. I think that the recommendations that have been made in the committee report - and I find it rather odd dealing with the committee report at this stage, when after a motion has been moved and passed to reconstitute the committee, when a motion has been made to adopt some of the committee's recommendations, or at least one of the committee's recommendations, we now find ourselves dealing with the committee report itself. It seems to me, and I offer this as a criticism of the government, that this has not been dealt with much sooner because I think many of the recommendations that were made would have expedited the business of this Chamber and perhaps we might not have had to sit here today at this late stage if we had adopted many of those recommendations that were made at that time.

With those few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I take pleasure in accepting it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Speaker, there's not too many minutes left till 12:30. I did speak on the motion, or the content of it anyway on an earlier occasion. The report was tabled way back on Friday, March 20th, and is recorded in Votes and Proceedings No. 7. I, at that time, made several remarks and raised some objections to the points that I felt, where I had reason to object to and that certainly were not in my favour. I mentioned the matter of Item 10 concerning Rule 26(3) which has to do with the requiring of leave of the House to proceed and that the report is desirous of changing this to asking for the support of the House instead. My concern is that there is quite a difference between the two and that on the one hand, one just needs tacit consent for leave; the other one needs active support on behalf of members of this House for a member to be able to proceed. I certainly find that the original, as what is contained in the rules at the present time, is much more agreeable than what is being proposed in the recommendations of change and I certainly would like to have this reconsidered by the committee when it reconvenes and goes over the rules once more and will deal with new matters referred to it.

The other one is the matter of the 20 minutes that will be allowed for debate on resolutions

(MR. FROESE cont'd.) and matters pertaining to Rule 26. Here again, I feel that there should be exceptions. I don't think there is a need to limit it to 20 minutes because many of the contributions that are made are not that long and I don't think we should be placing a restriction on speeches made in connection with matters pertaining to Rule 26 and Private Members' resolutions. Especially the person who wants to introduce a resolution, he might require more time to do so and this certainly will restrict him in pointing out various matters that he feels are essential to be brought to the attention of the committee and of the House when he introduces his subject matter. Certainly the 20 minutes should not apply in all cases. Certainly there should be some leeway. I feel that the 20 minute restriction is not essential. I don't think it should be brought forward at this time.

The Minister of Labour and Government Services touched on a good number of other points that were considered by the committee. Some of them I do not take exception to and I go along with them. I think some of them need further study, especially televising sessions of the House. I think this matter will receive further consideration by the committee and rightfully should do so.

The matter of providing funds for research to members of this House, the way it is recommended certainly states quite clearly what is going to be done for major parties in Opposition in this House, but for those of us who are sitting here as Independents or smaller numbers, this is not spelled out and we may get something; we may not get something. I think this should be spelled out quite clearly and I think the government should come along and certainly should do a little more than what is being proposed in the recommendation of the report. Certainly this should receive further consideration and that members of this House at least be dealt with on an equal basis so that we will be getting our fair share in this connection.

Mr. Chairman, I note that the time is nearing 12:30. I do not want to delay the acceptance of the resolution before us but I do hope that when the committee meets that I will receive notice of the meetings so that I can attend, participate in the discussions and make my views known, even though I may not have a vote on the committee.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Chairman, on the last point of my honourable friend. I believe that it has been a practice or practice has been established - the Clerk can correct me if I'm right or wrong - that all members are notified now of the particular meetings, at least at the offset so that they could attend, but anyway, I'm sure that the committee could accommodate my honourable friend, knowing his interest in the rules of the House, as per his request.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the Committee ready to accept the report, to vote on the acceptance of this report? The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. BEARD: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to add some contribution to it. It's 12:30. I didn't think the Member for Rhineland was finished . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member intends to speak? Shall we call it 12:30 at this time or continue?

MR. PAULLEY: . . . ask my honourable friend, if it's going to be a short speech or a long speech. We could meet again, of course.

MR. BEARD: It depends how hungry you are.

MR. PAULLEY: Well, my honourable friend indicates that he is not hungry; there may be some that are hungry, so Mr. Chairman, I would move that the committee rise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise. Call in the Speaker. Mr. Speaker, your committee has instructed me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan, that the report of the committee be received.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, before the adjournment motion is put, I'd like to direct a question to the First Minister, or rather a suggestion. In view of the temperature both inside and outside, would he consider not calling the House till Monday morning?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, because of new subject matter that has been introduced, because of the basic principle that I believe in very much, that there should be adequate time to consider important matters, I'm certainly agreeable and accordingly would ask the Acting House Leader, the Minister of Labour, to adjourn the House to that time, if it's agreeable to honourable friends opposite. I understand it would be.

MR. CRAIK: I think we all agree that it's pretty hot in here and pretty hot outside too and we'd all like the weekend off. The problem arises, and there's a degree of discontent that you can't overlook. Many of the people particularly who are in as country members - the weekend doesn't mean a great deal to them because they are far from their home, they've been held here overtime and they fully expected that there may even be a possibility that this House would wind up by tomorrow night, and if there is a possibility that the House is going to wind up by tomorrow night, they'd like to continue, but if this is not possible, then we don't wish to hold out on this. We would point out the fact that we have worked some very many late hours - 3:00 o'clock in the morning at the will and desire of the government - but I would suggest that our feelings on it are if there's a chance the House can finish by tomorrow night, we're willing to sit here today, tonight, tomorrow and go right through and try and get the problem before us resolved, which is a single Bill, a single problem. If this is not possible, then I think we are prepared to grant leave to do as suggested and we trust that over the remainder of the session we get the same co-operation when we ask for it from the government.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the suggestion of the Honourable Member for Riel that there is a possibility that we could complete all of the work on the Order Paper by tomorrow night of course would please everyone. The honourable member will realize of course it's impossible to really know whether that is so. It is my own judgment of the matter that this is not likely to happen and that therefore it would suit no one's convenience.

However, there is an alternative possibility, that is to adjourn now till 2:30; we can resume at 2:30 but then if any members opposite wish to have more time and request it, we in any case would be pretty well back in the same position that we are now, so really it's a suggestion questioned by the Member for Portage la Prairie, a response on my part that we would be agreeable to adjourning till 9:30, but if it's the wish to resume at 2:30 as normal, and see what happens this afternoon, that would be all right too.

MR. CRAIK: It is our desire to continue on Bill 56 but if you are indicating that this would not happen then I think that we would be prepared to go along with the leave to wind it up now.

MR. SCHREYER: There is really no way of us being able to know, therefore I would ask the Acting House Leader to adjourn the House till the normal time this afternoon.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by . . .

MR. MCKENZIE: Before the motion, could I ask what's going to happen to the private members' resolutions that's on the Order Paper? This is Friday and it's Private Members' day usually.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, as the honourable member knows, if I may on the point -- is it a point of order, or a question, I'm not sure, but in any case not to attempt to reply to it; it is not private members' day simply because since the adoption of a motion several weeks ago, Private Members' days are held in abeyance. Does that satisfy my honourable friend?

MR. MCKENZIE: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, if the House wasn't going to continue on the Bill that is before us, I was assuming that we could deal with the resolutions that are under Private Members.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, if I may speak to the point of order. When we meet at 2:30 and when the motion is made to go into Committee of the Whole, it was my intention to adjourn the motion and if the government were to allow it, then it would be pointless to come back. If they were not to allow it, then we would proceed.

MR. PAULLEY: Possibly Mr. Speaker, if that is the intention and I don't see any inclination on the part of the government at this time in refusing any adjournment on going into the committee, I think then it would be reasonable for us to adjourn until Monday morning at 9:30.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs the House do now adjourn and stand adjourned until 9:30 Monday morning.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried and the House adjourned until 9:30 o'clock, Monday morning, August 10th, 1970.