

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
2:30 o'clock, Wednesday, March 28, 1973

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we proceed I should like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the gallery where we have 19 Cubs and Scouts from the St. Bernadette Les Voyageurs Cubs and 135th Bisons Scouts under the leadership of Mr. H. MacKenzie and Mrs. Dyck. These Cubs and Scouts are located in the constituencies of Riel and Fort Garry.

We also have 53 students of Grade 5 standing of the Mafeking, Pelican Rapids and Barrows Junction. These students are under the direction of Mr. Joseph Kustiak and Mr. Gerhard Hanson. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Swan River.

On behalf of all the honourable members I welcome you here today.

Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions; Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees; Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills. The Honourable Member for Osborne.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. IAN TURNBULL (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, may I have leave to have this matter stand?

MR. LEONARD A. BARKMAN (La Verendrye) introduced Bill No. 29, an Act respecting the Town of Steinbach. (Second reading Friday night.)

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q. C. (Leader of the Opposition) (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. I wonder if he can indicate to the House whether it will be the government's intention to negotiate any increase in this fiscal year with the medical profession with respect to doctors' fees.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Health Services Commission has been conducting negotiations with the Medical Association and vice versa. The negotiations have been carried out in large part on behalf of the Commission by Mr. Kushner. There have been meetings in recent days between representatives of the Medical Association and Mr. Kushner and there will be a follow-up meeting tomorrow. I believe that really answers the point.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister and it deals with the budget and estimates. I wonder if he can indicate whether there is any contemplated increase in medical fees in the numbers that have been presented both in the budget and estimate with respect to cost, or would this require an additional supplementary estimate or will it require special warrant if the House is not in session?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, it's my impression that in past years, if it was a year in which there had been a negotiated settlement that that amount required to cover it would be provided by way of supplementary estimate if the House were in session, or by way of special warrant if it were not. I believe that the Minister of Labour has indicated this session on a previous occasion that it is really, taking all aspects into consideration, really quite improper to anticipate a negotiated settlement, therefore the amount is deliberately not included.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the First Minister. Then the balanced budget that he presented yesterday is subject to change as a result of this one particular situation and possibly the Civil Service negotiations . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member is debating the issue. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I certainly, as I always am, prepared and anxious to abide by your ruling but it seems to me, Sir, that whether the question be argumentative I will not answer but if it's allowed I would simply indicate that any budget is brought in on the basis of certain assumptions and certain contingencies, and the final balance at year's end will be altered no doubt a number of times, both up and down.

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

MR. I. H. ASPER (Leader of the Liberal Party) (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister responsible for Planning and Priorities Committee of Cabinet. Does the First Minister have, or does the Planning and Priorities Committee have in its possession a report on Indian and Metis employment entitled Manpower Target Groups?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that as notice and inquire and will do so.

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

MR. ASPER: To the First Minister. Does the Planning and Priorities Committee or does government have in its possession the information that states that 41 percent of the Metis people of Manitoba are unemployed?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well I don't know, Mr. Speaker. I did indicate that I would check to see whether a report by that title exists. I can add, however, that whatever number there are unemployed would be less than in previous years inasmuch as we are making special effort through Manpower - Northern Manpower Corps - and related programs which didn't exist before.

MR. ASPER: While the First Minister is taking the question as notice, could he also take as notice the question: Is it also true that the government holds information indicating that of the native Indian population 90 percent plus are unemployed?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, that specific figure is one that I can neither accept nor reject at this point in time. I would rather suspect, Sir, that it is inaccurate on the high side but I might add that certainly in substantial extent there is chronic underemployment and unemployment in many of the remote northern communities, which is the reason why the province has in recent years made special effort through Northern Manpower Corps, which is a rather expensive undertaking but one that we hope will have a remedial effect, and through special projects of development, winter works. I might add, Sir, that in the case of winter works the remote native communities, all native communities are treated as municipalities for purposes of winter works grants. None of this was done before, Sir, so if there is a problem now it was worse before. We've advised the Government of Canada that there is need for special effort on the part of the Federal Department of Indian Affairs as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MORRIS MCGREGOR (Virden): Mr. Speaker, to the First Minister. Has the First Minister had any conversation with Ottawa to extend the contract term length from five to ten years for commercial enterprises hoping to locate at Rivers Air Base known as Oo-za-we-kwun? Will the First Minister use his good office to influence the extension, knowing this is entirely federal but has a great economic benefit provincially and locally, and this, by all information I have, Mr. Speaker, is the real hangup is the length of term for five to ten years.

MR. SPEAKER: Question please. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I can of course give my honourable friend an undertaking to look into this in more detail. I can advise my honourable friend that the province has a concern for more reasons than one, but one of the concerns really dates back to those days in 1968 when the Government of Canada, through the then Minister of Defense and Minister of Regional Economic Development, gave clear commitments and indications of intent to do all that was within their power to assure alternative employment opportunities in the communities of Rivers and Gimli, and to some extent they have met that undertaking but to some extent, Sir, they have not. One of the aspects of my honourable friend's question has to do with time duration, whether it's a five year commitment or a ten year commitment, and that, Sir, is very germane to the undertakings given by the former Minister of National Defense, which was witnessed by many people from those two communities.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. JEAN ALLARD (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister. Could he tell us how the government is going to ensure that employees will receive that share of the Medicare payment that is normally paid by their employer, and whether it has the power to do so?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, there is a distinction to be drawn as between employees that are employed by concerns that come under the jurisdiction of the province's labour laws,

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(MR. SCHREYER cont'd) the province's jurisdiction, and those who are employees of concerns under federal jurisdiction. The Minister of Labour is in a position to give precision to this. It is a matter of some detail.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour) (Transcona): Yes, Mr. Speaker. The First Minister has answered the question partially. When the decision was made by the First Minister and his Cabinet members to abolish premiums for all Manitobans, this matter arose. At the present time there are provisions by an Act that the benefits will accrue to the individual rather than the industry insofar as provincial jurisdiction is concerned. When that amendment was introduced in this House there was some flak raised by the industries outside of provincial jurisdiction, principally the railroad, and endeavours have been made to get them to adopt the same principle as we have here in the Province of Manitoba. It's my understanding that some headway was made. There were commitments made; I don't know whether the Federal Government agreed with some of the administratives in federal law but, if it's not so at the present time, I can assure my honourable friend from Rupertsland that this government will use every pressure it can upon those under federal jurisdiction to receive the same benefits that Manitobans will as a result of the announcement made by the First Minister last night.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. I wonder whether he can indicate, or whether he can indicate to the House whether there has been any negotiations with Lloyds of London for reinsuring or adding to the insurance now offered by them for ships travelling to Churchill during the season.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I would ask my colleague, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, to take this really as notice because I know there have been inquiries and there's been discussions, and the precise nature of it and so on I think is something that would require some checking.

MR. SPIVAK: A supplementary question. I wonder then if the First Minister can indicate whether the provincial Crown insurance agency referred to in the budget is conceived to be a new Crown agency to be formed or is this an existing insurance agency now, as a Crown corporation, now operating in Manitoba?

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the reference in the Budget Address to the problem of extra season or extended season shipping insurance out of Churchill was put in the context of the Conference on Western Economic Opportunities to be held this coming midsummer, so that is something which there is no imminent decision to be taken by the province, but certainly it is something which will have to be -- which ought to be discussed at the Conference with the Government of Canada.

MR. SPIVAK: A supplementary then to the First Minister with respect to the reference to a provincial Crown insurance agency. You were then referring hypothetically to such an agency being created possibly in the future.

MR. SCHREYER: That is correct, Mr. Speaker, and it would depend of course on what the outcome of the discussions with the Government of Canada are. If my honourable friend is suggesting that we are perhaps considering the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, I would say that it is working so well that perhaps we should look at it in terms of extended on its work.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Agriculture. I would like to ask him if his department has any plans to improve the program of branding cattle for more easily identifiable actions by the police in tracking down rustlers?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture) (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, we have been looking at that particular problem for some time now and I think what the member is asking for is a statement of policy. Let me assure him that a statement of policy will be made during this session.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Osborne.

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Will the Minister ensure that those sole support mothers who are now receiving support but not on

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(MR. TURNBULL cont'd) welfare, and are working, will receive the full benefit of the ninety-nine sixty rebate or reduction in medical care premium and that that reduction will be applied equally to them and that they will not be discriminated against?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure I understand the question entirely; I'll take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON (Rock Lake): Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture. I'd like to ask him if he will be able to make a report to this House while the session is open in regard to the dairy industry study as it pertains in the annual reports of the Milk Control Board.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I didn't catch the latter part of his comments.

MR. EINARSON: . . . ask the Minister of Agriculture if he is prepared to make a report available to this House while it's in session, and the report I'm asking for is the dairy industry study as it pertains in the Milk Control Board reports of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, it is not a study which is commissioned and which will bring down a conclusive report. The restructuring of the dairy industry is an ongoing thing, so that if members opposite would like to know what has been reviewed and the policy changes that have already been made and are in the offing, I think we can try to facilitate with as much information as is available at the time. But it's not a matter of a Royal Commission type of study that is being undertaken, it's an internal study.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake. A supplementary.

MR. EINARSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I ask this Minister this question because I note in the Milk Control Report . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Question please.

MR. EINARSON: . . . in 1971 no monies are shown in this report, this year \$42,000 are shown and that's why I ask if he will make a special report in this regard as far as . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I want to direct a question to the First Minister with regards to a statement he made on Bill 23 yesterday. Could he formally table the reference material regarding the Public Schools Foundation Program which he indicated he had at that time?

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I believe I indicated that the chart which indicates the amount of the Foundation Program, which shows its incremental increases, etc., that this can be made available. As a matter of fact, Sir, I believe it is included as one of the charts in the Appendix to the Budget Address itself, and I would ask the Minister of Education to see if even further information can be made available.

MR. CRAIK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker then, might I ask - - yesterday the First Minister indicated that the reference table he had there was available for tabling other than being reproduced. Is it the same material as he referred to in the Budget Speech?

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, it is essentially the same information. It covers the same time span, 1968-73 inclusive, a five-year time period, and it indicates the amount. I believe - I'll check again - I believe that it shows the aggregate amount of the Foundation Program, the amount of the Foundation levy, and therefore the amount of the provincial contribution towards the Foundation Program, and additional information.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Speaker, I direct this question to the Minister of Education and would like to ask him if the subjects Graphic Arts and Home Economics are going to be compulsory for all Grades 6, 7 and 8 students.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Minister of Education) (Burrows): No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EINARSON: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. What are the alternate subjects then that may be taken?

MR. SPEAKER: The question may be more properly asked during the Estimates of Education. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. ALLARD: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Urban Affairs. Would the Minister, in view of his interest in the 1,500 new letters that are swamping my office, consider - would the Minister consider, would the Minister consider lending me one or two of

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(MR. ALLARD cont'd) his secretaries to count the signatures.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I believe if the honourable member would turn to one of the most recent, one of the more recent amendments to the Legislative Assembly Act, then he will find that there is provision, a monetary provision, for the payment for that very type of service that the honourable member is complaining about.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia. -- (Interjection) -- The Honourable Member for Rupertsland have a supplementary?

MR. ALLARD: I have a supplementary. In view of the importance of getting them counted in a hurry, you know, so that the voice of the people could be heard . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. STEVE PATRICK (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Colleges and Universities. Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Colleges and Universities. Can he tell us how many students have signed to participate in the STEP program to work on Manitoba farms this summer?

HON. SAUL A. MILLER (Minister of Colleges and Universities) (Seven Oaks): No, Mr. Speaker, I don't have that information and that information will not be available for some time because that program is also available to Grade 12 students in the public schools, so that information will not be available for some time.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Minister can undertake to find out if anyone has made himself available for this program at the present time.

MR. MILLER: Yes, I'll undertake to see whether anyone has applied for this.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSON (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him if he is now in a position to advise the House as to whether or not he has signed an agreement with the Federal Government on the small farm development program.

MR. USKIW: No, Mr. Speaker, not at this point in time.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour, and it relates to the statement he made in the House last week relative to the employment and unemployment position in Manitoba. Did the 22,000 roughly unemployed figure include the 11,000 Indian and Metis unemployed referred to earlier?

MR. PAULLEY: I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, in answer to my honourable friend, I would suggest that he approach his colleagues in Ottawa who supply the information that is used insofar as statistics on unemployment are concerned.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, then I suppose I direct my question to the Minister of Industry and perhaps he might make a brief statement indicating to the House what . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Question please.

MR. ASPER: . . . what -- I'm making the question, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Industry. What does Statistics Manitoba do to spend \$200,000 if not to prepare information like this?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Minister of Industry and Commerce) (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, the question that the honourable member poses is one that is more properly asked during the Estimates of the Department of Industry and Commerce, and at that time I'd be glad to take considerable time and go into considerable detail about the active program of that department. With respect to those people who may or may not be included in the labour force, I would say, Sir, that the basis upon which this figure is calculated is the same for all provinces, for all regions of Canada, and if a certain group in the Manitoba scene, of the Manitoba work force is excluded for various reasons best known to Statistics Canada, I can assure the members of this House that the same groups will be excluded in all other provinces of Canada.

MR. ASPER: To the Minister of Industry, Mr. Speaker. Will Statistics Manitoba not be preparing reports on peculiarly Manitoba problems such as the unemployment amongst native and Metis people?

MR. EVANS: The name of our organization which this Assembly established by legislation, is the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, and I repeat, Mr. Speaker, the Bureau has a very full program and one which is very challenging and there are a great number of surveys that have been undertaken which will not duplicate that which is already being done by Statistics Canada.

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MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Industry. Has Manitoba Bureau of Statistics or any other division of his department made any specific studies or obtained for his department any reports on the feasibility and the desirability of an oil and gas pipeline from the Arctic field down through Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, its a point of order simply to ascertain, Sir, whether that was a supplementary question. I know my honourable friend does manage with ease to flit from one subject to another, but Sir, he seemed to outdo himself.

MR. ALLARD: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Mines and Resources. Could he tell us whether he has finalized an agreement with the Indian band at Norway House for the purchase of some 70 acres of land for \$14,000 for the airport in Norway House?

HON. SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C. (Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management) (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my last involvement in the subject was to write a letter to the Honourable Minister of Transport, Mr. Davis, in Ottawa asking him whether Manitoba was required to finalize, was required to give the Norway House band \$14,000 plus 70 acres of equivalent land in exchange for federal cost-sharing, and also stating that if we were required by the Federal Government to do this we certainly would.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable the Minister of Public Works. I noticed today that the wheat has been swept off the front steps of the Legislature. Can the Minister now assure the House that the government has stopped poisoning the pigeons?

HON. RUSSELL DOERN (Minister of Public Works) (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I indicated to my department, based on the information yesterday, that I wanted the practice of poisoning halted immediately until we have a chance to make an assessment of the program. I might point out that since the Campbell days, at least, this practice has been in effect and that at present the department has authorized a contractor up to the present to provide materials that are of a repellant nature and of a poisonous nature. I have now asked them to desist from the practice of poisoning.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Urban Affairs. I wonder if he's in a position to answer the two questions that he's taken as notice with respect to the tax notices to be sent out by the City of Winnipeg.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, as I had indicated to the Honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, I have taken the questions as notice and I do not have the answer for him today.

MR. ALLARD: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Northern Affairs. Could he tell the House which winter roads are closed, which ones are open, which ones were finished and how much freight has been hauled at God's?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That question would be better served through an Order for Return. The Honourable Member for Arthur. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland have a supplementary?

MR. ALLARD: Well, could he, on the same subject but more to a specific point, could he tell us what amount of freight has gone into God's Lake.

MR. RON MCBRYDE (Minister of Northern Affairs) (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, in my visit to that part of the country the last few days, the freight hauled into Oxford House is pretty well all in at this time except, Mr. Speaker, for the considerable amount of the materials for the school that are not in because the contract was not let in time for the contractor to get the materials to Ilford to be transported to Oxford House. The God's Lake Narrows, which is the only road that the Northern Affairs Department contracted for to be constructed, has been done but there is still some question whether the trucks would be able to make it in over that road because of the recent warm weather. I understand that this Thursday some trucks will be attempting that trip.

The other part of the question I can't answer in detail without figures in front of me, Mr. Speaker, as to how much had been taken into the various communities by air.

MR. J. DOUGLAS WATT (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I address a question to the Minister of Agriculture relative to the question posed to him also by the Member for Morris. On March 6th I directed the same question to the Minister and at that time his reply was that . . .

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MR. SPEAKER: Question please. The rest is history.

MR. WATT: Mr. Speaker, my answer at that time, Mr. Speaker, was that the negotiations . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Question please.

MR. WATT: . . . from one to two weeks' time. I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. My question is, three weeks and one day have now passed since I posed that question. Could the member tell us why negotiations have not been completed?

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, when the negotiations are in process it's almost ridiculous to wonder why they haven't been completed. You know, they do take a period of time and there are always problems which can be posed from either side, whether at the federal level or the provincial level, that does require some deliberation on the part of senior officials and indeed on the part of the ministers involved. Now the negotiations are being carried out in good faith and we don't foresee any problems towards the conclusion of those negotiations and an agreement will be signed fairly soon, so I don't know what the intent of the members opposite is in terms of pursuing this question.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate to members opposite that a flow of hogs or pigs have been going to Japan since Monday and there will be an additional flow to Los Angeles next week.

MR. WATT: I have a supplementary question to the question that I posed to the Minister before he got on to hogs. Would you . . . us to assume that the statement that he made on March 6th that negotiations would be complete within a week or two was a ridiculous statement?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the opinions of the member opposite are somewhat ridiculous. One does never set a deadline on negotiations and if they are going on in good faith there is no reason to be concerned about them and we are in that position at the present time.

MR. WATT: A supplementary question. Then, Mr. Speaker, the Minister says that his statement is not ridiculous. I ask him then, is it in his opinion, is it a ridiculous position that the farmers are being put into waiting on the negotiations to be completed in order that they may complete their negotiations for credit corporations and assessments?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I think it's probably less ridiculous than the fact that there's been no such agreement in all the years of the government of members opposite.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The honourable member has had two supplementaries. The Member for Flin Flon . . . (Interjection) . . . Flin Flon. Order please. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. THOMAS BARROW (Flin Flon): I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Northern Affairs, Mr. Speaker. Could you tell me when you plan a trip up north again to sign that special area agreement with Cranberry Portage water and sewer?

MR. MCBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, it's always a pleasure to visit the constituency of the Honourable Member for Flin Flon. I imagine the trip for any signing for sewer and water will probably be made by the Minister of Agriculture, Municipal Affairs and myself, but I have no date for that, Mr. Speaker.

ROYAL ASSENT - BILL NO. 23

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Before we proceed we will have the Administrator in for a moment in order to go through the process of these bills. Will the pages move the desks, please?

The Honourable the Administrator of the Government of the Province of Manitoba having entered the House and being seated on the Throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour in the following words:

Your Honour, we, Her Majesty's most dutiful and faithful subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in session assembled, approach The Honourable the Administrator with the sentiments of unfeigned devotion and loyalty to Her Majesty's person and Government, and beg for The Honourable the Administrator the acceptance of this Bill:

No. 23 - An Act for the Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service of the Province for the Fiscal Year ending the 31st day of March, 1974.

BILL 23

MR. CLERK: The Honourable the Administrator of the Government of the Province of Manitoba doth thank Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence and assents to this bill in Her Majesty's name.

The Honourable the Administrator was then pleased to retire.

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MR. SPEAKER: We are still on the oral question period. The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID R. BLAKE (Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Tourism and Recreation. In view of the fact that Canada's second most popular National Park, which is located thirty miles north of Minnedosa, attracts something in excess of 100,000 visitors each year, would he inform the House if he intends to encourage the Federal Government to maintain the services of the post office in the National Park during the tourist season?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Recreation.

HON. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs) (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I think this question was asked by the same member yesterday. I told him at the time that I hadn't heard anything, no request, and I think he was also informed that this is a federal matter, that there is such a thing as federal members. If I have a request I will consider it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. GABRIEL GIRARD (Emerson): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Education. In view of the number of accidents that have occurred involving school buses and school children in the last few months, I wonder if he would comment on whether he's considering more restrictive safety measures in that area of transportation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, as the honourable member well knows, the accidents arise from a variety of causes and, as I had indicated a couple of weeks ago, my department is presently reviewing the regulations that we have governing the operations of school buses, safety standards and all other matters related to the safe transportation of school children, and upon the completion of such a review whatever further action either my department or in liaison with any other department should be taken, then that will be taken, Mr. Speaker.

MR. GIRARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could advise us if at the moment there is a special training program for school bus drivers?

MR. HANUSCHAK: The transportation of students, Mr. Speaker, the hiring and supervision of drivers, is within the jurisdiction of school divisions and no doubt each school division has its own program for dealing with this matter, but in addition to that, there are in-service sessions held from time to time for supervisors of transportation or for those in charge of the transportation program within a division would be designed with the purpose in mind of assisting them to better in turn to offer the type of assistance and instruction to their drivers to provide for safe transportation of students.

MR. GIRARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Is there a special license that bus drivers must require to be authorized to drive school buses?

MR. HANUSCHAK: I believe it is a chauffeur's license, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. ALLARD: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister. Is government considering substantial equalization grants for northern community councils of a different nature, a different level than the present unconditional grants, equalization grants, that they would administer themselves, of a serious nature.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I can answer that question offhand. There is, I am advised by my colleague there is in the nature of the present arrangement a per capita that is higher than the province-wide per capita. Now, we can perhaps go beyond that. It is hoped that we can make perhaps additional progress in this respect.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I believe that the other day the Member for Fort Rouge had asked whether it was a government policy to make provision for the handicapped in

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(MR. SCHREYER cont'd) the construction of new public buildings, and I would like to indicate to the honourable lady that we have here a letter from the Canadian Paraplegic Association which recognizes that there has been good co-operation and effort by the province with respect to problems of the paraplegic. The Minister of Labour is in a position to elaborate on this.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. INEZ TRUEMAN (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, my question at the time was specifically in respect to the new washroom facilities to be installed in Memorial Park, which will be underground.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, one assumes that the provision that should be made in public buildings for the paraplegic and the handicapped should be in all public buildings, not just those that happen to be controversial.

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

MR. ASPER: My question is to the Minister of Mines in charge of the Manitoba Development Corporation. Was the president of Phoenix Data, which I believe is the wholly-owned subsidiary of the MDC, stating government policy or his own opinion when he said a few days ago in the Winnipeg Free Press, quoting him: "Let's face it, we're simply not good enough to be able to compete on an equal footing with the private sector."

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, he was obviously stating his own opinion, completely unsuppressed by the Minister who happens to head the corporation.

MR. ASPER: Will the Minister inform the House . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister state his point of order.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It would be important to know before trying to solicit an answer whether the question, in presuming to quote someone, is quoting in its entirety and accurately, because that's not the recollection of some of us on this side as to what was said in its whole context.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines on the same point of order.

MR. GREEN: On the same point of order. I think that we have all learned, particularly the Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party, that you cannot say that what a press person said that you said is correct. I answered the question, Mr. Speaker, in the way that I did because it was such a splendid opportunity to give an answer.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, will he confirm (a) that Phoenix Data is losing substantial sums of money; and (b) that the government intends to disband it; and (c) that it's being integrated into the normal government computer service and being disbanded as a private company.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I will confirm none of the things that the honourable member says. I would only indicate that if the honourable member looked upon every expenditure that did not have an equivalent return result as being a loss, he would have to say that the entire Department of Education and Health and Social Services loses money and therefore should be disbanded.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. GIRARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Universities and Colleges. In view of his answer that in the IMPACTE program we had 59 students and 64 teachers, I wonder if he would undertake to clarify this by telling us how many full-time teachers are on the IMPACTE Program.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I cannot answer that question until the member clarifies his question to me. Is he talking about teachers in the public school system or professors in the faculty at the university in Brandon?

MR. GIRARD: Yes, let me clarify the question; I thought it was perfectly clear. I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, how many full-time teachers are involved in teaching the students of the IMPACTE program on a full-time basis. I'm not referring to teachers who are teaching these students on a part-time basis but rather on a full-time basis.

MR. MILLER: Fine, now we both know what you're talking about.

MR. GIRARD: I hope so.

MR. MILLER: The IMPACTE program in the 1972/73 academic year consists of a teaching staff of 14 part-time professors from the Education faculty, six part-time from the Arts faculty

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(MR. MILLER cont'd) at Brandon University, plus six part-time instructors in various centres around the province. There is no full-time individual involved at all. All of them are giving part-time services to the training of these students.

MR. GIRARD: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now, I would also like to know what are the requirements for students who are registered in the IMPACTE program.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of question that should be asked during Estimates. I couldn't stand up here and ream off the requirements. I really don't know them offhand.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable the Minister of Northern Affairs. Mr. Speaker, I wonder, due to the surplus that the First Minister announced in his Budget last night, if the Minister's now prepared to repair the streets and roads in Camperville?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

MR. MCBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I would guess that some of the roads in Camperville are the responsibility of the Department of Highways. The Department of Northern Affairs does have agreements with various community councils and work very closely with community councils in assisting them with this kind of community program, and we're quite willing to discuss it with the community of Camperville.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. JACOB M. FROESE (Rhineland): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address my question to the Honourable Minister of Public Works; I think it's under his jurisdiction. Is the government giving greater consideration to the distribution of public offices set up by the government in various centres in the province so that they won't be localized or centralized in just one or two or a few specific areas?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Public Works.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I believe it's an announced policy of the government that we are attempting to decentralize some of the government services. Now where in a particular region there are numerous government departments and buildings as a result of that decentralization, we have attempted in some instances to consolidate them into a more rational operation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. JOSEPH P. BOROWSKI (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister dealing with last night's Budget and his statement that we are receiving only \$11.00 per capita equalization payments from Ottawa, as opposed to Saskatchewan's \$29.00. I wonder if he could explain why there's such a great difference between two prairie provinces.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the equalization formula is a good concept, it is a pretty good formula, and it was made even better last February when the government of Canada accepted the proposal made by quite a number of provinces that the yield from local property taxes ought to be included in the total aggregate yield of taxes for purposes of calculation of the equalization formula and payments. Now, that being so, because Manitoba's per capita wealth and tax yield is therefore in relation to Saskatchewan, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and so on, higher, the amount of equalization we receive from Ottawa is therefore lower and that really explains it, Sir. Manitoba's per capita wealth and tax position is closer to the Canadian average than would be Saskatchewan, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland in that order.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister of Agriculture. Because there appears to be some confusion in the minds of farmers about whether or not the government is going to be in the insecticide and pesticide selling business this year, could the Minister clarify whether or not the government's going to be selling pesticides and insecticides this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, that question was asked in the House the other day and I did reply that we will continue the program that was started last year wherein we are going to distribute insecticides relative to Bertha Army Worm control and grasshopper control programming province-wide.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

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MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Agriculture. Can the Minister indicate whether there will be any program this spring to help and assist farmers in filling dugouts that did not get filled with the ordinary spring runoff?

MR. USKIW: Well I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, just what the member has in mind. I would draw his attention to a recent press release issued by the PFRA people, which is a federal authority, with respect to increased assistance for dugouts and things of that nature.

MR. GRAHAM: A supplementary question. Will the Minister make available to the PFRA people equipment that is presently in the hands of the Department of Agriculture in that respect?

MR. USKIW: Let me say, Mr. Speaker, in reply, that we have always been more than willing to co-operate with PFRA and I presume that the normal relationships will continue.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney.

MR. EARL McKELLAR (Souris-Killarney): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Health and it's the same question that I asked about three weeks ago and didn't get an answer, about the Clarkson Commission Report, and I was wondering when he's going to table this report.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. RENE E. TOUPIN (Minister of Health & Social Development) (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, the Clarkson Report is in the hands of the printers and should be available to the members of the House very soon.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable First Minister.

BUDGET ADDRESS DEBATE

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, would you call the Bill standing in the name of the Minister of Labour, adjournment of which is in the name of the Member for Emerson. I notice the member does not wish to speak today. Accordingly, Sir, I would move -- (Interjection) -- I'm sorry, Sir. The Budget Address Debate. The Leader of the Opposition can indicate his intentions.

MR. SPEAKER: The proposed motion of the Honourable First Minister. The Honourable Member for River Heights. The Leader of the Official Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: In anticipation of tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I can have the indulgence of the House to have this matter stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed? The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the Budget Address is being stood, I assume -- well I don't believe it would be proper for any one else to speak, and, Sir, the Member for Emerson indicates he does not wish to speak on the bill.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. GIRARD: Mr. Speaker, in anticipation that it might be called I would like the matter to stand. I'm not ready to speak on it today.

A MEMBER: You don't know what it's all about anyway.

MR. SCHREYER: That being so, Mr. Speaker, I would now move . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Orders for Return.

MR. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): I wonder if I could ask the House Leader to consider whether or not we could not have the readings of an Order for Return. There's an Order for Return on the Order Paper -- or an Address for Papers. Could that . . .

MR. SCHREYER: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. That is automatic. It's my fault. It should be done.

ORDERS FOR RETURN

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Lakeside, THAT an Order of the House do issue for a Return providing the following information concerning Community Development Officers appointed since January 1, 1971:

1. the number of such Community Development Officers;
2. the name of each;
3. the contractual terms of employment of each;
4. the salary of each;
5. the date of the appointment of each;

ORDERS FOR RETURN

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

6. the nature of the appointment of each (whether by competition, bulletin, etc.);

7. the professional qualifications of each.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, this is quite acceptable.

MR. SPEAKER: Proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. GEORGE HENDERSON (Pembina): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Minnedosa, THAT an humble address be voted to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor praying for copies of all correspondence between the Government of Manitoba, Government of Canada, and the International Joint Committee with respect to the proposed Pembina Valley Dam between April 26, 1971 and March 23, 1973.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not certain that there was any correspondence. That which I would be able to give if there was, is correspondence that relates to the parties where the Manitoba Government is involved, not between the Government of Canada and the International Joint Committee. I'm not able to do that. But other than the matters that I've raised, we'll file the Order, subject to concurrence, if there is correspondence with the Federal Government.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? So ordered. The Honourable House Leader. The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable the Minister of Agriculture, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

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

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Order, please. Order, please. Resolution 7(a) -- the Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Mr. Chairman, I think I had a few minutes left when the hour of adjournment arose the other day. We are discussing the agricultural estimates under the Minister's salary and I had made a number of points and inquiries on various matters. At the time that I -- that we had to call it quits I was just discussing the matter of the migration from the farm and as to whether the government had any solutions to the problem that we are facing as far as the farm depopulation in rural areas. Certainly in the comments that I did make I made mention of the reports in connection with labour supply and so on. I feel that we are in a critical time as far as retaining younger people on the farm in Manitoba. The age of the farmer, the average age of the farmer is away up and we are in need of young farmers, and the difficulty today is that it requires so much investment for a young farmer to get established and have a farm of his own that he can operate. Now with the present policy that the government has announced that the Agricultural Credit Corporation will no longer be in the business of providing loans for the purchase of land, we are now limited more or less to one source of funds and that is the Federal Farm Credit Organization. And I don't think this is a wise move. I certainly would have . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order in the House. I am having great difficulty hearing the honourable member. If members want to have caucus meetings and what not, I suggest that they go elsewhere and do so and let the honourable member make his presentation in the House. The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to repeat that. I don't think this is a wise move to be restricted to one source of credit namely the Federal Farm Credit Corporation. We know that from the earlier years before our program was brought into being that farmers had actually no place to go. It was only because of the federal and the provincial governments that the credit corporations were set up so that farmers would have a place to go for credit to purchase farm lands because what had happened in the '30s was that the mortgage companies would not cater to the needs of the farmer and supply credit so that he could get a loan to purchase a farm. And it was only as a result of the moves by the provincial and the federal governments by creating these corporations, and by creating a source of credit, that farmers were able to get credit in this way, and I think the Provincial Government should reconsider this proposal and leave that option open to the younger farmers, the young people of this province, so that they would not be restricted to one source of credit; this is a very important matter and when we consider keeping our young people on the farm.

I have one other item that I wish to draw to the Minister's attention and that is that I feel that the Agricultural Committee, the Standing Committee of this House, should be put to much greater use than we've had it happen in the past number of years. We find that the Canadian Wheat Board and the Federal Government by setting up this -- I forget the proper name of the stabilization program, committee that they've set up -- they're conducting forums, and right now there's one going on at the Fort Garry Hotel where they are trying to provide leadership in the farm community by informing farmers from across the western prairie provinces and giving them advice on the various matters. And I feel that this particular seminar is one of great value and that we probably as an Agricultural Committee of this House should be following because they're getting reports from the Canada Grain Commission. Not only are they getting reports from these organizations, they follow this up by group discussions and allowing for asking of questions and so on, and how policies are decided.

The same applies to the Canadian Wheat Board. They're also on the agenda and are answerable to the people attending. Under the report there are such programs as the wheat grading system, which is a very important matter at this time because of protein grading brought in. While the pricing is still not determined completely on the matter of protein content of wheat, nevertheless it will have a bearing in the future.

Then there is also the credit programs that are being provided by the Federal Government for the purchase of wheat and grains by companies that import from us.

And another item is the pricing policy. How do they arrive, and how are pricing policies established for the various grades and the various grains?

I think these are matters that should be considered by a committee of this House and that we should be fully informed on. I doubt very much whether there are any, or if there are some

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(MR. FROESE cont'd.) very few members are really informed on a lot of these items.

The same applies to the matter of the grain handling system, the transportation system of the railways. Here again is an area that we should be informed on; we should know what the future holds, what are the trends. I think time is running out on the Federal Government's time period in which the abandonment of rail lines was halted. I think this was extended for a five-year period, and the time is running out in either '74 or '75.

Certainly we should as a Committee on Agriculture be knowledgeable of what is happening, and what we can expect, and what is in store for the farmers of this province in these various areas.

There are other areas such as the oil seeds production and marketing and processing. I read from the report the other day, and brought to the attention of the Minister, that consideration had been given to the establishing of another plant at Pilot Mound and also in the north-west part of the province. Is there room for more oil extraction plants in Manitoba? Is the production of such a nature that we could have more plants of this type operating? And operating in such a way that they could show a profit. Here again is an area that we should be more knowledgeable of as members of this House because we're establishing programs; we are establishing policy to a great degree, and we should have the facts before us.

The same holds true of feed grain. We've not got a marketing board set up for the purpose of feed grains. Certainly we should have the right to question some of these people who are on that marketing commission, or marketing board, on their policies that are being established and what the operations are like.

Now some members argue, well this is all in the federal realm. I don't believe so. I feel that as members of the Provincial Government, as members of the Legislative Assembly for Manitoba, we have a very direct interest and a very direct concern for the welfare of our farmers, and certainly shouldn't leave it completely up to the Federal Government as to the various programs that are being conducted.

Then we too have made ourselves responsible because of passing supplementary legislation so that certain of the federal farm programs could be carried out and be brought into being. If it hadn't been for supplementary legislation by this House they wouldn't have happened, and they couldn't have been brought into being. So, Mr. Chairman, I feel that there is a lot of room for improvement and I feel that it should be an obligation on members of the Committee to make sure that this is happening and that meetings of the Agriculture Committee are being called for the purpose of hearing from these various groups and to be completely informed, and I think as a result we would probably see new programs, new policies being developed.

We have the ag reps I think which are supported financially by the Federal Government through the Manitoba department. What is the situation here? Are they really catering to the needs of the farmers? Sometimes I wonder whether certain farmers are not taking advantage of them more than others and others probably not getting the service that they should have. It certainly would be worthwhile from the Minister to hear on the program and on the operation of the agriculture representatives of the province. I don't want to attach any blame that they're not doing a good job, that is not the idea, but I feel that if there is improvements to be made on a program of this type that we should not hesitate to do so.

I touched on - I think at the time of the Throne Speech Debate - on this report put out by the National Grain Company regarding the delivery points. Again here I wonder if the Minister could bring us up to date on that very report, that was put out by the National Grain Company in which they have a program whereby receiving stations presently receiving grain having 1,900 of these in western Canada, and that these are to be reduced to 280 in number by I think 1980, or something like that. It appears to me that whether we actually want to or not as though we are already on this course because of grain elevators closing, and so on. And this very report indicates to me that they have outlined certain growth centres for the Province of Manitoba as for other prairie provinces, and are we recognizing these as growth centres and will we not do anything about it to help the other smaller communities along? Is it the intention of the government to go along with that report, or are we divorcing ourselves from it? Is this government policy or not? I think these are questions that I would like to get answered from the Minister.

Mr. Chairman, these are a few of the comments that I had under the Minister's salary.

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(MR. FROESE cont'd.) I will have further comments to make as we go along. I've forgotten my eye glasses at the hotel, I borrowed these just so that I could finish my comments this afternoon. Thank you, very much, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J. R. (Bud) BOYCE (Winnipeg Centre): Mr. Speaker, the Member for Rhineland -- I was listening to him; I've learned a lot in this House from the Member for Rhineland the easy way. The Member from Morris I learned it from him the hard way. But I was just wondering, in the first part of his address he referred to the, you know restricting the credit that was available to farmers for mortgages, and I was just wondering, you know, what his position is. My understanding of finance, for example, if someone has assets of roughly \$60,000 -- and I don't know what really what mortgage money is costing at the present time in the farm community -- but if someone has assets around \$60,000 and he was paying 9 percent this would be about \$5,400 as an operating cost. Now I'm informed that someone says it's 7-1/2 -- 7-1/2 percent, so 742, half is \$4,500.00. So that really if, after having been a member of the House and the Agriculture Committee for awhile and listening to the farmers throughout the province, that I find that the income on most farms, on the average farms, are relatively low, that these mortgages that the people are carrying are actually a millstone around their neck; that they don't really consider farm operations from a strict business economic viewpoint. That if I had \$60,000 and put it into term savings for example at 7 percent, I would have to do nothing to realize a return on it, and most farmers that I talk to don't really take this into consideration, the cost of money. And as land values have crept up they are carrying book values and mortgages which far exceed the economics of the operation and I wonder would he not agree that in helping a farm community that if there was some way of removing this, you know, from them as an operational cost, if it is to the advantage of all of us in Manitoba, and I include the people of Winnipeg Centre in that because it is to my advantage to have a viable farm economy. That if we remove this and take this into the public domain, the holding of land, would this not perhaps be a better system of apportioning these operational costs over a broader base, and perhaps the member could comment on this and his opinion on it the next time he makes his contribution in this debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell. --(Interjection)-- Well if no one is prepared. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I was hoping that I would get more members opposite to relate their concerns to me so that I can be more comprehensive and all-embracing in my answer rather than having to go through a lot of repetition as we usually do during the consideration of Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSON: We're perfectly willing and, in fact, even desirous of getting off the first item, so that we can relate our questions more directly to the particular items, and if the Minister would give us that opportunity we'll be asking the questions but we don't think the first item is really the proper place to be asking particular questions.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, it's obvious that members are ready to move on. However it's also obvious that members opposite did relate a number of points relative to policy that does centre on the question of the Minister's salary and therefore it would be desirable for a response on my part.

The Member for Lakeside engaged in a degree of philosophical dialogue and debate the other day; the question of whether or not public promotion and public initiative is indeed doing a job relative to private enterprise, and so on, and I don't know whether that is all that important to engage in at this point because we are operating in an economic environment wherein we have both public and private co-operative and so on, and they all have their place, and no one is advocating the extremities of one form or the other, so that I'm not sure as to the relevance of his contribution to the House the other day.

But nevertheless notwithstanding that, Mr. Speaker, I think that one could make one or two observations and I think it's important to relate it to our own experience. Observations that I want to mention are observations of what is happening in other parts of the world and compare that with what is happening here in Canada.

The Member for Lakeside went to great pains, Mr. Chairman, in trying to demonstrate to us that the largest grain sale to Russia, I believe, was made by private companies in the

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(MR. USKIW cont'd.) United States and he spoke in glowing terms of that arrangement, and how desirable it was that we allow that kind of thing to continue, or to develop, even here in Canada, as opposed to the centralized way in which we have been operating through the Canadian Wheat Board and the Government of Canada.

Well I think one really has to appreciate that that position does in fact suggest a head-in-the-sand approach because in fact, Mr. Chairman, we have to recognize that many countries of the world do prefer dealing with a centralized system of purchasing, marketing; a centralized system of delivery, and so on. You know, more than half of the world prefers to operate in that way, and in particular the largest customers with whom we deal are people that are great centralists and prefer to deal in that way - government to government or some sort of centralized corporate structure against their centralized purchasing system, or in co-operation with. So I think the Member for Lakeside is pursuing a course of sort of head-in-the-sand approach if I might say in this area.

The example he gave to us though does bear some investigation, or need for investigation in that notwithstanding the fact that the market opportunities were there and the private sector anywhere in the world wanted to take advantage of those opportunities, one has to take into account that those agreements entered into really are not developing in the way that they were envisaged in that their deliveries are far behind schedule; they don't have a central system in the U.S. to monitor the movement of grains; they don't have a centralized system in transportation to make sure that deliveries are on time, and so on, and hence you have a spectacle of bottlenecks all over the United States in trying to get this grain moving into port positions to in fact meet their commitments, which already have not been met and where deadlines have been passed. Now it's not being critical only to indicate that when you are involved in large transactions of this nature that it is indeed a good thing to try to minimize administrative bureaucracy, and so on, and that the centralized system usually is more efficient in this regard.

I want to relate an example. Members opposite like to think or talk in philosophical terms, and it's really not as much philosophical as it is a straight matter of economics and efficiency. And here I want to relate a discussion that I had with the company that is now involved in the buying of pork from Manitoba, a company that is located in Los Angeles. That company is in fact a company that operates on the co-operative principle, but that co-operative is owned by a chain of private entrepreneurs who have set up this central buying agency to avoid duplication in this particular field. This central buying agency I am told is involved in something in the order of 40 or 50 million dollars worth of meat purchases per year in the supply of their parent companies. It's a very interesting arrangement. Here again an arrangement of centralized operations in order to provide some efficiencies. Now because of that arrangement that particular company, distribution company, is in a position to enter contracts anywhere in the world, and so they have on a trial basis with the Pork Producers Board in Manitoba wherein shipments are going out to that market next week for the first time. There will be three trial runs after which we will either confirm or otherwise a longer term arrangement.

These things cannot always be done when you have to deal with, for example, as is now being promoted in the Province of Alberta, where you would have to deal in the purchasing of these commodities through a number of agencies or a number of suppliers. Now I would want to have members opposite ponder for a moment how we could get into that market without jeopardy if we were to ask a hundred or a thousand farmers in Manitoba to commit supplies to that specific market for the next year or two years or three years; how cumbersome a job would it be to tie down a thousand producers of pork into a three-year arrangement. Obviously that would be the most inefficient approach in the market challenges that we face, and that the system that we have here in the province, the most efficient and the most effective system in North America, Mr. Chairman, is one that we should not be embarrassed over, notwithstanding the fact that some people have some philosophical hang-ups about pooling human and technical resources together in order to bring about that efficiency.

So I simply point out to my friends opposite that businessmen in the United States who pride themselves with the notion that they are the true free enterprisers and free entrepreneurs, in fact are moving in this direction, and have moved in this direction, and we are doing business with them in that way, and in fact we had some discussions along the line of some co-operative efforts as between their companies and the people here in Manitoba through the Hog Marketing Board, or the government, in establishing more permanent facilities that might be

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(MR. USKIW cont'd.) involved in the possible future processing and so on. So that there are no hang-ups on either side as to good business arrangements that may be entered into.

So let the Member for Lakeside not dwell too long, Mr. Speaker, on old hang-ups, philosophical hang-ups that have been thrown out the window many many years ago by people throughout the world for the sake of more efficient handling and a better arrangement all around.

I want to remind members opposite that while I am not a supporter of the Liberal Party, the Government of Canada, I want to say that I have been impressed of late with the efforts they have been trying to make in the area of greater efficiency in transportation of grains, particularly as evidenced in the huge movement of grain in the last two years through the various outlets. Now surely one can always find an area of criticism but I think one has to recognize that efforts have been tried, and to a great degree of success, in trying to meet our commitments, sales commitments, commitments that we have made long in advance, and that by and large a good job has been done in that respect. All other arguments waived, Mr. Chairman, and I know there can be many as to price, and so on, but in terms of the ability to centralize the operation and make sure that the boxcars are properly allocated, and so on, all of these things that are tied together. Obviously they have an advantage compared to people in the United States in that we have only two major railroad systems in this country and obviously that makes it much easier, but it does indicate to us that centralization of this kind of effort is desirable.

Now the Member for Morris, the Member for Rock Lake -- the Member for Morris in debate on a resolution of this House indicated to us that we are so ready as a government to take credit wherein we have involved ourselves, or wherein the producers have involved themselves, in new market opportunities and that when criticisms arise that we seem to want to back off.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: . . . one that is frequently invoked by yourself, Sir, and by members of the opposite side, and that is indulging in a debate that has been concluded by this House. What the Minister is doing now is referring to a debate, and continuing a debate, that was decided upon by a vote of this House just last week and I think, Sir, that that is out of order.

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

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, during the Estimates on a department it doesn't become -- and I doubt whether the honourable member would want that rule to apply. During the Estimates on a department is he suggesting that in the future that we ask it be ruled out of order for something that had been passed, or defeated, in a private members' resolution. I wonder whether the Honourable Member for Morris really wants to have that kind of ruling.

MR. JORGENSEN: . . . I simply refer to is the often repeated point of order that is raised from that side of the House that we cannot continue a debate that has been concluded, and if the Minister wants to talk about the Hog Marketing Board that's perfectly all right. I can't stop him from doing that, but what he was doing was making specific reference to the debate that took place last Wednesday, and which was concluded by a vote of this House. That, Sir, I submit is out of order.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member would continue to talk about . . . the main objections, I don't think that you, Mr. Chairman, in the Chair have ever made a ruling that on Estimates one is unable to discuss something which has been the subject of a previous resolution which has been passed or defeated.

MR. USKIW: Notwithstanding the rules of the House, Mr. Chairman, I want to point out to the Member from Morris that it was only in passing reference in any case, in any event, that I had drawn to the attention of the House matters which were discussed at an earlier time, and that also it was raised during the discussion of this department's Estimates by the Member for Rock Lake, the same point was made, so that it is certainly germane to our discussion.

I want to say here and now that I am not embarrassed by the fact that government has to assume some responsibility in trying to promote and develop new opportunities, new markets for products which are produced in Manitoba, and indeed the former government through the Minister of Industry who is now the Leader of the Opposition, has indicated on many occasions that these kinds of promotional activities are not in fact in sufficient quantity on the part of this

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(MR. USKIW cont'd.) government, that he would do a far better job of that kind of promotion. So that I would hope that members opposite would take that in stride and provide us with a degree of consistency on that particular aspect of market development and promotion.

I am rather pleased that we have set up the marketing branch within the department who are responsible in the development of these markets, who are responsible in the assistance that they may provide to various producer marketing organizations in developing new techniques in marketing, and indeed to bridge some gaps in communication as between different areas within the marketplace; whether it be within the continent or internationally speaking.

Now the members opposite would like to have me in a position of trying to not assume any responsibility during a time when there seems to be some discussion as to the high cost of food. Let me say to members opposite that I have no apologies with respect to the increase in food prices as it relates to the increase provided for the primary producers. No apologies whatsoever; this is something that we have been looking forward to, and in fact trying to assist in development of this kind of a situation in the economy of Manitoba, and I think it goes without saying that some measures undertaken by government here have had an impact on prices and we accept that. Every marketing arrangement through a marketing board pursuant to legislation passed by previous governments or this government is in fact designed to bring about greater stability to primary producers. So let's not try to argue on both sides of the question. I said to the consumers' group, and indeed to the lady representing the Consumers Association, yes it's true marketing boards probably will have an adverse effect in terms of prices to the consumer, if you look at a depressed period of time and wherein there is intervention to bring us out of that depression, but by and large it's a stabilizer as well and that we try to get away from the booms and busts, the cyclical patterns that have been with us for all time in the past as far as the primary resource industry is concerned, or in particular the agricultural sector of that resource industry.

So, unfortunately, the Member for Lakeside was not here when I made my earlier remarks and I'm not going to repeat them. I would hope that he would undertake to peruse Hansard in the days ahead so that he may draw some lessons from those comments.

The Member for Rock Lake, he indicated to me that he was rather upset at my criticisms of the editor of the Country Guide at an open forum meeting in Brandon; and I want to say to the Member for Rock Lake that the editor of the Country Guide and I are on a very friendly basis and we don't mind digging the rib on the odd occasion either way. I think that the editor of the Country Guide on occasion tries to throw a few darts my way, and I usually respond in kind, and we are gentlemen about it and I don't think it requires any debate in this House.

But to go back to the reason why I in fact entertained the question of the way in which the editor of the Country Guide was reporting to the people of Manitoba, I think it arises out of the fact that there was a very significant amount of space allocated within that weekly, within that paper rather, on what Alberta was doing in the promotion of markets for pork in other parts of the world, and wherein they have had no success to date, with a great deal of elaboration on how thorough and how good a job the Alberta people were doing in that field. And my comment to the --(Interjection)-- my comment to the Farm Writers Association, and indeed in Brandon to the editor of the Country Guide, was that some people made more ado about hogs that were not sold than they do about hogs that were sold by the agency here in Manitoba, and that I was hopeful that the media would be more positive in their promotion of what we are trying to do and that an attempt is being made seriously to bring about greater stability to Manitoba's agricultural community through efforts at diversification and so on -- and the long term projection is that it is the right direction; we should be promoting it as fast as we can, and evidence of course is with us today; the opportunity that we are really missing at this point in time because we are not in a position to deliver all of the product that could be absorbed in the marketplace today. It's unfortunate, Mr. Chairman, that we are not in that position.

The Member for Rock Lake, Mr. Chairman, suggests that it will be some time before we know what the success or failure of our program will be. Let me indicate to him that the producers of pork products who are now involved in the shipping of pork to offshore markets will know whether they are satisfied with current daily prices, or weekly prices, or monthly prices, at this point in time. --(Interjection)-- They know when they receive payment for their products, Mr. Chairman, as to whether or not they are getting fair returns on their investment and labour. So let not the Member for Rock Lake suggest that the producer does

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(MR. USKIW cont'd.) not know his position.

And you know it reminds me of the question that I put to him the other day, which he refused to answer, and I don't blame him for that because he was trying to duck the issue. I would like to know, and I still haven't learned from the Opposition, as to what prices the private sector sells Manitoba farm products at in different markets of the world or in fact in different markets within Canada or the United States. The Member for Rock Lake was not able to give me that answer. He indicated to me that this is nothing new, private companies have been shipping pork to Japan for a long long time for a number of years now and it's been a developing market, and therefore we haven't achieved anything. Mr. Chairman, what is being missed here is the fact that the control has been shifted from the private sector --(Interjection)-- that's right, the control -- and I make no apologies for that, Mr. Chairman -- the control as to the terms of the agreement has been shifted from the meat packing industry to the producers of this province through their board; and that is a major achievement and something that is historic and will be looked upon in retrospect in years ahead as one of the major things that was done to change the bargaining position of our producers for all time to come.

And I would hope that over the years ahead we will become more and more sophisticated and aggressive in developing these market opportunities, and indeed which will stabilize agriculture to a larger extent. Surely members opposite should appreciate that when you lock yourself into a two or three or five-year contract you really have thereby created a degree of stability knowing that you have a percentage of your production already marketed in advance. This certainly has to be almost if not identical to buying a life insurance policy where you know that there are guarantees built in, or a sickness and accident policy would probably be the analogous thing here, so that if something happens you know that there is some recovery or some stability built in, and I would hope that we would get into a position where we have a good percentage of our production marketed through locked-in agreements for three-year periods or five-year periods, or whatever, so that we can convert, Mr. Chairman, so that we can convert greater amounts of our feed grains into meat products here in this province in order that we not only stabilize the income of our farm people but we create job opportunities for people in the processing industry and the transportation sector, and so on. It certainly has, it certainly has major spin-off benefits to the rest of Manitoba, to other sectors within the province, and indeed beyond the province.

So let us not be negative on what I consider to be, and I'm sure members opposite do -- I'm sure members opposite privately would admit that it is a course that is going to do us well for the future, but are not in a position to admit because they have some political problems. Now, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate their position, I appreciate their position. I know that it is always tempting for opposition to oppose, to oppose, Mr. Chairman, everything that is done. I indicated to the Leader of the Liberal Party one time in a private conversation -- I don't mind relating it -- that it would be advisable for his benefit that if he would try to be more credible with his criticisms. To me it was advisable for him, and I say that to members opposite as well, criticism is good if it is constructive, but let us not pursue a negative course because all it tends to do, Mr. Chairman, is to confuse the public and thereby everyone loses in the end.

A MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. USKIW: I know the Member for Rock Lake if he was not in public view would endorse the very program that I have just enunciated. --(Interjection)--

The Member for Rock Lake was concerned about the fact that I did not make reference, Mr. Chairman, what is the latest development in AI and in making those remarks, Mr. Chairman, he put the question and I quote: "What happened to the program established by the previous government?" You know, Mr. Chairman, . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Minister has five minutes.

MR. USKIW: . . . I want to really take issue with that statement because the Member for Rock Lake knows that there was no program that was ready to be unveiled by the previous government; that in fact there was a real problem within the industry; that we had a Legislative Committee that was trying to wrestle with the problem and that there was nothing about to be done about it by the previous administration. --(Interjection)-- He says it's not true. Well I can remind members opposite that there is conflict between the Member for Lakeside, who was the Minister of Agriculture only a few years ago, and members in the back row, and that

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(MR. USKIW cont'd.) conflict has not been resolved, Mr. Chairman. And let not the Member for Rock Lake try to pacify the people in his constituency that want something to happen by suggesting that there was a program ready but this new government is holding it up. --(Interjection)-- Let me assure my honourable friend that the program is not being held up; that we have a report submitted to me by the board that was set up over a year ago; it does recommend a course of action. What is now taking place in that respect of course is the development of the mechanics to go into a program, and if you will notice in your estimates, or maybe it's not revealing as they are shown in the estimates, there is \$100,000 figure set aside within those estimates for an AI program; there is a very aggressive approach undertaken, and I will elaborate more fully when we reach those items, Mr. Chairman, because I do know that other members want me to respond to matters of policy at this point.

The Member for Arthur suggested to me that the sewer and water program which was introduced under our latest ARDA arrangement was a political program, and that is the sum total of his analysis and his impression of it. I want to take issue with the member because I always looked at political programming as being the best thing you can have for society. What is politics all about, Mr. Chairman, if not an expression of public wishes through their elected representative? If that isn't what it is, then I don't belong here, Mr. Chairman. I don't think that it is that the term "politic" should be used, should be used in vain and should be used to discredit public policy. I don't think the word politics should be used in that way; it should be used in a positive sense. And the political decisions that are made hopefully reflect the wishes of our people in the countryside or in the urban sector; and if they don't do that then we have failed in our democratic institution, Mr. Chairman. So I remind the Member for Arthur that he should not have disparaging remarks about the word politic and political decisions because that is really the mainstay of our democratic system, and it should remain that way.

The question on the insecticide program has been raised on a number of occasions, in fact even today. Again I want to mention to members that we are continuing our involvement in the area of chemical supply and distribution for the control of grasshoppers, which we know will be with us this year in greater numbers than a year ago, and indeed in the control of army worms, which we're not sure of as to how intensive they will be, and what measures will be required. But those two chemicals we will be supplying through the public distribution system and I want to remind the Member for Arthur in this connection wherein he indicates to me that here we have another situation where the public is moving into an area, a private area, and establishing a monopoly position.

And here I would hope that he would reflect on what was our position prior to last year when we inadvertently got involved in the distribution of these chemicals. The position we had up to last year, and a position which we inherited from our predecessors in government, was one which in fact provided subsidization to the industry; not subsidization to the farmer user, or the municipal user, the municipal corporation in its use of these chemicals. It was a situation where there was a subsidy going to the distributive trade, not to the people that really needed the support in that the price of chemicals that was bought last year ranged as high as, well anywhere from 21 to 24 or 25.00 dollars a gallon, and it was obvious, Mr. Chairman, that we could buy that chemical at 11, somewhere around \$11.00 a gallon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: . . . time. The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. FROESE: I'd like to make a few comments so that the Minister can later on complete his statement. I'd just like to answer the question put to me by the Member for Winnipeg Centre, which I think is important, and if he would lend his ear I would like to give him my views on it. The Member for Winnipeg Centre asked a question about this continuous cycle of a farmer selling his farm to his son, and as generations keep on every time you have a new cycle, that the farm has to be bought and paid for over and over again. The other course naturally is to incorporate and have corporate farms, and here I personally have given thought to this. I haven't been incorporated because we find that laws of the land are changed from time to time in regard to taxation and so on, so that you might be better off to incorporate one year and in a few years' time the opposite might be the situation and that you may be better off not to have it incorporated. Then there's also the matter of a farmer if he's his own boss, unless -- when he incorporates there are others to have a say in it, and if he doesn't incorporate he can do as he well pleases and take action when action is necessary. So that it's quite

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(MR. USKIW cont'd.) a decision to make for a farmer to incorporate and on that basis not having this continuous cycle going on. By incorporating, naturally you could vest some of your interests to your children so that they would be part and parcel of it, and the farm could carry on in this way. And I'm sure many of the farmers are doing it today because of advantages that are given to them for the very purpose that they mention, that you have a better credit - more credit available to them. The federal credit program certainly, that is providing credit to syndicates, certainly this is open to people of that type who incorporate in that way, and you wonder sometimes which is the better course to take. But the point I was trying to make before was that we should, by limiting our program under the Agricultural Credit Corporation to not provide loans to farmers any more, that we would be restricting the young people in this province to one major source of credit, which would be the federal Agricultural Credit Corporation. We have probably other sources such as credit unions but they're generally not in the long term program of providing credit for such type of loans, namely long term farm loans, and the interest rates generally are too high too. Most of the credit unions charge nine to ten, some as high as eleven and twelve percent, and I feel this is too high. So that we need a less costly source, and as I pointed out before to them, during the Dirty Thirties, during the time that so many farms went into bankruptcy, this is when mortgage companies discontinued providing money for purposes of farm mortgages so that they were cut down to no source at all, there was no money available; and this is why these programs came into effect at that particular time and I think it was right to bring them about at that time. But as I have said, where should we go? Who can advise us properly on this? And because the tax laws change it's a very difficult situation for any farmer to decide the future of his farm in this way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Perhaps the Minister could respond to -- but, as I understand it, at the moment the Minister has given no indication that he's not going to exclude other forms of financial assistance, and in light of what the First Minister said last night, that if we had a local bank which was broadly based on credit unions and Caisse Populaire -- mind you, this quite possibly could pick up the slack in the areas the member last speaking was referring to. But I wonder if the Minister could clarify this for me. I don't think that anything he has said so far has precluded other forms of financial assistance in the mortgage field to farmers who want to operate in that way.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MCGREGOR: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to draw out a few points to the Minister, and the one is the Student Farm Employment Program. I thought this really had some potential until investigating and finding it's more or less a student farm PEP program in reality, and I can think to my own boyhood when I was raised on a farm and not a very encouraging farm or a very productive farm, and later on I became employed by a real farmer. Then the war came along and whether it be on the Atlantic or Pacific I was weighing those two ways of farming and I was hoping, and one day I came back, and not a particularly good farmer, and I was thinking this program, maybe this was the thing that was coming out of it, they're bringing these young people out to the farm to show them how reasonably a life can be made. The thing we need is more farmers whatever the program. As far as bringing a program like this to tear down some buildings, to tear down some fences that puts someone to work, but really it's not gaining anything to my knowledge; and some land I have, I'm looking at the buildings and wondering how long a match would take to destroy it, to get rid of them, the fence, the bulldozer. Certainly I could put some students to work for several months but in the name of the whole overall economy how much benefit is this type of program? If it was there to encourage young people to the life on a farm I can see great benefits from it. So I would urge the Minister, if not this year to next year look at it from that approach.

We talk of markets and market development and the new feeding program and I think this is a good sign, that the department is encouraging. But I think again, we must never forget that we need our borders open provincially and certainly internationally, because there's no way really Manitoba can compete against, say, Ontario which is considered a fodder province, and we at least at this day have never become a corn province to take the advantage. But I still think that we can compete and many people are showing this and competing in a real progressive way. Probably our selling program has changed and will change but still needs some change, and I can think of only one in my area, it's the Mobile Auction, where a particular

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(MR. MCGREGOR cont'd.) auction market gets the buyers, goes out to a feedlot, be it yours, be it mine, and how much more independent the whole operation can be.

You can walk in and look at that 50 head or 150 head, they bid amongst themselves, they come up and say all right, forty-four ten is the top bid. That farmer can say yes or no at that very moment, the cattle haven't been off feed, he hasn't paid trucking to a market, and I can show you an example of this as of last Friday. Carberry there was 33 head, price forty-three sixty; Elliott-Pipestone forty-three seventy, 50 head - and this was all the same auction - Birtle, Bartow Brothers 30, forty-nine ninety; Barry Belview, forty-nine ninety for 29; and then Carberry feed is thirty-three, and it goes right down the line till the Minister's good friend, Ross Mitchell, 105 forty-two eighty - this was for heifers. And these people had got this price without putting a nickel out or out gambling in any way, shape or form.

I don't know why the big packers haven't adopted this type of a program but I think we all know, who watch the auction here in St. Boniface and other plants, they take enough in the other way without the auction ring that really doesn't necessarily establish the market. That type of operation is right there, the farmer isn't out, and I think more promotion along this line would be to the betterment of agriculture. In fact, if I could handle my grain in that market, that type of way, it would be a real benefit to all grain people because we know again you take your grain to the elevator and you're at the mercy then when you're on the scale it's the dockage, etc. And those are just two points I would like to bring out, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that I'm not going to be able to complete my remarks during the few minutes remaining this afternoon. The Member for Rhineland - and I want to make this clear - has indeed participated in debate in a very positive vein, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate that. Unlike some members opposite who tend not to inject a degree of constructive criticism, the Member for Rhineland appears always to be very sincere in his proposals. Whether we agree with all of them is another matter, Mr. Chairman, but I want to simply make the point that I appreciate his sincerity.

The Member for Rhineland posed a number of questions and I dealt with one or two, but one which I did not deal with to date, Mr. Chairman, has to do with what is developing in Canada with respect to the grain stabilization proposal of the Federal Government, which is now something like two years old. I want to say to him that we have not met recently with the Minister in charge of wheat, Mr. Lang. The last time we met was some time during the summer months wherein there was indication that there would be further discussions, but to date we have not had another opportunity. I know that there will be a ministerial conference in eastern Canada early in July and at that point in time I would hope that we have further discussion of his proposals. Now that is assuming that the Government of Canada is not proceeding with legislation prior to that time, and we are not in a position to know that, other than some indication given to Canadians - I don't know whether in the House of Commons or outside - that a proposal will be reintroduced on the question and that some of the surveys that have been undertaken by the Government of Canada through the Minister's office are perhaps matters that are preceding the introduction of measures in this area. So we await with some degree of anticipation, Mr. Chairman, and at this point in time I'm not in a position to tell my honourable friend precisely what is going to happen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30, the last hour of every day being Private Members' Hour, Committee rise and report. Call in the Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, your Committee of Supply has directed me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Vital, that the report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Private members' hour Wednesday. The first item is Orders for Return referred for debate or Address for Papers. There are none. We go to Private Members' Resolutions. The first resolution is No. 16, proposed by the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' RESOLUTIONS

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, could we have this matter stand?

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? (Agreed) It goes to the bottom of the Order Paper. No. 5 -- the Honourable Leader of the Opposition. The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if in the absence of the Honourable Leader we could have this matter stand?

MR. SPEAKER: Same procedure. The Honourable Member for -- No. 6. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia has five minutes left.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I believe I have a few minutes left on the resolution recommending the city charters and municipal acts to relieve the senior citizens and people over 65 of having required to pay on homeowner occupied property taxes, and perhaps I could have argued much stronger if it was before the Budget Address but I will still continue to make the point and I feel the resolution has some merit.

I believe that you will agree, Mr. Speaker, that I feel that old age pensioners, our senior citizens, must be able to remain in their own homes and that high property taxation should not force them out. I understand that in some of the other jurisdictions, for instance the State of Florida for many years, for many years has amended its Constitution where it extended the exemption of \$10,000 of assessment on homeowners or homes occupied by senior citizens who were over 65, and the assessment exemption was upped to the first \$10,000, which this could be done in the same manner because I understand the Member for St. Johns the other day was quite concerned about this program being universal so that some people living in very high and homes that cost a lot of money, that perhaps they should not have this same privilege. He may have a point, I will not argue, but I feel that many of these people have -- well, they through all their life have certainly contributed very much towards education costs and towards education taxation, and when they reach the age of 65 perhaps they should have relief at that point. If this is not acceptable to the government perhaps they can look for a certain figure. For instance, as was mentioned, I believe this would not be relevant to our assessment because I'm sure that our assessment is based different than the assessment in some other areas because some other areas have assessment based on their market value of properties.

Now I'm not familiar what it is in the State of Florida but I do know that they have an exemption of the first \$10,000 on homeowner occupied homes. I believe that many of our senior citizens have been discouraged with the heavy tax load and who thought that they would be able to retire in their own homes in dignity and they were faced with high property tax, with repair bills, with sales tax and they still have to pay you know their hydro bills and heat bills, so this puts a real burden on many of these people. I'm sure that the government realizes and at last has accepted the fact that property is not a fair basis for raising revenue for education. So this reason alone, that the government has come to realize this point, that I believe some consideration should be given in this respect.

Perhaps the government will argue that this is not required in view of the Budget that was brought down yesterday, that there has been further relief given to the senior citizens, but this is to a maximum of \$200.00 of education tax and perhaps I would have liked to have heard from the First Minister to see what is -- what constitutes education tax to many of our senior citizens. It may be more than \$200.00. On top of that they still have the tax portion which relates to the services of the property and I'm sure that many of these people will have a tax bill of three to four hundred dollars so they will still be burdened with considerable, considerable property tax.

So for these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I still believe that the resolution has some merit. I know that the members on the government side will be saying it's redundant in view of what happened last night, but I would still feel until we do really appreciate, and realize what total, what the budget will have, what kind of an effect it will have on the property tax of this province, I still feel the proposal has merit and I would like to see some consideration given

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(MR. PATRICK cont'd) to it.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? All in favor please say aye. Oh, the Honourable Member for Osborne, sorry,

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, like the person moving this resolution, the Leader of the Liberal Party, and like the Member for Assiniboia that just spoke, I am one of those that felt that senior citizens deserved a better shake from the government of this province.

And in 1969, Mr. Speaker, when I was campaigning I began with those issues that seemed to me to be the salient issues of the day -- the reduction in the medical care premium, which was an inequitable tax et al; the re-examination of South Indian Lake, which of course has now been done; and the reduction of school property taxes. And I soon came to the realization, Mr. Speaker, as I canvassed the area in which I was running, and I have canvassed it since my election, that one of the shameful policies of the previous administration was their harsh inequitable and overbearing school property tax levied on all regardless of their resources and income.

And I would agree, Mr. Speaker, with the beginning of the second paragraph of the resolution proposed where it points out that as a result of property taxes levied against senior citizens, many are annually being forced to sell their homes. Mr. Speaker, I can recall so vividly the days and evenings when I spoke to senior citizens in my riding and, like the Leader of the Liberal Party, there are many of them, and they told me, described to me, in a quiet but factual way how the rising school taxes and how the imposition of the medical care premium was in fact going to be the last straw -- the straw that broke their back and required them to sell the home in which they had, many of them, raised their families and lived for 30, 40 or 50 years. And I have spoken before in the House, Sir, pointing out to members, through the cackling of many members of the Conservative Party, that these senior citizens did deserve a better break. Well, Sir, although I agree with the first two lines of the second paragraph of that resolution, and whereas I do know, as many members here know, that senior citizens were in the early part of '69 -- 1969, having to consider the possibility of selling their homes because they could not pay school property taxes and because they could not pay medical health premiums, I know that this government has given them considerable relief.

And so, Sir, I must part from the resolution as it stands before us and say that although, although in the early part of '69 the inequitable taxes imposed by the previous administration were a burden to senior citizens, that the senior citizens today are receiving a much fairer deal. So, Mr. Speaker, I would have to say that where the first paragraph of the resolution does indicate that those over 65 living on fixed incomes face annually increasing property taxes, I would have to say with relationship to that paragraph and that sentence, that they are not facing increasing property taxes. There may be some, Sir, who are, some who enjoy pensions of considerable magnitude, size, but most, but most, Sir, in my riding anyway, are not facing increased property taxes; they had a school property tax reduction last year -- \$50; they are now in the process of applying, many of them, for up to \$140.00 in school property tax rebate this year, and next year, Sir, they will be empowered by the budget just brought down yesterday evening, to apply for even further school property tax rebates.

And because of that budget I think -- yesterday's budget -- I think that quite simply the first paragraph of the resolution is simply not true. The senior citizens are no longer, the majority of them anyway, facing ever-increasing property taxes. And they are facing either declining school property taxes, or the same school property taxes this year, because of the progressive tax policies introduced by the Minister of Finance and by this New Democratic Party government. And I don't think, Sir, that that position that I have just taken is partisan; I don't think it is a biased point of view. I think it is factual, and if the members opposite feel that it is not factual then I would certainly like to hear them cite cases of senior citizens living in their ridings who are in fact facing increased property taxes this year as compared to the school taxes that they paid last year.

The new plan, Sir, as I understand it will really mean that those people living on old age pensions, or with modest pensions in addition to the old age pension, and living in modest homes where the school taxes perhaps were not more than \$90.00 will in fact receive back as a result of the proposals in last night's budget moneys that will be applied to their general municipal taxes. That at least, Sir, is my understanding of the budget proposal as it was presented to us yesterday.

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(MR. TURNBULL cont'd)

Now I'd like to return to the last part of the second paragraph and point out that this paragraph indicates that the senior citizens face rent increases which make it impossible for them to live their senior years in the dignity to which they're entitled. Sir, the sentiments expressed in the last part of that paragraph are sentiments that I would agree with. Indeed they are sentiments that have motivated me to enter politics, and they are motivating me to continue in politics. Because I don't believe for one moment, Sir, that the deep shadow of reaction which sits facing us on the opposite side here could ever bring about enlightened progressive tax legislation as this government has done. Far from it, Sir, I think that the members opposite, the ones most likely to form an alternate government, namely the Conservative Party, would return as rapidly as possible to flat rate taxes, which gave relief to their wealthy friends and which imposed the same kind of harsh burden on senior citizens that those senior citizens experienced in 1969 before this government obtained office. --(Interjection) I don't think there is any question of that, Sir, we know they're biased; we know their position; we know their attitude towards those on low incomes, and I think that that attitude was well exemplified in the tax legislation that was introduced or, in fact, was not introduced in the years before this government assumed office.

The last part of the second paragraph, Mr. Speaker, does deal as I said with rent increases, and rental increases are difficult, difficult for the government to deal with through its tax policies. How, for example, can the senior citizen living in a rental accommodation benefit fully from the tax rebate that the new scheme, and the scheme introduced last year, would normally bring to him if he actually owned the home. As you know, Sir, the scheme introduced last year did enable people to claim up to 10 percent of their rent as that portion of the school tax that they could claim against. Ten percent of their rents was the portion that they could claim as a school tax, and they could seek to obtain the rebate of that amount of money providing, of course, it fell within the net amount of one percent of taxable income deducted from the \$140.00 maximum.

This year, Sir, to ensure that those people living in rental accommodations receive greater credit from the new Property Tax Credit Plan the 10 percent level has been raised to 20 percent. Mr. Speaker, in my mind, now that is double if you go from 10 to 20 percent that surely is double, and those senior citizens now living in rental accommodation are going to be able to claim 20 percent of the rent that they pay as the equivalent of school taxes that they would have paid if they had owned that house. And I think, Sir, as a result of that increase, that doubling of the rental amount allowed to those renting homes, that we once again are faced with a paragraph in the resolution that like the first paragraph is simply not true. The senior citizens will be enjoying even greater rebates resulting from the doubling of the 20 percent amount.

I should, too, Sir, point out that since this government assumed office in 1969, the agency of the government, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, has undertaken to construct apartments and other accommodation for senior citizens living throughout the province. And the resolution, Sir, makes no note of that kind of accommodation provided by a government agency to senior citizens. In fact, Sir, if the Liberal Party was in office they would never, never, Sir, enter into that kind of a housing program where the province constructs and rents accommodation to the senior citizens. In fact, Sir, I think their policy is well stated. They believe that housing construction and house ownership should remain in the hands of private enterprise, and whereas I wouldn't disagree with that on principle, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that private enterprise would be willing to give the senior citizens the kind of rental break that these senior citizens are now receiving from living in senior citizens apartments -- oh what? 601 Osborne, Nassau and Jessie, and in other places in the Province of Manitoba. In fact, Sir, as members I think well realize by now, the old age pension increases that pensioners are about to receive, or perhaps already have received, is not going to result in their rents, the senior citizens' rents, going up. In fact as I understand it the people living in the MHRC sponsored housing, senior citizens' housing, will be a break because rents in that housing will be frozen at the present levels, as I understand it.

Well, Sir, I think that clearly, although the sentiments in the resolution are sentiments I agree with, that both the new tax plan and the rental rebates that we will be giving to senior citizens, indicate that the first two paragraphs of this resolution, as I've said, are not true.

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(MR. TURNBULL cont'd)

When we deal with the third paragraph, Sir, I think that again we face the kind of sentiment that one could agree with in a progressive democratic state. I see nothing wrong with the resolution, with a paragraph of the resolution which does provide that all real property owned by such senior citizens and instituted should result in rebates. Except, Sir, you know that although it's a progressive and democratic state and people should perhaps get a rebate, it's quite clear that if rebates are to be paid to all real property owners then we would have senior citizens that, say, owned the Richardson Building receiving, I presume, according to the resolution, a rebate of the property tax that they would have to pay on the Richards on Building. Now, Sir, really I don't think that the Richardsons would particularly want that kind of money back, and I don't think, Sir, really that those senior citizens who own maybe 50 houses in the city, and are living in perhaps Florida, really would benefit that much, you know, it wouldn't increase their sustenance or their enjoyment of what money they have if they got a rebate on all the taxes paid on the 50 houses that they owned in the City of Winnipeg. Really, Sir, I don't think that any plan which would rebate, as the resolution calls for, all the taxes paid on all real property is a progressive resolution. It is simply a resolution that would benefit those who are well off much more than those who are less well off. And I for one being a part of the New Democratic Party would not be willing to tolerate such a flat rate rebate. I don't think that those who own 50 houses really need to have all the taxes on all their real property rebated to them.

Well, Sir, the rest of the resolution, the concluding paragraph, does deal with a matter that I think needs some consideration. The resolution suggests that this government consider amending the appropriate City Charters and Municipal Acts so that the senior citizens over 65 would not be required to contribute property taxes directly, or through rent, to the financing of education. Mr. Speaker, I believe that every person living in a democratic society benefits from a high level of education amongst the populace. It's a belief that I have long held, and I don't think that anyone, even those members of the Conservative Party who think about it, would want to disagree with the benefits that people derive from everyone being able to read and write and calculate in simple arithmetic. That surely is something that society offers to its citizens, and it's something that in turn society derives as a benefit from those who have become educated. So I think, Sir, that any attempt by the government to require municipalities to not contribute, rather to require municipalities to tell the senior citizens not to contribute property taxes directly, or through their rent, really is a provision that would not be in the best interests of society. Everyone should support education to a certain degree, Sir, and I think as well that everybody in a local community would want, and surely, Sir, the members on the backbench of the Conservative Party would want the local municipalities, the local districts, to contribute to the cost of education so that those local districts could maintain autonomy and control over the kind of education that would be provided in their local areas. Sir, that is fundamental to the democratic system, it is fundamental to autonomists and local government, and I think that the way it is now, Sir, should be the way it continues.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, just a few brief comments on this resolution. I was in somewhat of a dilemma, I thought perhaps somebody would question whether the resolution in itself was properly in order. I'm not going to raise a point of order, but I wonder about the Legislature spending its time considering a resolution on something which it asks the government to take action which doesn't exist. This was drawn to the attention of members, that there is no such thing as a provincial education tax, it just doesn't exist.

Now I realize that the Leader of the Liberal Party had this resolution on the paper for some time and perhaps he will make the argument this is one of the things that pressured this government into action since February 19th or something, but rather than spend the time of the House because there is perhaps no reason for the resolution in the first instance, but nevertheless what was behind it, the concern of the people in the Province of Manitoba -- concerned with the burden of taxes on the senior citizens, I would move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Member for Radisson that the resolution be amended by striking out the words "one of the main components of which is the provincial education tax" in the third line thereof, and that the resolution be further amended by striking out the words "AND WHEREAS as the result of these taxes levied against senior citizens many are annually being forced to sell their homes or face

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(MR. BOYCE cont'd) rent increases which make it impossible for them to live their senior years in dignity to which they are entitled"; and that the resolution be further amended by striking out all the words after "NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED" in the ninth line thereof and adding the words "That this House commends the government for its action in relieving the burden of taxation for senior citizens as announced in the Budget for 1973-74"

MR. SPEAKER: Moved by the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre, seconded by the Honourable Member for Radisson, that the motion be amended as follows . . . the Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, on the amendment, it's quite obvious that the intent of the amendment is to prevent the passage of the resolution and so fundamentally I'll simply take the position we took at the beginning. And that's this: that there are some people who don't want to live in senior citizens' homes, no matter how pleasant, no matter how well it's built or how comfortable the accommodation. Those people may want to live not in state institutions but rather live in their own homes, live in apartments which are not ghettoized or not estranged from the rest of the community.

Mr. Speaker, the nub of this resolution is that there have been steps taken, whether they were taken last night or the year before or the past four years but the paranoia of my friends opposite, Mr. Speaker, who can't accept the fact that maybe they haven't done everything that ought to have been done is what prevents them from looking at this resolution rationally or with any sense of objectivity. The government spokesmen who spoke in the debate so far spend their time playing word games or splitting hairs or suggesting ludicrous interpretations of the resolution, when in fact it's well known what is intended by the resolution. And if the issue were to be resolved simply by the amendments that are suggested, not in front of us, but have been suggested in other speakers' offerings and contributions, there'd be no problem. But that isn't the issue with my friends opposite. The issue is they are not prepared -- it drives them to distraction to think that maybe some senior citizen who after having paid taxes for 40 years or 50 years, who is not in their preferential income group, maybe he'll get a break. That really upsets them. The fact that, if there are any who are in the upper income group, the 8, 10, 12,000-dollar income group who would benefit from having no more education tax and have the gesture made to them, then the number is so insignificant that the cost of administering this resolution in any other way would far outweigh the minor equity gains that my honourable friends refer to in preventing this 66-year old or 10 or 12,000-dollar a year person from enjoying this minor tax adjustment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we conceded at the beginning that considerable strides have been made by the government and considerable progress in the four years to lessen this problem; but why not, for the pittance involved, have the decency, the courage to say, we're going to do it universally; it isn't perfect equity, somebody making \$12,000 will get the benefit, God forgive us for doing that for him. But on balance and in the main we will simply say to the public of Manitoba that when you turn 65 you will not contribute to the cost of educating those who come behind you through property tax. Now you still will contribute through income tax of which 75 percent is covered -- 75 percent of education approximately is still covered through our consumption and income taxes, and only 25 percent is on property. So they'll still contribute. But in this one area that is so definable and so measurable, why would you not simply say, "it's over, you stop paying the tax." The revenue loss is a dribble, it's nothing, but the principle of recognition of a lifetime of paying tax is rather important. When we talk about who will get the benefits; the people will get the benefit who have spent their lifetime fighting to keep their home, who don't want to go into institutions, who don't want to take advantage of this government's generous offer to be segregated from the general community in state housing, who have the pride and dignity that they want to maintain, and all the government's handouts in the world, have your home fixed up, we'll do it for you. We'll send somebody along who's on a provincial employment grant, or a STEP program and you'll be kind of a ward of the state, we'll look after you, don't worry. Why not let them have their own home, let them be free of the tax, and in so doing you'll do a more meaningful contribution to their ability to remain in their home than any of the other programs.

If we are so picayune that we can't stand the idea that somebody who may be making 8 or 9 or 12 or 15,000 on retirement pension might get this \$75.00, \$100.00 benefit, then Mr. Speaker, I suggest that we have become hair splitters, we have become so enmeshed in

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(MR. ASPER cont'd) the niceties that we can't see the forest for the trees. That's my observation of what comes from the other side. A paranoid, a guilt complex, that gee maybe we should have thought about it, maybe we should have done it. Otherwise what other rational explanation can there be for the unbelievable behaviour on a very simple resolution? Education tax ends for people who reach 65. Is there something wrong with that? Is there some heinous principle --(Interjection)-- on their own homes, on the property issue -- (Interjection)-- Pardon? --(Interjection)-- That's what the resolution is intended to accomplish.

If the Member from Osborne wants to put a ludicrous absurd interpretation on it, that's his fun and games, but the preamble of the resolution makes it very clear, and the heart of the resolution is very clear, and my introductory remarks on the resolution are very clear, that we are not talking about investment property, we are not talking about the senior citizens who own 50 houses -- whose tenant would then get the benefit, whose tenant then Mr. Speaker...

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Point of order by the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre. State your point.

MR. BOYCE: I'm very sorry to interrupt the Member for Wolseley, but really, Mr. Speaker, this is Private Members' Hour and I as a private member have offered an amendment to a private members' resolution for consideration by this Assembly, and the member insists upon saying "this side". I am a private member just as he is during this hour and I as a private member have offered an amendment to this resolution, and I'm sorry but I wish he'd stop saying that, you know, "this side", because I'm an independent member of this group. If you don't like it, don't vote for it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wolseley, Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, there was no point of order. Proceed with the debate.

A MEMBER: What was the ?

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, now that the member has recovered, my point was that the amendment is obviating the resolution. I wonder if it's in order in itself, Mr. Speaker. However, rather than take up the time with the formality or the legality of the amendment, the point still remains that every member from the opposite side of the government benches who's risen to speak on this has said "no", so I think it's quite in order for me to characterize this attitude as being a government attitude. If there is one man on the government side who will stand up and say, yes we don't think people of 65 years and up should pay tax through property tax or rent toward education, then I will withdraw those remarks and salute the member who say it, but there isn't one.

Mr. Speaker, it becomes clear that no matter from where an idea emanates, from where a policy is plagerized, from where it's developed, members on the other side of the House will only vote for those things which emanate from that side of the House, and the history of their record in four years is so obvious, so obvious that the idea comes from a member opposite and it's hooted out of the House, and a year later it comes in as government policy.

Now I close debate, Mr. Speaker, in the comfortable knowledge that the record is so clear that whether it's the creation of the department of the north, which we urged in this House and were laughed at by the Honourable Mines Minister who said, what are we going to do, regionalize Manitoba, why not a department of the south, the east, the west -- and a year later, miraculously a change of heart.

And a year ago we said on this side, let us have a Bill of Rights. Well, preposterous, idiotic, nonsense! And so, Mr. Speaker, a year later after memory conveniently eroded, we now have have reference in the Speech from the Throne to a study about a Bill of Rights. Mr. Speaker, I could go on through four years of this catalogue, but the point is self-evident. There will be no support from the government side of this House for any rational, reasonable cogent idea to emanate from this side of the House; and so on that unhappy note I close debate, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek. Debate is not closed. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could ask the honourable member who just spoke a question before the Member for Sturgeon Creek takes his place. Would the honourable

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(MR. GREEN cont'd) member, in indicating that there is no suggestion that would be taken that came from the other side of the House, would he agree then that the Budget was not something that came as a result of his suggestion, Mr. Speaker, which he said on television last night?

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, the answer to the question is that on February 19th and in the Speech from the Throne response that I gave at the time, I indicated to this House that my calculations as to the fiscal capacity of the government was approximately \$60 million, and that it amounted to a tax rebate of approximately \$240 for the year, per family, and at that stage the First Minister stood and said this was ludicrous and outlandish and went on to describe the \$60 million that we have as being some kind of irresponsible Midsummer Night's Dream irresponsible matter, and then last night, last night, last night the \$60 million suddenly appeared in the forms that were happy, or certainly acceptable to the government side. We at no stage said how the \$60 million should be rebated and we made one suggestion in the Speech from the Throne response that one-third of it would have gone to the reduction by one-third of the property tax for education. So, Mr. Speaker, there's nothing inconsistent with what I said a few minutes ago and with what I've said now. We have never . . .

A MEMBER: Would you like further evidence . . . ?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. I believe the question has been asked we don't need another debate. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources to not ask any more questions like that or I may never get on my feet.

Mr. Speaker, last night, or the other night when I was speaking on one of the resolutions I started out by saying that I wanted to remind the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources that the advisability of -- and he could never understand why somebody would not accept the resolution when it was basically "the advisability of." Well, Mr. Speaker, the advisability of accepting this resolution in its present form is just wrong and I would be very surprised if the government would accept it or if the members of this House as a private member or otherwise; as the Member from Winnipeg Centre said, none of us could really sit down and seriously accept this resolution the way it is. It's all very well to stand up and talk principle of the whereases and whereases, but when you get down to the therefore, or be it further resolved, my God what it says is just an impossible thing to accept because it does say, although the Member from Osborne uses some great exaggerations that would probably never happen, --(Interjection)-- it could happen. It can't be accepted in that form, Mr. Speaker, there's something wrong with the Member from Winnipeg Centre, you know, we have a situation where it's obvious that you've got to blow your own horn, and if nobody else is patting you on the back he's going to stand up and do it himself, or something of that nature, but we always get these great, wonderful amendments complimenting the government on the other side, which is mainly there to change, and he knows we can't accept it because really that kind of complimenting and back slapping doesn't really go that far. But now that of course is the role of a backbencher to slap the front bench on the back now and then; you know this is really what is happening in this case.

So, Mr. Speaker, let's really take a look at this, and I say that the principle of helping senior citizens and people over 65, the Progressive Conservative Party has never been opposed to. In fact it is our policy and we have come up with, we have said that we would -- owner occupied homes, senior citizens living in those owner occupied homes, which this doesn't say, we would believe that that could be done, and the argument from the government when we say that is, oh there's owners living in very very expensive homes, and there's people living in Tuxedo that are over 65, and what have you. But you know I don't think all the members on the other side or in this Assembly, as the Member for Winnipeg Centre would prefer me to say, really hate people who have had through their lifetime the opportunity and the ability to be able to buy themselves a more expensive home, --(Int)-- that's fine. But what you're really saying to them is you can't --(Interjection)-- no that's right but you're saying, you can't give them a break. You're saying, you know, do you realize that because they become 65 the expenses and taxes and everything don't go down on that house any more than they go down on a person who lives in a smaller house when he becomes 65. Well what you're saying is the fellow that's living in that home, he's got to move because you can't help him because he's

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(MR. F. JOHNSTON cont'd) in a bigger house. That's really what you guys get down to saying about people who have a bigger home. His expenses don't change one damn bit the day he becomes 65, but you won't help him out because he happens to live in a bigger house. He's got a bigger lawn, more light bills, more water bills, more everything than the smaller house, that's basic, that's fact, but you say, oh no, we can't help him. He's in a class all by himself. And the Honourable Member from Osborne gets up every time he speaks and uses the old communist way of doing things of divide and conquer. I have never seen this House so much as I've seen it this year, which is the plan of this government at the present time, is let's split this province between the rich and poor. Every time they get up to speak they say your rich friends, your rich friends. They pass it on all the time, and you know if you go back in Hansard this year that's exactly what they're trying to do. You know this is really -- it's cheap, it's disgusting, it's downgrading, it harms the province, and everybody gets -- you guys get up, we're the friend of everybody. You're the friend of everybody. We're the -- you know and every time one of them gets up to speak pretty near they refer to, oh you're helping your rich friends. This is really drawing the province together. It's the old divide and conquer bit again, gentlemen. They use it all the time. My God, rich friends? Let me tell you --(Interjection)-- No, Mr. Speaker, Let me tell you --(Interjection)-- okay, sure, love to.

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

MR. WALLY JOHANNSON (St. Matthews): The honourable member referred to divide and conquer as a communist tactic. Is he accusing the Roman emperors of being communist?

MR. F. JOHNSTON: They were a pretty lousy bunch too. --(Interjection)-- That's right. Now . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker --(Interjection)-- No I don't really want to sock it to 'em, I just want to really drive it home to you what you're doing when you stand up and you've actually got together and say, boy are we going to accuse them of being the You know I know more rich NDPers than I know rich Conservatives, you know --(Interjection)-- Yah. Do you really want me to start on that? You know, if you really want to take a guy that's in business today when you look it over after taxes, and what have you, you know he's not the richest man in the place. He's there because he's working and he enjoys working alone, but I'll tell you the guys that are working for him, that he's paying the salaries for, are becoming very very wealthy men, and I don't argue with that. If I want to be a person who wants to own a business, pay salaries, money, that's my business. I don't argue with it, that's his business. If there's going to be taxes put on him, he'll pay them, no question about that. But don't talk to me about rich NDPers because I know quite a few of them.

A MEMBER: They can't be NDPers Frank.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Now, Mr. Speaker, and, you know, the ones that I know never hold anything against anybody else but the members on the opposite side when they get up to speak they really seem to have a bit of hatred in them. I'll take you out to good fine NDP people that I know that don't really hate a person that happens to live somewhere else. In fact I'll take you to a couple of NDPers, gentlemen, who live in very nice cottages who could buy a guy out in Tuxedo tomorrow, and you know he doesn't hate the guy in Tuxedo for some reason or other. But you fellows get up and you start this nonsense all the time about you know the rich, the rich, your rich friends. --(Interjection)-- There you are. That's right. No, I don't know. Let's not -- I really wouldn't like, Mr. Speaker, to get off the resolution to the point of view that I were to start talking about who has what in this House because I'd end up so far down the line, I wouldn't be -- I'd be a little embarrassed. We'd all be lined up behind that side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it's rather surprising to me that the Member from Wolseley has this resolution the way he has. I was very very much in favour, and I have discussed on many occasions amendments such as this type with the Member from Assiniboia. You know old people on old age supplement that are living in owner occupied houses, you know, should have consideration on education tax. We've said that for a long time. You know this is what this resolution basically was last year from the Liberal Party. It had a little more sense. But the Member from Wolseley obviously didn't talk to the Member for Assiniboia and he said,

(MR. F. JOHNSTON cont'd) you know, yours isn't quite good enough for vote getting. We got to have it do everything. So he wrote a resolution that is again trying to go down the river with one -- as I said before -- with one foot on each bank trying to jump either way. Mr. Speaker, really anybody that gets up to speak to this resolution, especially in an opposition party, should say I can't vote against it. But quite frankly this resolution cannot be accepted by anybody in its present wording; it couldn't be accepted by anybody with any brains at all in its present wording; and anybody that puts it out in its present wording is being very stupid for that matter of fact, so therefore I could not accept the resolution the way it is. As far as the amendment is concerned, quite frankly if the Member from Winnipeg Centre wants to be the guy in the backbench who's supposed to stand up and cheer for the government all the time, that's entirely up to him. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? Order please The Honourable Member for Rhineland wish to speak to the amendment?

MR. FROESE: Mr. Speaker, could we have the amendment read?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes. That the resolution be amended by striking out the words "one of the main components of which is the provincial education tax" in the third line thereof, and that the resolution be further amended by striking out the words "and Whereas as a result of these taxes being levied against senior citizens many are annually being forced to sell their homes or face rent increases which make it impossible for them to live their senior years in dignity to which they are entitled" and that the resolution be further amended by striking out all the words after "now therefore be it resolved" in the ninth line and adding the words "that this House commends the government for its action in relieving the burden of taxation for senior citizens as announced in the Budget for 1973-74."

MOTION on amendment presented and carried.

MOTION on the resolution as amended presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: I do believe I could call it 5:30.

MR. PAULLEY: I believe so, Sir. If you weren't, I was going to suggest it.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour being 5:30 the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon.