

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
2:30 o'clock, Tuesday, June 11, 1974

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 18 students of Grade 4 standing of the Bannatyne School. These students are under the direction of Miss Mikkelson. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

We also have 14 students of the Alexander School. These students are under the direction of Mr. and Mrs. McPhail and Mr. Cieni. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Brandon West.

And we have 30 students of Grade 9 standing of the Landmark School. These students are under the direction of Mrs. Goertzen. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Springfield, the Minister of Tourism, Recreation and Cultural Affairs.

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; Ministerial Statement and Tabling of Reports; The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

HON. RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour) (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I wish to refer to the latest statistics on the matter of unemployment rates which have been released today. I want to indicate to the honourable members of the House that whereas our position in relation to unemployment has been at the second level across Canada our position deteriorated somewhat. We are the third lowest in Canada in accordance with the latest information received. Last month, that is actually in April '74 our rate stood at 3.1 percent for the month of May. It was 3.7 percent, an increase of six tenths of one percent.

Insofar as total numbers of unemployed, our total number increased from 13,000 to 16,000 insofar as the respective months are concerned. Noting this increase, Mr. Speaker, I must refer to the fact that Manitoba's labour force in May of 1974 stood at 429,000, which was 13,000 higher than it was in the month of April and 10,000 higher than it was in May of 1973. The total number of employed in Manitoba in the month of May stood at 414,000, an increase of 11,000 over the month of April and 10,000 higher than it was in May of 1973.

So while I have some regrets, Mr. Speaker, in indicating that our relative position is not quite as good as it was before I think that on the basis of an assessment of the figures that have been produced by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics that Manitoba's economy is still advancing and that the total number of people who are employed in Manitoba is constantly on the increase.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister for his statement. It would appear that our employment picture is holding up very well and that there is no particular trends that can be read into the information here and we'll look forward to a continuing good year.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial Statements or Tabling of Reports; Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills; Questions; Orders of the Day; The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Just before we go into the actual Orders of the Day, I announced this morning that the Committee on Law Amendments would meet tomorrow afternoon after the House had gone through its routine procedures to consider amendments to the Bills upon which representations were heard yesterday evening. I do note when looking at the calendar or the processing of the bills that there is one outstanding bill; I believe its the Animal Diseases Act or something like that which was referred to the Agriculture Committee. I'm wondering whether or not it would be agreeable that after the House goes into Committee of Law Amendments tomorrow afternoon that the first order of business would be to deal with the Animal Husbandry Disease Bill, I'm not sure whether I've got the --Animal Diseases. I'm wondering whether or not it would be agreeable that the members of the Agricultural Committee could be present and the first order of business at that session in Room 254 would be to deal with this agricultural bill. I understand it is relatively non-controversial. If we could do that before we

(MR. PAULLEY Cont'd) go into Law Amendments then we're really having the two committees at the same time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSON (Morris): Mr. Chairman, I really don't see the need to refer this Bill to the Agricultural Committee in the first place. And I don't know why Law Amendments Committee can't handle it just as well. After all if it is possible to send the Animal Husbandry Bill to the Law Amendments Committee then surely we can send Animal Diseases to the Law Amendments Committee. After all husbands and diseases to some women are the same thing.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Chairman, I have no objections at all but I somewhat hesitated as the Minister of Labour in the Province of Manitoba to refer an agricultural bill to Law Amendments, or this particular one, lest I ran into criticism as a labourite, so-called, dictating that Agricultural Committee should not meet. But I'm perfectly agreeable and I believe my honourable friend from Morris' point is very valid; so therefore may I indicate to the agriculturalists of Manitoba that it is agreed that the Law Amendments Committee will consider this bill. Fine.

Mr. Chairman, if that's agreed, would you kindly call Bill No. 75, the Northern Affairs Act.

ORDERS OF THE DAY - BILL No. 75

MR. SPEAKER: Proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs. The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. JAMES H. BILTON (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I enter this debate with some feeling of disappointment. I've listened to I believe all the speeches that have been made thus far and it leaves me in doubt as to exactly where the province is going.

I also enter this debate, Mr. Speaker, by the fact that I was a member of the Northern Task Force representing the Conservative Party, that it completed its work some four short years ago. Being a party to the interim report, Mr. Speaker, which I have a copy of before me, I want to say at the beginning that I was very pleased indeed to see that at least one of the recommendations within that report was the provision of an extended care home for the northern people has been completed at Norway House at a cost of \$500,000.00. I also note with interest, Mr. Speaker, that the good people of that particular area raised \$90,000 by way of bingos and what have you to make their contribution. This, Sir, I suggest to you augers well for the people in the North and gives you some idea of their intent and their independence and wanting to play their part.

Mr. Speaker, there's something in the neighbourhood of 47 recommendations in this report and in looking at Bill No. 75 I am astonished with the directions that they're suggesting.

Mr. Speaker, in travelling throughout the North we of that force found conditions that were crying out for remedies. And I would remind you, Sir, that that was four years ago and we made our recommendations. And I believe I've said in this House before that report made recommendations to this House that would take this Government or any Government ten years to accomplish. Mr. Speaker, we found a very independent people in the settlements strung out across Northern Manitoba. One of the important things that struck me, Mr. Speaker, was that they wanted to maintain their way of life; and at the same time they were anxious for assistance to improve and upgrade their standard of living. They welcomed us, Mr. Speaker, on every hand and opened up their hearts and their homes to us. I came away very very impressed.

Hence, Mr. Speaker, the findings of that commission after a good deal of argument and discussion and knocking down the back room boys once in a while we had our way, and it's right in this book. I would refer you, Mr. Speaker, to page 62 of that book which reads: "The above mentioned approaches" 49 recommendations, Mr. Speaker, "will not and must not force integration but will allow integration to take place. It will allow the people to move at their own pace, under their own leadership and discretion." I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that Bill 75 does exactly the opposite.

A MEMBER: Hear, hear.

BILL 75

MR. BILTON: In some ways, Mr. Speaker, to be honest the Bill goes a long way to meet some of the privileges these good people asked for, but true to form, Mr. Speaker, this Government must dictate and nail down their authority, and in this case with the approval of this Bill that authority, Mr. Speaker, is completely in their hands, backed up by the law of this Legislature. For there is no doubt, there's no doubt whatsoever that with their very numbers this Government will pass this Bill.

Section 8, Mr. Speaker, of this Bill indicates that a Minister may expropriate a business for cause. And I would ask at this juncture, Mr. Speaker, who will determine that cause. The Minister? Cabinet? Or the local people? I suggest to you that the Minister will have the final word. --(Interjection)-- Section 18, Subsection 2 of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, provides for a Council audit. It can be examined by the Cabinet, the local committee and the Council itself. Fair enough. But there's nothing in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, that says that we in this Legislative Assembly will have the privilege of examining those audited reports. --(Interjection)-- Section 20, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm sure the honourable gentleman is aware we're discussing the Bill in principle and not clause by clause.

MR. BILTON: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that but I had to get those little sneakers in. Thank you for your indulgence, Sir. It looks as though there's two pages of my notes have got to go.

Authority, Mr. Speaker, is extended to the Minister in tax agreements. He can make any agreement, he can enter into any agreement with whoever in the community by virtue of this Act, without any reference, any reference whatsoever to the feelings of the local people. Mr. Speaker, this bill is far-reaching in its scope as to the benefits the Minister may extend to this community or that. And do I have to say to you, Mr. Speaker, what a critical situation can develop when you have one community against another community that has the favour of the Government one way or the other. There is nothing to say in this bill, Mr. Speaker, that all those communities and settlements will be treated alike. Nowhere does it suggest it.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is shot through with limitations and encroachments on civil and community rights. This bill was put together, Mr. Speaker, in my humble opinion by people who, to my way of thinking, ignored the findings of the Northern Task Force. I know sitting in Committee with those people when we were developing the program from which this bill has grown out of, in anything I had to say, and several other members of that committee had to say, it's a long time ago now, but we were quickly put in our place and told "we'll do it the way we want to do it and you'll find out." And this is the outcome of it, Mr. Speaker. My memory is a little long and I remember those days.

Who are these backroom people that are writing these Bills? I'm sure the Minister didn't put it together. If he did I'm disappointed in him - by the fact that he knows the northern people, he knows the trials and tribulations under which they live. He acted as a servant of this Government, or at least of this Legislature in a capacity that required that he get down to the grassroots and how he could have brought this Bill before the House is beyond my comprehension.

Mr. Speaker, it's true the bill appears to go far beyond what the people were told and led to believe they might expect. The Minister's power throughout the bill makes him supreme master of any given situation. Mr. Speaker, this is not to say that he personally will administer the contents of this Bill. Far from it. I shudder to think what will happen when the contents of this bill are in the hands of bureaucrats which will be turned loose to carry out its intent. There's no question whatsoever, Mr. Speaker, that anybureaucrat laying down some particular policy for any settlement or community on the ground, with the people, has no way but to obey and carry out to the very letter every word that is in this book. And the people will have no redress. In brief, this bill, Mr. Speaker, will be out of our hands once it has passed this House, and the people in the grassroots will have to live by it.

The Member for Rupertsland the other day, Mr. Speaker, told us that it was important, it was imperative that this bill should be passed. He questioned as to whether those of us on this side were familiar with the contents of the bill. They want it adopted. Delay he said would be fatal. Yes he told us. His people were all for it. They'd had meetings, meetings throughout the North. The people were made familiar with this bill, or the contents of the bill.

BILL 75

MR. BILTON (Cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, with the limited time that this bill has been in our hands my findings are somewhat different. I understand that the fundamental parts of this bill has not been explained and accepted by the majority of the people in Northern Manitoba. I am told, Mr. Speaker, that they cannot live with it as it is, certain parts of the bill. I can hear the jeer and the grinning and the laughing on my left but, Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill in the lives of those people in Northern Manitoba and they should not be pushed around by this Government, any more than is necessary. I say that for the Honourable Member for Rupertsland who told this House with all the dignity in the world that the people of Northern Manitoba knew the contents of this bill. Mr. Speaker, I say to you that they do not know the contents of this bill.

A MEMBER: This is your opinion.

MR. BILTON: I hear someone over there saying "that's your opinion". Mr. Speaker, did not I prefix my remarks by saying that I had made an inquiry. I don't suppose he has. And if he thinks this is good enough for the people in Ste. Rose well let him live with it, because he'll not come back after the next election, I'll tell him that.

Mr. Speaker, so far as I can learn up until Wednesday of last week none of the councils, none of the councils have been provided with a copy of this bill, nor has its intent been explained, in any degree. And the people are unhappy, Mr. Speaker, and for the life of me I can't understand why this Government should have brought this bill in this House at this particular time until they had satisfied themselves beyond reasonable doubt that the people in Northern Manitoba can live with it. Because all you have to do is read it, Mr. Speaker.

A MEMBER: Read it out then.

MR. BILTON: I can't by the rules of the House. I've already been stopped from that. I'd dearly love to explain it. I suggest to the Minister that those charged with administrating this bill will have to stand the test of time and they'd better handle it with care.

Mr. Speaker, there are sections throughout this bill that are repugnant to given communities. You realize, Mr. Speaker, that this Bill gives the Government power to say to this group of people in this settlement that we're going to move you over here to this settlement because it is economically good for you. And he can do it. What right have 31 individuals over there with 42 percent of the popular vote to take that upon themselves? --(Interjection)--

You mention Sterling Lyon. Tell me where he moved one community to another? You can't. --(Interjection)-- Wellll. Mr. Speaker, the people will have no recourse but to abide by it. You know, Mr. Speaker, this Government has been looking at the efficiency of local district governments. I have one in my area, and I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that if this bill is patterned on that, look out; because that hasn't worked either.

This bill gives the Minister extraordinary powers to enter into agreements on behalf of the community or any other person. And the Minister may develop, as I said a moment ago, a new townsite in the interests of expansion of industry. But he can move them just like chessmen anytime he feels like it. And the local council, it says in this Act, are a party thereto. But, Mr. Speaker, so far as I'm concerned previous experience suggests to me over four years under the direction of this Government that local opinion doesn't count, doesn't count. I've only got to look at the insurance agents in this province and the way you treated them. Where are they now? Scattered to the four winds at the hands of this Government. How much longer are you going to do this sort of thing? I say again, Mr. Speaker, that the councils are concerned in the lack of consultation and it's very evident is intended to give them a hand.

Mr. Speaker, the real intent of the Government when it gets down to the local people, when they start carrying out the intent of this bill, Mr. Speaker, there will be a wringing of hands and a gnashing of teeth by those unfortunate people.

You know with the odd exception, Mr. Speaker, with the odd exception, possibly four, there hasn't been any of them north of Neepawa and they sit there and grin like a bunch of jackals about something that's effecting people's lives.

There is this session, Mr. Speaker, I believe the elimination of many of the municipal councils and village councils that we hear about these days as we know them today with a central master council that's going to be produced by this Government in due course under the country system which will govern larger and bigger areas and they'll try and convince the people it's in their own interest. The contents of Bill 75, Mr. Speaker, I predict is the forerunner of legislation under such an arrangement and heaven help our beloved province.

BILL 75

(MR. BILTON Cont'd) Socialism will be supreme, Mr. Speaker. They're using this bill, they're using this bill to socialize Northern Manitoba, and one of these days the 53rd Parallel which they so fondly talk about from time to time, you'll have to get a pass to go through it; and in due course, when they set up this so-called County System, (if they're in long enough), will create a socialist state of this province.

We've only got to look at the Act that covered the amalgamation of the City of Winnipeg. What a horrible mess that was. What a horrible mess. They said it wasn't going to cost the people as much. But what do we find? Not only does it cost them more money, but they're relegated and relegated and relegated, and since the inception of the original bill what have we had? Dozens and dozens and dozens of amendments and still it's not right. What do you think is going to happen to the unfortunate people in Northern Manitoba? Experience this session, Mr. Speaker, and the last one for that matter, bills passing second reading, in their passage through committee, have been amended in some instances by literally dozens of amendments, which suggest to me that they got some empty headed, back room boys, who throw this together and say, this is it. I'd like to know who they are, and where they came from, because these boys are not putting these bills together. Somebody is. They're just in the firing line and they don't realize, they don't realize that this province is going down the alley of socialism.

The other night, the Government tabled fourteen amendments, Mr. Speaker, to Bill 44, the Workmen's Compensation Act. What was wrong with them having that bill in the correct manner before it was placed before us for discussion in this House under second reading. Those fourteen amendments, Mr. Speaker, we didn't have the opportunity of discussing in this House, under the original tabling of that bill. And this goes on all the time.

I see no reason to believe, Mr. Speaker, that Bill 75, The Northern Affairs Act, has not been thrown together in the same manner - in fact, I'm convinced of it - with that similar haste. There is yet time, Mr. Speaker, to sit down in harmony with the chiefs and members of council, whose people are to be affected when this becomes law. Their livelihood and everything else concerning their well-being will be affected by this bill. There's no reason why we can't sit down in harmony with the chiefs and members of council whose people are to be affected and hammer out compromises where they are necessary, and put before this House a bill in proper order, so that at least we see to it that none are out-done or out-moded.

So, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Roblin, that the subject matter of Bill 75 be referred to a Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs for study, and report back at the next session of this Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: Moved by the Honourable Member for Swan River, seconded by the Honourable Member for Roblin that the subject matter of Bill 75 be referred to the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs, for study and report back at the next session of the Legislature. Are you ready for the question? All those in favour . . . The Honourable Member for . . .

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Mr. Speaker, I rise to take part in the debate at this time as a person who has recently returned to the Legislature after a week at home putting my crop in, and I find that there has been considerable amount of legislation proceed very rapidly, through this Chamber in the short space of time that I was away.

This Bill quite fortunately I think, Sir, has not moved maybe at that same speed for very valid reasons; because I think the intent of the bill, while probably very worthwhile, might eventually prove not to be of that same category. Sir, I think that eventually - my own personal opinion would be that I would like to eventually see the Department of Northern Affairs gradually erased from the Manitoba statutes. But I realize, Sir, that until that time arrives when the people of Northern Manitoba have the same opportunities as those in other parts of Manitoba, that they have to be given special considerations, and in that light probably this bill is justified. But I would hope, Sir, that the day will come when those disparities that exist between Northern Manitoba and the rest of the province diminish and eventually vanish; and when that time comes, Sir, I suggest that the operation of the Department of Northern Affairs as a Department separate and distinct should probably also vanish at that time; because it has a, I suggest, a devious psychological effect in this province, if for no other reason than that. I would like to think of all people in Manitoba, whether they be North, South, East, or West, considering themselves strictly Manitobans, not Western Manitobans,

BILL 75

(MR. GRAHAM Cont'd) or Southern Manitobans, or Winnipeg Manitobans, or Northern Manitobans, but just all Manitobans.

That, Sir, as long as we have separate departments, such as the Department for Northern Affairs, we will find that there is a distinction and a drawing further apart between Northern Manitoba and the rest of the province. I would think that that is a very live possibility and I wouldn't like that to happen - I wouldn't like to see that happen. So I would hope that in the operation of the Department of Northern Affairs that all efforts are made to maintain policies that are consistent with the rest of the province and to minimize at all times the differences, and yet at the same time realize that where need is for special assistance that it be given, so that the people of Northern Manitoba, or any other part in Manitoba, have the opportunity to be truly equal with other parts of the province.

But, Sir, having said that - I haven't had much time to look at the bill, but, Sir, the very first page of it did cause me some concern when I find a section, and I won't refer to the section by number, which says that the Minister shall co-ordinate the activities of the Government in Northern Manitoba. Now I would think that this probably means that all various programs of Government will eventually be handled by the one department, the Department of Northern Affairs; whether it be highway building, whether it be school programs, whether it be hospitals, will all be handled by the Department of Northern Affairs. Because it says "he shall co-ordinate". This poses problems to me, and I'm sure it must cause problems or some concerns to those in this House that have for quite some time expressed their concerns about the accountability of government and the manner in which we have noticed the lateral transfer, the shifting of funds from one department to another and from one project to another, and I would think that this co-ordinated effort all under the one department will make it more difficult rather than easier to distinguish where specific allocations are accountable in this House.

And it causes me some more concern, Sir, when I notice in the definition part of the Bill that an auditor means a person appointed under this Act to audit the books, and accounts of a community council, local community or an unincorporated community. We don't know what other activities that person will be carrying out. We don't know what the qualifications of that person will be. I would hope that they would be consistent with those of at least a certified public accountant, if not a chartered accountant; although I doubt that they would find sufficient C.A.'s to carry out those activities.

Then we go further back in the Bill, Sir, and we find that the Provincial Auditor is going to have the opportunity to examine the books of the Fund, and the Minister must maintain the Northern Affairs Fund in a manner consistent with the accounting procedures or satisfactory to the Provincial Auditor. But it says nothing about the spin-off or the programs that the fund pays for, whether they are going to be accountable to the Provincial Auditor or not. And, Sir, you have heard members in this House on previous occasions expressing their concern about the accounting procedures that have occurred in the past year and no doubt in numerous years in the past, where it is becoming more and more difficult for members of the Legislature to examine in detail the spending programs of government as those programs become more complex and more diffused and covered up, as they very well might be under this one umbrella-type of Act.

I noticed also, Sir, that some place in the bill the Minister is going to be responsible for the activities of the Municipal Act, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal, and several other -- the Municipal Board Act, the Planning Act, the Real Property Act and several others. Sir, this, I think, has to again cause some concern in the Legislature because we know that in the past year there have been questions raised about the operations of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal. The Minister may refer to them as allegations. I suggest they're a more maybe diplomatic term, saying questions. And, Sir, I'm going to say this, that those questions are still in the minds of many people and answers have not really been satisfactory. Sir, it wasn't too long ago that I was in the constituency of the Minister of Northern Affairs, and there was a problem which was brought to my attention at that time regarding the operation of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and I'm just wondering, Sir, whether once this Act is passed whether it'll be the Minister of Northern Affairs that will be answering for the Manitoba Housing and Renewal or whether it will be . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Matthews state his point of order.

BILL 75

MR. WALLY JOHANNSON (St. Matthews): . . . rules of the House regarding relevance, and I think the honourable members should debate the bill before us.

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

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry that the Member for St. Matthews couldn't hear me - or maybe he wasn't listening, or maybe he didn't want to listen.

A MEMBER: Probably missed the thrust of your debate.

MR. GRAHAM: But, Sir, under the Manitoba Housing and Renewal in Northern Manitoba we find that all things have not been going well there . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. GRAHAM: . . . if the Minister of Northern Affairs under this Act is going to have control of the Manitoba Housing and Renewal, perhaps he's going to co-ordinate them I guess -- all activities of Government. I don't know. This is what the bill says, and I'm asking the Minister is this the intention? Is he going to have control of all these various government operations under the existing bill? Because, Sir, the section and I refer to it again, "the Minister shall co-ordinate the activities of the Government in Northern Manitoba." So I would assume in doing that he would probably have control, to some extent anyway, over these various activities.

But, Sir, in getting back to the point that I was - under the present operation of the Department of Northern Affairs, we find that we have a Northern Manpower Corps which is training workers. I hope that they're doing a very credible job in it, and in doing so they are providing employment opportunities for people in Northern Manitoba. But I find, Sir, that there seems to be some questionable tactics being used with these workers once they have trained them. For instance we find that Manitoba Housing and Renewal contracts, which were maybe in default, are being completed by Northern Manpower labour at no cost to the Manitoba Housing and Renewal. Is that the cricket, Sir? How do you arrive at the true costing of a building project if you get your labour for nothing? Sir, mind you I realize that these things don't occur - or to my knowledge they haven't occurred unless there has been problems, but we find that when there are problems that somebody gets bailed out. And there was an organization, Sir, in The Pas named the Pas-Metis Development Corporation, which had I believe contracts to develop 20 or 25 houses in that area, and they did receive a \$50,000 loan from the Community Economic Development Fund. They tried to borrow more money, and I believe they probably did get advances from Manitoba Housing and Renewal, but I don't think they built any houses or completed any houses. They made some starts, but we find that Northern Manpower Corps is completing those houses now. Now is the cost of that labour going to be included in the eventual costing that Manitoba Housing and Renewal must show for the programs that they have implemented? I don't think, Sir, that that type of accounting will be given to this Legislature, and I don't think that the Northern Affairs Fund and its accounting will ever show how these transactions occurred.

Sir, when I referred to The Pas-Metis Development Corporation - I want to go back to that for a minute and make one point, that The Pas-Metis Development Corporation should not be linked with the Manitoba-Metis Federation. It's separate, it has nothing to do with the Manitoba-Metis Federation at all; it's a corporation involving seven or eight or a dozen people, and I believe that the intention of that was a very noble one. The purpose of the Metis Development Corporation was to repair houses under a remote housing program, it was to do small jobs, and I think that under its original concept and under its original management it did a fairly good job. But the manager eventually found that his services were probably better required in the employ of the Department of Northern Affairs and he is now employed with the IC program I understand, and has left that Corporation. Since that time, Sir, things did not go well - and while the newspaper - I have the newspaper clipping here, Sir, of May 24th in the Winnipeg Free Press - refers to a bankrupt company, to my knowledge, Sir, I don't believe The Pas-Metis Development Corporation has declared bankruptcy, but it might have. I think that they're still hoping that through some government program or another that eventually they will be bailed out, although so far to my understanding nothing of that has occurred. But they do owe 50,000 to the Community Economic Development Fund; they do owe back wages; they do owe the Federal Government; they do owe some trade accounts, and in my estimation it's probably in the neighbourhood of \$150,000. How much of that money was advanced by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal, I don't know. How much value was received

BILL 75

(MR. GRAHAM Cont'd) by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal from the advances they made, we don't know either. But I hope that sometime these answers will be forthcoming, and I hope that the Government will report and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal will give an adequate reporting of the construction that was carried on on the 12 houses in The Pas, the 10 houses in Moose Lake and the four at Wanless. To date, Sir, not one of those houses is complete.

Sir, I've talked to several of the people that were involved. I talked to the foreman, who was also the main estimator, and the information that I got from that gentleman didn't seem to coincide with the information I got from the person who was looking after the books. The last General Manager always seemed to be at a different place when I went to see him. I wasn't able to talk to him at all, although one time I did see him just going out the back door as I went in the front.

A MEMBER: I wouldn't do that, Harry.

MR. GRAHAM: But there has never been any accounting to my knowledge of their operations. Nobody knows where the books are, whether they've been audited - and in talking to the signing officers of the Corporation, they don't seem to know what has happened. They said the General Manager attended monthly meetings . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I hate to disrupt my honourable friend. I wonder - and I've waited for some considerable period of time to hear my honourable friend's comments on the motion that is before the House. The motion before the House as I understand it deals with the referral of Bill 75 to the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs. My honourable friend has consistently and persistently referred to matters that have been the subject matter of debate in this House, and bears no resemblances . . .

MR. HARRY ENNS (Lakeside): Read the bill. Read the bill.

MR. PAULLEY: My honourable friend from Lakeside says "Read the bill". The bill . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. PAULLEY: All I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, and I've read the bill - even made some contribution to the contents - but the motion before the House in all due respect, Mr. Speaker, is whether or not Bill 75 should be referred to the Municipal Affairs Committee for study and report back. My honourable friend talks about auditor's statements and the likes of this. Surely to goodness that would not be the subject matter of a referral to the Municipal Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The point is well taken. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm just trying to point out some of the things that the Municipal Committee should be looking into, Sir, when they are carrying out their investigation. These are some of the points that I think the people that are looking into the affairs of Northern Manitoba should look at, some of the misoperations that are occurring in the department.

Sir, I raise this matter at this time, because I find that when we are bringing in sort of an omnibus bill and I refer to it as an omnibus bill, because it is an umbrella type of thing, an all-protecting device to help the people of Northern Manitoba. And, Sir, that's good - but an umbrella also serves two purposes, Sir. It also covers up many of the things that the public should be taking a look at. And if the Minister can assure us that the accounting procedures, that are consistent with general accounting practices will be carried out in all the operations that go on in that department and are reported to the Legislature, then that's fine. But I'm sure, Sir, that the only report that we will be getting will be the Provincial Auditor's report, and the Provincial Auditor is only going to audit the accounts of the Northern Affairs fund. Sir, when the co-ordination that I see happening in this bill becomes truly effective, then the question of transfer of funds, laterally and unilaterally, becomes easier as time goes by.

I've taken a somewhat different approach to this bill, Sir, than what the others have at this time because I feel, Sir, that accountability in all parts of the Province of Manitoba must be equal; and those people of Northern Manitoba that are going to benefit from the implementation of this legislation will also want to know how their money is being spent, whether it's being spent wisely, whether it's being spent in their interests or whether it is being spent at the direction of the Minister. Thank you.

BILL 75

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'll only be brief on the resolution that is before the House. I realize that my honourable friend, the member who has just taken his seat, did use this as an opportunity of discussing many aspects of what we've already discussed in this House ever since we started here at the end of January. I don't know whether the objective was to further delay the passage of this bill so that the people of Manitoba would have an opportunity of making known to the Assembly in the only manner in which they can make it known - at least at this particular stage of the proceedings - is in a committee of the House, to where this bill will be referred, I say "will be referred", because it seems to me that the objective of the Conservative Party in proposing this amendment is to further delay activity which is going on and is proposed for the benefit of Northern Manitoba.

How well I remember - and I'm sure honourable members too will remember the champion of the Conservative Party, federally, back in 1958 and 1959 said that the North belongs to the next generation, and we have to develop the North, that therein lies the future of Canada, and that we have to develop the North. How well I remember, Mr. Speaker, in this House here a former Premier of Manitoba, as a matter of fact, two former Premiers - I can refer to Mr. D.L. Campbell, who was the Liberal Premier at the time I came into this House, laid emphasis on the fact that the development of Manitoba and the development of Canada indeed rested in making provisions for the expansion and a forward thrust in Northern Manitoba. Bud Jobin, who at that particular time was the Minister of Industry and Commerce in Manitoba and represented Flin Flon, repeatedly said in this House, we have to have some co-ordination of activities for Northern Manitoba. How well I recall Duff Roblin, when he was the Premier of Manitoba, when he introduced the bill for the development of the Nelson and Saskatchewan River said that here in the North is the area that belongs to the coming generations, that we must develop Northern Manitoba.

Not what does this all amount to Mr. Speaker? The Minister of Northern Affairs and this Government has now introduced a bill dealing with affairs in Northern Manitoba, the objectives of which - an endeavour to co-ordinate a forward thrust for Northern Manitoba. It is sure of course, Mr. Speaker, that we have in our program the Northern Manpower Corps. The objective of the Northern Manpower Corps is to attempt to educate and to train the peoples of the North in order that they can make a contribution to the forward thrust in the North. And that's the whole proposition that we have contained within this particular Bill No. 75. And what is the approach of the opposition? In effect what they are saying: No, you can't progress until such time as this bill has been referred back to another standing committee for consideration in a report. I respectfully suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the time is now.

There may be deficiencies in the bill, as indeed there are deficiencies in practically every bill, and that's one of the reasons - my honourable friend the Leader of the Official Opposition, he agrees, and I'm sure that he would also agree with me, Mr. Speaker, that we've had to amend as many bills that were introduced and passed during the regime of the Conservative Party as we're doing now with bills that we brought in over the last four years. We're not perfect. We're not suggesting that we're perfect, but what I am suggesting to the members of this House - and in this particular case, to the Official Conservative Opposition, that by a referral as suggested in their proposition we will further delay a united forward thrust in Northern Manitoba. As imperfect in their opinion as parts of the bill may be, I say that the bill as introduced and supported by the Honourable the Minister of Northern Affairs can accomplish much. It might be that, as the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell has suggested, that there may have been - and it hasn't been substantiated - there may have been some hanky panky that might have gone on. But the main point that I'm trying to make, Mr. Speaker, is that this bill in my opinion should be passed. It should go into committee so that it can be considered thoroughly clause by clause; a referral simply to the Municipal Committee for consideration in-between sessions will only mean a further delay of possibly a year before the next time we meet. We cannot accept the proposition introduced by the Honourable Member for Swan River, because we are most anxious to see an increase in the development and involvement in Northern Manitoba to the betterment of all those in the North and we in the South as well, so we must reject the proposition.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

BILL 75

MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Well, Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest to the Minister of Labour's reasons as to why the Government is going to reject the suggestion made by the speaker that moved that Bill 75 should be referred to the Municipal Affairs Committee for extensive study, with the idea of reporting back at the next session. It is my understanding that the Minister of Northern Affairs - and by the way as an aside, I might say that the Liberal Party for many years has advocated that there should be a Minister who has a special interest in the North and should be able to cut through the red tape in the northern community's dealings with all the various departments of the Provincial Government, and we support that. We still do. But I think, Mr. Speaker, that when a bill such as 75 comes before us, and it comes before us late in the session, when members don't have a proper opportunity to make an exhaustive and detailed study of a bill of this magnitude, I think there is reason for some caution. The Minister of Northern Affairs has quite a wide authority at the present time as a Minister and as a Commissioner of Northern Affairs. He's not being hamstrung or restricted in the work that he's been able to do up until this point. But, Mr. Speaker, I am very hesitant to vote for a bill that says this, and I quote - and we're talking now about the misuse of powers on Page 11, where it says: "Where the Minister is satisfied that a community council or a local committee is misusing its funds or not looking after its affairs in a proper and straightforward manner; or cannot or is unlikely to be able to meet the obligations as they fall due, he may with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council do the following: take over the assets, including the cash and credits; assume the obligations of the community council or local committee, and take possession of the books of accounts, records and other documents." And, Mr. Speaker, this is with no appeal.

This is not democracy. To say that we in this House must vote this bill through in a hurry to allow the Government to do what they wish to do, I'm suggesting to you, Mr. Speaker, that I doubt if there's a piece of legislation in all of Canada that gives a Minister this power. --(Interjection)-- Well I'd be interested in hearing what the Government members have to say in defence of legislation like this. There may well be the need for some power to stand over or be a superior body to a municipality or an unincorporated body or a corporated body dealing with the affairs of the people in Northern Manitoba. We have in the Municipal Act, we have a board that is superior to elected bodies in the municipal field. I'm suggesting that one man should not have this power, that if this power is needed, it should be given to a board separated from the political field. Mr. Speaker, I see nothing wrong whatsoever in the suggestion contained in the motion that this bill be referred for exhaustive study to the Municipal Affairs Committee, because we all know that once an Act is on the books of the Province it's pretty difficult to make changes.

The Minister of Labour said: Well, no bill is perfect, no bill is perfect, let us get this one through and if there needs to be changes, well we'll make the changes. Well I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that a bill that gives so much power to one person, power over many thousands of people, over large areas of the province, this is cause for exhaustive study - it's not something that should be casually passed through after half a dozen speeches on either side. The Minister of Labour has suggested that, let this go to Law Amendments Committee and let there be some discussion there, and let's get the bill through. If the Member for Swan River is correct, and I have no reason to doubt his words, he says many of the northern councils and communities don't even know about this bill - and how are they going to be at the Law Amendments Committee, let alone the time and the expense, the distance, and they don't know about the bill. My God, this unbelievable if this is true. I know that the Minister has said that when he introduced the bill there was consultation for a few years, I believe he said, with various parties and individuals of the North - but a great deal of this bill deals with the councils and the appointed bodies and the elected bodies who are going to work with and under the Minister. If this bill goes through in its present form, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that this is the beginning of one party rule in the North, because there will be no room for dissent, there'll be no room for dissent, there will be no independent board to go to. The only place to go to reason or to question a decision is an elected political person, and is this what we want in Manitoba? Is this the way it is, is this the way it should be in Manitoba, albeit the North? I know the people in southern Manitoba wouldn't stand for it. They wouldn't stand for it for one moment, that a city or a rural council or a village council could be overruled and vetoed by a Minister, with no right of appeal. It's not democratic, Mr. Speaker.

BILL 75

(MR. JOHNSTON Cont'd) I appeal to the Minister of Labour, who I know is a fair minded man, to reconsider the decision that they are making on that side, that this bill go through without question and give unlimited power to one man to rule the North.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. RON McBRYDE (Minister of Northern Affairs) (The Pas): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when this Act was under discussion with the communities that are affected by it in Northern Manitoba, the consultation process was not yet completed by the time the Legislature came into session. At that time I was a little bit hopeful that the people in the communities would say, well we want longer to discuss the Act with you, we want longer to consult with you on the Act, maybe you shouldn't proceed with the Act at the next session of the Legislature. But, Mr. Speaker, the indication from the people in the communities affected was exactly the opposite; that is, you better hurry up and get his Act passed at the next session of the Legislature because we are anxious to get on with the job of local self government in the North and we don't want any delay on the part of the Minister in bringing forward the change in the Act that we have outlined and we have discussed in the consultation process of the Act. So, Mr. Chairman, the communities will be affected by the Act, and I listed those at the beginning, have indicated their preference and their desire to have the Act go ahead and to go ahead at this time. Contrary to what members opposite have said, the consultation process has been very thorough, and although the exact legal wording might not have been discussed in every community, the intent in language that anyone could understand has been thoroughly explained and discussed with the people in those communities. Mr. Speaker, when I have the opportunity, if it ever comes to close debate on this matter, I would like to go into a number of issues raised in discussion of this bill, but I would like to limit myself pretty well to the comments and terms of the resolution for delaying the bill. I think it should be made clear that the Conservative Party is proposing a delay in the bill and that they are now being supported by the Liberal Party to delay the bill in Northern Manitoba.

Probably the most disappointing - and I say this only because I'm used to disappointing speeches from the Official Opposition - but probably the most disappointing speech this afternoon came from the Member from Portage who it would appear has very little understanding of municipal law, because I think if he had any understanding of municipal law he would know that municipalities, cities, LGDs are creations of the Provincial Government. The authority under which municipalities operate is an authority that is in fact given by the Provincial Government or the province, my understanding is, in all jurisdictions and the provision is contained in those bills giving that authority to the municipalities, that in fact if they run into financial difficulties to the extent they're unable to carry those affairs then the authority reverts again back to the province and the Minister responsible. That is a very clear principle in municipal law and anyone who has any slight understanding of municipal law would be well aware of that provision in all Acts relating to municipal governments, whether they're in Northern Manitoba, Southern Manitoba or anywhere else in Canada. So I would hope that the member would be aware of that and have that knowledge and information available to him. Perhaps he should have consulted with the Member for Fort Rouge who certainly gave a more rational and realistic appraisal of the bill in his discussion when he related to the bill.

Mr. Speaker, the other point that seems to be being made in terms of the reason for delaying the bill is the theme or the message that came through in the discussion of the bill all along. And that is that somehow this bill that we have before us, Bill 75, gives more power. Well, Mr. Speaker, the only way that we can deal with that question is to take a few moments and assist the honourable members by quoting from the Commissioner of Northern Affairs Act assented to April 27th, 1966. And I'll have to quote, Mr. Speaker, to demonstrate the powers that are presently available to the Commissioner of Northern Affairs so that members will understand that what the new Act is doing is in fact allowing the Minister to give up some of those powers to an incorporated community council.

But under the Act passed by the Conservative Government the powers are there and any quotations that have been used opposite to demonstrate the power of the Minister in fact is already existing legislation in the Province of Manitoba today. Now maybe I made a mistake, Mr. Speaker, when the people were drafting the bill I said include the old Act as much as is possible and then add the revisions. I probably made a mistake in giving the draftsmen that kind of advice but I wanted to make it clear in fact that the only changes we're

BILL 75

(MR. McBRYDE Cont'd) . . . making are the changes to allow the incorporation of the communities which would in effect take authority from the Minister and give it to the local community councils.

The Act that was passed in 1966 by a Conservative Government, Mr. Speaker, said as follows: "The Commissioner may assist the communities in providing, maintaining and improving local service in the communities and more particularly may assist in the planning, organizing, developing, carrying out, administering and financing of programs to provide local service in the communities. The Commissioner has in respect to the northern area all the powers, rights, privileges and duties including the powers to make bylaws that a municipality has within its boundaries. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing the Commissioner may, subject to the regulation provide for the assessment of property, the levying of taxes, the imposition of fees in lieu of taxes in any community and the provision of The Municipal Act respecting the assessment of property, the collection of taxes and the sale or disposal of property for non-payment of taxes apply mutatis mutandis where the Commissioner exercises the powers given under this jurisdiction. Where the Commissioner levies taxes on the basis of property assessment in a community the rate of taxation shall not exceed the rate determined from time to time by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council for the purpose of this section. The Commissioner may pay for or contribute to the cost of providing, maintaining or improving a local service in a community or carrying out any program for the benefit of a community. The Commissioner for and on behalf of the Government may enter into agreement with the local committee or any other person respecting the provision, maintenance or improvement of local service in a community or the carrying out of any program for the benefit of that community and the agreement may provide for the sharing of the costs therein between the Commissioner and the community. The Commissioner may with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council acquire, purchase, lease, expropriate, or otherwise, real property necessary to provide local services in a community or to carry out any program for the benefit of the inhabitants of the community. The Commissioner may acquire by purchase, lease or otherwise such machinery, equipment, supplies and other personal property as is required for the provision of any local service in a community. Ownership of all machinery, equipment supplies and other personal property so acquired shall vest in and be in the name of the Commissioner and he may transfer, lease or otherwise dispose of such property when no longer required. Where the Commissioner deems it advisable in the interests of a community he may establish a local committee composed of residents of the community to assist in providing, maintaining and improving local services in the community and to act in an advisory and consultative capacity to the Commissioner. Where in the opinion of the Commissioner there is sufficient population and he deems it advisable the Commissioner may provide for the election of all or some of the members of a local committee and may provide for, (a) the qualification of voters; (b) the preparation of voter's lists; (c) the nomination of candidates; (d) the procedures for carrying out the election; (e) the term of office of the elected members; and (f) the filling of vacancies on local committees. The Commissioner may appoint members of a local committee who are not elected under the provision of subsection (2)." So I guess if he didn't like, Mr. Chairman, those persons that were elected then he could come along and appoint them. "The local committee may do all things necessary to achieve its purposes subject to the written approval of the Commissioner who may enter into such agreements and make such arrangements as may be necessary to provide, maintain and improve local services in the community."

Part II of the Act that was passed in 1966 by the Conservative Government: "The Commissioner may with the approval of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council enter into agreement on behalf of the Government of Manitoba on such terms as he may deem appropriate with any person, for the purpose of establishing and developing new townsites and encouraging the establishment or expansion of industry in Northern Manitoba; for the purpose of providing, maintaining or improving local services for the benefit of the inhabitants of any community; for the purpose of assisting any community in Northern Manitoba in any manner and in the planning, organizing, developing, carrying out, administering and financing of any program for the benefit of the inhabitants thereof. And without limiting the generality of the foregoing any municipality, municipal district, local government district, school district, school division or school area may be party to any such agreement. Without limiting the generality

BILL 75

(MR. McBRYDE Cont'd) of the foregoing the agreement made under subsection (1) may provide for the payment of grants in lieu of taxes by any party to the agreement or the payment by any party of such agreement, of such monetary or other contribution to the province, a local committee, municipality, etc. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this Act any tax exemption conferred by the Commissioner in an agreement entered into under this Act shall apply only to taxes imposed by the municipality.

"Part No. III," Mr. Chairman. And this should be directed to the member who spoke earlier today, the Member for Birtle-Russell, who is not here to listen to it. But he made a big deal of this section in the new Act.

Part III of the Act, Item 9 in the 1966 Act passed by the Conservative Government: "The Commissioner shall coordinate the activities of the Government in Northern Manitoba. Any department of the executive government of the province and any agency of the Crown with the consent of the Minister in charge of the department or chief officer in charge of the agency of the Crown may do such things or provide such services in respect to Northern Manitoba or a community as the Commissioner may request."

Mr. Speaker, there is a number of things here and the same sort of powers apply. "The Director of Northern Affairs and such other officers employed as may be deemed necessary for the purpose of administering this Act may be appointed as provided by the Civil Service Act, etc. All costs incurred in the administration of this Act including expenditures made by the Commissioner shall be paid out of the Consolidated Fund."

Mr. Chairman, there was some discussion of regulations by members opposite when they spoke in terms of this bill. "For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this Act according to their intent the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council may make such regulations as ancillary thereto and are not inconsistent therein with every regulation made under and in accordance with the authority granted by this section has the force of law, and without limiting the generality of the foregoing the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council make regulations not inconsistent with any other provision of this Act for obviating any doubts as to the matters of procedure arising from the concurrent administration of this Act and any other Act of the Legislature, providing procedures and authorizing methods by which the Commissioner may coordinate the activities of the Government in Northern Manitoba, determining the extent to which land or property in a community shall be subject to taxation under the Act; fixing of a minimum rate of taxation above which the Commissioner cannot levy of taxes; fixing the maximum rate of taxation above which the Commissioner cannot levy taxes on property; providing for cases and circumstances that may arise in Northern Manitoba for which no provision or adequate provision is made in this or any other Act of the Legislature. The Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council may provide in the regulation under this Section that it applies to all or only part of Northern Manitoba or only to a community or part of a community and the regulation shall apply accordingly."

Mr. Chairman, if I wanted to be the czar of the north, Mr. Chairman, I have all the authority I need to be the czar of the north at this time. I have every ounce of authority I need to do it. And the present Attorney-General, former Commissioner, had all that authority, and the Mines Minister, former Commissioner had all that authority, and Mr. Lyon had all that authority and Mr. . . .

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Will the Minister permit a question?

MR. McBRYDE: After I'm done, Mr. Speaker. If I wanted, Mr. Chairman, to control the whole North as members opposite would have the people of Manitoba believe it's all right there in the Act, it's sitting there right now and the authority is there to do that. But, Mr. Speaker, it is precisely because the Commissioners of Northern Affairs under this Government unlike under the previous government want to divest ourselves of some of that authority and give it to the local communities that we are bringing forward this present Act. And, Mr. Chairman, the members opposite - I have offered them the assistance of any staff to explain the Act. Some of them have taken advantage of it, some of them haven't taken advantage of it. But what this Act basically is is the old Commissioner of Northern Affairs Act and the ability of communities in the North to move into an incorporated community council status, and to do this there are certain regulations that are being transferred over as applicable from the Municipal Act in order that the incorporated community council can operate within the guidelines that a municipality can within the Province of Manitoba.

BILL 75

(MR. McBRYDE Cont'd)

Is that too complicated for the honourable members to understand, or do they not want to understand? Are they deliberately trying to mislead the people of Manitoba so it fits in with their strategy of trying to tell the people of Manitoba that the Government wants to control everything in Manitoba? Because they are deliberately, especially the Conservative Party and the Leader of the Opposition, deliberately deceiving the people of Manitoba when they say that the purpose of this Act is to give more power when the purpose of this Act is to give power to the local communities in Northern Manitoba.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister entertain a question? Would the Minister entertain a question? Has the Minister presently the power without cause to suspend a community council of the north? Without cause.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, the section of the Act to which the member is referring to does not say "without cause". Mr. Chairman, the authority of the Minister is one that if in fact a community is in such a state that they cannot carry on their function then at that time the authority would have to revert to the Province who is the granter of the authority in the first place. This is common municipal law.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, another question. I have The Municipal Act before me and I'm unable to find any mention of the fact that a Minister may suspend the power of a council where he finds it is unlikely that they are able to carry out their obligations. Could he point that out in The Municipal Act where a Minister has that power? In other words pre-judge them.

. continued on next page

BILL 75

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q.C. (Leader of the Official Opposition) (River Heights): I'm assuming that the Minister will be in a position to answer the question when he closes the debate on the main motion, unless he's prepared . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, if I have permission .

. . . Mr. Speaker, let me if I may proceed on this and I'm very happy that I'm following the Minister because it gives me an opportunity to deal with his statements.

Mr. Speaker, when we opened the debate on this from the Opposition side we indicated, Mr. Speaker, that the Honourable Minister would become the czar of the North. And I know the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources was very upset at that, he . . .

A MEMBER: He's never upset.

MR. SPIVAK: He was upset. He moved around; he asked for the Commissioner of Northern Affairs Act of 1966 which the Honourable Minister has referred to and he gave a - if I may say - a bit of a hysterical presentation - and I'm using his adjectives because he describes our presentations as hysterical - in which he said that the powers were the same as before. And this is ridiculous. What we are doing and what the Minister just said, what we are doing is giving really more power to the people. Mr. Speaker, one has to always become suspicious when a New Democratic Party Minister says we are giving more power back to the people. Because, Mr. Speaker, there is something inherent in those words which suggests that really what they are doing is exactly the opposite. Now they may believe that they are giving more power back to the people but they also want to have a certain control because Government always has control and besides which they're in a better position to know better than the people as to what they should be doing.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Minister has indicated that there were certain powers in the Act of 1966 and in effect he was the czar at that time or as a czar under this Act when he was appointed. And, Mr. Speaker, the Acts that they passed after this incorporated the same powers. So in effect realistically there are no different positions. It's my intention to read 25 sections, and I'm not going to read them as sections, Mr. Speaker, but 25 powers that are given in this Act to the Minister that he didn't have before. And in the course of reading that, Mr. Speaker, to indicate very clearly that it's not a question of giving back power to the people but in reality assuming more power for himself with the belief, and the mistaken belief by some, including the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, that somehow or other this will give power back to the people.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister may now assist communities and incorporated communities in providing, maintaining and improving local services, but now by such means as he deems appropriate - by such means as he deems appropriate, Mr. Speaker; whereas before, the Minister was allowed to make by-laws for and on behalf of the residents of Northern Manitoba, he now makes them for or on behalf of the residents of Manitoba. Well there is a substantial difference, and if the Minister doesn't understand the difference I'll explain it to him. If he was acting for and on behalf of the residents of Manitoba, that's one thing. If he's allowed to make by-laws for or on behalf of the residents, that's a very different power, Mr. Speaker. -- (Interjection) -- Well, where's the - well if we're going to change that that may make some improvement, we've got much more to make. Whereas before, by-laws made by the Minister applied to Northern Manitoba or to any community in Northern Manitoba, the by-law now may be made to apply to parts of Northern Manitoba. -- (Interjection) -- Oh, no, there's a difference. Whereas before, the Minister could only negotiate agreements with the Government of Manitoba or any person with Cabinet's approval, and he read that section, now he may also with Cabinet's approval negotiate and enter into agreements with the Government of Canada or any other agency thereof - and that, Mr. Speaker, is a new power. -- (Interjection) -- No. Whereas before, the commissioner entered into arrangements with the communities or communities' councils respecting the provision, maintenance or improvement of local service in the community or the carrying out of any program for the benefit of the community, he may now also enter arrangements respecting the provision of planning and management services and the establishment, acquisition and operation of a commercial or industrial business or activity by an incorporated community.

BILL 75

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) .

Mr. Speaker, that means that the Czar who had the power in '66, according to him, now has the power to enter into the business and commercial area. Mr. Speaker, with the power he has of expropriation in whole or a part within this Act, based on, Mr. Speaker, on the ability to enter into business, the establishment, acquisition and operation of commercial and industrial business activity, he can if he so desires, expropriate a business in whole or a part. He did not have that before. There is nothing in the power that the Minister had before that allowed him to go into a commercial enterprise or an industrial enterprise, nothing whatsoever. Now I mean - you know, the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose and the others, he did not have the power to go into business before. He now has the power to go into business, so the suggestion now that somehow or other what's now being suggested is the same as before -- (Interjection) -- Well the Minister says it's one change. I think there's more than one change involved. But let's not kid ourselves. If we have an acknowledgement from him that there's one change, we then have to understand the significance of that change in relation to the development of the North and the development of those communities.

Whereas before the commissioner could acquire real property necessary to provide local services or to carry out any programs for the community, the Minister may now also acquire real property necessary to perform any of his powers, rights, privileges and duties under this Act. As I've indicated, Mr. Speaker, that would mean commercial or industrial enterprises. Whereas the commissioner could only acquire personal property as was required for the provision of any local service in the community, the Minister may now also acquire personal property as in his opinion - as in his opinion is required for the provision of local services, the carrying out of a program and the performing of any of his powers, rights, privileges and duties under this Act. There's a very big difference, Mr. Speaker, in the discretion that's offered in this Act and the power that's given.

Mr. Speaker, the new Act allows that notwithstanding the Crown Lands Act, no disposition of any Crown land in Northern Manitoba shall be made without the prior approval of the Minister. Now that, Mr. Speaker, is a new power; he didn't have it before, he did not have that power before. Mr. Speaker, there were a number of sections relating to an inquiry to be set up, and I'll only refer to it as Section 10 without going into detail; all of those are new powers for the Minister. Whereas before the commissioner and a person designated by the Minister of Finance to sign checks, now the Minister or a person designated by him can sign checks; and I suggest that that is a different power, Mr. Speaker, a very different power with respect to the North and the operation of his office.

Whereas the commissioner had to pay any grants received by him under the Unconditional Grants Act to a community council it was designated for, the Minister may pay these grants. Now there's a very substantial -- he had to before, now he may. That's, you know, Mr. Speaker, a very different kind of power.

The Minister may recommend to Cabinet that a certain area be incorporated. That, Mr. Speaker, is a new power.

The Minister may reduce salaries paid by local communities to an employee. That's a new power.

The Minister with Cabinet approval may alter boundaries at any time. That's a new power.

The Minister may appoint auditors and determine their qualifications and salaries. That's a new power.

The Minister prescribes the way in which receipts, moneys and securities of an incorporated community shall be kept. The Minister may issue licenses or permits to persons who have been refused by incorporated communities. That, Mr. Speaker, is a new power.

The Minister prescribes -- (Interjection) -- Well, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about the Czar of the North, we talk about the power that's given to him and we talk about the power of the interference in the lives of the people, let it not be said, Mr. Speaker, that what we are really doing in this Act is giving it to the people. Essentially what you are doing is you are saying to many of the communities, we are going to give it to you, but subject to our approval, subject to our control and subject to our direction. -- (Interjection) -- He did not have all of this power before. The Minister prescribes the form of annual estimates of incorporated communities. That's a new power.

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd)

The Minister may require incorporated communities to levy taxes for their operating deficit. That's a new power.

The Minister can tell incorporated communities to correct a by-law they make, if in the opinion of the Minister the by-law is deficient in any matter of form. That's a new power.

Mr. Speaker, if we deal with the regulatory section - and one must point out that there were seven subsections in the previous Act, that was the New Democratic Party's Government Act; there are now 27 subsections, so there are 20 new subsections. I'd like to if I may, deal with a few of them, and a few of the powers that the Lieutenant-Government-in-Council are giving.

First, there will be a change in the number of members of an incorporated community from that specified in its letters patent; the maximum salary of a mayor or a community council member; the manner, time and writing of advertisements for candidates for clerk, treasurer, secretary-treasurer and manager of incorporated communities.

Regulations with respect to the elections of the mayor of an incorporated community shall be by the electors of the incorporated - or pursuant to the Act itself.

The Government will make regulations regarding the preparation, publication or revision of lists of electors eligible to vote for members of incorporated community councils and community councils, including the appointment, remuneration, powers and duties and oaths of office and declaration of secrecy to be taken by the Returning Officers, Deputy Returning Officers, enumerators, revising officers and assistants to them or any one of them.

The appointment, remuneration, powers and duties and oaths of the office and the declaration of secrecy to be taken by interpreters in connection with the election of members. The bringing to application of the elections of incorporated community councils and community councils of such provisions as the Local Authority Election Act as the Lieutenant-Governor deems appropriate, making such other provisions for the election of members of incorporated community councils.

The terms of office of members of the incorporated community council. The procedure to be followed at regular special meetings of the adult residents of the incorporated community, including without restricting the generality of the foregoing, the quorum of such meetings.

The method of determining the population of Northern Manitoba, including the incorporated communities for the purpose of the Unconditional Grant Act.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what I've tried to indicate in all of this is that there are in fact powers that are being given to the Minister now that he did not have before. -- (Interjection) -- Well he says it's not right. I suggest to you that he is being given more power, that the changes are reasonably significant, that in effect his involvement in the business and commercial activity, and that capability of involvement is a significant one and therefore Mr. Speaker -- (Interjection) -- Well, I got one right. Well, you know, Mr. Speaker, I got one right. I suggest that the representation that's been made by you and by the Minister of Northern Affairs and by the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources, that somehow or other this bill is an improvement over the other bill or the other Act, which is an improvement over the first Act, is defeated by your own arguments. If you say that the 1966 Act -- (Interjection) -- yes, if you say that the 1966 Act contained all the powers that may be desired in the North, then I do not see in this Act that you're giving up any of your power to the people; not at all. So therefore on that basis, the 1966 Act, the 1966 Act was good enough. Because, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing that the people will be able to do, that they can do for themselves, that is not subject to the control and under the thumb of the Minister. Now if I'm wrong in that, you stand up and read off the 25 clauses to me and to this Legislature and to the people of the North, which will allow them to do things which are not subject to your control or approval.

So, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the illusion that's created, that somehow or other this is a united forward thrust, I think the Honourable Minister of Labour used - the united forward thrust that's required in the North -- (Interjection) -- well, Mr. Speaker, you're prepared to talk a line of gobbleygook, which suggests to the people that somehow or other they are going to be able to really take control of their own situation, when in reality they are going to be subject to the thumb and to the patronage and to the control of a Minister who now is not even subject to the control of Cabinet, who completely becomes the Czar of the North. -- (Interjection) -- Well because even if you go back to the other Acts, Mr. Speaker, the commissioner

BILL 75

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) at least was subject to the control of Cabinet. -- (Interjection) -- Well, Mr. Speaker, the Government's introduced a bill which they say meets the approval of the residents of the North. This came as a result of the consultation with them. Our proposal is a simple one. It's the kind of proposal that basically says, follow the example that you set in Unicity. In the case of Unicity, the Minister went with the White Paper and basically presented to the communities what the Government's intention was - and then, Mr. Speaker, on the basis of that, formed the bill. -- (Interjection) -- No, you did not. You took the old bill, you had discussions, but, Mr. Speaker, you've got an obligation to take this bill back to the Members of the Legislature, including the Opposition, for them to be able to understand whether the people in the North are really saying to the Legislature and to the Minister and to the Government, yes we want to become involved, we want to be organized, we want to have control of our own lives, but we're prepared at this point to recognize that it all has to be subject to the approval and control and direction of the Minister. And, Mr. Speaker, that's what this bill says. -- (Interjection) -- I've read the Act, I understand the Act, I understand the Act very well.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that the example in connection with the White Paper, in which the Minister went to the communities and discussed it as an example that could be followed by the Minister, when we talk about the united thrust of the Government, you know, or the united forward thrust for the North, I'm not sure what it really is. You're not going to persuade me as a result of this bill that the communities are getting more control over their own situation, not at all. There's nothing in this bill that would indicate that. You're not going to persuade me, Mr. Speaker, that, you know, that in effect it follows necessarily that the people will be better off; nor, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister indicate to me that in doing what he's doing, this really is the most desirable result, considering the moneys that will be spent and the time that will evolve and the organization that will be developed within his department to carry out the additional functions that give this additional opportunity.

You see, Mr. Speaker, we have a big problem in this House, we've had a problem right from the beginning. The Minister of Labour stands up and talks the North as before and, Mr. Speaker, the North has changed. Many many things have occurred, many things have changed the North and they're going to continue to change the North. Mr. Speaker, there is more money being put in the North than there was before, and there's an assumption because there's more money and because the communities are offered some of the amenities that they never had before, and because the provincial budgets have escalated and have risen and as a result the North has received a proportionate part of it; that it follows necessarily because the moneys have been spent that the moneys have necessarily been spent wisely, that the waste that occurred was justified; and that it has to, Mr. Speaker, it has to be judged on the basis that at least what is being done is better than before and therefore that in any way compensates for any errors, omissions on the part of Government, mismanagement, or for any of the fiddling around that they may have done.

And, Mr. Speaker, what this bill is, is an extension of that position - because it really basically says, well we are now offering something that we can say is better than before; it is realistically going to give them more power - when in reality, Mr. Speaker, it is not. And so, Mr. Speaker, our concern is a real one. There is no reason, Mr. Speaker, for us to believe at this point that the communities themselves really are prepared to accept the kind of control and direction that is being offered as being something new. They understand the control and direction that the Government has now. I am convinced, Mr. Speaker, based on the information we have - and we've made our context as well - that the communities up there do not recognize or do not realize that the Government is talking two-faced and is saying one thing at one point and another thing at another and realistically, Mr. Speaker, when you examine the bill, they are not giving up any control.

And so our concern for what's happening is real, and the way in which this can be judged is by the kind of reference that we've indicated. Mr. Speaker, it would simply mean that the bill would be a better bill, and we would be in a better position to know frankly whether the communities accept the position that the Government should have the residual power in every situation to be able to make the final determination so as to be in a position to essentially say to the communities, you can do this or you can't do this, and be judged and guided by their own political considerations of the moment. And I'm now talking government political consideration

BILL 75

(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) as opposed to the real considerations and the political considerations of the communities involved.

Mr. Speaker, I've pointed out 25; the Minister may suggest that he had the power before, I say to him that he did not have the power before. I say to him as well that his involvement in the business activity in the North - and this section is one additional spoke in the whole program that's being introduced this session which will basically create what the Honourable Minister of Finance said he did not understand was contained in this unpublished document referred to as the Guidelines for the Seventies. The reality, Mr. Speaker, and I read five pages of that chapter, is that it's the Government's intention essentially to effectively set up what they refer to as municipal development corporations in the North which will now become the development corporations - which will become involved in business which will be financed, Mr. Speaker, through the Communities Economic Development Fund, through the Treasury Branches; which will accomplish an objective, Mr. Speaker, that they consider important - and which will be susceptible to the same kind of patronage and the same kind of concern that's already been demonstrated; demonstrated by you in some of the actions that you've undertaken, and some of the hiring that's been undertaken by your department, and the ways in which the Communities Economic Development Fund have loaned their funds. Mr. Speaker, what it means for the North is really - and I say this quite honestly - the chance that, you know, what it will really mean, will mean the inability to really grasp the opportunities that are developing as a result of their new awareness; as a result of the new activities that are being undertaken on a federal level, albeit initiated in many respects by the Provincial Government, and as a result of the new funds that are really available simply because provincial revenues have gone up.

Mr. Speaker, what we see in this and what we fear, based on the past performance, is the intrusion by the Government in what would have been the evolution into self government and into self sufficiency to a point, Mr. Speaker, where a great deal of what could have been gained will have been lost and in the course of losing it, Mr. Speaker, we will have lost the opportunities to help the people help themselves. And so, Mr. Speaker, we would prefer that it go to the Committee. We recognize, you know, the Government's stubbornness at this point in its inability to be able to recognize that, you know, in some cases there is need for consideration and review. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we also recognize the position - the Minister has said it, the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources said it - what we are doing is essentially giving the people something better than they had before; and what we say to you is what you are really doing is saying to the people that you are giving to them, but in reality you are not giving them anything.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J. R. BOYCE (Winnipeg Centre): Mr. Speaker, I'm quite anxious to - more anxious perhaps than the Leader of the Liberal Party - to see the publication of the CFI investigation. You know I really don't place much confidence in the argument "youse guys were worse than we were," but nevertheless I think if you stack up the \$42 million over-capitalization of the CFI, I think the Minister of Northern Affairs has got a long way to go. And also the agreement with Great Northern Capital, that they agreed to lend money in perpetuity for operational expenses - and other things such as that. But, Mr. Speaker, the fallaciousness of the Leader of the Opposition's argument really astounds me - really astounds me - the lack of depth of his presentation. If I was in his position, I'd fire his research staff, because in five minutes I have more documentation on this than the gentleman brought into this House - and I would suggest to you, Sir, that you know, fallacious arguments, you do the people of the province of Manitoba a great disservice.

If we go back to 1970-71-72-73 - what did this House do? It set up a Task Force made up of the Member for Swan River, and also the Member for Portage la Prairie, and they went through the North - and yet the Member for Swan River stands up in this House and says that this bill is presented in the dying hours. It is the result of the Task Force. It is also as a result of the Members of this House going through the north and the LDGs, and sitting down with the people in their communities as a committee of the Legislature on Municipal Affairs relative to LDGs how to best approach this problem of local government in the North.

Now the gentleman stands up here in this House and says that this is a new power, this is a new power, this is a new power, it is a new power - and every time that he mentioned it, it is as if this power did not exist in the executive somewhere at the present time. He says you

BILL 75

(MR. BOYCE cont'd) cannot read the Northern Affairs Act that is presented at the moment without reading the Municipal Act, relative to the administration of municipalities, relative to the administration of the LGDs, relative to the industrial development; the whole thing has to be read together, because what it is is a tying together of the authority which is vested in various places in the government at the present time. -- (Interjection) -- I'm sorry, it is. If the gentleman would have somebody do some in-depth research, in-depth research, he could say that what I say is correct.

Now just for example one point - the gentleman comes into this House and says that the appointment of an auditor is a new power. I would like to read the Municipal Act. When I said that this power is in Section 598, read Section 598, what does it say? Let me find it. It says, "a suitable person, who in the opinion of the Minister" - the czar, the czar, the czar, the czar, - all these czars that sit in front of me -- (Interjection) -- yes, but of course when you fellows were over here, you weren't czars, so It says - it says

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. BOYCE: "A suitable person, who in the opinion of the Minister is qualified to be" - Section 598 (1) - he appoints an auditor. Now go over to Section 606, take a look at it - and what happens if this auditor who in the opinion of the Minister is a satisfactory person to appoint to this position? What happens if he goes in and finds the books or finds something not to his liking? Read 606, which applies in this Act, mutatis mutandis. -- (Interjection) -- No, he says. Mr. Speaker, the Municipal Act applies mutatis mutandis to this bill. It says - well I can't refer, within the rules, to the section of the bill - but nevertheless it does set forth the implications of the Municipal Act relative to this particular bill. But, you know, the Leader of the Opposition is rather cute. He comes in and he gets hung up on something - in the first part of his speech, he says the Minister may pass by-laws for/and, and he's going to bring out a great change for/or, and I would suggest that the honourable member doesn't even know the laws of conjunction disjuncts.

A MEMBER: He's a lawyer.

MR. BOYCE: He suggests, you know, by saying there's a difference, but he doesn't explain to the people what is the difference between a conjunct and a disjunct. You know, I get annoyed sometimes. You know, I made the erroneous assumption, you know, that you had to have some knowledge of these sort of things when you used them, but he doesn't use these in a debating technique. He hands them out there just like, you know, something's the matter - for, and - he changes the word - ah ha, it's a change. You find out - I'm not going to, you know, nobody's paying me in here as a teacher to teach you the difference between a conjunct and a disjunct.

But one of the other points - he tried to make the great point that the Minister may with the community become involved in business. The Minister may with the community become involved in business. But he doesn't make that as a point, he says the Minister may become involved in business. Let me just go back in history a little bit, that when a municipality, an organization of people, the great sophisticated city of Winnipeg decided, you know, that they were getting shafted by one of the local companies, to wit, the Winnipeg Electric Company. The Winnipeg Electric Company was selling on a monopoly base in the city of Winnipeg, electricity at the rate of 14 cents a kilowatt hour, so the city of Winnipeg, you know, got together and said, we can do this better for ourselves than through Winnipeg Electric. So what did they do? They built themselves a power dam up here. And what happened? Immediately after the thing came on the line, electricity dropped to three cents a kilowatt hour.

A MEMBER: Honest competition.

MR. BOYCE: Honest competition. Well what - yeah, yeah - oh, as the Member for Thompson used to say, you know, when you take that needle and you poke it through the lard, when it hits the pork the pig squeals. Yeah, doubtless some of these people that had transportation systems as a monopoly in the North, doubtless some of these companies, including the Hudson's Bay Company - you know, that little corner store that we're going to compete with, or somebody's going to compete with -- (Interjection) -- doubtless, doubtless, oh yeah the CNR too, they're a great example of a Crown Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the Member from Morris from his seat has said the CNR - and of course, Mr. Speaker, if I just may stress the rules just a little bit. They bring this in as a great Crown Corporation, you know, this is how they bailed their friends out when all these little trunk lines

BILL 75

(MR. BOYCE cont'd) . . . were going belly up, bankrupt you know; they formed a Crown Corporation to save them, like they did in the States here with the Penn Railroad; the Penn Railroads belly up, so what did they do? You know, they got - all of a sudden these great capitalists or socialists, they get the people's tax dollars and support them, and they say look how inefficient this Crown Corporation is. You know if they were strictly businessmen they would have let those things go bankrupt and bought them all in bankruptcy. But nevertheless back to this matter before us at the time.

So far as an argument, as an argument of why this bill should not be considered now, it should be referred once again to committees of the Legislature. First of all, we appointed a Task Force on Northern Affairs, comprised of all members of this House - which come up, you know, I wonder if people read it. The Member for Portage has returned to his seat, he was - I mentioned the Task Force, he was on it. This is one of the fruits of labours of it. And also his colleague, the former Member for LaVerendrye was on the Committee of the Legislature on Municipal Affairs looking into LDGs. I don't know if he talked to his colleague or not, but you'll see the results of it in this particular bill. So you know, the idea that this bill all of a sudden, you know, came into existence is just ludicrous. You know, the members of the Opposition, you know, try to make the case that the Ministers don't consult with their backbench at all which, you know, is really foolish because this bill has been a-borning for three years, three years. The Minister is trying to correct me, he says two, but I still say three because it goes back to the Northern Task Force. So to the argument that, you know, this is all of a sudden presented to the House in the dying hours, you know, is a fallacious argument.

To the argument that it is creating new powers for somebody in the Executive Branch is fallacious also, because the powers exist at the moment. That it is gathering together of these powers under one portfolio, is in my judgment irrelevant, because if the Minister of Municipal Affairs has the authorities relative to the operation of the LDGs, which are going to be included in this particular bill, when the bill applies mutatis mutandis, you're not saying that there's any new powers being created, all you're saying is that these powers are similar. So, Mr. Speaker, I just couldn't possibly sit here and let the Leader of the Opposition get away with his presentation that all of a sudden we are giving somebody entirely new powers to operate in an arbitrary manner. And when he makes his arguments that the Minister is going to go into business, it's fallacious because the Act itself says, with the community, and the powers as far as the auditor. What happens to a local organization? You know history has shown us - the Member for St. James knows well that when the Municipality of St. James - and I really shouldn't say this because it's just from my personal experience, but you know the people out there themselves pulled themselves up by their bootstraps. It was after they got together and formed the necessary instruments to raise that municipality, Lord, they're one of the best examples in Manitoba of how a community can lift themselves once they get organized so to do, but nevertheless there was a time when they were in difficulty, as were most municipalities in the Province of Manitoba more or less, under the Municipal Board. But for the Leader of the Opposition to say that this is creating entirely new powers in the North is totally fallacious, and the need for more time, as you say, is a delaying tactic because the thing has been investigated enough at the present time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to take as much time as the Member from Winnipeg Centre took. I just sincerely wish that he was sitting a row back. I'm starting to have much more respect for that back row than I do the two front rows of the NDP Party and I wish the Member from Winnipeg Centre was sitting back there with the people with commonsense that I know he has. The other people in the two front rows, I put them in a big barrel and shake them all up, and nothing.

Mr. Speaker, I would only like to say that I'm disappointed, that I would think that the members on the other side would believe in the practice of hypocrisy. -- (Interjection) -- No, Mr. Speaker, I did not say they were hypocrites, I said I hoped they wouldn't believe in the practice of it. Mr. Speaker, in my travels through the North with the Municipal Committee - and and I can go to, Sir, the recordings of all of those committee meetings, and at every one of them the Minister of Northern Affairs was there, and I can very thoroughly remember the Member from Churchill questioning every aspect of an administrator's powers. I can very

BILL 75

(MR. F. JOHNSTON cont'd) thoroughly remember that the decisions regarding Northern Manitoba that they were driving at, was the people of the North should have more to say about their affairs. Now regardless of what has happened before, if you want to read the regulations and say they were there before - and I assure you that I haven't studied this bill as well as some, but I have gone through them, and I believe that you have put more powers in it for yourself than there were before. But by the same token, all of the arguments that I ever heard from the members that were on committees, were that they should have more powers to do their own thing so to speak in Northern Manitoba, but this bill does not do it. They don't give away any powers whatsoever. The Government by the Minister, the czar of the North, which he's been called, which is what he is; the man who learned the North sitting in an outhouse with the cold wind blowing, by his own admission, that's the way he learned how to run the North, is still the czar of the North because they haven't given any powers away in this bill. So I would wonder if the members on that side do believe in the practice of hypocrisy from what I heard them say when I was travelling through those committees. And especially the Member from Churchill, who just loaded and hit hard at any administrator of every local government district or anybody who had any power in the North other than the people. And he's not sitting in his chair right now, and I'm very disappointed that he could sit and see this bill be passed - the Member from Flin Flon, excuse me, Sir - that this bill could be passed not giving the people any power but maintaining it in the right of the Minister.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have hoisted this bill in such a fashion that it should be studied. I recall in this House, Sir, to give an example of why it should be studied, there was a Boundaries Commission Report made before this Government came into power, the same as we've had a study - two studies of the North by northern committees and by municipal committees. And the report came out and it was tossed aside; but after the report, rather than write legislation the Minister of Urban Affairs at that time wrote out a White Paper on the amalgamation and workings and how the City of Winnipeg should be put together. And when he went to put this all together, he went to the people, he went to every community in Winnipeg, every council; he held meetings to get the people's opinion and he got it. And he still did what he pleased. So what really happens here is the Government at the present time has decided that they won't go to the people of the North because the people of the North won't agree with having a czar of the North, so they're going to write the legislation anyway.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what it is. This Government says I've got to put it in now, I'm not going to ask them because I know they won't like it, we'll just stick it in. So I just wanted to say, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to question the members on the other side as to their belief in hypocrisy, because they really turn around - and for all their saying of, you know, we want the people of the North to have more power, rule their own affairs, didn't change our legislation. By their own admission have said they didn't change our legislation. They have said, they have said that we're going to keep the power in our hands under the Minister. And, Mr. Speaker, if that is not, that is not what I heard the members on those committees say. Those members of those committees were saying, we want them to have more powers but you know they just aren't giving it to them. Mr. Speaker, that is the truth and they know it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM (Rupertsland): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I didn't plan to speak on the bill twice. However after listening to some of the comments from the opposition today, I was provoked into speaking again, mainly because of the blatant misrepresentations by the Leader of the Opposition and other members who have been speaking on this bill.

Again, Mr. Speaker, they have proven to me conclusively and to anyone in Northern Manitoba who has taken the time to read the bill and to come to the consultation meetings that were part of the process in drawing up this bill, they have proved to us that they have not read this bill. They have in fact proved to us that as I stated the other day in my first comments on this bill, that in fact they may have read one or two pages at the beginning of this text, but that in fact they have ignored the parts which do in fact give power, give more powers to the communities in Northern Manitoba.

The Member from Sturgeon Creek, the Member from River Heights as Leader of the Opposition have both stated that this bill gives more powers to the Minister. Well in some respects that may be true, in that the bill goes further in terms of its application to Northern Manitoba than the previous bill; that since more powers were given to the community councils

BILL 75

(MR. BOSTROM cont). under this new bill and more powers associated with those responsibilities were laid on the Minister's desk.

I'd like to refer directly to the bill in my comments, Mr. Speaker, because it would seem to me that since the members opposite have obviously not read the bill, someone should bring to their attention some of the aspects that are within this bill. For example, if you look at the first section of Bill 75, it is obvious that this is the only section really that members opposite have read. If you look at the section which lists the Minister's additional powers, it reads, "subject to other provisions of this Act to the extent that they have not been delegated to incorporated communities." And it lists some powers here that the Minister has in addition. But the key phrase, Mr. Speaker, is the phrase, "to the extent that they have not been delegated to incorporated communities." In other words, even if you just read Page 4 of this Act, you see that there are powers that are written into the Act that are in fact delegated to the incorporated communities in Northern Manitoba, that in fact this is something new, something which was not included in the previous Act.

The Leader of the Opposition has been critical of one section, where he has said that the Minister may in fact operate and acquire businesses in Northern Manitoba. I'll refer directly to the section in the Act which he seems to have misrepresented, and that is on Page 5, Mr. Speaker, and it says directly that the Minister may make arrangements or agreements with a community council and incorporate a community, a local committee or any person respecting the establishment, acquisition and operation of a commercial or industrial business or activity by an incorporated community. In other words, this says specifically that if a business is going to be operated in Northern Manitoba under the terms of this Act, that it would in fact be operated by an incorporated community or within an incorporated community. If you go further in the Act - and I refer specifically to the comments by the Leader of the Opposition with reference to Crown land and the powers of the Minister of Northern Affairs with respect to Crown land, and that is on Page 6: "The Minister first to consult community council." And it says specifically, "where the land referred to in subsection (1) is located in a community, an incorporated community or within five miles from the boundaries of any of them, before approving the disposition the Minister shall consult the community council or the incorporated community council as the case may be as the desirability of approving the disposition." This puts right into law, Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Minister must consult with the members of the community council before he makes any decision with reference to Crown land which is in or near a community. At the present time there is absolutely no need for the Minister of Mines and Resources, who now administers the Crown lands of Northern Manitoba, to make any consultations with any community with respect to Crown land that is in or near their boundaries. The decision may be made right here without any consultation whatsoever. So this is a step forward, a step in the direction towards more decision-making at the local level.

As I said in my speech the other day, Mr. Speaker, the only section really that the Conservatives read, obviously is this section which leads up to Page 10, 11, and they have read on Page 10 and 11 that local committees may be established in Northern Manitoba. Local committees may be established, Mr. Speaker, where an incorporated community is not operating. And certainly where a local committee is established under this Act, then the Minister has the authority through those local committees. The Minister does not delegate authority to the local committees in the same way that it is delegated to incorporated community councils. But this is as far as they've read, and they have made their whole case on these first ten pages of the Act and they've absolutely disregarded and ignored the other sections of this Act.

If you go on to Part IV, which I submit they have completely ignored, on Page 12: "On receipt of a petition signed by at least fifteen . . ."

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I think the honourable gentleman is skirting very close to citing page by page, clause by clause. We are discussing the bill in principle. I would hope he would adhere to that. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, for example, Mr. Speaker, in one section of the Act with reference to incorporation it states that - if I may paraphrase the section - that a petition signed by at least 15 adults in a community, adult residents of the community, may apply for an incorporated community council status. And where that incorporation takes place, Mr. Speaker, the community can then be delegated authorities under this Act, which they at present do not have under the present Northern Affairs Act.

BILL 75

(MR. BOSTROM cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, if you go on to read the Act more thoroughly, as I submit the opposition have not done, and if you look at the powers, the powers that are given to the incorporated community councils, the powers that are delegated to the incorporated community councils under this Act, they will have the power to levy taxes on all taxable property. And if you look at the Act and read the section, nowhere does it say that this power is subject to the approval of the Minister. The only approval from the Minister that is required is in the first instance that the council is incorporated. Once the council is incorporated, these other powers can be delegated to that council and they can exercise those rights and powers under this Act without the approval of the Minister. In other words, they can incorporate, they can incorporate the community into an incorporated community council, and they have the power to levy taxes, a power which they do not have right now, a power which is exercised under the Act passed in 1966. They have the power under this Act on Page 29 to operate police services within the community, a power which they do not have at present.

Another power which is delegated to them under this Act is the agreement regarding facilities, in which a community may operate facilities within the community completely on their own, without any approval of the Minister. Other powers that are delegated under this Act. And the Leader of the Opposition has the gall to state that there are no powers, no new additional powers which are given to the communities under this Act.

They will have the power to acquire, use and dispose of property. At the present time the community councils, the communities in Northern Manitoba, cannot acquire property. They cannot dispose of property. They cannot hold ownership, hold title to that property. Under this Act they will be given that power. At the present time, the Minister must own the property and allow them, by his own discretion, to use that property. Under this Act the title can be held in the name of the community.

They will have the power to develop and redevelop land. They will have the power to establish, acquire and operate businesses. They could be delegated the power to operate homes for elderly persons, and they could be delegated power for acquisition or construction of housing for rent. These are all new additional powers, powers which the communities do not enjoy at the present time. And they are not subject to the approval of the Minister. The only thing that is subject to the approval of the Minister, and it's stated right in the Act, is the initial incorporation of the community. Once the community is incorporated it is like any municipality. It has Letters Patent which spell out its responsibilities, rights and duties. It is governed by that Letters Patent. The Minister cannot interfere and direct, as the Conservative Party has suggested they may do, as the Conservative Party has misrepresented and suggested that the Minister may directly intervene in the affairs of the community. Under the present Act, under the Act which was passed in 1966, the Minister may do that, but under this Act he may not. In fact, these powers are given to the community councils to be independent and autonomous of the Minister.

QUESTION put on the amendment. MOTION lost.

QUESTION put on the main motion. MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 75 passed.

BILL NO. 83

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you'd call Bill No. 83.

MR. SPEAKER: The proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I adjourned the debate for the Member for Minnedosa.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID BLAKE (Minnedosa): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's just one or two points that I want to make on Bill 83 before it comes to a vote, and I was disappointed that the Minister hasn't provided an answer to a question that's been on the Order Paper for some weeks. I felt that this might have cleared up a lot of items. He may have some interesting information that he want to sort of give us at the final minutes when he's closing debate to show that there are areas that disclose a need for the particular entry of the government into the insurance field. That need hasn't been adequately demonstrated to us as far as we are concerned on this side. The introduction of the bill by the Minister certainly didn't give us a good enough explanation of it. We have asked what studies have been undertaken, and this would have given us, I think, a

BILL 83

(MR. BLAKE cont'd) a little better information to be able to debate the bill in a little more orderly fashion. I know the Minister considers the insurance field to be a lucrative field and this is probably the reason for the Government's entry into the general insurance business, although I notice they are not going into the hail insurance business. I suppose that's an area that he feels is not too lucrative in view of the experience of Autopac last year. What I mean, it's not under the same bill. It's a service being provided to the agricultural community.

I just can't really, Mr. Speaker, understand why the Minister hasn't given us some answers to the questions that we have been asking, so without the benefit of the studies being done, or the studies that have been undertaken for our reference, we will just have to make the points that we have marked down because I don't think the Minister has proven the case and that there is a need for the Government's entry into the general insurance field. They're going into the business on a competitive basis and we're certainly glad to see that, but just how the Government will make money on a competitive basis we are not too sure, because I think they pretty well have to have a monopoly situation in order to run profitably.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think the main argument to be made is the long-range plans for their entry into the insurance field, and that is the control of funds. We have heard that the insurance agents are not in danger, that they will be able to handle the government insurance, and they have been assured there's nothing to worry about, but I think all they have to do is look down the road away and see the end result of the planned dovetailing with the treasury branches, and the Autopac, and the fire insurance, and the marine insurance, and all of these various other types of services that the Government will be providing to the people of Manitoba whether they like it or not. I think when the agents look down the road they can see the branch of the government that will be handling all of the various insurance services and there will be no longer a need for Mr. Insurance Agent. I think this is one of the dangers that we see in the plan, and I feel, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we haven't been deluged with insurance agents protesting is probably due to the fact that they are enjoying in most cases the Autopac line now and they're probably a little reluctant to come forward and rock the boat too much for fear of losing their licence as an Autopac agent, or not getting the agency to sell the government line. I'll be interested in the remarks of the Minister when he closes debate just to show us that that is not really the case.

The Minister of Labour seems in a hurry to get this bill to a vote, Mr. Speaker, and I assure you that I won't be that long but there are one or two points that I must make, I think, and I can't pass up, and mention once again the staggering Autopac losses, and once we get the fire and general insurance funds all rolled into one tiny little bundle, it's going to be extremely difficult for those of us in opposition to decipher the statement and find out just what lost money and what made money, and come up with a fair appraisal of the various lines of insurance.

The Minister has told us in his opening remarks that there will be competition in the industry, but there are many areas, Mr. Speaker, as is obvious in the field, just how fair will competition be. I believe the Minister mentioned the other night on a television interview that public buildings and hospitals and schools and various things of this nature would probably be placed with the government agency, and I just wonder if this really is considered fair competition, and I would also like to know just how long it will be before Autopac and the fire insurance things are merged. I was extremely interested in the studies that had been done and this was the reason for placing a question on the Order Paper, because in my experience in the business world you just didn't jump into a new venture, you did some studies and you took a cautious and a real careful approach to it, because those fields where you did enter without due research and consideration with an eye to the profitability of it usually ended up in disaster and there were fingers burnt in most cases.

I think the bill as it presently stands obviously will be passed with the government majority, but I think there are areas where amendments will be necessary, and certainly desirable, and I hope that it can be pointed out to the Minister and I hope that he will bring in some amendments to the bill. He has indicated one particular section already where the Government has power to acquire businesses, the particular wording "by purchase or other means", and that is rather a far-reaching clause "by other means". We're not just too sure whether it means confiscation or expropriation or just what the Minister might mean there.

BILL 83

(MR. BLAKE cont'd) So there are areas no doubt, Mr. Speaker, where amendments will be forthcoming and we hope that they will be brought in.

There's another section in the bill that gives us some concern, and I can't recall the correct wording of it, but it allows the corporation or the government to request information from any agency, so and so and so and so, and municipalities. On request they'll be asked to provide certain information to the government. Now this would indicate to me that if one of the municipalities happen to have their insurance placed with a particular fire insurance company, that the MPIC could request the municipality to provide all the information and all the particulars of their insurance coverage, and naturally this would include rates and it would be a very simple matter, Mr. Speaker, for the MPIC then to under bid the existing company that's carrying the insurance. So this goes back to the competition feature and just how fair the competition might be. So these are areas of concern, Mr. Speaker, that I hope the Minister will consider, and when we go to the clause by clause discussion of the bill that he will come forth with some amendment that will remove these unsatisfactory features and clauses from the bill.

I feel that the Bill 83 is going to pass, as I said, Mr. Speaker, and while we have objections to the Government's entry into this particular field, we don't feel that they have shown just cause and we're afraid that it will be difficult for them to provide the same calibre of service that is provided by the private companies on a reasonably fair, competitive basis and therefore it could result in another losing proposition such as the serious losses of Autopac have proven to be. We know in some of the powers of the bill they will be able to maybe divert some of the gasoline tax into the insurance field and this way reduce the rate, and I realize this is done in another province, but that's not really being fair to the motoring public and there'll be no way, I suggest, Mr. Speaker, in a year or so, of ever comparing the rates in a proper manner whereby we will be able to see just how much the motorist in Manitoba is saving on his auto insurance.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues seems to be anxious to get to the vote and I will not hold it off any longer, so with that I will defer, Mr. Speaker, to whoever else might want to contribute to Bill 83.

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

MR. I. H. ASPER (Leader of the Liberal Party) (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I propose to take only a few seconds to state, Mr. Speaker, -- (Interjection) -- If the Honourable Minister of Labour eggs me on, anything can happen

Mr. Speaker, I simply want to state the Liberal Party position. We believe the hoist, the six-month deferral, was reasonable. We will support it. We find the Government unwilling and certainly so far intransigent as to amendment. We hope that will change when we move this bill into committee. But, Mr. Speaker, in so saying, we state the reason for our position, that that being that there are more important things that the Government's energy should be used for. There are senior citizens in nursing homes that need to be built that aren't being built. There are roads that need to be built that aren't being built. There are acute-care medical hospital beds required that aren't being built. There's a welfare nightmare to clean up. It isn't being attended to. There are jobs to be created, they are not being created. And yet the Government assigns this priority to this bill and it wants to embark into a new bureaucracy and a new, untried, uncharted path without putting before this House one scintilla of evidence as to the need for government intervention in the area.

As well, Mr. Speaker, because of the lack of priority that this government seems to have in viewing the problems of Manitoba, we find the bill contains no commitment as yet to fair competition. Competition, yes; fair competition, no. And, Mr. Speaker, because there has been no cogent reason advanced by any spokesman for government, no study that warrants or supports this action, we believe that the motion before the House to defer, to give the Government time, to give opposition members a chance to study it and give the affected public a chance to make a submission and also time for the Government to make its case, we would have, and will, continue to support the hoist.

Mr. Speaker, in view of my doubt that the amendment will pass and in view of my confidence that the government majority will vote to pass the bill itself for second reading, we would again urge the Government, at least when we move to committee stage hopefully tonight or tomorrow, that it will consider the amendments that have been proposed, recommended,

BILL 83

(MR. ASPER cont'd) and at least protect the public by making the amendments that have been recommended.

QUESTION put on the amendment. MOTION lost.

MR. JORGENSEN: Yeas and nays, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Call in the members. Order please. The motion before the House is the amendment to Bill 83.

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

YEAS

Messrs:	Asper	Jorgenson
	Axworthy	McGill
	Banman	McGregor
	Blake	McKenzie
	Craik	Marion
	Enns	Minaker
	Graham	Moug
	F. Johnston	Spivak

NAYS

Messrs.	Adam	McBryde
	Barrow	Malinowski
	Bostrom	Miller
	Boyce	Osland
	Burtniak	Paulley
	Cherniack	Pawley
	Derewianchuk	Petursson
	Dillen	Schreyer
	Doern	Shafransky
	Evans	Toupin
	Gottfried	Turnbull
	Hanuschak	Uruski
	Jenkins	Uskiw
	Johannson	Walding

MR. CLERK: Yeas, 16; Nays, 28.

MR. SPEAKER: In my opinion the nays have it, I declare the motion lost. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, if my honourable friend from Sturgeon Creek is going to make a contribution, may I suggest that you, Sir, may call it 5:30 and this bill will be the first bill called this evening.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour of adjournment having been agreed upon, the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 8:00 p.m. tonight. (Tuesday)