

## THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

8:00 o'clock, Tuesday, February 26, 1974

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I don't quite recollect my final words at 5:30 but I know, Mr. Speaker, that it had to do with pork marketing in Manitoba and it had to do with certain statements made by the Member for Lakeside. I simply want to say that it would be most unfortunate, Mr. Chairman, that if we continued to debate the question of pork marketing indefinitely in the political arena, which would result, or could result in the operation of that board coming to a standstill, or at least certainly not making any degree of progress, which would be very costly to the producers of pork in this province.

I believe that the kind of debate that has been ongoing in the last six months to say the least, Mr. Chairman, has been harmful to the hog producers of this province and has worked to the advantage, Mr. Chairman, of the processing industry. It has not been a good trade-off for the producers of this province. And I would ask the members opposite that they take the politics out of marketing boards--(Interjection)--oh yes, oh yes, that it is not reasonable, Mr. Chairman, that it is not reasonable, Mr. Chairman, to have to tie the political philosophy of any party in the operation of any of the marketing boards that we have in this province. And the reason I say that, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that they are not new institutions, that we have had marketing boards in this province for at least 20 years with respect to some, certainly many in the last ten years, and we are just at the point of sort of rounding out the list at this time in our history, and the only exception I would say would be the beef producers of this province that don't have an organized marketing system, but by and large all other commodities have been organized in one form or another and with different degrees of success, Mr. Chairman, as to the benefits to the producers. So it would be wrong to try to continue the debate at the political level, and it is wrong for any political party to presume, to presume that its role should be, Mr. Chairman, to bring about the destruction of any existing orderly marketing system other than through the change of legislation, which, Mr. Speaker, if that is the direction the members want to go then they ought to be on this side of the House and they should repeal the Natural Products Marketing Act, Mr. Chairman; they should repeal the Natural Products Marketing Act if it is contrary to their philosophy. But I want to make the observation, Mr. Chairman, that they were in office for about 11 or 12 years and they did not repeal the legislation. It was on the books since 1949. But they have attempted to deny the rights of people in the setting up of marketing agencies over the years by very stringent requirements, namely, Mr. Chairman, the fact that if any particular group, if any particular group, Mr. Chairman, wanted to set up a marketing board, the regulations under the former government were that two-thirds of those voting had to be in favour, had to be in favour.

A MEMBER: And how's it done now . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Honourable Member for Lakeside will get his opportunity.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, we have brought in a substantial degree of democratic freedom just through the removal of the two-thirds, just through the removal of the two-thirds majority that was required prior to 1969. We brought democracy into the Natural Products Marketing Act for the first time in Manitoba's history, Mr. Chairman. Today you can elect a marketing board, Mr. Chairman, with 51 percent of those voting. Now, the honourable members say, if they get a vote at all, and I should ask them to search their memory, Mr. Chairman.

A MEMBER: They have to have minds.

MR. USKIW: They have to have minds, of course they do, to search. But, Mr. Chairman, only recently, a week ago we announced a result of one such referendum.

A MEMBER: Yes, it was sure dumb.

MR. USKIW: But it was a vote. The Honourable Member for Lakeside said when have you allowed a vote, Mr. Chairman. His mind is so weak that a week escapes him, Mr. Chairman. A week has already escaped the mind of my honourable friend from Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: . . . about the Hog Marketing Board.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. ENNS: Tell us that . . .

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MR. USKIW: . . . we had an egg vote in this province and they voted positive, and that was only about two years ago. We had a vote on vegetables, contrary to the operations of the previous government on the same question, and the same commodity, Mr. Chairman. We had a vote and it was positive. We have elected directors on those boards. We had an election of directors for the first time, Mr. Chairman, to the Potato Commission or the Potato Board, which was in existence since 1965, Mr. Chairman. The Potato Commission was set up with a vote in 1965, Mr. Chairman, but the board was never allowed to be elected, never allowed to be elected.

A MEMBER: By the Conservatives.

MR. USKIW: By the Conservative government, that's correct, Mr. Chairman. And that was democratized a few years ago wherein we did hold elections and that board is also run by elected people, elected by the producers whom they represent. And it is true that I have never made the pitch, Mr. Chairman, that you have to have a vote on every issue. In the case of the hog marketing system, we already had a hog marketing system in this province established by the previous administration . . . In 1965, not voluntary, Mr. Chairman, compulsory - compulsory to pay 30 cents for every hog sold without any benefit whatever, Mr. Chairman. Without any benefit whatever, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. ORDER!

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I'm having difficulty here in the Chair. If the honourable members don't want to listen to what the Honourable Minister is saying, fine and dandy, but the Chair does. Order please!

MR. USKIW: Let me reflect on the character of the board that was appointed in 1967--1965, Mr. Chairman - not on the individuals but on the character of the agency wherein the processing industry was in control of the board.

SOME MEMBERS: No. Oh, no.

MR. USKIW: Not producers, Mr. Chairman, but where Canada Packers and Swifts and Burns and all the others were in the decision-making process presuming to operate a marketing agency for the producers of this province. My honourable friend cries about democratic freedom. The shouting started, Mr. Chairman, when we had the election, when we appointed--no, when we appointed a group of producers to run that board and where we did not reappoint the industry people that were on there previous. That's when the shouting started, Mr. Chairman. And for good reason, Mr. Chairman. For good reason, Mr. Chairman, because for the first time in the history of the Manitoba Hog Marketing Commission the producers were running the affairs, albeit they were appointed, but they were running their own affairs, Mr. Chairman, and subsequently, Mr. Chairman, we had the election of producers, in which case the lowest level of ethics were employed by members opposite, by members opposite, and some members of that particular board, in unison, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Mr. Chairman, when the Chairman of the Hog Marketing Board was in Japan last fall, and while at the same time, while at the same time in his own district elections were being held to elect a member for that district and he was a candidate for election, Mr. Chairman . . .

A MEMBER: No, he was not.

MR. USKIW: Oh yes he was. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Chairman, he was subsequently elected so he must have been a candidate. --(Interjection)--

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. Order please. The Chair is having difficulty in hearing what is being said. Now if some honourable members want to have a shouting contest I suggest they go out in the hall or outside the building, but when I'm trying to hear what the honourable member is saying, I'm trying to maintain order here. These are your rules, I hope that you'll live by them. If you want to have a shouting contest, well then I suggest perhaps we can arrange that, but right now I don't think we are engaged in a shouting contest. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that particular man was elected. . .

MR. ENNS: No, he was not.

MR. USKIW: . . . for the area which he represented when he was appointed. --(Interjections)--

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Honourable Member for Lakeside, if he wishes to take part in the debate . . .

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MR. ENNS: I'm on a point of order, not a point of privilege, on a point of order . . .  
Mr. Chairman.

MR. USKIW: The fact of the matter is that Max Hofford was not elected at large from the district that he proposes to represent.

MR. ENNS: He sure as hell wasn't. He was put in by five or six regional people, and you would . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. ENNS: You would . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. ORDER! ORDER! That is not a point of order, as I said to the honourable member before; if two members have a difference of opinion, that does not constitute a point of order, according to our House rules. ORDER PLEASE!

MR. BILTON: Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. BILTON: I believe if the Minister continues to suggest to the House what he has suggested a few moments ago, that Max Hofford was elected in Swan River, Sir, I was present and Max Hofford withdrew and he was elected the next day by six members in Dauphin, but not in Swan River. I was there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order! That may be so, but that is not a point of order according to our House rules. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: It's obvious, Mr. Chairman, that the members opposite would want to rely on the ignorance of the public on the question of the elections in order to put their point across. The present chairman of the board, who was the past chairman of the board, who was elected in his district only about two months ago, was elected in the same way as every other board member that is elected to that board . . .

A MEMBER: He wasn't.

MR. USKIW: . . . including my honourable friend's friend from Lakeside.

MR. CHAIRMAN: ORDER PLEASE!

MR. USKIW: But during the course of the election, Mr. Chairman, during the course of the election, Mr. Chairman, we had the friends of my friends opposite conducting a campaign of innuendo at a time when they knew that the man in question was not able to defend his position. Ethics, Mr. Chairman, of the lowest kind experienced in this province for a long long time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read into the record a letter which I received from a very outstanding member of that particular board, a member that many members here would know and would appreciate, and that is from the former Member for La Verendrye, Mr. Albert Vielfaure. --(Interjection)--Yes, I'm prepared to table this letter, Mr. Chairman. This letter's dated December 26th.

A MEMBER: What year?

MR. USKIW: 1973. And it's to myself, Mr. Chairman, and it reads as follows: "You are no doubt aware by now that I have not let my name stand for re-election as representative for the Hog Marketing Board District No. 7. I wish to take this opportunity to thank you most sincerely for the confidence you placed in me by appointing me some three years ago to the Manitoba Hog Marketing Commission. It has been my goal through these years to work towards equitable returns to producers, stabilizing and equalizing both prices and production while at the same time taking into consideration the interests and needs of other segments of society. I feel that as a commission and a board we have achieved a fair percentage of these goals, and I certainly do not think that we are beyond criticism. However, some of the charges that were made publicly, even by some of our own board members, at the Pork Producers' meeting November 28th, such as the board not giving financial information, the elected board members having allowed only two votes since the election of new members to the board, meetings being unconstitutionally conducted, plus an enormous amount of innuendo and false interpretations of documents, were just a little too much for me to take so I decided at this time I would not accept re-election. In closing, Mr. Minister, I would like to thank you for your consideration and assure you that I will continue towards the betterment of our agricultural producers in this province and country." Signed, Albert Vielfaure. (Applause)

Mr. Chairman, I submit that that group over there had more to do with the pulling away of these services on the part of this individual than anybody else in this province, a man that was well respected while he was a member of this Chamber for a number of years.

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(MR. USKIW cont'd)

Mr. Chairman, I don't have many more minutes to go, so I simply want to end on the note that we have an elected board, a Hog Producers' Marketing Board, and the politicians should leave that elected board alone and let them operate as they should, without interference, the like of which we have had in the last eight to twelve months, and if that is allowed to happen, Mr. Chairman, we will have indeed made a lot of progress in a very short period of time in the months ahead.

On the other hand, if the debate continues at this level, if the destructive purposes of members opposite shall continue into the future there is no question in my mind that we will have major confrontations and problems in the marketing of pork in this province. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I feel that I should say a few words on agriculture at this time. I normally would not have, I believe, joined the debate but the Minister in his opening remarks this afternoon made what I feel was a strong statement of misrepresentation when he said words to the effect that the Federal Government is trying to downgrade the role of the Wheat Board and he's setting himself up as a great defender. I could hardly believe it. I have respect for the Minister and I could hardly believe that he would make a statement like that. I really do. I thought he was one of the better Ministers on that side, but when he deliberately last fall and almost up to the present time engaged in verbal combat with the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board without factual information to back him up to prove that he was in the right and the federals, or in this case Mr. Lang, was in the wrong, for a long time I was confused, during the course of the summer and the late fall and on into the winter; and when the government under his direction started to use taxpayers' money to try to influence the minds of farmers who were going to vote on the rapeseed poll, well I tell you the Minister dropped a long way in my respect, because later on when I talk I'm going to go into some of the facts and the reasons for the rapeseed poll.

But for the moment I want to concern myself and draw attention to the members of the House the actions of this Minister with respect - and he said it again this afternoon - that the federal authorities in agriculture are trying to keep a cheap feed grain policy probably to satisfy eastern livestock breeders and eastern consumers. Now I would think that that is a fair summation of his remarks.

Now let us see what the facts are. Let us see what the facts are. The facts are - and I'm quoting extensively from a report that was published in the Winnipeg Free Press Weekly and it was written by Otto Lang and he signed his name to it. And I quote: "Feed grain supplies and prices on the prairies. Livestock producers on the prairies wishing to buy feed grain may of course purchase directly from the farmer or from the Canadian Wheat Board."

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Minister never said that. He didn't say that there was a choice, a freedom of choice of purchasing like suppliers or people wanting feed grains could purchase from the Wheat Board or they could purchase from another farmer. He never said that. He left the impression that some force in Ottawa is trying to destroy the Canadian Wheat Board by removing that particular part of grain operation from the Wheat Board, and that's not true. That is not true, that the purchasers can buy from the Wheat Board or from the farmer, whichever is convenient. Farm to farm or farmer to feedlot or vice versa. --(Interjection)--Yes. But why don't you say it? When you're attacking why don't you say it? You leave that out. Oh yes, I've heard my honourable friend many times on the radio, on television and in quotations in the newspaper, as if he is the defender of the Wheat Board for all of Canada. What nonsense! And I quote again: "Purchases directly from farmers. Feedlots, feed mills and others buying barley, oats or feed wheat directly from the farmers pay the going rate per bushel charged by the farmer. This is referred to as off board or off quota price. (b) Purchases from the Canadian Wheat Board. On buying" - Mr. Chairman, if the jackass from Radisson will quit braying I will carry on, but if he wishes to ask me a question I'll sit down and let him ask. On the two points that are made here.

The second way of purchasing is from the Canadian Wheat Board. "On buying from the Canadian Wheat Board, prairie feedlots, feed mills and others now pay the going off board price plus the Wheat Board's costs of handling and storage." Now outside of the prairies for this year the Canadian Wheat Board remains the only seller of prairie feed grain into all other

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(MR. G. JOHNSTON cont'd) . . . . parts of Canada outside the prairies. It charges British Columbia and eastern feed mills, feedlots and livestock producers the prairie off board price plus costs of handling, storage and transportation.

I think my honourable friend has made reference to the fact that certain parts of Canada are getting cheap feed grain. Well here is the fact on that matter. "Equity in pricing across Canada." Says, "The Canadian Wheat Board now charges all Canadian buyers in the prairies as well as in the east and in British Columbia the same base price, and since this base price is the same as that charged by the prairie farmer in his direct sales to feedlots, feed mills and others, you can see that we have achieved our objective of equity of prices right across Canada." Everybody pays the same base price. Costs added to the base price make the final purchase price somewhat higher in B.C. and in the east. Now the off board prairie price earlier this week - and this is referring to a month or so ago - the Canadian Wheat Board announced its reading of prairie off board prices. Farmers across the prairies have been charging in their private sales the following average prices: Feed barley, \$1.92 a bushel; feed oats, \$1.18 a bushel; feed wheat \$2.99 a bushel. The Canadian Wheat Board is now charging these base prices for its sales all across Canada. To determine its domestic prices for feed grains the Canadian Wheat Board takes these average prairie off board prices and adds the costs. Let's examine that. Take feed barley as an example. What is the Wheat Board charging buyers in Canada? Let's first look at the prairies and this is the prairie board charges. The average off board price - \$1.92 a bushel, plus costs of handling and storage which is 19 cents, so on the prairies they pay \$2.11 a bushel, that's the average price a buyer on the prairies must now pay to get No. 1 feed barley from the elevator.

What about the east? In eastern Canada and B.C. the board charges \$1.92 a bushel plus costs of handling, storage and transportation which is 28-1/2 cents, total price \$2.20-1/2. The Wheat Board's price for No. 1 barley at Thunder Bay for domestic users is therefore about 2.21 a bushel at the present time. The price for that same bushel at Prescott, Ontario or Montreal is approximately 2.25 a bushel wholesale. So, Mr. Chairman, I hope that the Minister will shoot a little straighter when he's making some of the charges that he has made in the past that the prairie farmer is being ripped off by some evil force in government and that's not so at all. --(Interjection)--When I'm finished.

Now this is a concluding paragraph of a newsletter, and I quote again: "Clearly since the announcement of our new domestic feed grain program, feed grain prices both on the prairies and outside the prairies have been going up. I have said many times that this year prairie farmers can expect to receive their best return ever on feed grain sales. Since the editors of this newspaper quite reasonably asked that this column be non-political I have to leave it to you to draw your own conclusions about all the fuss about cheap feed grains, about the talk of providing eastern livestock feeders cheap feed from the west and about the suggestion that the prairie producer was going to take a substantial loss because of lower prices. It's abundantly clear that that is not happening."

Mr. Chairman, I turn to the other subject of the rapeseed poll that was conducted a short while ago. My honourable friend opposite would have us believe that there was again some evil force at work to thwart the farmers from getting a fair price for their product, so he was so upset about it that he started to spend public moneys on an advertising campaign to change their minds or to influence them instead of letting them alone, successful farmers who have been doing pretty well over the years, he felt that he should instruct them on how they should vote. How was that vote set up that he was so livid about that he couldn't live with it that he had to use taxpayers' moneys to try and persuade them to vote the way he felt they should vote? Here's how the rapeseed poll was set up.

The government had been making plans for the poll in response to representations from growers and from producer organizations. So, No. 1, the growers themselves and the people who are processing and buy it felt that there should be a vote held, so proceeding from there, and I quote from a news release made by Mr. Lang: "To be sure that this poll was a fair and impartial one, in June we appointed George Turner of Winnipeg to take charge of it. Mr. Turner is a former President and General Manager of the Manitoba Pool Elevators and his appointment to this new role was well received by all interested parties." Now I don't know whether my honourable friend disapproved of that person taking on this job or not. They didn't say so at the time. The Wheat Board Minister pointed out that Mr. Turner had been consulting

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(MR. G. JOHNSTON cont'd) . . . . over the past several months with rapeseed growers in Western Canada to determine the exact rules to govern the poll.

Mr. Lang reported that the government had adopted Mr. Turner's recommendations in full, and here are the basic ground rules for the vote. No. 1. Who can vote. All Canadian Wheat Board permit holders whose permit books indicate acreage seeded to rapeseed in any two out of the three crop years 1971-72, 1972-73, 1973-74. Also eligible to vote will be the new permit book holders who grew grain for the first time in 1972 or 1973 and whose permit books indicate acreage seeded to rapeseed in at least one year.

2. What choice will be on the ballot. The ballot will allow a producer to indicate a) that he prefers the present marketing system; or b) that he prefers the Canadian Wheat Board system; or c) that he is undecided.

3. What majority will be required. A majority of at least 60 percent of the ballots returned must be in favour of the Canadian Wheat Board alternative before a change to that system would be made.

4. How will the votes be collected. Well, I don't suppose my honourable friend would haggle about that, how they were collected.

And, 5, the fifth interesting point made: what information will be provided about the alternative. Each eligible voter will receive two information brochures, one explaining the case for the present open marketing system of rapeseed marketing, and this was prepared by the Rapeseed Association of Canada, and the other explaining the case for including the marketing of rapeseed under the Canadian Wheat Board, prepared jointly by the three prairie pools. These brochures will be mailed together to all eligible voters in mid-November.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I could ask the House: what could be fairer than that sort of a vote? What could be fairer? The information was supplied to the farmer so that he could make up his mind one way or the other. They had competent people running the vote, running the poll. They had a respected person who made the recommendations as to how and why and when the vote should be taken, and I really can't understand how the Minister would take it upon himself to interfere, disrupt, try to sway the person's vote, try and change the farmer's mind, and then have the audacity to use the farmer's own money to pay for the ads to try and do it. The taxpayers' dollar. So I think this Minister has a lot to answer to to this House when he takes it on himself whether it's based on his philosophy or his socialistic outlook or whatever, that he would try to thwart a program that is, 1) for the good of all Canada; 2) try to get the best return for the farmer in the west; and then when he gets through with that, he tries to muddy the waters on the rapeseed vote. I really have lost respect for my honourable friend when he does a thing like that.

A MEMBER: How much did it cost, Gordon?

MR. G. JOHNSTON: I would like to know. Perhaps the Minister will tell us the cost of the advertising campaign that was so unsuccessful and farmers were too smart to fall for it.

Now to turn to another matter, Mr. Chairman. I'm wondering at this time, and I represent a farm community, a small rural city in Manitoba and some of the best farm and grain and cattle producing areas in the province, the constituency of Portage la Prairie, but I ask myself the question when I walk into a supermarket and in December, January, February potatoes are \$1.25 for 10 lbs. Now, is this high price because of the quota system of allowing, under the vegetable marketing system, to say that only certain people can grow the product, they can only deliver so much? Well, if this is control, supply and demand, it's certainly loaded in favour of the few producers who have the quotas. There are many, many farmers who wish to grow, who wish to make a decent living at producing root crop vegetables, and I know, I've talked to many of them who would like to get quotas but they can't. You can't tell me that this system is good for all of Manitoba. It may be good for a few producers but it's not good for the housewife who has a budget of \$60.00 or \$70.00 a week to try and buy her food. And here is a Manitoba-grown product that's 12 cents a pound by Christmas time, God knows what it's going to be by spring when the shortages really develop. And it's unbelievable that the most productive country in the world should have their people running short of certain foods that are grown right here.

A MEMBER: It happens in Russia every day, Gordon.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: I would ask the Minister if he's considering any changes in the structure of the Vegetable Marketing Commission or any other board that he has any authority

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(MR. G. JOHNSTON cont'd) . . . . over, where we see the product that is a very very high price. Now I know I'll be represented as saying, well, the farmers you want them to produce cheap food. That's nonsense. But there's a fair price somewhere and it isn't gouging the housewife, because I'll tell you, if we go through one more year of inflation and this sort of an operation has a lot to do with inflation where there's an artificial price set on a product that should be plentiful and should be in good supply, and it can still be a fair price; there can still be a fair price and a fair return to the farmer, or to the grower.

In closing, I would say to my honourable friend he seems to be fighting it out with the Conservatives with respect to the hog contract with Japan and the Hog Marketing Commission. I would ask him this. Can he not in very general terms, in very general terms without revealing the nature of the contract, tell this House and tell the farmers of the province who are interested how the system works. I understand that when the market drops on certain days, then some appointed group or a company jump in and buy to help hold the market up, but they buy a little bit cheaper than the day's buying had started out at, and this method of taking off the surplus and getting a half decent price goes to the Japanese contract. Now if I'm wrong, well then I would like to be corrected, but I would think the Minister can give some general information that will not harm, will not hurt the contract or will not cause any alarm from the buyers. Surely the farmers who are selling--and I get them asking me many many times in the past year in my constituency, they like to know what's going on and we talk about the rumours we have heard about how it operates, but nobody really knows. My goodness, surely the Minister can give some sort of a general statement that will spell it out in a way that doesn't destroy the confidentiality of the contract.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I have been asked to give some details as to the contractual arrangements that the Pork Producers Marketing Board has with Japan, and indeed how that relates to the operations of the teletype system here in Winnipeg and I should, for the benefit of the Member for Portage la Prairie, indicate to him that, as I understand it, the board does try to manipulate the market to the extent that they have power to do so, through the use of the Japanese contract. In other words, when there are days where the markets are sluggish, where the bidding is slow, they do try to intervene more aggressively than they otherwise would to take off some product from this market. In fact they do that not only for the Japanese contract, Mr. Chairman, but for shipments to the United States.

The board itself gets in the act of pushing the button to purchase a lot of hogs, which would attempt to reduce the number of hogs or the supply for that day, and in that sense try to raise the price on the balance of the hogs sold during that day. Whether it would have the effect of raising it a nickel or a dime or a quarter is irrelevant. The fact of the matter is that if you're able to manipulate it at all, even if it's a nickel, you could afford to discount one sale by 25 cents if it represents a small percentage of the total, say 10 or 15 percent, and offset that loss by a significant benefit by getting a nickel or a dime or a quarter more on the larger volume that is sold domestically. That is essentially how they try to operate the system. So that one could never argue in black and white that there is a loss with respect to the American market or the Japanese market or indeed - and I should enlighten my honourable friends opposite - the direct sales to Ontario and Quebec that are made from time to time in order to do the very same thing, in order to do the very same thing, Mr. Chairman. So all of those factors put together end up in an average price situation on a given date, and that is the extension of bargaining power that is possible when you pool all of your resources together in the sale of any given commodity where everyone acts through one agency. That is the benefit of a single desk selling agency. That is one of the major benefits.

The other is, Mr. Chairman, the possibility of negotiating, of negotiating even with the domestic buyers, and that process has been ongoing, Mr. Chairman, and I should like honourable members to listen to this point. That process has been ongoing now for some time, where there have been direct negotiations with the point of view of eliminating perhaps, not eliminating but maybe almost eliminating, reliance on the teletype system and dealing partly through negotiated arrangement. And we have had two or three rounds of negotiations--and I say "we", I say the people of Manitoba through the Hog Marketing Board. And let me say this, Mr. Chairman, that the only area of difficulty during those negotiations arose when there was controversy generated by my friends opposite. Oh yes. When you're talking to the industry people

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) . . . . who are the buyers, if they feel there's any hope of destroying the system they bargain tougher, and the louder my friends opposite shout, Mr. Chairman, the more reluctant they are to negotiate with the Hog Marketing Board, and that is the damage my friends opposite, Mr. Chairman, are doing. --(Interjection)--All right; the Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party wants to disassociate himself from that kind of activity and I accept that. I think that is fair . . . .

MR. ENNS: On a point of order. I have no difficulty disassociating myself from the Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lakeside on a point . . . Order, please. Order, please. I didn't hear the honourable member's point of order.

MR. ENNS: Well, my point of order was simply that I had no difficulty in disassociating myself from the Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party on a point of order.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Chairman, on the point of order I think the disassociation is self-evident.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Well we had expressions of opinion but those are not points of order. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: That procedure is not new and the Honourable Member for Lakeside knows it. He had the responsibility of overseeing the operations of many boards during his term of office. I've had very personal experience in the way in which the Potato Marketing Commission as set up by him, Mr. Chairman, how they operated in two or three or several markets and how they pooled the price into an average price for all producers, and Mr. Chairman, you can search Hansard. You will never find one day, one time, where I put the question to the Minister of Agriculture who is now the Member for Lakeside, as to how much I got for my potatoes that were shipped to Montreal and how much less that was than what I got for them when they were sold in Winnipeg. Never, Mr. Chairman, will you find on the records of Hansard a question put by me, because I understood very well the workings of the marketing system and the way it had to function. And for the benefit of members opposite who yet have to learn, who yet have to learn how the marketing function is set up and how it's administered, let me point out that in any given day of the year, Mr. Chairman, no producer, nor the Minister, whether it was the Minister before this one or this one, would know - unless they made an inquiry - would know the price that Canada Packers pays for our hogs or would know the price that Swifts is paying on any given day.

A MEMBER: Now that's where you're wrong.

MR. USKIW: And that is not where I am wrong, because the only price that is revealed is the average price of all the hogs sold at several different prices during the same day. Only the average price is known, Mr. Chairman, and you can have Swifts buying cheaper than Canada Packers or vice versa in the same day, depending on how much volume was put through and at what price they pushed the button. And in the end the producer knows what the average price was for that day, and for some peculiar reason there is some need to separate one buyer and say, "But we want to know how much that one paid today compared . . ." We don't want to know what the other ones are paying, we just want to know what that one is paying. That is the posture of my friends opposite. So if my friends opposite, my friends opposite have any respect at all for the elected marketing board that is now there, and they are all elected, if they have any respect at all, then they should not indulge in the kind of innuendos that we have experienced over the last four or five months.

I should like to deal briefly, Mr. Chairman, with the allegations of Mr. Cameron because this strikes to the heart of my friend for Lakeside, the Member for Lakeside; he would like to have this repeated I'm sure. This is a letter from the Manitoba Marketing Board dated December 28th to myself, and it's in response to my request for an investigation of those charges that were made. It says here as follows, Mr. Chairman: "I am pleased to submit herewith the report of the Manitoba Marketing Board in regard to the operations of the Manitoba Hog Producers Marketing Board. The report contains the findings of the Manitoba Marketing Board and certain recommendations made thereto. I also wish to report that on no occasion during the past year has any producer or producers' organization or any member of the Manitoba Hog Producers Marketing Board filed any complaint of any type with the Manitoba Marketing Board in regard to the operation of the Manitoba Hog Producers Marketing Board,

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) . . . . its Chairman, or any of its officers."

Now, Mr. Chairman, consider that particular point. Notwithstanding all of the controversy in the media precipitated by my friends opposite, notwithstanding the Liberal Party-- I have to say that, yes--notwithstanding all of the public discussion, Mr. Chairman, the report of the Manitoba Marketing Board which is the supervisory agency over all boards in this province, who is responsible to the government, tell me on December 28th that never once have they received a complaint from anyone and their job is to receive complaints and to deal with them, Mr. Chairman, but never once. Mr. Chairman, it proves without doubt that the complaints were of a political nature; the complaints, Mr. Chairman, were of a political nature.

MR. CHAIRMAN: A point of order's been raised. The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Is the Minister of Agriculture insinuating the comment that I made today when I commented on the news release, that that's political?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, that is not a point of order, the honourable member is asking a question or an opinion. I think the honourable members should take a bit of their spare hours and have a look through their own rule book, Beauchesne, other authorities on parliamentary procedure. We're getting lots of points of orders, points of privilege, and none of them are valid.

MR. USKIW: Now, Mr. Chairman, not too many days ago the Member for Morris raised a question, raised a question of the integrity of the Manitoba Marketing Board in submitting this report, and I want to ask members opposite how low they really want to get in this debate. How low do you want to crawl? Because, Mr. Chairman, I want to remind members in this House that Darwin Chase, a well-known man to I'm sure all of the people here, long in the service of the Government of Manitoba, is a member of that board and was appointed by Premier Campbell of the Liberal Government years ago, years ago, and was retained, Mr. Chairman, by my honourable friends opposite who were the government up to 1969. But the Member for Morris now questions the integrity of that man, a man that spent a lifetime in the service of this province, Mr. Chairman.

And who else do we have on that board, Mr. Chairman? Dr. Wood, Dr. Wood from the University of Manitoba, appointed by the Roblin government, Mr. Chairman, a very capable man, Mr. Chairman, but the Member for Morris would try to impute some illicit motives to Dr. Wood who is chairman of that board. I ask, Mr. Chairman, how low the members opposite want to bring this debate--the exclusion of the Liberal Party, of course. Herb Andresen, Mr. Chairman, long known to members opposite and certainly to the Conservative Government of 1969, Herb Andresen, the former president of the Farmers Union of this province, who they appointed, Mr. Chairman, to a number of boards, but now they question the integrity of that man, Mr. Chairman. Rudy Usick is on that board, I don't believe he--well I'm not sure, yes he was on that board; he was appointed by the Conservative Government. He was on that board then and he's on that board now, Mr. Chairman, also a former president of the Farmers Union of this province. But my honourable friends question his integrity. And the only new face appointed by this government on that board, Mr. Chairman, is Mr. Bill Nebozenko from Portage la Prairie, a strong supporter of this government, yes, and a very respected man of all people in Portage la Prairie. Even, I'm sure, the Honourable Member for Portage would agree with that. All of these people have been brought into question by the Member for Morris who alleged that somehow this particular document is not honest even though it's presented to the Minister of Agriculture in the most sincere way that one could expect.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I ask the members opposite, does our level of debate have to sink to that new low? And that is what I referred to in the Throne Speech, Mr. Chairman, when I said that our politics in this province had degenerated to a new low, something that we have not witnessed for many years in this province. The key word, Mr. Chairman, is smarten up the political process because it stinks the way it's working right now.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to now deal with the allegations in the report from the Manitoba Marketing Board. The Manitoba Marketing Board met with all the members of the Manitoba Hog Producers Marketing Board and the secretary-manager on December 10, 1973, to determine the facts relating to allegations made by Mr. Don Cameron - a friend of the Honourable Member for Lakeside - of the Hog Board, and reported in the local press on November 29th and 30th; "Members of the Hog Board were questioned in detail regarding the circumstances of these allegations. The Manitoba Board wishes to report the following findings

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(MR. USKIW cont'd) . . . . and to make the indicated recommendations relating thereto:

"Allegation No. 1: That Mr. Hofford, the Chairman, had failed to tell producers how the board has spent the money producers contributed to it through high levies on hog sales. Facts as determined by the Manitoba Marketing Board:

"1. Audited annual financial statement for the year ending March 31, 1973, has been mailed to all active hog producers in the province." Bear in mind, Mr. Chairman, the allegation and the fact that every producer got a copy of the audited report as to how his money was spent.

"2. Monthly financial statements provided to board members give details of expenditures during the current fiscal year. Board accountant present at this portion of the meeting to answer questions members may have about the statement. No members indicated that they had raised questions that had not been answered except for the revelation of the details of the pricing formula of the Japanese contract.

"3. A newsletter dated April 26, 1973, was forwarded to all producers explaining the principles in the pricing formula of the Japanese contract and how this price was incorporated into the daily average price paid. Explanations of the procedure have been made to producers at the eight sub district meetings held this fall." The allegations obviously must be political, Mr. Chairman, and that is not a quote from the report; that is my own comment.

"The Manitoba Marketing Board concludes that the allegation is not supported by the facts.

"Allegation No. 2: That the Provincial Government has taken money from producers' pockets to hide a loss on the Japanese pork contract.

"Facts as determined by the Manitoba Marketing Board. (1) The Provincial Government is neither a party to the contract nor is it responsible for setting the producer levy or for determining the allocation of funds raised by levies on the product.

"2. The Provincial Government did establish the Hog Producers Marketing Board and gave it the powers necessary for it to enter into the said contract, to collect levies from producers and to disperse them in a manner which could equalize prices between hogs sold on the Japanese contract and those sold domestically.

"3. The Hog Board has used levy funds to help equalize prices between contract hogs and domestically sold hogs.

"4. It will not be possible for the Manitoba Board to determine whether there is a loss on the Japanese contract (a) until the contract terms have been fulfilled; (b) unless the Manitoba Marketing Board requires the Hog Board to provide it with details of prices and expenditures involved in the implementation of the terms of the contract under Section 14 (5) of the Hog Marketing Plan; (c) without determining or assuming the value producers place on any price stabilization achieved through the operation of the Japanese contract; and (d) without a thorough analysis of the effect on the Manitoba price of diverting hogs to the Japanese market under the terms of the contract. The Manitoba Marketing Board finds no basis and fact for the allegation.

"The Manitoba Marketing Board recommends that the Hog Board survey a random sample of a thousand hog producers to determine whether they are in favour of board negotiating export contracts under terms acceptable to the board and the buyer. 2. That the Hog Board contract a professional economic analyst to carry out a study of the export contract operation to estimate the economic effects of the contract on hog producers in Manitoba.

"Allegation 3: That at a meeting of Manitoba Hog Producers Marketing Board, November 6th, Mr. Hofford and the appointed majority ran through an agreement between the Manitoba Hog Producers Marketing Board and Export Canada West.

"Facts as determined by Manitoba Marketing Board. 1. The motion approving the agreement was passed with only one dissenting vote.

"2. A motion to table failed for want of a seconder, though that motion was not recorded in the minutes.

"3. The concept of a single agency had been discussed on previous occasions and had been supported by most board members.

"4. No motions were made for amendment to any clause of the agreement.

"5. An offer by the Chairman to have the agreement considered clause by clause did not receive a positive response from any board members.

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(MR. USKIW cont'd)

"6. The agreement leaves the Hog Board in ultimate control of policy matters since the agency can exercise only those powers delegated to it by the board. The Manitoba Marketing Board concludes that the allegation is not supported by the facts.

"In addition to the above allegations, Mr. Cameron made two further allegations during the meeting: (1) that the minutes of the producer board meetings were slanted; (2) that the producer board was a two-man operation and one was not a director. In support of the first allegation it was pointed out that a motion at the November 6th meeting to table the Export Canada West Agreement for 30 days had not been recorded. This motion had not been seconded. The board had not met since November 6th and consequently these particular minutes had not been approved by the board. Analysis of minutes since Mr. Cameron became a member showed no changes had been made by board members and that Mr. Cameron had seconded the motion to approve the minutes on two of the four meetings since he became a board member."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I pause there to reflect on the credibility of that individual who assumes to run for office to work for the betterment of our hog producers; whose motives I question, Mr. Chairman, quite openly; who questions the minutes of his own meetings but forgot that he--(Interjection)--but forgot, Mr. Chairman, forgot, Mr. Chairman, that he either moved the motion or seconded the motion to adopt the minutes. That is the kind of nonsense that we are listening to from my friends opposite, Mr. Chairman. All members - and I want to continue, Mr. Chairman - all members of the Producer Board were asked if they supported the allegation of a two-man board. They replied in turn and were unanimous in rejecting Mr. Cameron's allegations. The Manitoba Marketing Board concludes that these allegations are not supported by facts.

"Japanese contract. A major problem affecting the Producer Board's operation revolves around the contract signed with C. Ito for the export of hogs to Japan. This contract has not yet . . ."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour being 9:00 o'clock, the last hour of every day being Private Members' Hour, committee rise and report. Call in the Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, has directed me to report same, and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

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

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

MOTION presented and carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR - PUBLIC BILL 21

MR. SPEAKER: Private members' hour, Tuesday night, private bills. We have none. Public bills. The Honourable Member for Thompson. Bill No. 21.

MR. KEN DILLEN (Thompson) presented Bill No. 21, an Act to validate By-Law No. 719 of the City of Thompson, for second reading.

MR. SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. DILLEN: Mr. Speaker, we have just recently had a vacancy on the City Council of the City of Thompson as a result of the resignation of Alderman Dale Tilling, and the City Council has passed a by-law requesting that the length of the term of office that would have been held by Dale Tilling, or at least the office that's going to be filled as a result of a by-election, be extended for one year. The purpose of extending this office for one year beyond the term that Alderman Tilling would have filled, would be to create a complete balance on the City Council in that four aldermen would be elected every year in order to have a continuity on the City Council. When this bill receives, or is passed by the Legislature, the election will be held immediately and the alderman's stay in office will then be extended by one year. If it is necessary, when this bill goes into committee, to have representatives of the City of Thompson come down to explain this bill further, I will pass that message on to them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, having just recently had the pleasure of enjoying the

PUBLIC BILL 21

(MR. JORGENSEN cont'd) . . . . hospitality of the City of Thompson, I want to assure the honourable member that we on this side of the House will endeavour to expedite the passage of this bill at the earliest opportunity. We're therefore prepared to let the bill go to committee. Indeed, if the honourable member wishes, we're prepared to let the bill pass all stages at this moment. I think that the request being made in this particular bill is a perfectly legitimate one and if the Minister of Finance will contain himself for a few moments I think that the bill is one that is a perfectly legitimate one asking that the vacancy be filled as soon as possible. We're prepared to let the bill go right now.

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

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party takes the same position, the only caveat being that inasmuch as we haven't heard anything formally from the City of Thompson and the Mayor and the Council as a group, we would appreciate the Honourable Member from the constituency of Thompson providing the committee with some evidence that this is the will and this is the authorship of the bill, that the City of Thompson has asked for this. Other than that, Mr. Speaker, we have no hesitation in giving it second reading and passing it to committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson will be closing debate.

MR. DILLEN: Mr. Speaker, the bill was printed and the by-law as passed by City Council is printed on the back of Bill No. 21.

QUESTION put and motion carried.

. . . . . continued on next page

PUBLIC BILLS - BILL 23

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 23. The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN presented Bill No. 23, an act to amend The Liquor Control Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, this bill was introduced during the course of the last session. However, it was not proceeded with for reasons that we are all aware of now, and I would like to introduce the bill again in the hope that there's a possibility that it may be passed. I note that the Attorney-General is not in his seat. I hope that he may want to have some comments on this particular piece of legislation because I haven't -- because I know he is intending to have - or is causing to have had a study made of the Liquor Control Act at the present time. Whether or not this particular piece of legislation will conform to his ideas of change in the Liquor Control Act, I have no way of knowing, but I do want to say that if the amendments that he is intending to propose, they're going to be proposed during the course of this session, will meet the situation that causes the introduction of this bill, then of course I am prepared to withdraw the legislation or it may even become redundant if new amendments are passed in the Liquor Control Act.

But briefly, Sir, the purpose of this legislation is to take care of a unique situation. It's the only instance in the Province of Manitoba, I am informed, where a town, or the village of Sperling situated in the northwest corner of a municipality, has to depend upon the vote of the entire municipality in order to change the particular licensing practices that they have in the hotel. There's a men's parlor only at the hotel at the present time. They are desirous of changing that to mixed beverage rooms. Sperling I think is one of three hotels that have men's parlors only in the Province of Manitoba. However, the other two are in a somewhat different situation. The village of Sperling being located in the northwest corner of the municipality, the people who patronize the hotel and patronize the village of Sperling voted about 95 percent in favour of this particular change, but the remainder of the municipality was served by the Town of Morris, and where most of the people who voted against it use as their place of business, creates a situation where in spite of the fact 95 percent of the people living in that community want a change in the legislation, are unable to get it by virtue of a vote that is held in an area other than that surrounding the town of Sperling.

What the legislation intends to do, Sir, is to allow a community under those circumstances, notwithstanding whatever the results of a vote taken in that area may be, to appeal to the Municipal Council for permission by the Liquor Control Board to change their licensing practices; in other words, to change from the men's beer parlor only to mixed beverage rooms. And by the same token, if a particular municipality were to vote in favour of widening of the liquor laws, and there was one community within that municipality that did not want a change or did not want a licensed premise in their village or their town, they in turn could apply to the municipality for an exemption from the general application of that referendum. So I want to emphasize that this provision works both ways, so that those people who want to be exempted in an area that has voted to change the liquor laws, may do so as well as those who may want to broaden their liquor laws in an area that has voted against the referendum.

With that explanation, Sir, I hope that the details of this legislation commend itself to the House and that we can pass it so the town of Sperling can at long last enjoy the privileges that are extended to other people across this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. HARRY SHAFRANSKY (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Crescentwood, that debate be adjourned. (Agreed)

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 22. The Honourable Member for Emerson. (Stand)  
In that case, we go to Private Members' Hour.

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MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 1. The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. GEORGE HENDERSON (Pembina): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make some remarks on amendments to The Election Act. I thought last year during the election that it was only my constituency that was having troubles, but I saw I was wrong, that probably my constituency was one of those that had the least troubles. Probably there's a good reason

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(MR. HENDERSON cont'd) . . . . . for the trouble. We don't want to cast blame on any particular individuals but we do know that many people had a job for the first time and that they didn't know what to do, that they only had a minimum of time to do it in, and there was just . . .

And then there was another thing that of course is very noticeable, that during any election I suppose there's always some mistakes made, but in a time when an election is close in so many constituencies, if there's any mistakes it really shows up badly.

But I think, without casting any reflection on any of the people in my area, I'd like to state some of the things for rural areas that are very important. I think the people that make up the voters' list should be local people. I don't think that they should be people from another town that comes into a rural area and does it without canvassing door to door. In our particular area we had people that had been dead for five years that were on the voters' list; we had people that had been living there for 40 years that weren't on the voters' list and they were still living there.

We had a Returning Officer that had an unlisted number and then when they had that position, why nobody could phone her. It was published in the paper that they had an office but the office only had certain hours and you couldn't find anybody in it, so then you couldn't find her number because it was an unlisted number; in fact it caused so much trouble in my area that I set up personally with my committee, I set up three information centres in my constituency and put it in the paper that we'd answer calls from every Party if they were concerned about where they voted and things like that. And we answered everybody's call, no matter, without asking what politics they had -- and incidentally I think it was a good thing to do and it paid off.

But really, we shouldn't have this; we should have the Returning Officers's office, we should have it open for certain hours; we should have people in there that can answer phone calls during these hours, and even the person should be able to be contacted after hours sometimes, because there's peculiar circumstances. I even believe that on election day if there's some particular things come up and somebody's upset, if you have to use a phone in somebody else's building that you should be able to reverse the call, even, to them.

We had all these problems, but I suppose they're small compared to the problems that we had elsewhere. I don't really believe the Election Act is so bad. There's no doubt that it's possible to make good changes in it, but it's not that bad; it's just that we had a lot of people make a lot of mistakes that they shouldn't have. And I think possibly when another election is called that the Returning Officer should be brought in and schooled. I'm not saying that they all have to be paid for this because if they want to be involved in a political process and they're going to be working that day, I think it's their duty to learn to do the job properly so we haven't got all those mistakes.

The Honourable Member from Fort Rouge, he had some suggestions, and thinking about them from a rural member's viewpoint I just can't see them working at all, because he talked about a voting machine instead of using the old ballot systems out in the rural areas. Well, I'm sure that he must know better because the rural areas have constituency polls all over the area and there's not too many people vote at one poll, and it's just impossible to talk about anything like that at all.

He also stated that everybody should be just a resident for 60 days in the province before they vote, and I don't think this is right. I don't know but what maybe 12 months might be long, but I certainly think 60 days is too short, because the way some people want to win some constituencies, I think they'd be planned and out 60 days ahead. So I'm not in favour of that at all.

I think that this here talk about having these here advance polls open from the time the election is called till the election is over is wrong. It's not practical in the rural areas; you have very few people vote anyway on that. But I think that there could be a lot more use made of the mail-in ballot in the rural areas, because we have people that aren't sure what they're going to be able to do and they can't say that they're so sick they can't go out, but I think if they signed some sort of a thing that they aren't going to be voting and it can be checked, I think that this would be quite a convenience to an awful lot of people. I think that there could be more use made of the mail-in ballot.

He also spoke about having letters go out to people as soon as an election was called. Well, I don't know. You'd only have to be a candidate a few times and see the way a lot of

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(MR. HENDERSON cont'd) . . . . those kind of letters go in the waste paper basket the first day when they come; they don't even go home. The people won't read their local paper and the notices that are put up and the different things. I don't think that a mail-out, a letter mailed to everybody in the constituency trying to outline everything, is going to work either.

He also is speaking about the amount of money that each candidate can spend on being elected and he says it should be more than 48 cents, but how much more he doesn't say, and that leaves a large portion up there where you don't know what he's thinking about. I don't know myself. I think it's rather foolish in some cases to spend the money that is even spent on elections. I think possibly the people know who's running pretty well and I think a lot of this here propaganda that goes around from time to time, they get pretty well accustomed to it and they don't pay too much attention to it.

And about these campaign expenses and the funding of candidates, the matter from the government's purse, it's a very difficult one to decide because you can have candidates that would be running that wouldn't be getting hardly any votes. Whether they're entitled to money from the public purse or not to run, I don't know. I wouldn't say so, because we made it easy for them to run in the first place; now when they have no amount of money they forfeit if they don't get a certain percentage of the votes. So I think things are not too bad that way. I certainly don't want to see it raised so as they can spend too much on elections anyway because I think it just -- you know, one tries to outdo the other almost, in all the different literature and all the things that go out.

Now another thing that I feel is very important, too, is that our Chief Electoral Officer has also been serving as the Clerk of the House and I think that this really puts an awful load on him because, as was said, elections are usually called right after the House adjourns, an election's called and there's just a certain number of days, and although I know that our Chief Returning Officer did his very best, I think that it put an awful load on him to try to get this done, especially when just called on the end of the week like this. And I have to agree with what the Member for Morris said, that if elections were on Mondays it would really help to clarify this to the way I thought it was.

But I think that the people that are probably more capable of coming up with the right recommendations on these, is a committee of the Legislature who would have the right to summons anybody to it, because they're the people that have been through it before and they know what it's all about, and I think that they're the ones that would be more capable of making recommendations to the Cabinet.

So these are the things that I would like to see happen before our next election. Thank you very much.

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

MR. WALLY JOHANNSON (St. Matthews): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a rather embarrassing admission to make. I find myself in agreement with most of the positive suggestions made by the Honourable Member for Morris, and some of those, a good number, made by the Honourable Member for Pembina. My reputation as a radical is going to suffer very quickly . . . or theirs. Maybe they're becoming Red Tories.

The Honourable Member for Morris made a very reasonable speech and the Honourable Member for Pembina made quite a reasonable speech. The fact that there were some inefficiencies in his constituency in the electoral organization didn't seem to have hurt his chances a great deal. I understand that he was elected by a very handsome majority.

The member who introduced this resolution stated that he and his Party had received expressions of concern about electoral abuses, and he mentioned for example that there was a great deal of cynicism and negative comment from pundits and analysts and commentators, and undoubtedly there was. I am sure that R. S. Malone was very cynical and very disillusioned after the last election. I am sure that the Liberals are very disillusioned because, of course, the result of the election was that they're in a state of near oblivion right now. We didn't get a sweep but -- I'll tell the Leader of the Opposition this.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. JOHANNSON: The Leader of the Liberal Party, pardon me. He'll never become Leader of the Opposition. I would not trade our seats for his seats.

Now, there are a number of reasons why these concerns were expressed. There were, of course, close contests, an unusually high number of close contests, in an election which

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(MR. JOHANNSON cont'd) . . . . had an unprecedented high turnout. Also, of course, for the first time Returning Officers were being appointed by an NDP government. In the past they had been appointed by the previous Tory government and previous to that by a Liberal government. Then at that time of course there were no expressions of concern. So what happened was that when the election was called, you had disgruntled Liberals and Conservatives phoning into the Peter Warren show and complaining about the fact that the jobs that they had enjoyed for untold decades back suddenly weren't theirs by divine right, that some new people had been hired. Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm one who believes that most organizations benefit from an infusion of a bit of new blood and I don't think that was very harmful at all to the election organizations, the formal election organizations.

Now the Member for Fort Rouge brought up one bit of concrete evidence, one piece of solid evidence to indicate that there had been abuses. He didn't mention, like the Member for Pembina, that dead voters were on the list, but he did mention that there were a thousand more spoiled ballots and that these could have turned decisions in a number of close seats. Well he's wrong, because of course, according to Section 93 of the Elections Act, a spoiled ballot is a ballot that is turned into the Returning Officer and another ballot is handed out, so the spoiled ballots had absolutely no effect on any contest and they had no -- they disenfranchised no one. --(Interjection)--

The honourable member again is making some aspersions. If they are as solid as his one piece of evidence was, I'm afraid we couldn't put very much credence in this.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put this in a bit of historical context. The Liberal members are raising the issue of election abuse; the Conservative members, I now give them credit, haven't made that much of an issue of it. If you look back on the history of Canada, the abuses that occurred in the past were monumental in some cases. In the election campaign of 1874, the Federal election campaign, following the fall of the government of Sir John A. Macdonald over the Pacific scandal, in the election of 1874 the --(Interjection)-- Yes, the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek doesn't like history.

A MEMBER: . . . remembers it well.

MR. JOHANNSON: You know, I would remind the honourable member -- I shouldn't remind him that most Conservatives have some respect for history, but in 1874, about a quarter of the seats, the decisions in about a quarter of the seats were protested. The former Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, was unseated in Kingston because it was proven voters had been bribed.

A MEMBER: Terrible, terrible.

MR. JOHANNSON: I'm a great admirer of Sir John A. Macdonald so in spite of that I admire Macdonald a great deal; he was a very colorful man. Let me give you an illustration of what happened in Manitoba, 1878. This occurred in the constituency of Selkirk and the man involved was Donald Smith, later Lord Strathcona. Smith contested this election for the Liberal Party. To guarantee victory he had temporarily transferred 26 Hudson Bay families into his riding; he at that time had a --(Interjection)-- and bribed them to vote for him. A Manitoba judge, a very impartial and a very non-partisan independent judge, a Manitoba judge, Mr. Justice Betournay, confirmed Smith in his seat, but when a reporter discovered that Smith held a \$4,000 mortgage on the judge's home, a Supreme Court appeal reversed the decision. Mr. Speaker, in 1880, Smith again contested the seat of Selkirk and he lost, and described in a very unbecoming way that he'd been rejected and his Returning Officer described the upset more succinctly: "The damn voters took your money and voted against you." "You've properly expressed the situation," Smith replied. A good Liberal.

I'd like to read a couple of cases from the Canadian Abridgement. This is a digest of court decisions on elections dating back to the Confederation period. There's a whole series of them, I'm not going to go over them in any detail. --(Interjection)-- Table? I can table it but I have to return it to the Attorney-General's department tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, the section on mistake or misconduct by a Deputy Returning Officer includes about 15 cases. Bribery - 57 cases listed here. These are cases where some precedent was involved. Bribery involving liquor - innumerable cases. Undue influence and intimidation - there are a couple of interesting ones here. It was ruled "undue influence" that a voter was marooned on an island by the agent's stratagem; the fellow couldn't vote.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS - RESOLUTIONS

(MR. JOHANNSON cont'd) . . . . There was an interesting case in Quebec, 1877, Pessard versus Langevin. On Sunday before the election several priests preached sermons in which they commended their flocks not to vote for the Liberal candidate on pain of spiritual censures and punishments. At least one priest said it would be a sin to vote Liberal. Now, Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't agree that there were ecclesiastical grounds for it being a sin, but I think it would be an intellectual sin to vote Liberal.

Now if one examines the history of Canada there's a good deal of corruption, a history of corruption. If you examine --(Interjection)-- We want to perpetuate it. Now, Mr. Speaker, what bloody nonsense. You look at the history of Manitoba by Morton, and Morton points out that Manitoba politics reached a very low level around 1912, 1913; both parties were guilty of very corrupt practices and what happened after that was that during the period of the Progressives, Manitoba politics became quite clean, and the election organizations were run in a very honest and straightforward fashion - and I give them credit for that. They weren't socialists but they ran honest elections, and I will say that in my opinion the Conservative Government that succeeded Doug Campbell ran honest elections too. I think Manitoba politics are remarkably honest and I'm not saying that on a party basis; I think all parties have been quite honest for decades. So when one raises the phantom of corruption it's a bit of nonsense. --(Interjection)-- You've raised it.

Now, my experience in St. Matthews, in my own constituency in 1969 and in 1973 was that in both cases the elections were quite well run. In '69 there was a returning officer appointed by the Conservatives and I'll give her credit, she ran a good operation, and I think the returning officer appointed by our party ran a good operation too. There obviously were problems in some constituencies but I don't think it's as widespread as some members would point out.

The solutions offered by the Liberal Party I think are an over-reaction. I would basically agree with the Member for Morris; he has some suggestions to make and they're reasonable suggestions. I think that the suggestion of an independent electoral commission is an over-reaction and it implies an aspersion against the Chief Electoral Officer which I don't think is warranted. --(Interjection)-- Well, the implication is that he is not independent. The Chief Electoral Officer is a servant of the House, he's not a servant of the government.

Now the suggestion of the Honourable Member for . . .

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge state his matter of privilege.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, if I heard the member correctly, he suggested that in the resolution before this House it indicated an aspersion on the stature of the Chief Electoral Officer and the Chief Clerk. At no time was it ever said in debate nor in the resolution and I would ask the member to withdraw that particular statement.

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

MR. JOHANNSON: I said that the implication is an aspersion against the Chief Electoral Officer. --(Interjection)-- I won't withdraw it. The very fact that you were suggesting an independent electoral commission to replace the role of the Chief Electoral Officer in my view is an aspersion against his integrity.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia have a point of order?

MR. PATRICK: I have a point of privilege of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member state it.

MR. PATRICK: I ask the member to withdraw his statement that there is an aspersion

. . . . MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member is entitled to have his own implications, his own interpretations, that's all he's saying. The Honourable Member for St. Matthews.

A MEMBER: On a point of privilege . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for St. Matthews. Order please. Let me indicate it is not a matter of privilege to have a difference of opinion in this House. I have stated that before, I'll repeat it again. If the honourable member wishes, I'll indicate it. Each member is entitled to his own opinion. The Honourable Member for

## POINT OF PRIVILEGE

(MR. SPEAKER cont'd) . . . . St. Matthews.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member state his point of privilege.

MR. ASPER: . . . which has nothing to do with a matter of a difference of opinion or interpretation. Words were said in this House, there's no question of opinion, words were said in this House. The Honourable Member from St. Matthews says, not that it is his opinion, but he is saying he has accused the Liberal Party - those are his words - not even the Member for Fort Rouge but he has said that the Liberal Party is challenging and, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order! The honourable member has not made a matter of privilege to date. Will he state definitely what the matter of privilege is.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, with respect, I'd like to complete the point I was making.

MR. SPEAKER: It was not a matter of privilege. Will the honourable member get to the matter of privilege.

MR. ASPER: The matter of privilege is that a member of this House has lied. That's a matter of privilege. Mr. Speaker, it is a damned distortion and lie for that man to stand up -- Mr. Speaker, most times we ignore his irresponsible babbling but this time he has lied and a member of this House has stood in his place, denied it, and asked him to withdraw it. And, Mr. Speaker, that is a matter . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I believe I was paying attention and the Honourable Member for St. Matthews said that he got an implication out of what the resolution said, and that is not lying, that is not a matter of privilege, and the Honourable Member for St. Matthews may proceed.

The Honourable Minister of Finance have a point of order?

MR. CHERNIACK: I do have a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Honourable Member for Wolseley said, not once but several times, that an honourable member of this House lied. To my recollection that is a privilege of the House and I think it is a requirement that the honourable member withdraw the statement that he made.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair is remiss in not having recognized that. That point is well taken. Would the Honourable Member for Wolseley please retract?

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, I shall wait for Hansard so that we can deal with the matter in full. I have no intention whatever of withdrawing my remarks until that member withdraws his remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: I am at the pleasure of the House. I have requested something. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: I rise on the matter of privilege that was raised by the Member for Fort Rouge. When a member stands in his place and refers to a resolution as casting an aspersion on a public servant, I believe that is a matter of privilege and you, Sir, should listen when the member raises the question. The Member for St. Matthews said that he considered the resolution to be casting an aspersion on a civil servant, the Clerk of the Assembly, who's sitting right in this room. Now if that is not an impropriety I don't know what is, because the resolution wanted to deal with certain practices that happened in the last election; it was proposing a correction of what the member considered to be some things that were improper, and the Member for St. Matthews said that that resolution cast an aspersion on a civil servant. And, Mr. Speaker, with regret, I say to you that when you told three of the members of our party to sit down because that was not a matter of privilege, well then with respect I quarrel with your decision. When my leader arose to suggest to you again, you ruled him out of order before he could complete his statement, and clearly, clearly the statement made by the Member for St. Matthews was a reflection on the Member for Fort Rouge and the reason he put his resolution forward, and I appeal to you, Sir, I appeal to you, Sir, that if this precedent stands then this means that any member can stand up on any resolution under the sun, name a civil servant by position or a public official, and say the resolution is casting an aspersion on that person, and that is not right. That is not right.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Let me settle one matter first, the matter of privilege. Members sometimes raise so-called questions of privilege on matters which should be dealt with as personal explanations or corrections either in debates or the proceedings of the House. A question of privilege ought rarely to come up in the Legislature. It should be dealt with by

## POINT OF PRIVILEGE

(MR. SPEAKER cont'd) . . . . a motion giving the House power to impose a reparation or apply a remedy. There are privileges of the House as well as of members individually, and here they are. "Wilful disobedience to orders and rules of parliament in the exercise of its constitutional functions, insults and obstructions during debate are breaches of the privileges of the House." (Members should note that.) "Libels upon members and aspersions upon them in relation to parliament and interference of any kind with their official duties are breaches of the privileges of the members, but a dispute arising between two members as to allegations of fact does not fulfill the condition of parliamentary privilege." The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, in relation to the questions raised by the various members of the Liberal Party about the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Matthews, I believe that probably it is a matter for Hansard. I confess that I did not hear exactly what he said and therefore I could not assist you at all, Mr. Speaker, in that respect. I think it's a matter for checking Hansard to see whether or not there was an infraction of the rules and I would suggest that that be done and that when it is done the Honourable Member for St. Matthews will then have to consider what his position ought to be.

On the other matter which I raise, I don't think there's any question but that the Leader of the Liberal Party said, not once but more than once, that the Honourable Member for St. Matthews lied. That I believe is clear. And yet, Mr. Speaker, recognizing his impetuous nature and recognizing also that he is still comparatively new in the House and should be given, I think, an opportunity to look into the rules and look into Beauchesne and the records of this House, I think that it will not be long before he will come back to this House and do what is required of him according to our rules, and that is to withdraw the accusation that he made. I consider them two unrelated matters, I don't know if you do, Mr. Speaker; but I for one am quite prepared to let it rest on the shoulders of the Leader of the Liberal Party.

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

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, as I said when the point of privilege was raised, I will wait for Hansard, but I wish it very clearly understood that if a lie is perpetuated in this House, if an untruth is stated in this House, if something is stated that characterizes, insinuates or demeans a political party, as was done tonight, then I will feel honour bound to characterize that statement as a dishonest statement, as I did. And, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Minister of Finance that the matter should rest until we see Hansard, but not for the reasons he states. For the reason that we will have to bring to an end the innuendo and the statement that characterizes -- well, the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge says "assassination". I'm not sure what the term is, Mr. Speaker, and I'm trying to control myself because I am deeply angry that a man would stand in this House and say that a political party, a political party represented in this House has done what he said they did. And, Mr. Speaker, any time that happens, regardless of what rule one cites, I will feel honour bound to characterize it for what it is, whether it's propaganda, whether it's a lie or whether it's sheer dishonesty, whatever it may be, and somehow, Mr. Speaker, I will have to find a rule that permits me to be honest in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: Unfortunately the Chair is not in the position of trading in respect to rules of order. A request has been made for a withdrawal in respect to the word "lie" on a member of this House, and I think the honourable gentlemen knows what the procedure is. The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, I wish to state that if it has been said, if it has been said that the resolution before the House --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to make a statement. In the absence of Hansard I can only say that if it has been said that the Liberal Party, in presenting this resolution, cast an aspersion upon the integrity of the Chief Electoral party -- sorry, the Chief Electoral Officer -- that, Sir, is a dishonest, inaccurate untruth. If the person who said that or said words to that effect did so, as Hansard will reveal, then, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I will withdraw the statement that he is telling a lie, I will simply say that he is a stranger to the truth.

RESOLUTION No. 1 cont'd

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Matthews. The honourable member has six minutes left.

MR. JOHANNSON: Mr. Speaker, the English language ceases to mean very much when it's being used by the Leader of the Liberal Party. This is the man, Mr. Speaker, who the other day called the Minister of Finance a "yahoo" and characterized the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources as a "dictator" and who called this government "totalitarian". And suddenly he is very deeply offended, what was his term? deeply hurt, that somebody is maligning his party.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Morris made a very reasonable reply to the Member for Fort Rouge. His position was that some changes were necessary in the Elections Act and he suggested some that made a good deal of sense. He suggested, for example, that possibly the Assistant Clerk become the Chief Electoral Officer and that he be provided with some permanent staff and that there be some nature of permanence to the position of Returning Officer, and I think that makes a good deal of sense. I might also say that in my opinion the Chief Returning Officer did a good job in the last election in spite of the fact that probably he government didn't provide him with adequate staff in the period prior to the election, and I feel that the suggestion made by the Honourable Member for Morris makes a good deal of sense. It doesn't involve a radical change, but it involves a sensible change, I think.

The Liberal Party, however, wants not an election run by the Chief Electoral Officer, as it is now, but they want there to be created a permanent independent electoral commission presided over by the Chief Justice of Manitoba, and including two other independent and non-partisan people, and I assume that these independent non-partisan people would be appointed by the federal Liberal government, because the definition of an independent person or a non-partisan person appears to be someone who's appointed by a Liberal government. --(Interjection)-- Yeah, if they're appointed by Liberals, they're independent.

Now in the past - and I've been involved in elections since about 1958 in this province - I don't recall the NDP Party protesting against the electoral system or making complaints such as those now voiced by the Liberal Party. I don't think I recall our making those sort of complaints.

The second suggestion made by the honourable member is the permanent voters' list, and I think that should be looked at but I think there are difficulties. He suggests the British practice; I understand that the British practice involves a yearly enumeration but there is a cut-off date, which means that a lot of people are deprived of the right to vote.

He has another interesting suggestion, coming from a Liberal Party. He wants to ban public opinion polls during an election campaign. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is the Party that characterizes this government as a totalitarian regime, one that has no respect for freedom, and they're going to ban one aspect of freedom of expression during an election campaign. Now, Mr. Speaker, as I recall there was only one -- I could be wrong, but only one poll during the last campaign came to my attention, and this was a poll done by the GGG, the Group for Good Government; and this was the poll that, according to the men who commissioned it, a Mr. Palk and others, this was supposed to be a very professionally done poll, in-depth interviews, random sampling. Mr. Speaker, in my constituency these people who were doing the polling were brought to our attention in a very strange way. They came up to households - by the way, in their random sampling they didn't come up to any household that had an NDP sign, they just went to households that didn't have NDP signs - in their random sampling they came up to the householder and they opened up with a question: "Do you want to kick out those socialists?" Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm no expert on polls - according to the Member for Morris dogs are - but I'm no expert on polls, but I have never heard of a poll, public opinion poll, that was done in this fashion.

I think the basic problem with the Liberal Party is that they're looking for an excuse - for an excuse as to why they lost the last election. And, Mr. Speaker, the formal election organization had nothing to do with their election loss, the basic problem is that they have no credibility with the people of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member's time is up. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. J. PAUL MARION (St. Boniface): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will try to contain myself, Mr. Speaker, and not be impetuous to raise the kind of fervour in this House that the

## RESOLUTION No. 1 cont'd

(MR. MARION cont'd) . . . . Member for St. Matthews raised. I will try to be very objective and I will try not to speak any comments that would not relate to the truth.

I think that one of the things that the Member from St. Matthews said that I have to support, is the fact that there were a great number of close contests in the last election. I have the results before me, and you also have a man who stands before you that was in one of those close contests, perhaps not the closest in this House, Mr. Speaker, but a very close one indeed. I honestly did listen intently to the comments that were made to the Member from St. Matthews, and I will not impute any motives for the comments that he made, but surely I will talk to him on his own time out of this House to find out really what he meant by the comments that raised the ire of the members from my side.

I think that there's no doubt that all of those who have spoken in the debate so far have agreed that the enumeration procedures leave a great deal to be desired. Now I think that we have total unanimity to that fact, and it would seem to me that one of the proposals contained in the resolution that we have before us speaks of a permanent electoral list. Surely this must be one of the best known methods to date, one that we've soul-searched when the resolution was being prepared, and it would seem to me that this is one of the methods that can avoid the tremendous kind of problems that arose during the enumeration process. If I thought, in the comments that I made when I was invited to make them to the Law Reform Commission, I thought that one of the purposes of the electoral list was to enable candidates to use that list, and in my constituency the list was ready but seven or eight days prior to the election. Believe me, that is not time enough to be able to do the kind of leg work that one has to do today to be elected.

I think that we allude to the shut-in vote - I know that the Member for Pembina mentioned this aspect - and it would seem to me that the experience I had in that particular regard was a sad one; I felt that the vast majority of the electorate in my constituency were not aware - the shut-ins, I'm talking about now - were not aware of the possibilities of the write-in vote, and I think that this is a responsibility, without doubt, of the election procedure to make it well-known to all of those who can't avail themselves to the vote at the regular poll of this kind of method. I think that when we talk in this resolution of a permanent electoral commission, we're certainly not casting any aspersions at all on any of -- certainly not Mr. Reeve, the Chief Electoral Officer, or anyone else. But I think that it's a known fact to all of the people who sit in this House that the appointment of Returning Officers is one that leaves a great deal to be desired. I won't go into the mechanisms of how they are appointed, and they were appointed at the last election the very same way that they were appointed in previous elections, and it is abundantly clear, to me anyway as a newcomer to this field, that this is not the way -- (Interjection)-- Yes, it is patronage. I was trying to avoid the word but I think that the Honourable House Leader of the Liberal Party feels that I should use it. It's patronage, and I think that there are better ways of appointing more competent people than patronage, and this is, well -- (Interjection)-- I would think that if we accept the electoral commission, that we speak it out, that we bring it out in our resolution, you would have -- this electoral commission would appoint the Returning Officers independent of political participation. That might be sad.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSON: Would the honourable member accept a question at this time? Would he not think regardless of how Returning Officers are appointed by patronage or whatever - - I'm not opposed to patronage, I rather like it myself - - but would he not think that as long as the Returning Officers and enumerators are appointed in sufficient time to do a competent job, that it wouldn't really matter who they were? Well, I think . . .

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

MR. MARION: In answer, Mr. Speaker, in answer to the Honourable Member for Morris, I think that the appointment of the person is important . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MARION: The appointment in plenty of time to do the kind of training that is required is important.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MARION: But, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that not only the time element involved here is of import, but that the character or the person himself must be able to comprehend the

## RESOLUTION No. 1 cont'd

(MR. MARION cont'd) . . . . Election Act; must be able to do a satisfactory kind of job of adjudicating it, and I think that in a great number of cases, and not only at the last election but in a great number of cases some of the members in this House who have been through a great number of elections will tell you that competency has left a great deal to be desired, and I think that if you had a separate kind of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hour of adjournment having arrived, the House stands now adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon (Wednesday).