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DEBATES
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THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY of MANITOBA

Monday, December 12, 1977

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham(Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON(Charles wood): Mr. Speaker, pursuant to my comment to the Leader of the Opposition the other day, I wish to lay on the House, with the permission of the federal authorities, a copy of the communication received from the Prime Minister of Canada which was sent to all of the premiers of Canada relative to upcoming conferences.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Renewable Resources. If, Mr. Speaker, as indicated by the official organ of the Conservative Party the policy and direction of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation is in the hands of the provincial government, why is the minister communicating with Ottawa to see to it that the fish corporation behaves in one way or in another way?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. KEN MacMASTER(Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that the controls as such are in the hands of the provincial government. I would like to say, and it's a difficult thing, but I believe the shareholders of the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation are in fact the fishermen of which 50 percent are in Manitoba but the total control of it, I believe, is in the hands of the federal government.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the honourable member for confirming what I thought was always the case. I suspected that there was some change because the Winnipeg Free Press has stated that the Manitoba government controlled the policy of processing fish but the honourable minister has confirmed to me, I wonder if you would so advise your official organ. Mr. Speaker, I have a question . . .

MR. MacMASTER: I don't like answering a question with a question but I'll have to. Who is saying that the province is controlling the fish? fishers?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I will read from the editorial in the Winnipeg Free Press. "The New Democratic Party government under former premier Ed Schreyer, expanded the corporation to include the controversial Transcona Fish Processing Plant." My impression was at that time we had one director on the board, the corporation was a federal corporation responsible to a federal minister and that this policy decision was made by the federal government. I'm glad to hear that the honourable member confirms that the official organ of the Conservative Party is wrong again, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the First Minister. When did the Conservative government, decide to change the policy of Manitoba automobile insurance to permit diversion of funds from the insurance fund to general purposes of the government?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the minister, I would have to take the question as notice. I'm not aware of any change in the policy.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I was not aware either. I want to indicate to the honourable First Minister the source of my information is again the official organ of the Conservative Party, the Winnipeg Free Press, who says that the Conservative Government should now change the policy to prevent diversion so I assumed that the Conservative party have previously changed the policy to permit diversion, which was never permitted under any year of New Democratic Party administration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. In view of the minister's recent statement indicating that non-bulletined or term positions at the three major mental health centres in the province are being reduced, can he advise the House whether a similar policy applies to other branches or sections of his department?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN(Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, there is a restraint policy being followed by the government that cuts across the entire spectrum of government departments. The Department of Health and Social Development is no exception, but because of its particular role in relationship to people, the Department of Health and Social Development has asked for exemptions from that restraint program to protect the interests of those who need to be cared for and maintained at a certain level of safety and care. Those exemptions are being asked for and are being obtained.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Yes, a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the honourable minister could advise the House whether this decision respecting term employees was arrived at through advice of the Task Force on Government Organization?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the decision differs in no way from the program and the initiative that was being pursued by the previous government over the past several years, the aim of which was to achieve a 10 percent reduction in government complement, in government payroll. Because of that program — which has been an ongoing one — and the restraint initiatives of the present government, there are persons who have been on term employment whose terms are simply not being extended. The nature of term employment is that employment is not guaranteed beyond the term anyway. The previous administration developed the habit of extending terms indefinitely, but the normal procedure is that terms do not extend beyond the guaranteed term of employment. That's the practice that is being followed at the present time, with an eye being maintained at all times for a safe level of staffing to ensure safety and care in the relevant institutions.

MR. EVANS: A final supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. I thank the honourable minister for his answer, but I wonder if he could advise the House approximately the number of term positions in the Department of Health and Social Development that will be under review in his present restraint or cutback exercise.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, there are none under review as such in the literal definition of that term. What is happening is that the Department of Health and Social Development, as I said, like all other departments, is subject to the general initiative of the government in the area of restraint. As a consequence, term employees are being advised in some instances that their terms are not being extended. It's not a matter of any specific individuals, or any specific categories being under review, but a floor has been established below which the necessary safe level of staffing will not be permitted to fall.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. EDWARD SCHREYER(Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister of Health, to enable him to give a more precise definition to what is actually happening, can the minister indicate if . . . Quite apart from definitions of term or permanent, etc., can the minister show the House that the staffing ratio at the three institutions, and the Portage Home in particular, will be maintained, and more precisely still, can he indicate whether the staff-to-patient ratio at the Portage Home will not fall below seven-to-nine.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I can tell the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition that the staffing ratio at the Portage Home and at all three institutions will be maintained at a level which has been agreed upon by the administrators of those institutions and officials of my department and which was determined and decided on the basis of safety requirements. When the Leader of the Opposition asked me specifically about staffing ratios, I would say that it is the intention of this government to maintain existing staffing ratios but the Leader of the Opposition will acknowledge I'm sure that his question involves the whole future of the Portage Home, the Portage School, the determination as to whether more patients, more residents of the Portage School should not be integrated into the community rather than maintained in that institution, so the question of ratio is in a state of flux at the present time.

MR. SCHREYER: Even with complete concurrence about the prospects of more community residences, but given that as a premise that there will be more community residences, insofar as those who are residing then at the Portage Home, whatever number that may be, will the effort be made to

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maintain a ratio of staff to patients at that particular place of in the order of 7 to 9 instead of seeking "agreement" that it will not revert back to 5 to 13 which presumably was agreed upon too in years gone by.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Sir, I can give the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition my emphatic assurance on that point.

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

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. He was quoted, I think it was Saturday in the newspaper, saying that the staff of the three institutions in question felt or told him that the standard would not be lowered by reduction of personnel. Is that a misquote? Did the staff say that they would go along with his directive or did they inform him that they could very well keep the standard while reducing the staff by the number announced in the press?

MR. SHERMAN: No, it's not a misquote, Mr. Speaker, it's as indicated.

MR. DESJARDINS: Then I would ask the minister to investigate and tell me when the staff changed their opinion and what might have happened to cause the staff to feel that they needed less staff.

MR. SHERMAN: If there is any misquote, Mr. Speaker, it's in the use of the term "staff." I think the persons I referred to were the administration personnel, the officials of the various institutions. The decision with respect to the exemption that the department would seek from the restraint program establishing the floor below which staffing levels would not be permitted to fall at those three institutions was reached in concurrence with the officials of those three institutions and officials of my department and passed on to government generally through that channel.

MR. DESJARDINS: I thank the minister for the added information but again I ask him, could he investigate and find out what happened and when the staff, the administrators of these, and the staff of his department realized that they had excess staff and that they could very well lower that staff without hurting the standards of those institutions?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, as the honourable member well knows from his own term in the ministry, there is a regular vacancy level in the staffs of all those institutions. There is a regular agitation and a legitimate one by the administration of such institutions for increased staff which is entirely legitimate. It is entirely legitimate. But the point is that there was consultation and agreement that safety and care would not be impinged upon and would not be minimized by meeting the floor, operating above the floor established in the restraint program, as far as they know at this juncture. There is an additional caveat on that, that if it appears that there is difficulty in maintaining proper safety and care that further exemptions will be sought and implemented immediately.

MR. DESJARDINS: My question is very clear. If the government which has a mandate to govern and decides on certain policies, that's fine, but I want to know why they want to blame the staff because if the staff is now saying that they can go ahead with less personnel, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I point out to all members that every member of the House has the right to ask a question. They may not be satisfied with the answer, but there is no obligation on anyone to answer a question and the questions should be clear and not repetitive. The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Reil): Mr. Speaker, there was a question on Friday with regard to the power failure and the seriousness or otherwise on of it Thursday. At the time I indicated in the answer that the tie-in with the United States caused a problem inasmuch as that there accidentally or coincidentally was a power problem in the United States that did not allow feeding of the Manitoba system from the U.S. I discovered on further discussions with Hydro that the problems in the United States occurred because of the Manitoba problem, in that, at the time of the power failure which was at a time of very high demand on both the Manitoba system, that the systems in the U.S. and Ontario were both at the same time dependent on the Manitoba system, and when the Manitoba system failed, the American system dumped the entire American system upon which the Manitoba system would normally achieve its power failed as a result of the supply from Manitoba not being there, and the American system was unable to get back on track as soon as the Manitoba system. The net result was that the tie-in with the U.S. was of little or no benefit in recovering the Manitoba system to a point where it could be brought back onstream in Manitoba.

MR. Speaker, I point it out in particular because I don't want to have left the impression that the tie-in with the U.S. at this point is going to be of any substantial benefit to Manitoba with the existing tie-ins. The reverse is likely to be true until there is a third tie-in, which is some years yet from being completed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to pose to the Minister of Health and Social

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Development. Did the restraint program with regard to the publicly operated mental facilities in the province of Manitoba, was that applied in the same way, that is an offer you cannot refuse, to the St. Amant facilities which have always had better staffing than the public facilities and which are fully publicly supported, did you make the same offer to them and get the same agreement from the St. Amant authorities to reduce staff?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Inkster knows the answer to that question. He knows the difference between the St. Amant Centre and the public institutions to which he's referring. That is a matter that's being reviewed by the task force at the present time because of the anomalies and the inconsistencies that arise in the very field to which he's referring and the very field which he understands from his days as health minister very, very well.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the honourable minister did everything but answer the question. I'm suggesting, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable minister clamped down on public authorities to make them less and did not make the change applicable re . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, Order please. May I point out to all members this is the period that is supposed to be used for asking questions. Statements do not really occur and should not be in this particular period of the order paper. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Due to the fact that the honourable minister didn't answer the question, I'll ask it again. Did the minister — (Interjection) — no he doesn't have to, did the minister, perhaps he didn't understand it. Did the minister do the same with the retardates that are looked after through a private institution fully publicly funded as he did with the public institutions?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I understood the question perfectly, and I attempted to answer it by telling the Member for Inkster that that area is one of those that's being reviewed by the task force right now because of the anomaly that exists between institutions of that kind, and the public institutions to which he referred. I would say this to the Honourable Member for Inkster that government and external agencies funded by government, are aware that a restraint program is being practiced, and they will continue to be made aware of that fact until this government is able to bring into line the runaway spending, the runaway excesses practised by the previous administration which have put this province into a serious deficit position.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition on a Point of Privilege.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the same citation that you quoted to us on Thursday or Friday with respect to questions that are permissible, I believe you cited Beauchesne's Citation 180 with respect to questions not being satirical, etc. Now, we've just had a perfect example of an answer that contains allusions to runaway spending, etc. etc., and when looking at the facts, we see that spending by the Crown in this province is in line with many other provinces in Canada, and as such my honourable friend should not be allowed to distort — (Interjection) — he is violating Beauchesne just as much as . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of privilege.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSON (Morris): If I understand the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition, it goes something like this: that the questions can be ironical, rhetorical, offensive, or contain epithet, innuendo, satire or ridicule, but the answers must not. That's precisely the point that my friend is making.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, on a Point of Order.

MR. SCHREYER: My point, Sir, was the very opposite. I was indicating that the answers are subject to the same constraints as the questions, and that last answer, Sir, made reference to subject matter entirely divorced from what the Member for Inkster was asking about. It made inaccurate reference with respect to the phenomenon of government spending in our country.

MR. SPEAKER: I want to thank the honourable members for their contribution on this Point of Order, and I would want to point out to all members of the House that the rules that apply to one side should also apply to the other as well, and if the answers that are given stray somewhat from the fact, then I have to allow the same amount of latitude in the asking of the question. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface. — (Interjection) — The Honourable Member for Inkster has another supplementary question.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I ask the honourable member who says that both are going to be subject to restraint, why in his priorities, he would start with institutions which he has directly under his supervision and control, rather than institutions which are under the direction and control of private citizens to whom the public merely gives grants. Would they not be a priority for restraints?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, because as the honourable member well knows, we are in the budget preparation period of the year right now, and that is the area — (Interjection) — well, if the honourable member doesn't care for the answer — he accuses me of not answering his questions — that is the area in which operations of external agencies can be examined.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

MR. MacASTER: Mr. Speaker, in answer to the question raised by the Leader of the Opposition, had an agreement or a contract or discussions taken place with the federal government to establish a rough fish marketing plant, the answer to that is that there was no agreement signed. However the Federal Fisheries and Range Services and Department of Rural Resources in conjunction with the FFMC did take a look at the feasibility of a rough fish harvesting plant in the Eddystone area of Lake Manitoba, and it was determined at that time that it wasn't viable economically. I can't find record of a written report on their findings, and the federal people can't find one either. So if you have documentation, I would appreciate it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, just a question by way of follow-up to the Minister of Renewable Resources. My question was not asking whether or not there was a report as to feasibility in a given hypothetical case, but rather whether the minister was willing to undertake to follow-up on a promise in writing, in fact in telex form, by the federal Minister of Fisheries some few years ago with respect to the establishment of a rough fish processing plant, unspecified at the time as to location, but somewhere, obviously in the commercial lake fishing zone of Manitoba. My question then is if the minister regards this as being sufficiently relevant to give it a high priority of follow-up.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

MR. MacASTER: I consider it relevant, Mr. Speaker, that just we have failed to find any documentation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my is directed to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Could the minister advise the House whether or not the notices of termination which he referred to have been given to some term employees on Saturday, whether that includes notices of termination which have been given to employees working what is commonly known as Group 189 dealing with occupational therapy involving the teaching of light skills to the mentally afflicted.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: No, I can't answer that question. I don't know that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PAWLEY: Is he prepared to take the question as notice and provide me with an answer this afternoon?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would be prepared to take the question as notice. I think the honourable member will agree that on those questions I have taken as notice, I have tried to respond to them in as short a time as possible.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister of Health in his statement seemed to indicate that the number of inmates in these institutions might be reduced and sent back to the community. In order to make sure that I do not misquote him, if that is a policy, has this received the approval then of the task force, because that will take an awful lot of money, a lot more than in the institution. And secondly, why, when these people are so difficult to hire, why are these people not transferred to the community where they will be needed, instead of their term not renewed?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the answer to the first question is no. The task force and the

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government are reviewing and studying that kind of concept and developing policies, and if we produced a policy that calls for the integration of more and more patients of that kind in the community, it will not I'm sure displease the honourable member or differ very much from the kind of policy that he was trying to pursue. But I can't give him a specific answer on it yet, as we are still working it out. The answer to the second question is that nobody is being fired. There are terms that have expired, and they simply are not, at this point, in some cases being extended.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Then my friend will admit that he shouldn't have used that in his answer, because that's misleading. There are no new policies. Why then doesn't the minister and the government wait until these policies come in instead of reducing the taxes, or reducing staff; we don't know the policies, everything is frozen.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the honourable member will have ample opportunity to explore this and grill me on this when my departmental estimates are before the House. At the moment, the government has one essential policy, which has been announced, and that is to attempt to rationalize government programs and rationalize the load that the taxpayer is carrying, keeping in mind the necessary level of safety and service and program that have to be maintained in the interest of the people of the province. We are trying to do that, and the decisions we are arriving at are decisions that are based on those considerations, what is necessary for safety and security and service, and what is affordable. That is the only program related to the government's general initiative of looking at the financial condition of the province and trying to bring it into line that is being pursued and it's being pursued conscientiously and I think candidly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface with a final supplementary.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, how can my honourable friend say that it's pursued candidly when they haven't got the answers but they're already making policies in certain areas. I'd like to ask a question to the Leader of the Opposition. Isn't it a fact that during the campaign, while in Portage la Prairie, he stated that they will not do if elected like this government, they will provide the staff requested by the School for Retardates in Portage la Prairie, not cut them off?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Minister of Health would like to take this as notice to bring all this to a focus. May I ask the Minister of Health if he can indicate that whatever technical procedures and definitions are being used in this matter that the staff to patient ratio, aggregate, at the Portage Home this month or next, or both, will not be allowed to fall below a ratio of 7 to 9?

MR. SHERMAN: Sir, I thought I'd given the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition my assurance on that. The situation will be continually monitored to ensure that it does not fall below that ratio.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to direct a question to the Minister of Health. Can he confirm that all hiring of replacement staff has been discontinued including maternity and extended sick leave?

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

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would have to ask the honourable member what institutions or what range of institutions his question is related to. I'm sorry, I may have missed the preamble to his question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood restate his question.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I am referring specifically to Selkirk but it may also apply to Brandon and Portage. Is it true that a directive has been issued indicating that there will be no replacement staff for people on maternity leave or extended sick leave?

MR. SHERMAN: I have no knowledge of that, Mr. Speaker. I'll have to take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a supplementary.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to know if the minister will confirm that there will be no extension of term appointments even when these have been for a period of years and consequently may be regarded as equivalent to permanent staff.

MR. SHERMAN: No, I certainly will not confirm that, Mr. Speaker. As a matter of fact, it's probable and I think I can suggest factual that the opposite is true.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a final question.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Health. Is he telling me that where term staff have been working on the basis of a number of reappointments extending for a period of several years, that they have nothing to fear in terms of termination?

MR. SHERMAN: I'm telling him that the premise or the implication in his second question was incorrect, that I think I can assure him that where term employment has developed into lengthy employment, employment of length, that there is a preferential emphasis being applied in terms of retention.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for the Task Force on government organization. Will the minister advise the House whether the task force will be reviewing the staffing at the three major mental health centres and be recommending reductions in addition to those deemed advisable by the Minister of Health. In short, Mr. Speaker, what I am asking the minister, whether he can advise the House whether there is a possibility of additional cuts after the task force has completed its review.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

HON. SIDNEY SPIVAK (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I am unable at this time to even deal with what the recommendations will be. I don't know what they will be and I think it would be foolish to even suggest that the task force is reviewing all government programs and will make certain recommendations to the First Minister and to Management Committee.

MR. EVANS: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his answer but I wonder if the minister could advise the House in this review process of the Department of Health and especially of the mental health centres, whether the task force or the subcommittee of the task force reviewing this matter whether the personnel from the private sector, whether those people will be knowledgeable in the field of public and mental health centres, can he assure the House that the people from the private sector who are going to be engaged in the process, at least in terms of this department, will they be knowledgeable in the field of public health and mental health care?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, the review teams are in the process of being set up and they will be dealing with the particular problem that the Honourable Member for Brandon East has mentioned. They will deal with this and call forth those who they believe are necessary for their considerations and in assistance for the determinations, recommendations to the task force itself.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East with a final supplementary.

MR. EVANS: Yes, a final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Honourable Minister without Portfolio can advise the House whether the termination of non-bulletined or term positions that have been under discussion in the Department of Health in the mental health centres, whether these positions, the non-bulletined or term positions the reduction of these types of positions will be a general procedure throughout the government service. Is this a general policy now that is at work?

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, the task force preliminary report will be out fairly soon and the honourable member will have an opportunity of being able to examine that and then be able to ask questions. It would be just presumptuous at this time to try and deal in answers to the questions that he's posed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona. May I advise there are four minutes left.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Attorney-General. In light of the fact that a workman was killed on the CNR Yards almost three weeks ago by an explosion, can the Attorney-General confirm to the House that a search has yet been undertaken on the yards to ensure that there are no other explosives lying around where workmen are now working?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, a further report has been requested by the Emergency Measures Organization and I hope to receive that some time today.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Does the Attorney-General not think it prudent to

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ensure that we do have the investigation taken as quickly as possible in light of the fact that there is still confusion amongst the CNR, the Armed Forces and a number of other people as to whether in fact an investigation should take place at all?

MR. MERCIER: The answer, Mr. Speaker, is yes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAMUEL USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister of Agriculture would clarify for us a statement given to the Wholesale Implement Distributors' Association just what it is he meant with respect to his entry into a national broiler marketing plan? I gather from his statement that he wants an increased production quota for Manitoba. Would he clarify that for us, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JIM DOWNEY(Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I believe that question has been answered prior to this.

MR. USKIW: Would the minister then tell the House what is now preventing Manitobans from going beyond 3.9 percent of the national market? What is now preventing Manitobans from exceeding 3.9 percent of the national marketing arrangement in Canada today?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to direct to the Minister to whom the Manitoba Development Corporation reports. In view of the fact, Mr. Speaker, that we are experiencing a terrible rate of unemployment, would the honourable minister permit Manitoba Development Corporation board of directors to make advances for development loans which they approve on a strict commercial basis so that we can have the kind of development, for instance, that my honourable friends approve of in McCain Foods, Simplot Chemicals, Versatile Manufacturing, all of which were done on a straight commercial basis and have resulted in developmental and job opportunities in the province of Manitoba? I'm not referring to any social or economic loans. I'm referring to loans which they have under consideration and if they are willing to advance them on a straight commercial basis?

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

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN(La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, with reply to that question, that policy is under review right now. I should point out to the member that the federal business development bank is very actively engaged in that type of loan right now and are picking up many of the loans that might ordinarily have been dealt with by the Manitoba Development Corporation.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, there were several such loans under consideration when the previous government left office. I'm not talking about new ones, I'm talking about those loans which they were permitted to make by virtue of the change in legislation which removed the inhibition of being a lender of last resort. If there are such loans which could operate on a commercial basis and provide development and job opportunities in the province of Manitoba, would it not be wise that those loans at least should be permitted?

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

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, the loans that the member is questioning about are being worked in close consultation with the federal business development bank and I think that talking to the general manager and the minister in charge of that particular bank, there's a close liaison, I think that that particular funding will come from those sources instead of the provincial government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: I thank the honourable member for his encouraging answers. Supposing, on the supposition that the — (Interjection) — well, Mr. Speaker, it's not hypothetical in terms of its result. If the federal, because these loans were under consideration by the MDC, if the money is not forthcoming from another area, would the minister reconsider, so that we do not lose what would be commercial transactions which would be developmental and which would provide a profit for the MDC, such as they had last year?

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

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, the question is hypothetical, we feel assured that the FBDB will look after those few loans that were involved at that particular time and I don't think there will be a need for us to enter that.

MR. SPEAKER: May I point out to all members that the time for questions has expired.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON (Rock Lake): Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce to members of this House that Mr. Galbraith is to replace Mr. Cosens on the Standing Committee of Public Accounts.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: I have after the questions and before orders of the day, what I believe to be a customary and allowable point of privilege and that has to do with a statement in the press that is, demonstrably contrary to fact. It has been the custom here to be allowed to deal with that from time to time.

I refer to an article in the Winnipeg Free Press, it is merely one of a legion of them. Nevertheless, this one in particular which is 100 percent contrary to fact, it refers to the establishment in Transcona decision of the government of Manitoba to build a processing plant there. In fact, Sir, the decision was made by the government of Canada and in fact, with a split vote among the representatives of the four provinces that are minority partners thereto. The decision was not made by the government of the province of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, since there is nothing on the order paper to consider at this moment, we will move into Law Amendments Committee to be returned when that Committee has completed its deliberations, at the call of the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: May I seek the advice of the Chamber then. Is it your wish that the House do now adjourn to return at the call of the Chair?

SOME MEMBERS: It's not adjourned.

MR. GREEN: I gather that what is required, Mr. Speaker, is that you leave the Chair but be available and that if we are not finished we'll come back at 12:30 and adjourn the House till the afternoon. Not adjourn but leave till then.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Well, if our deliberations are completed before 12:30 we will return to the House, if not then the House will meet at 2:30 this afternoon.

MEMBERS: Not necessarily.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I sympathize with my honourable friend but I do not think that we can leave the House without an indication if . . . what we are in the custom of doing is coming back at 12:30, adjourning till 2:30 because otherwise the Speaker has not adjourned the House. If we adjourn the House we can't come back till 2:30.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, my preference would be that instead of coming back at 2:30 into the House that we just stay in Law Amendments, because there is nothing to do here anyway and continue our deliberations until the Committee has completed its work and then return at the call of the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: May I point out to members of the House that I am just the servant of the House but if we are to do that, then I would suggest that the House should now adjourn to return at the call of the Chair. If not then we would have to return here at 12:30 to adjourn the House to call the House at 2:30 again and we would again go through a 40 minute question period. Or it could possibly be less. I am the servant of the House.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, that is the point that I was attempting to make. That according to the agreement that we do have, that the House meets on two separate sessions. I was hoping to be able to avoid that by not coming back at 2:30 but if my honourable friends prefer to come back here at 2:30 then this is what we must do because that is the agreement that we have. I would like to get consent not to do that because there's really nothing to come back here for. If I could get that kind of an agreement to complete the work of the Committee before we come back here it would certainly facilitate the business of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

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MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, despite the suspicions of my honourable friends We are quite willing to come back here at 11:30 or 12:00 o'clock if the Speaker will leave the Chair, which has been our customary practice. If we are finished in Law Amendments before 12:30 we come back, because the House will not have adjourned, and we will come back and finish the work or go as far as we can. If, however, we are not completed in Committee at 12:30 then the standard procedure despite the fact that it will involve a question period, is to adjourn the House so that the Speaker can leave and call it back again. I know of no other way of doing it. I don't think that we can say here that we will meet again whenever the Speaker is ready. That is not a procedure that we have ever followed, and therefore, I would suggest that the Speaker leave the Chair, if we can get back in here this morning without a question period that's fine. If we can't then at 2:30 we will start the House again. But the House will have to come here at 12:30 to adjourn.

MR. SPEAKER: Well, I am still in the Chair here and cannot leave until there is a motion for me to leave.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I simply suggest that the House do now move into Committee, that the Speaker do now leave the Chair to return at 12:30 to adjourn the House, or earlier, whenever the Committee can complete its deliberations.

MR. SPEAKER: You have heard the motion by the Government House Leader. Is it agreed? I am now leaving the Chair to return at the call of the Chairman of the Committee or at 12:30.

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MR. JORGENSEN: Will you just call it 12:30, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The 1 hour being 2:30 we will adjourn and stand adjourned till 2:30 this afternoon.