

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, July 4, 1978

Time: 2:30 p.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 Minister of Health.

HON. L. R. (Bud) SHERN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Annual Report 1977-78 of the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. EDWARD SCHREYER (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the First Minister if he could confirm that before the House prorogues which presumably will be in ten days or so, whether he is confident that we could have a report as to the closest possible estimate of the damages with respect to the tornado in south-eastern Manitoba, and also an indication of Province of Manitoba input with respect to remedial action.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, in response to the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition, I regret that I can't give that commitment. The assessors are now in the field making assessments of the damage that occurred, and until that figure is known, and until the extent of the insured liability is known, then it would be really somewhat foolhardy to base any judgment or make any commitment on the part of the government with respect to Federal-Provincial, or purely provincial assistance. However, I believe, as I said to my honourable friend the other day, we do expect that the report should be in our hands within a month, and keeping in mind his optimistic date as to when the present session of the House may terminate, it would not be possible within that time frame to accede to his wishes. However, I can assure him, that it has not lost the attention of the government, and immediately upon receipt of the information as to damages, decisions will be forthcoming as to what compensation, if any, will be offered from the province's standpoint, at least, to those who have suffered and who are uninsured.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs. That is to ask the Minister whether he can say whether the Province of Manitoba's policy, at the present time, with respect to the C.P.R. line and yards in the City of Winnipeg, whether the policy then is one of favouring no action — in other words, retention of line and yards as is, or making that the assumption — or one of favouring relocation of both or relocation of the yards and ancillary trackage only?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, we have not dealt with the question of whether there should be rail relocation of the yards or the main line. We have carried through with

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the commitment to cost-share 50-50 the cost of the Sherbrook-McGregor overpass. It was the position of the previous government, I believe, that the decision should be made to cost-share 50-50 to in fact avoid any consideration of either rail relocation or yard relocation, and we have continued on with that policy.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Finance. I'd like to know, Mr. Speaker, when the Government of Manitoba has approved a Hydro policy of paying double market value for land acquired in southern Manitoba for Hydro projects.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I will give the opportunity to the Member for Inkster to ask a supplementary question, because I don't have any idea what he's referring to.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I caution the Honourable Minister that my information comes from the Winnipeg Free Press and therefore is likely to be highly inaccurate. There is a front-page story in today's Winnipeg Free Press which indicates that the Manitoba Hydro is paying double the value of land acquired for Hydro purposes in southern Manitoba and that where farmers are not accepting double the value, that the Cabinet is being asked to expropriate, which is the proper thing to do. I would be pleasantly accepting an answer that you are not paying double the value of land, and I would want the honourable member to check that, because that's what the story said.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen today's paper so I'd be pleased to take the question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Consumer Affairs. A report that appeared in a Toronto paper on Friday from the Mortgage Bankers Association indicated that there has been a significant increase in the number of mortgage defaults in the prairie region in the first quarter of 1978. I wonder if the Minister can tell us whether he has any information concerning the number of defaults on mortgage payments of homeowners in the Province of Manitoba, and whether he can give us any information as to what the particular condition of the mortgage market is at the present moment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Fort Rouge, I have no information in front of me about the number of mortgage defaults of homeowners. I will, however, take the question as notice and attempt to get the information for the member.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for taking the question as notice. I wonder if he would also undertake to examine if there is, in fact, an increase in mortgage defaults on the part of homeowners for a variety of reasons, if they would undertake to discuss with federal authorities operating The National Housing Act, whether there can be any, or with a private mortgage market, financial houses, if there's any way that there can be some further protection or extended period of payment while we are in more difficult economic conditions, to ensure that the homeowner doesn't lose his home or lose the mortgage.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, I'd prefer to deal with the member's first question first and report to the House in that respect; if indeed the member's concerns are justified, we would then consider his further request.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for Housing. Can the Minister assure us that the policy pertaining to the payment of taxes by Leaf Rapids Development Corporation in regard to the properties which they owned in Selkirk and in South St. Boniface will be continued as a result of the assumption of the ownership of those lands by the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Housing.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take the honourable member's question as notice and give him an answer but right off the cuff I'd be prepared to say that if we have taken over the assets of Leaf Rapids Corporation, MHRC that is, that we would be responsible for the same arrangements that Leaf Rapids has. But I will check it and give the honourable member an answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Environment. It's a question that, I think, the First Minister took as notice last week concerning the reports of new outbreaks of Dutch Elm Disease in the Winnipeg River-Brokenhead River area which may constitute problems for the maintenance of Dutch Elm protection in the City of Winnipeg. I wonder if he has been able to develop any information on that question as yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): No, Mr. Speaker, I have not.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, just as a supplementary, I would ask the Minister of Urban Affairs who is now back with us, if he has presently negotiated or agreed with the City of Winnipeg to further fund the Dutch Elm prevention program in the City of Winnipeg or is it still sort of a deadlock or still without funding from the province?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should answer that as the agreement falls under the Department of Agriculture's responsibility, or has done in the past. There has been no change in the province's and the city's agreement as far as the Dutch Elm cost-sharing of removal of trees is concerned, it is the same as it has been in the past. However, I was faced with signing the agreements that had not been signed for the past two years, I believe, after taking office, so it is under control as far as the agreement is concerned. We are working along the same basis as the past two years.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I find the Minister's phrasing "being under control" ambiguous. Does he indicate that the agreements have been signed and that the City of Winnipeg is now to be fully funded for the provincial share of the cost for the removal of Dutch Elm and for the preventative measures that the City is undertaking?

MR. DOWNEY: As I stated, Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the agreement that has been signed over the past two years will be the same agreement that we are working on this year. It is very difficult to pay for this year's tree removal program until we know how many trees have to be removed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs. I wonder, with respect to Inkster Park and recognizing its close proximity to the Tyndall Park area, whether the lots that are now being sold for building purposes by CMHC, whether the Minister is satisfied that the storm sewage coverage will not have the same inadequacy as resulted in the flooding in the Tyndall Park area.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Housing.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to tell the honourable member that we will not have the same problem. The construction in that area regarding the sewage and drainage starts right at the top of our property, of the Inkster Park property. We will have the benefit of the new drainage that has gone in which will ultimately come down and take care of some of Tyndall Park, but I checked with our staff because I was asked that question last week and we are assured that we will not have that problem.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. I asked the Minister some time ago whether any MHRC properties were flooded in the Tyndall Park area as a result of the inadequacy of the storm sewer facilities due to the failure of the City of Winnipeg to take the advice of their engineers that this project should not have proceeded with that inadequacy.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I had a brief conversation with the member regarding that question after he asked me and I do have the complete answer on my desk and I am going from memory now, that there was nine MHRC houses that had damage because of flooded basements. The total costs of that damage is \$300, of which we pay 50 percent of, split between the Federal Government and ourselves. The contract that we have with people who rent our MHRC houses in that area is that they are responsible for ensuring their own personal furnishings or wares that they have in the basement. So what it boils down to, Mr. Speaker, we have a cost of \$150 to the province for the flooding that we had in Tyndall Park in our homes, and I have not instructed the department to take action with the city because of that.

MR. GEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that so many other people are affected, and that the province's case would be identical, would not the Minister consider in this case, that pursuing a claim on what I would suggest are very very strong grounds by the province, would also be a factor by which all of the other citizens, who I am sure the Minister would want to see justly dealt with, would have their flood damage looked after?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I understand the point that the honourable member is getting at, that the province should probably take up the gauntlet and be the leader as far as making a claim against the city. I would say this, Mr. Speaker, that the province and MHRC will support the people in Tyndall Park if they make representation to the city, but I would say it would be rather expensive for us to take action at the present time when we've only had \$150 damage costs, and I don't think, Mr. Speaker, that we want to do that. We will support the people of Tyndall Park but I am well aware of the principle that the honourable member is speaking of, but I have not instructed our department to take action.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: When the Minister, who has just replied, refers to the formula as being on \$300 damage per household, \$150 provincial and \$150 federal, is the Minister indirectly confirming then, that the estimate of damage in that particular area is in excess of \$1 million, which level must be reached and passed before there is any federal input?

MR. JOHNSTON: I understand the Leader of the Opposition's question. He's saying when does it click in that we have support from the Federal Government? No, that's not really the way it works, Mr. Speaker. We split the operating and maintenance costs of those houses 50-50 with the Federal Government in our rental subsidies or our X costs of maintenance for those houses.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for MHRC. On Friday, he indicated that he would provide to the members of the House today the information package given to people seeking to purchase lots in Inkster Gardens. Does he have that material available today?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Housing.

MR. JOHNSTON: Yes, Mr. Speaker. We came directly from a Caucus meeting into the House. I have the material available on my desk and I'll see that the honourable member has it. The question that the Leader of the Opposition asked me about the property, I hope to have it for him tomorrow morning.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney-General who I note has just returned from a conference of Attorneys-General and I would ask the Attorney-General if he would be prepared

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to table with the House the position paper which he presented to his colleagues in Edmonton pertaining to the RCMP, which position paper he indicated he would be presenting during our Estimate review.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, there is no such paper. There was merely a verbal discussion of this particular matter.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Point Douglas.

MR. DONALD MALINOWSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for a change to the Minister without Portfolio responsible for the Housing and Renewal Corporation. Can the Minister indicate to the House when will new applications be accepted for Critical Home Repair?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Housing.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, during my Estimates I indicated that we would hope to get working on new applications for the Critical Home Repair Program when we got the present applications down to between 2,000 and 2,500 and we are aiming for that target towards the end of July. We're keeping a very close watch on it and hopefully we can get there at that time.

MR. MALINOWSKI: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. Will the interior and exterior painting programs be continued?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the exterior and interior painting programs were programs that were offered by the government last year for winter works and employment. It was administered by the MHRC but it was not something that the MHRC decided to do on their own. The decision of whether there will be exterior or interior painting is something that will be done on the basis of government policy, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not able to answer that at this time.

MR. MALINOWSKI: Mr. Speaker, a last supplementary question. Will the Minister assure us that an adequate number of inspectors will be available to the Critical Home Repair Program so that my constituents of Point Douglas can get assistance in maintaining their homes?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, at the present time we have the inspectors from the Critical Home Repair Program, we have some that were used in the paint program working on it, and we have staff working from our regular inspection group that are inspection group for our regular construction. We are trying to work them down as fast as we can at the present time and hopefully we will meet the target we are aiming for.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over a week ago I addressed a question to the Honourable Minister of Mines and Environment, Mr. Speaker, regarding the pollution complaints on the south end of Lake Winnipeg. I wonder if the Minister has a further report, or any report from his staff, on the complaints which I brought to his attention at that time?

MR. RANSOM:

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, my staff have had no reports of that particular situation but I am instructing them to follow up on one or two leads that may result in some information.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Speaker, just by way of question, could the Minister have his staff check with the fishermen on the south end of Lake Winnipeg who are complaining because of the brown, almost mucous-like, substance they are catching in their nets? They believe it's causing a reduction in the catch on the south end of Lake Winnipeg this spring. Thank you.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we intend to pursue that line further.

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

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to ask a question of the Minister of Housing as well, and ask him whether he now is confirming that he is revising his dates of applications for the Critical Home Repair Program from the beginning of July to the end of July, based on statements that he had made earlier in the year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Housing.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I don't think that I'm revising my dates. I will have to check back in Hansard my statements during Estimates but I believe I indicated the end of July then. I will check it for the honourable member, but our target presently is the end of July.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a question of the, since the Minister of Tourism is not in the Chamber, the Acting Minister of Tourism and ask him, in light of the cutbacks in maintenance staff in the Parks Program, what avenues they are intending to undertake to clear up the masses of garbage along the Trans-Canada Highway near the entrance to Manitoba from the Ontario border?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, as the Acting Minister, I was prepared to take the question from the Honourable Member for St. George as notice, but it occurs to me that possibly that is a matter for the Minister of Public Works, if he's referring specifically to highways .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

MR. ENNS: It will be looked after tomorrow at 2:30, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Agriculture whether or not it is the government's intention to start collecting the moneys owed to them under the Beef Income Assurance Plan, or have they started already?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

A MEMBER: That's a horror story if there ever was one.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated many times in the past to the House, that we had planned no changes for the program, that we would be carrying out the contract that the Meer for Lac du Bonnet signed with the farm people, and that we, at this point in time, do not plan any changes in it.

MR. USKIW: Well perhaps then the Minister could clarify, or explain to us, just how it is he would intend to collect moneys on livestock already sold where prices were beyond the contract price?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, that is one of the problems, as I'm sure that many of the farmers in the province are finding, the type of a program or a contract that they did sign with the then Minister of Agriculture, some of the problems that are built into it, and they are going to have to be dealt with according to the contract.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister then indicate to us just how much money has been lost to the Province of Manitoba because of his ineptitude in collecting those funds?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, to this point in time, we are in a position of not being able to say one way or the other which way we are insofar as the pay-out or pay-back to the province are concerned.

A MEMBER: That's the horror story of all.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet with a fourth question.

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MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture indicated something about a pay-back provision. I don't believe there is a pay-back provision and I'm wondering what his intentions are in that connection. The contract doesn't require pay-back, it requires different action on the part of the Crown to recover the advances.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the contract, as interpreted by the people involved, we could end up with an amount of money to be paid back to the province, but we will be continuing the looking at it and seeing what the market is doing, and if that's the situation because of the contract that is drawn up, then that's the situation that people are in.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the question which I posed to the Attorney-General a few moments ago, would the Attorney-General be prepared to share with members of the House either a transcript of his remarks to the Attorneys-General Conference or his speaker's notes pertaining to his lead-off remarks to the conference?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHEAN: Mr. Speaker, last week I took as notice a question from the Honourable the Member for Transcona, on the status of the Diversion Project under the Ministry of Corrections and Rehabilitative Services, the project being a project designed to keep non-violent first-time offenders out of the Criminal Justice System, as the honourable member knows.

That program is under review by the government at the present time, Mr. Speaker, although as I indicated at the time in my first answer, there was a minimal appropriation voted and approved during consideration of my Departmental Estimates to permit us to keep our options open, and proceed with it if we decide to do so, but in terms of the overall program and the overall down stream commitment that's still under review.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister for his information but there are some follow-up questions arising from it. Does that mean, then, that the Minister will be coming forward in Supplementary Estimates with further requests for funds to ensure that the program can be provided for in this fiscal year? Is that the Minister's intention still?

MR. SHEAN: No, Mr. Speaker. Whatever was required this year would be recoverable from Ottawa, but the costs of the program in the future involve a considerable outlay and undertaking on the part of the province, but if we decide to go ahead with it, which is making a financial commitment for the future, this year's costs would be recoverable from the Federal Government.

MR. PARASIUK: Could the Minister indicate what the levels of Federal cost-sharing are, is it 50 percent straight, or 100 percent for the first year and 50 percent thereafter? Do you have any indication of what the level of Federal cost-sharing for this program is?

MR. SHERMAN: It would work out to about 85-15 Federal-Provincial in the first year. It then ranges down to the 60-40 range and then ultimately the province has a total undertaking on its own.

MR. PARASIUK: A final supplementary. Could the Minister indicate how much he has budgeted in his departmental list is for this fiscal year, for this program, which will be cost-shared 85 percent by the Federal Government?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, \$30,000, and the program would require a commitment this year of \$200,000; the other \$170,000 the province would have to put up in an up-front capacity, but would be recoverable from Ottawa.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour. Can

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the Minister indicate to the House the reasons behind the delay in beginning the work of the Mining Safety Committee?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Labour representative, who was coming in from Toronto, was on the plane that crashed when it was taking off, and that's why the delay.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Previously, the Honourable Minister confirmed that she would be willing to table the terms of reference for that Committee as soon as it had been approved by all the participating parties. Is she now willing to table that document?

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, they haven't been approved by all the participating parties; we're waiting for the gentleman from Toronto to come in.

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

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to follow up on the question posed by the Member for Lac du Bonnet to the Minister of Agriculture, and ask him, under what section of the contract is he interpreting the remarks that he is making as to the provisions of the pay-back provisions that he has talked about? Could he indicate under what parts of the contract he is receiving that interpretation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. George is asking for a legal opinion. At this particular point I wouldn't want to enter into that particular part of it. However, if I were to elaborate a little further on the Beef Income Assurance contract as it was drawn, there actually were two contracts; the first one, which lasted somewhat of about two to three months and was unacceptable to the then-Minister, then there was another one forwarded, and so I'd have to check to see which contract he was referring to. And if we go into it a little further, because the Minister of the day kept changing the direction and the rules of the game, it put the producers in a very difficult situation, as I'm sure they're finding themselves in now. He found that he had to continually keep his hand in their pocket or a string on them, even after the market increased in beef, that he was really not sincere with that kind of a contract; he just wanted a control over them.

A MEMBER: Legislation you could put a truck through.

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

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After all the red herrings that the Minister of Agriculture has thrown out, could he indicate, since he's talking about several contracts — and he must have received some opinion from someone, because he indicated in the House that there is an opinion — could he indicate under what area of the contract that there is a pay-back provision? I would — (Interjection) — I have read the contract. The First Minister is asking about reading a contract — there's a provision of purchasing the cattle in that contract. I'd like to hear the Minister's interpretation and where he gets that interpretation from the contract.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the member refers to a buy-back part of the contract. I believe that as far as I'm concerned we are dealing in an interpretation of the contract at this particular point and we will leave that to the legal people. I'm sure that it will be handled as fairly and as equitably as can be for the farm people in the province, and that is a problem that we have inherited from the last administration, and it is going to be difficult — it's the interpretation that is taken out of that part of the contract.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Government House Leader. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: I would address a question to the Minister of Education about the Winnipeg Centre project to see whether or not there has been an agreement signed between the Universities

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of Brandon and Manitoba, and what the effect of that agreement is.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to report to the Member for St. Johns that an agreement has been signed between the parties concerned, and the effect of the agreement, I am very positive, will result in us having a very effective program in the year ahead.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank him, of course, for his answer, and ask him whether this indicates that there will be a change in the curriculum or the procedures in the project and whether or not it is correct that the existing staff, up to now, is not to be used any longer.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, as far as staff is concerned, I understand that many of the same staff will be operating in the program. There are some people who have moved out of the program for different reasons; there will probably be some new people hired. They are in the process of doing that at this time. I don't think any program ever remains static as far as personnel is concerned, but I am quite confident that there will be adequate staffing and the program will progress we hope.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, this is not a supplementary, but a request that the Minister answer the first part of my question, and that is, whether or not there is any change in the curriculum or the project itself?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, my answer to that question would be very simply, no.

MR. CHERNIACK: Finally, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister now indicate who has the direct responsibility of the delivery of the program in light of the change from the University of Brandon to the University of Manitoba?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. Johns was speaking about the program at Brandon, which is the BUNTEP-IMPACTE program; now he's speaking about the Winnipeg Centre project. The University of Manitoba will have the responsibility for the delivery of the programs within the Winnipeg Centre project.

MR. CHERNIACK: Just for clarification, Mr. Speaker, I was not speaking of any program of the University of Brandon related to BUNTEP or the other — I was speaking about the Winnipeg Centre project from beginning to end, and therefore if the Minister's answers were dealing with anything other than the Winnipeg Centre project he should clarify that so that he knows, and we know, that he is speaking about the Winnipeg Centre project. And when he says the University of Manitoba is now responsible, when I said "who," I didn't say which university; I want to know who. Is it the Dean of Education or is it someone else in the University of Manitoba?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, the Winnipeg Centre project will have its programs delivered by the University of Manitoba; the Dean of Education will be responsible for that delivery.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, this is not a supplementary; this is a new question to the Minister of Education. Is his department as directly responsible for the delivery of that program as it was under the previous arrangement prior to this change to the University of Manitoba, or has the government given up its control and development of the program to the University of Manitoba?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, there is no significant change in that regard at all. As far as I'm concerned, the government still plays its part and we still have our Director of Special Projects who represents our particular interests in the program, but the deliveries of the program itself fall under the jurisdiction of the university.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I think this will be the final supplementary to that last question and that is, is it then clear that the Dean of Education is responsible to the director of the Special Projects of the Department of Education?

MR. COSENS: I think that's absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker.

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I was asked a question by the Honourable Member for St. George concerning communication between members of the staff of my office and the Municipal Board with respect to a hearing related to the Village of Arborg. I can report to the honourable member and to the House, Mr. Speaker, that I have had the opportunity to look at the correspondence on file between the staff member and the board and the citizens involved and I have concluded that there was no improper or irregular action whatsoever and that no interference of any kind took place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture. It relates to the attempt by the government to stabilize the incomes of cattle producers when the market was low and to recover for the people of the Province of Manitoba when the price was high. Is the Minister intending to pursue that interpretation of the agreement which will result in the citizens of this province recovering some \$38 million which was advanced to cattle growers during a period of low prices?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the interpretation of the contract will be as it is written and that's up to the legal people to decide.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the honourable member should learn from his First Minister that different people have different interpretations. I'm asking the Minister whether he will pursue that interpretation of the contract which will result in \$38 million of the money belonging to the people of this province being recovered or does he intend to let that \$38 million go without a judicial hearing as to whether we're entitled to it or not?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, this contract was written by them. I wouldn't really know how the members opposite interpreted the contract that they put forward and if that was the intent of it when they drew it up, then that is their opinion. We'll deal with it as we see it.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm asking the Honourable Minister of Agriculture whether he will pursue on behalf of the people of this province that interpretation of the contract which would result in us recovering \$38 million now that the price of cattle is high, the \$38 million that was advanced when the price of cattle was low, or is he going to, Mr. Speaker, rely on the specious suggestion that there is difference of interpretation in order to give up \$38 million of the people's money to his friends?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day.

MR. GREEN: No, Sir, no. Well then, sue for it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, on a point of . . . was given up, money was advanced . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order.

MR. GREEN: . . . and this government is refusing to go . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Order please. Orders of the Day. —(Interjections)— Order please. Will the Honourable Member for Inkster please pay attention to the Chair.

MR. GREEN: They're giving up \$38 million of money belonging to the people of this province.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. —(Interjections)— Order please. —(Interjections)— Order please. Order please.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. PETER FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker, may I indicate a change on Law Amendments. The Honourable Member for St. Johns to be replaced by the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I also have two changes for Law Amendments. Mr. Ransom for Mr. Cosens; Mr. MacGregor for Mr. Kovnats.

MR. SPEAKER: Are those changes agreeable to the House? (Agreed)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSON (Morris): Mr. Speaker, will you first of all call for second readings of Bills No. 52 and 64 and following the introduction of those two bills standing in the name of the Honourable Attorney-General and myself, will you call Adjourned Debates on Second Readings starting with Bill No. 25.

GOVERNMENT BILLS — SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 52 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE CITY OF WINNIPEG ACT

MR. MERCIER presented Bill No. 52, An Act to amend The City of Winnipeg Act, for second reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Thank you.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the amendments in this bill are almost all of a technical or a procedural nature and not intended to provide for any major rearrangement of the government of the City. Almost all of them have been requested at one time or another by the City.

Mr. Speaker, I believed, when I assumed this portfolio, that there was a need for closer consultation between the province and the city with respect to the revisions of The City of Winnipeg Act and therefore I suggested last December, to the City, that they establish a small committee of elected and appointed officials to review the Act in consultation with provincial officials. They accepted this offer approximately March 1st and appointed a committee under the chairmanship of the Mayor of the City of Winnipeg.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, to reviewing any particular recommendations for legislative changes which may be brought forward, the committee is also expected to arrange for a systematic review of those parts of the Act which either City Council or the Board of Commissioners may designate as requiring attention on a priority basis. These reviews are to be carried out with the assistance of provincial staff which are available to consult informally with the City's committee on request. In due course, the recommendations of the committee were forwarded to City Council for approval and were then transmitted formally to the province.

In my view, Mr. Speaker, this legislative review procedure will provide for more appropriate and timely participation by City Council and both provincial and city administrators and will permit us to develop a practical and workable Act.

Since it was established on March 1st, the committee reviewed all the amendments which had been requested by the City for some time but which had not yet been acted upon. The need for certain amendments were subsequently reaffirmed by Council and it was these amendments that were considered by our government.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I have the attention of all members of the Chamber. We have a member of the Chamber trying to introduce a bill and whether you are interested or not is no concern of mine, but I wish you would give the member the courtesy of presenting his bill in such a manner that those that do want to listen will have the chance to listen. The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, because there was only a short time available, this bill does not contain any proposals for any major legislative changes to the Act. Bill 52, Mr. Speaker, attempts to do a number of things.

Firstly, Mr. Speaker, reviewing the amendments, states clearly the Mayor shall be the head of the Council and the chief officer of the city. Allows for the election by Council of the Acting Deputy Mayor to act fully with the powers of the Deputy Mayor during the absence of both the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. This has been the experience of the new City Council that both the Mayor, Mr. Speaker, and the Deputy Mayor have been absent from the city, or ill, Mr. Speaker.

It adds the Mayor and Chairman of Executive Policy Committee to the Board of Commissioners as non-voting members.

It allows for the admission of the employees of The Winnipeg Ambulance Commission to the benefits program for the employees of the city.

It ensures that where a councillor is appointed by Council to sit as a member of a board, commission, or other body, such councillor will be able to participate in Council discussions and to vote on any question relating to that board, commission, or body. There was, Mr. Speaker, I may say, a legal opinion obtained by the city to the contrary but this will clarify the whole matter.

It ensures that the present procedure for applying to quash a by-law, order or resolution of Council also applies to an order or resolution of a Committee of Council

It relieves the board of revision of the responsibility of dealing with minor matters.

It will ensure that authorizations for city borrowing given by the Municipal Board prior to the 1977 amendments continue in effect.

It will broaden the powers of investment of the Sinking Fund trustees to include pooled segregated equity funds of life insurance companies and segregated mortgage funds or bond funds of life insurance and trust companies.

As usual, Mr. Speaker, it retroactively extends the deadline for adoption of the city's Annual Estimates from March 31st to April 10th and allows for approval in future years by order of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

It allows the city to levy the actual cost of construction of a trunk storm sewer water drainage system as a local improvement charge, which is uniform for all the lands benefited by the system, but which is not necessarily uniform with the rates and charges for other systems in the city.

It allows the city to defer or remit local improvement charges by by-law subject to such terms and conditions as may be prescribed by the by-law.

It removes the present limit of \$20 on fines for either vehicle owners or poundkeepers who violate the city's by-law with respect to unauthorized parking on private property, and thus brings into effect the general penalty section in The City of Winnipeg Act.

It removes the requirement that a second public hearing be held with respect to zoning applications being considered by the Committee designated by Council for that purpose, to provide for further consideration of such applications by the Executive Policy Committee if Council so desires, and ensures that persons who made representations at the public hearing, before the Community Committee are advised of any recommendations being made with respect to a zoning application and are notified of the time and place when Council will consider it. It still retains the discretionary section, Mr. Speaker, whereby Council can either accept the recommendations or modify them, or refer them to the Municipal Board or some other committee for further consideration.

It provides that applications for zoning variations and conditional uses affecting land in the additional zone be heard by the Council of that municipality with an appeal to the designated committee of the city.

It excludes shopping centre leases entered into prior to January 1st, 1978, from the operation of Section 637 of the Act, Mr. Speaker, which might otherwise have the effect of voiding certain long term leases.

Mr. Speaker, that is a summary of the principles upon which the amending Act is based. I would be pleased to discuss the matter in further detail in Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks. **MR. SAUL A. MILLER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Regarding Bill 52, as the Minister points out, these are mostly of a technical nature, very minor changes in most instances, but there is one or two which I would like to ask the Minister about and perhaps when he closes debate, or in Committee, he can clarify them. \$\$

I noticed in his comments he indicated the fact that the government was in close consultation with the city in bringing these amendments to the House, and I will remind him that that was the case in the past. Winnipeg sometimes has the unfortunate habit, at least in the past and probably today too, coming in at the very last minute even while the House is in its dying days, to ask for changes in bills or in the Act itself, and we simply didn't respond when we didn't have enough time

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to examine them. But by and large, most amendments to the Act were done in consultation with the city and very often at their request, particularly the technical nature which some of these are.

However, not all of these are of the technical nature, some of them are of a procedural nature, which I think should be commented on.

Firstly, the fact that the Mayor is to be ex officio on the Board of Commissioners in the light of the fact that Council in its wisdom or lack of it, decided that the Chairman of the EPC should be sitting with the members of the Board of Commissioners, then it follows that the Mayor should be there too, and I can't quarrel with that. I still don't understand why any elected member should sit as a member of the Board of Commissioners, because frankly I can't see the Board of Commissioners who are employees of the city really refusing to allow the Mayor or Chairman of the Executive Policy Committee, or Chairman of any committee, refusing access to one of their meetings. They are administrators; they are not policy makers, but they apparently run into problems and this will clarify it, so that they have no vote and of course they shouldn't have a vote, although I wonder how often the Board of Commissioners really votes. If there was a meeting of the Deputy Ministers of all the departments in government, would a vote on something you are discussing really be necessary because they deal with administrative matters; they don't deal with policy matters and I can't see that if the Commissioner of Works and Operations, I can't see him being in the position where he is going to be outvoted by other commissioners with regard to his administrative practices in his department. But be that as it may, if they felt it necessary, I have no objections to it.

I find it interesting that the government is not changing something which last fall, or last year, was a fairly contentious matter to both members of the House and the opposition at that time, and some members of Council — the requirement that the Minister of Finance has to approve the borrowing of the city. That was introduced when the Municipal Board was relieved of that responsibility and I am pleased that the government has realized the importance of it in today's money market. The fact of the matter is, that as I understand it, on any future prospectus that the province issues when they hit the American market, they are going to have to indicate what the municipal borrowings are and what the municipal debts are in addition to all other. There may be Crown corporations which they are guaranteeing or provincial loans themselves, because the American market is becoming a little more sensitive and will want the global picture, not just the provincial borrowings and their agencies, but rather the cities and towns within their jurisdiction. Because the money market realizes full well that the province simply couldn't stand by idly and allow a municipality to get into financial trouble or go broke literally, the province would have to step in. And for that reason, I think the money market realizes that they need to have the whole picture, the financial obligations, whether legal or real, or actual, and require this kind of information. Therefore, the need for the province, through the Minister of Finance, to know what the City is doing, and to approve the money-lending, the borrowing, the money borrowing that the City undertakes, is absolutely vital, and I'm pleased that they have not removed it from the bill, even though last year there was a great deal of criticism that we were interfering in the City of Winnipeg's autonomy. But of course, that wasn't the fact, because their autonomy is quite valid, but their ability to raise funds affects the province very directly and impinges on the provincial credit.

There was one reference made to a new definition of a trunk storm water drainage system, and that the City could now classify that as a local improvement and levy a cost which is other than the average cost, within the geographic area being drained by the trunk storm sewer. I am curious about this, because I really don't fully appreciate the import of the impact of this. Is the Minister saying that henceforth, if the City is undertaking a project, a major drainage project in a part of the City, that the actual cost will be levied against the properties affected, and might be different than the cost for a major storm sewer or drainage system in another part of Winnipeg? It is my understanding that in the past it was an average cost that was charged, whether it took place in Fort Garry, Charleswood, West Kildonan or East Kildonan, that now there would be — the Council could, the City could charge an actual cost which raises the question: Will that mean that certain lands will be more expensive to develop than others, that certain developments will cost more than others simply because of how close they are to the river itself, where the final drainage enters the river, the contours of the land and so on? And I'm wondering whether this will create an anomaly within the City with regard to some of these set charges.

Will it also affect the upgrading of the storm sewer system which is taking place in Winnipeg now? I'm thinking of the areas where in former years they had combined sewers which were installed many years ago, and because of the fact that a combined sewer was really not the best way of handling raw sewage, there has been a program established whereby the City is gradually replacing some of the old storm sewers, and of course also to help avoid flooding. Is this going to mean the City can now say that within this area of the old city, the inner city, we are prepared to modernize and upgrade the sewer system, providing people approve, and it will cost so much and so much? Does it mean that if the levy is too high, some areas may say, well, we can't afford it? My concern

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is that you get then a different level of service to residents of Winnipeg, whether they live in the old inner core, or live anywhere in the inner city or elsewhere, that because they don't have the finances, they can't afford it, that they are somehow left with a storm sewer system which floods periodically because it's still part of the old combined sewer system. I would like clarification from the Minister in this regard. I'm thinking of Tyndall Park, for example. Would they be faced with an inordinately high cost in order to correct their problem? Whereas now, the levy, as I say, would have to be an average cost which is charged across the city. So, it's this question the Minister can answer, perhaps when he closes debate on second reading or in Committee of the Whole, when we get to it there.

My other concern, Mr. Speaker, deals with the appeal provision which existed in the Act, exists in the Act today, which was introduced last year, and I have to spend a moment on this. Previously, the procedure was this, an application was made to rezone something, or to permit something to be built within a particular community. The applicant would have to advertise it; the residents — there would be signs posted, other notification to people who might be interested, certainly people living in the adjacent area and a hearing would take place with the Community Committee. After that hearing took place, the Community Committee made a recommendation which went to the Environment Committee; Environment Committee at that point could approve it, approve the recommendation, alter it, change it, send it on to Council.

The people who opposed it, or weren't in agreement with the Community Committee recommendation and the final recommendation of the Environment Committee or Council, could appeal to the Minister of Urban Affairs, and the Minister of Urban Affairs could, by not signing, not approving beyond the second reading of the by-law by the city, the matter simply died there, because the city couldn't give third reading to the by-law unless the Minister approved it. So the Minister could simply kill the action by refusing to sign the by-law or — and this is what usually happened — refer it to the Municipal Board for their hearings. And the Municipal Board would hold hearings where people pro and con, and the interests pro and con would be heard, and they would make a ruling.

Now, I know the city was never happy with that, and I was inclined to agree with them, and so we eliminated that appeal provision to the Minister and to Municipal Board, and we said, "All right, if the city does want more authority, more independence, more freedom within its own jurisdiction, we'll give it to them, but there should be more than just one appearance at the Community Committee. There are issues that develop within a community, issues of a very local nature, where people can get very upset about the rezoning of land for apartment block use, or the provision of a bridge crossing and the roadways which will have to connect to that bridge crossing to make it usable, and people get very excited about it, and a great deal of pressure can and has been applied in the past on Community Committees, and they have tended very often to buckle to the pressure. On the other hand, sometimes the Community Committee has made recommendations which the public or the applicant wasn't too happy with, but since we took away the right of appeal to the Minister of Municipal Board, we introduced an appeal provision to the designated committee. It used to be the Environment Committee, now it's called the Designated Committee, and it deals with it. And this is now being removed.

Now the Designated Committee will get the recommendation and they will notify me, those people who are interested in the matter, they can listen in on the discussions of the designated committee, but they will not necessarily have the right to make an appearance. I wonder about that because if we took away an avenue of appeal in the past, there is no appeal now at all beyond the Community Committee. You go once, you have one opportunity to state your case, to influence the councillors in your ward or in your community, but that's it. Beyond that you then have to go bend somebody's ear up at Council or bend somebody's ear, a member of the Environment Committee, and hope that he'll take up your case for you.

I would prefer that the Act we introduced last year, the amendments, would be on the Statute Books a few more years to see how it actually works because Winnipeg is given unique powers here, far beyond what any other municipality has. The Municipal Board is the avenue of appeal elsewhere in Manitoba and here we are denying that and there is only one opportunity to make your case and make it effectively. Beyond that you have to, as I say, hope that some councillor elsewhere will take up your case either at the designated committee or at the Council itself.

So I would like, firstly, for the Minister to advise me whether I'm reading the amendment correctly and, if so, why they felt that they had to change it as hurriedly as they did. I know that Council wasn't too happy — just as they weren't happy with the control the Minister of Finance has on the issuing of debentures, just as they're not happy with many things — but this was put in in order to allow the public an opportunity for an appeal, a second kick at the cat is really what I would call it, to have a chance to make known their views, not to the members of the boards in the community in which they reside, but to people who are members of Council, duly elected to make decisions — and their decision is final, there's no question — but they have people who are

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somewhat objective. Some were a little detached because they don't represent those areas directly and they can look at it from the needs of the City, the overall needs of the City, the greater need as compared to the sometime parochial views taken by either councillors at the local level or the public who feel that they may be disadvantaged by something occurring within their boundaries and the councillor is reflecting that and saying, "Well, I don't want to get into a hassle with some of my voters so I'll support them," and really it's not the best thing for the City as a whole.

So I would question the Minister in this regard hoping that he will be able to throw some light on this particular concern that I have as to why they moved as quickly as they did to take this action.

Mr. Speaker, those are the only comments I have on the bill. The others, as I acknowledged, were very technical in nature, the matter of the pension board and the investment powers, etc., those are not uncommon for other agencies, although I suppose we will get more information at Law Amendments. It's not something that we can discuss with any intelligence during second reading.

So with those few comments, I am prepared to allow the bill to go to Committee of the Whole.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, there were some comments I wanted to make on the bill as well as on the Minister's introductory remarks. I would like to begin first by commenting on his announcement that there has been established a committee of review to examine proposed amendments to The City of Winnipeg Act that would include members of City Council, administrative staff and officials from the Provincial Government.

I approve, Mr. Speaker, of the objective of reviewing the Act because, as I said in the debate last year, I thought that last year's amendments were not good amendments and that they were only really going to produce serious damage to the functioning of the City of Winnipeg. I think events of the last eight or twelve months have borne those statements out, that the City of Winnipeg, in terms of an operating, functioning city, has really ended up in a horrendous stalemate with very little being able to be produced in the way of direct action, primarily because there still is a fundamental weakness in the executive structure of the City of Winnipeg. There is no one who really has the kind of responsibility for making decisions and being accountable for decisions that can be identified and that can be held to be identified by the public and by the Council itself, that the curious, awkward position the Mayor finds himself in, not as an individual so much but it is an office of the Mayor, still is retained and there is no question that the weakness of that whole concept which really, I guess, began to go off-track back in 1971 when there was the kind of hybrid of a direct election of the Mayor but then sort of a not a follow through in terms of allowing for a choice of EPC from Council itself has never been repaired. The pseudo-Mayor, is going to sit on the Board of Commissioners? No one knew, so the Council had said, "We will choose the chairman and not the Mayor," and there was our newly elected Mayor sort of hanging around waiting to be invited to a meeting so that he could maybe at least find out what was going on in the City of Winnipeg. Well, now we've at least got him invited back into the meetings of the Board of Commissioners but he has no power, no clout, no ability to do anything with it. He has been assigned certain functions of the Chief Executive Officer without being given any of the powers to do it. You are not going to get that changed by having members of EPC sort of trot off and sit down with the Provincial Government, the former councillors sitting and sort of saying, "Now how do we change it to really refurbish our position or not?"

So, Mr. Speaker, I really believe very strongly that The City of Winnipeg Act, particularly in the functioning of the executive powers of the Act, does need very thorough review and you're not going to get it by simply having a sort of an insiders' review committee, closed to public review, to public meeting, not really independent or objective in terms of the kinds of assessment that will be made, you will simply be refurbishing based on upon their own peculiar self-interest. I want to point out, in fact, Mr. Speaker, that one of the fundamental weaknesses that has occurred in the City of Winnipeg has been increasingly the dominance of the council and the executive structure by councillors from the suburban areas. You will not find one councillor on Executive Policy Committee who represents an Inner City ward. You will not find in any of the major committees or the housing corporations chaired by an inner city alderman. In other words, you've got a curious anomaly, that the city because of just the way the numbers of wards have worked out, that the major executive decisions are being made by councillors representing only one-half of the city. And if they are good councillors and smart councillors, and some of them are, they're going to be damn sure they are going to retain that position of advantage; they're not going to give it up.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that we see time after time, decisions being made running contrary to the interests of the hundred-and-some-odd thousand people who live in the inner city,

perhaps more than that. But there is no one on Council in an executive policy capacity who represents them at all, and yet these are the people who are going to be making recommendations to further review and reform the City of Winnipeg structure. Well, you're going to get a biased point of view, you're going to get one as good politicians to substantiate their position and, Mr. Speaker, I think the particular composition now has to give one cause for some real concern.

I think anybody who read the newspaper reports last week of the discussion that went on concerning the location of the Community Committee headquarters in the St. Boniface-St. Vital area just realizes some of the kind of attitudes that are prevalent in that council at the present moment. They are reprehensible, no other question, no other way to describe it, reprehensible, and yet these are the people who are going to be asked to be making the recommendations on review.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that the Minister, if he is sincerely interested in the question of coming to grips with amending The City of Winnipeg Act, to repair some of the glaring weaknesses that are now existing, he should really find a way of bringing some more objective and independent views to bear on that. You know, we set up an independent commission to review boundaries, why don't we have that same commission perhaps be responsible for making recommendations than they are, or some other system. I just simply want to get it out of the hands of individuals. I don't think it's a good idea simply to ask sort of the insiders to be responsible totally and completely for reviewing their own position. I think you need something more of an objective position. I think that was what went wrong with the amendments last year, because I don't think first, they were very practical, or weren't based upon political reality of what was really taking place in the City of Winnipeg and their weaknesses reflected that, so we ended up this fall with really a pretty serious weakness and inability of anyone to make decisions at City Hall, and I don't think there have been decisions made since then other than sort of deciding who sends the telegrams on the arena.

Mr. Speaker, I think therefore the question of review of The City of Winnipeg Act is one that this House should treat with some seriousness, and that the Minister should be taking a look at some of the problems that are existing. Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, I think there are within the bill itself some issues. The small gesture that is made towards somewhat repairing the position of the Mayor of at least by putting him back on the Board of Commissioners is welcomed. I think though that the Minister as a former councillor and a member of EPC recognized that there were other steps that should have also been taken to further substantiate the role of the Mayor. As long as we have the Mayor in a position where he is directly elected by the people, and where he is now responsible to a majority on Council, then you've got to give him some basis for bargaining and negotiating with the majority, and he doesn't have any. — (Interjection)— No, there's none. I beg to differ strongly with the former Minister of Urban Affairs He heard me say it last time. He may have the power base but he's got no power. There's no point in having a base if you can't exercise it. You've got no legal requirements under this Act to give the Mayor of the City of Winnipeg any sort of statutory rights to do anything other than to attend the meeting, that's all, that's all he can do.

There are a lot of people who are exercising executive functions in this House. They wouldn't want to be stuck in those things saying, yes, you can . . . Law Amendments Committee if you want, or you're allowed to meet with the Deputy Ministers. It's very clear who makes decisions in the parliamentary system; it's the people who are elected and they've got the power to do it. Under The City of Winnipeg Act, that's not very clear at all as to who is making decisions and you're still retaining sort of the two-headed monster or the Chairman of EPC who has almost equal kind of position and leverage to the Mayor's office, and you're not going to go anywhere under those circumstances. In fact, Mr. Speaker, as the Member for St. Boniface suggested, he probably has more power than the Mayor, but not accountable in the same way, so I think we've got to get rid of that charade.\$

One of the areas that I am concerned about, Mr. Speaker, and I can see some signs of it here is that again one of the problems experienced by the amendments last year was the position they put the community committees, substantially weakened the role of the resident advisory groups in the community committees. There is some suggestion and some noise being made around Council now that at least part of the rumor mill was that these amendments are going to include a direct elimination of the resident advisory groups. I'm glad to see the Minister hasn't gone that far, but there certainly seems to be a move around City Hall to further weaken the position of that grand old concept that the Member for St. Johns introduced back in his original bill in 1971 of giving the people the right to have some real involvement. I think we have been winnowing away at that concept year after year reducing it down to — increasingly more difficult for people to get involved, and I think that the changes to the Community Committee Act that we see in this area are a further narrowing of those kinds of powers. Because the right of appeal on the question of zoning, the difficulty that again has been experienced in those areas in the last seven months, if you speak to any of the councillors, has been this: it is again that you will find the community committee making a decision on a zoning matter, which is a pretty fundamental matter, and by and large, having it

overturned by one of the standing committees of council, because that standing committee is composed of people with very different orientations than there is on community committee, and as a result you have a very strong anomaly going on where the community committee really isn't being responsible for decisions of first recourse. It's simply really just a pass through system, and the real decisions to be made by the standing committees, and now, we're taking away the power even to make appeal and representation in those areas.

So, I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that there has to be a pretty fundamental reassessment of the role that community committees are going to play and I believe, and I thought I heard during the last provincial campaign, the Conservatives talk a great deal about restoring the uniqueness of the communities, refurbishing and strengthening the idea of almost moving towards a two-tier system. Well, there's certainly not any motion being made in this Act to move within that area, in fact, it further increases the centralization of power that is going on. I think, Mr. Speaker, that runs contrary to the position put forward — I don't know if it was the Minister of Urban Affairs who said it, but certainly spokesmen for the Conservative Party in the election campaign said that they too reacted against the centralization of power. They wanted to strengthen the area of the community committees, and yet, again, this bill moves against that.

And, so, Mr. Speaker, again, I think that there is an area that the Minister should take a hard look at when he is saying, "I'm just dealing with technical amendments." One thing I have found, as I've gone through each year of technical amendments in the City of Winnipeg Act, that they aren't so technical as they really have very strong policy positions built into them, where they have been simply passed and, you know, have been ensured as simply technical to clean up a little problem, but ends up fundamentally changing the position of one part of city government or the other, and has added to the gradual aggregation of centralized power in the City of Winnipeg to the disadvantage of the local communities in the neighbourhoods. I would think that this government in particular should be moving in the other direction, and I would encourage them to do so. I think they've got the power to do that and that is something that should be happening right away.

On the question of the storm sewers, Mr. Speaker, the thing that concerns me about putting the requirements of storm sewers under local improvement, and we could maybe get more detail on this, is that it seems to me that the use of services, particularly storm sewers but other kinds of services, is a major tool of development control on the part of city government, that it is a way in which you structure and influence the growth of a city. It is something that you have to make very hard decisions about in terms of where you allow new residential areas to expand.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that one of the real difficulties that's happening in the City of Winnipeg right now — and if you gave me a few more months, I could probably produce some pretty hard evidence — is that the cost of continual expansion in the suburban areas is becoming counterproductive, that we have always encouraged, supported the notion of major suburban expansion. Well over 90 percent of the capital budget of the City of Winnipeg is devoted towards it, most of the activity of the city is derived towards it, and it is usually sold on the basis that this will create additional revenues for the City of Winnipeg. What is increasingly becoming clear is that rather than increasing revenue, in fact, is becoming a substantial burden of cost, and that one of the real pressures on the property tax owner and on the taxpayer generally is the requirement not only to put the hard major services in but to follow up with the soft services, the police services, the schools, the welfare services, the social services. No one ever adds those up as part of the cost of suburban expansion, and yet they're increasingly becoming the heavy cost items, yet one of the few ways that you have of controlling that kind of growth and expansion is where you place major service facilities.

Now, we're really reallocating the service facilities to local improvement judgements. It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that that would weaken the ability to plan the orderly development of the City of Winnipeg, and to begin to try to restrain and reduce the major suburban expansion, we chew up to 1,000 acres a year, is it, approximately in terms of suburban expansion within the perimeter route? Well, I think it's 600 acres inside the perimeter route, at least that much outside the perimeter route is devoted towards major subdivision development each year in the City of Winnipeg. Now that is just far too much and a storm sewer allocation is one way of putting some control on that. Now, we're changing the system of paying those things, you're going to reduce it back again to a matter of local option and local choice, and therefore you're going to begin limiting or reducing the ability to deal with suburban expansion in an orderly fashionable way. I recognize, Mr. Speaker, that there's some real trade-offs that you have to make between the question of how do you limit growth in the city to save money to the total community in terms of allowing a special service to go into one local community, who says, look if we want to get rid of our water quicker and faster, always a trade-off between those sort of localized priorities and the metropolitanwide priorities.

It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that that amendment has to be looked at in those lights. Will this fundamentally weaken the ability of the City of Winnipeg to contend with the job of suburban

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expansion? I would hope that the Minister would be able to provide some satisfaction on those grounds if he closes debate or in committee meetings. But it seems to me that that is a direction perhaps in which we're headed.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that there are some problems in these amendments. The only thing which I am disappointed in, and I think that a year's wait will only cause further major confusion, is that there wasn't a more direct and more comprehensive set of amendments on the question of the role of the mayor and the position of that office in relation to the executive policy committee and the board of commissioners and the powers of it. I think that the City of Winnipeg really is in a state of paralysis at the present moment when it comes to who makes decisions. There are just too many chefs stirring the stew and adding their own particular menus, they've got very different concepts of where they are, and that we will now simply have to live with another year of that particular paralysis.

It would seem to me, Mr. Speaker, that it may not be too late, and I would encourage the Minister, perhaps before we go much further, to see how we could substantially perhaps make further questions, to clarify the role of a mayor, to ensure that there is at least a very obvious denunciation of where the responsibility for the executive decision-making in the City of Winnipeg rests and resides, and where people know whom to hold accountable at the present moment, because right now they frankly don't know, and, Mr. Speaker, the reason they don't know is because under the present Act, there is no way of finding out.

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

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was just one small matter that I wanted to bring up under this bill that might be better brought up under the committee stage, but I would like to speak of it now to the Minister, so that he can perhaps answer it when he closes debate and if necessary give the individual an opportunity to come to the committee meeting.

I mentioned it to the Minister on a previous occasion, and he said that he would look into it, however, I didn't hear him mention it when he introduced the bill and this is part of the question that I'm posing to him now. It refers to a particular instance that was brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker, whereby the old City of St. Vital had given a deferment of local improvement costs to the builder involved. Now, I am informed that there was no lien or encumbrance or any other official notification of this matter against the particular title, and after the house had been sold twice and the last owner of the house had been assured by his solicitor that the title was clear, he received a notification from the City of Winnipeg that this amount of several hundreds of dollars was outstanding from the time that the residence was originally built under another jurisdiction, and that the city had the authority to go after this particular individual for payment of these costs. Now he did speak to a number of officials of the City of Winnipeg and was reasonably assured that the matter was being looked into and that an Amendment to the City of Winnipeg Act would prevent this sort of occurrence from happening again, either by means of some lien or other document being placed against the title of the house.

So the question to the Attorney-General or the Minister, is this in fact being done to prevent future occurrence, and is there any provision being made in this bill or any other bill to come before the Legislature to relieve this particular individual of the plight that he finds himself in?

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

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, in rising to speak to this bill I guess I'll be walking a tightrope. I'll be walking a tightrope, Sir, because my main reason to speak at this time, taking part in this debate, is to protest the action and the words of a councillor who was talking to a group that was making representation, so I must be very careful to make sure that you don't call me out of order, and I guess the best way of doing that, Sir, would be to talk about the past changes and some of the changes that I feel should be brought in at this time.

I might say that I very much resent the words of Councillor Leech, who, when a delegation from the Community Committee of St. Boniface-St. Vital was making a recommendation to keep the Community Committee Office in the old St. Boniface, took them to task and told them that they should be Canadians, especially now that national unity was so important. I resent that very much, Sir, when people who are defending, fighting for their rights are accused of not being Canadians. I think that this is not the first time that the law and the intent of the law, when we brought in the Act that made Winnipeg a large city, is probably not observed, or certainly not the way it was meant to be. And it seems that as the years go by then fairly soon the intent is to try to forget the old part of St. Boniface that was so important in the make-up of this province and people who have always been very good citizens of Manitoba and very good Canadians, and who have done an awful lot in the life of this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, first of all it was the Metropolitan Winnipeg, and St. Boniface was brought into that in co-operation, it was felt then that this was the beginning of the end for St. Bonifac. Then we had The City of Winnipeg Act, and there were certain safeguards put in that, and also some of the other regulations or legislations that were brought in by the former government led me to believe that, fine, that we, the people of the Franco-Manitoba could work in co-operation with the rest of Manitoba to make Manitoba a better place to live in. Last year there were some changes made, and again to safeguard St. Boniface, it was felt that if at any time, because St. Boniface and St. Vital were united together, weakening the position of St. Boniface again, but at least that there would be some facility, some means, of retaining some office, if not the main office, of the Community Committee in St. Boniface. And I kind of regret it that I didn't push a little further at that time, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that the office was retained in the old St. Boniface. I don't think that this would be asking for too much, or that the character of St. Boniface would have been protected a little more, when we made some changes in the different Community Committees. I think that it is unfortunate that we are not, or the present councillors, or the majority of them anyway, seem to think that the Franco-Manitobans have no rights in Manitoba at all, and that they are more or less second citizens. It hurts quite a bit when you hear people say that the question of bilingualism, and even Folklorama is tearing this country apart, and I think that this is quite ridiculous, Mr. Speaker.

And for somebody like Councillor Leech to take people to task because they are defending their rights, I think is certainly wrong and you wonder about the kind of people that you have running the affairs of the City of Winnipeg. Oh sure, at this time it seems the popular thing to do and there is a backlash because of Quebec and you will always find somebody that will get on the band wagon — that is the easiest thing to do — and who will criticize those who are trying to be and in fact being good Manitobans and good Canadians, but who are fighting for certain rights, rights that they quite rightly believe that are theirs.

Now it is the same thing, Mr. Speaker, if somebody is saying, well I'm fed up with being, you know, all this stuff about hyphenated Canadians, let's do away with French Canadians and English Canadians and let's all be Canadians. That is the best thing that I have ever heard, Mr. Speaker, but I think that we can accept that once we know the definition of a Canadian and what a Canadian is. If a Canadian is someone. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I realize the honourable member has a rather difficult subject matter that he wants to bring forward on this particular bill. I would just hope that he continues to refer to the City of Winnipeg Act during his remarks.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, you just prevented me from slipping up that tightrope and I will try to be a little more careful.

Yes, I think that the government should try to, in the future anyway or even if there is any amendments that could be brought to this bill, safeguard certain rights or at least respect the intent that was certainly in the minds of those that brought in, the government that brought in The City of Winnipeg Act. As I say it, I think that it will make — if things were clearer, Mr. Speaker, and I think that this is something that probably is the responsibility of the Provincial Government and the Federal Government more than municipal level of government to make sure that we retain this national unity, and that the people can fight for their rights and not be insulted, Mr. Speaker.

So, as I say, I would hope that even if it is not too late that the Minister can maybe think of and prepare an amendment during the Committee stage and maybe bring in certain safeguards that will help in these important days when it is so important to understand each other, and not just to tolerate each other but to accept each other and realize that, you know, you are not just a very good Canadian if you don't rock the boat and if you do what the majority wants. You know, sometimes — and I don't want to start these racial remarks but it seems that in the hearts and minds of some people you are not a good Canadian if you don't believe in the WASP tradition. As I said the statement that was made, and I don't attribute that to Councillor Leech, but that Folklorama of all things is destroying this country, that everything should be Anglo-Saxon and so on, and this is a statement that I have heard.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the name of national unity and I think it is important, I think that maybe the Minister can bring in some change, or at least, I serve notice now that if nothing is done, I certainly will do everything I can to make sure that the intent of this law and the Act, the way we have it, requesting certain things being bilingual at the City Hall and certainly at the Community Committee Office, wherever that is, and that is supposed to be if St. Boniface is in a certain area, and if this office is moved outside out of the old St. Boniface, well then it is by the Act that everything is supposed to be bilingual in that area, all the information given and all the service at least for

that area, and furthermore that an office should be maintained in the old St. Boniface where they can also get service in the French language.

Mr. Speaker, thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Attorney-General will be closing debate.

The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing that I have learned in the short seven or eight months since I have become a member of the Legislature, is that when you introduce a bill, you simply are unable to predict the scope of the discussion that will follow the introduction of the bill. What I thought was a fairly technical bill has now somehow developed into a bill on national unity.

But, Mr. Speaker, referring to the comments of the Member for St. Vital I will undertake to obtain information with respect to the section that he is referring to. He is really asking whether or not that clause will be retroactive and we will attempt to provide that information for him when the matter is in Law Amendments Committee.

The Honourable Member for Seven Oaks raised a number of technical questions related to a few sections in the bill, which again, Mr. Speaker, I will undertake to review and provide further information to him in Law Amendments Committee.

The Member for Fort Rouge raised the questions which relate really to a change in structure under The City of Winnipeg Act and therefore questioned the composition of the Review Committee that has been established between the City and the Province.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments that have been considered by that committee have been of a technical or procedural type, those are the only kinds of matters that will be continued to be discussed by that committee. Any major substance of changes in the structure of the Council or its committees or powers will be one that is obviously, Mr. Speaker, beyond the jurisdiction of administrative officials or just elected officials from the City of Winnipeg, or fundamental decisions that have to be made by the Provincial Government. I would however not hesitate, Mr. Speaker, to consult with the City of Winnipeg elected officials in any such a review.

The City Council has for some time since their election last November been considering internal reports on the structure of City Council and on how they feel best, as a new council, they can work and be effective under The City of Winnipeg Act. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that their internal review was only completed within the past month or so. In any event, I have not received any report from them relating to their internal review.

Mr. Speaker, I do find some of the comments of the Member for Fort Rouge interesting. On the one hand he suggests that there is no executive responsibility in The City of Winnipeg Act, that the City is proceeding blindly along its way, and yet on the other hand he complains that no member from the Inner City has been appointed to this executive, which in the first place he said had no responsibility. I find that position, Mr. Speaker, somewhat difficult to reconcile.

Mr. Speaker, he refers to the powers of the Mayor, and the fact that the Mayor has no power. This is a difficult question; in my view, some of the amendments that took place in recent years did take away some of the powers of the Mayor. We are attempting, Mr. Speaker, to return some of them by making him, as the Council has suggested, along with the Chairman of Executive Policy Committee, a non-voting member of the Board of Commissioners.

The question has been asked why should elected people serve on what is an administrative body? Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the Board of Commissioners, as the Chief Administrators of the city, do require a feeling of the objects and the directions which Council intends to pursue, and I don't think the Member for Seven Oaks for one moment would have suggested that his Deputy Minister should act on his own and establish his recommendations for public meetings between him and his Deputy, of the directions that the Administrator wanted to pursue, without any direction from the elected body, Mr. Speaker. And I think it will only — as the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks said, he wouldn't dare, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's why simply suggesting that this has been a request from the Council, I think it's important for the proper administration of the city that the Mayor and the Chairman of Executive Policy Committee to whom the Board of Commissioners reports, have a close liaison with those two people, that they can be consulted at their meetings. I believe, Mr. Speaker, having had some opportunity to work under that system, that it will be beneficial.

Mr. Speaker, unless another question was asked, why would just these two people be named? Why isn't it possible for them to go to a meeting of the Board of Commissioners without having been specifically authorized in the Act? This question has been raised before, Mr. Speaker, by a number of members of Council, who take the position that if no one is authorized to attend the meetings, but the Mayor goes without that authorization, or the Chairman of Executive Policy

goes without that Legislative sanction, that any member of Council can go to any meeting of the Board of Commissioners that he wishes, and the result, of course, Mr. Speaker, would be chaos. —(Interjection)— Falling back on a custom I fell into some years ago, Mr. Speaker. So that there is some requirement for legislative sanction as to who is entitled to attend meetings of the Board of Commissioners.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Fort Rouge raises the question, why shouldn't there be further powers added to the Mayor's authority? Certainly, in this particular piece of legislation we're not initiating any fundamental changes in structure or authority or power; there simply has not been time to do that, Mr. Speaker, and I would like the opportunity to review that, now that City Council has completed its own internal review. So, I'm not ruling out in future any substantive changes in the role of committees, including Community Committees, in future amendments to The City of Winnipeg Act, but this Council has had a review underway, it should have some time with a number of new members in a reduced City Council to develop some experience under the existing Act.

But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, while in this bill we are stating clearly that the Mayor is the head of Council, Chief Executive Officer of the City, he is entitled to attend the Board of Commissioners' meeting he has in addition the powers of veto that he had that continues under the legislation, the authority to call the meetings, special meetings, to deal with emergencies, I do wonder, and while at the same time, Mr. Speaker, I don't think the Mayor should be reduced to a mere ribbon-cutter, that he is the only person at the local level who is elected by the city at large, I feel strongly that he should provide leadership to the City Council, that he is elected on a city-wide platform, elected by an electorate at large, Mr. Speaker, and as the Member for Seven Oaks says, he has two votes. At the same time, he should be expected to be a leader of City Council and the city, rather than a mere ribbon-cutter, and if there are further steps that can be taken to increase his authority, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to very seriously consider them. At the same time, I think you have to be careful not to provide the Mayor with such extreme powers that he can become a dictator; we do have 28, 29 councillors elected in the city, representing fairly large wards, who have a duty not only to their ward but to the city as a whole, so there must be a careful balance maintained between the elected Councillors and the elected Mayor.

Mr. Speaker, with one further comment; there have been a number of questions raised with respect to the land drainage district and the assessment for land drainage, which is a technical matter, Mr. Speaker, which I think would best be considered in Committee. Mr. Speaker, I thank the members who have spoken with respect to this bill and I look forward to reviewing this matter further in Committee.

QUESTION PUT, MOTION carried.

SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 64 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ACT

MR. JORGENSEN presented Bill No. 64, An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, there are three major provisions in the Act, aside from the typographical errors that are to be corrected in the latter part of the bill.

The first section deals with the situation that one finds himself in if he is under contract with a government at the time that the election writs are issued, and in many cases, this happens through no fault of the person who decides to run for office. The intention is to provide that there be no penalty applied to that person, as was the case in the former provision of the Act.

The second deals with the matter that was dealt with in the Speech from the Throne, that is the freezing of the salaries of the members of the Legislature for this particular year, and although it can be argued that we didn't quite keep our word because the salaries will be going up 73 cents in the fiscal year, I think it's a reasonably close approximation of a static salary.

The third provision deals with a matter that has caused some difficulty in its interpretation, and that is the people who are eligible to receive the \$25 per diem allowance, and what we're attempting to do here is to more clearly spell out those members that would be eligible for that particular allowance, so that when the affidavit is signed, indicating that a member is eligible for it, there is no doubt as to whether or not the particular constituency that he resides in or represents makes him eligible for the \$25 a day allowance.

Those are the three major provisions of the bill and I hope it will be accepted by the House.

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

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader is quite correct. We see in this bill before us, also three major aspects or proposals, and with respect to two of the three, there is no particular quarrel, and for that matter, there may not be with respect to the third, but it seems as though there is and it will await committee stage discussion.

The one proposal which would deal, as indeed has been found necessary from time to time in this Chamber, via the same Act, the Legislative Assembly Act, to deal with those cases, where, for whatever peculiar combination of reasons and circumstances, a member has made what one would call a nominal and pro forma transgression of the intent of the Act with respect to remuneration or emolument received directly or indirectly from the Crown, it's necessary to deal with it, it's been done, I would think on a rough average about every four, five or six years. And in every case it has proved to be minor with respect to the cases that I am aware of and in this instance it is minor as well.

With respect to the action to put a temporary, as I understand it, one year freeze with respect to indemnities paid members of this Assembly, I would say that in the circumstance, it is probably appropriate. We, after all, know very well that our hospitals and post-secondary institutions are being kept at 2 percent and 2.9 percent increases in the face of a seven percent inflation, and if that's the best and most realistic action we can take with respect to those two major elements of operation of our society, then it is only logical that there be a complete freeze with respect to indemnification of members.

I should not, however, lose this opportunity, Sir, to say that for the past eight years, we have practised that kind of freezing restraint, which is absolute restraint, that is to say with respect to the emolument or salaries paid to Ministers of the Crown. I believe that Ministers of the Crown salaries have not been adjusted at all since 1968 and it is appropriate that they remain frozen as well, that's for sure.

With respect to the third item which has to do with clarification relative to — oh, may I say by way of digression, although it's related to the subject matter, that it's interesting to note that the bill puts a one year waiver of the application of the Act with respect to automatic annual indexing, and I've already said that in the circumstance it is probably appropriate. But it's interesting to note — that the principle inherent in that particular section of the Act which was inserted there, I would think some three or four or five years ago is not being deleted, it is being retained, because in the final analysis it is probably more rational to make adjustments of a few hundred dollars every year than to wait three, four or five years as used to be the common way of proceeding years ago, and then make an adjustment of a few thousand dollars at one fell swoop.

Indexing is ultimately rational, there are particular circumstances this year which make it equally reasonable not to apply the principle, so it is being waived for the year and we have no objection.

Now, with respect to the third major aspect of this bill, which has to do with clarification as to who is eligible for the the extra allowance for reason of the fact of representing constituencies somewhat removed here from the capital city, and who also, therefore, in most cases, live — principle residence some distance removed from the city. Now, my honourable friends have to wrestle with that question as indeed we did. They feel they have a more clear principle or description to enunciate, and I, from what I understand thus far, beg to differ, because it seems to me that the first part of the equation is fine. If a person represents a constituency that is outside of the City of Winnipeg, then he should be deemed to be eligible for the special allowance, provided he is living away from home. But if the person is not living away from home, then I really don't know what justification there can be for any special allowance. So that even with the change my honourable friends are proposing, they're not going to deal with all potential anomalous situations. Because a person may represent a constituency which is outside of the boundaries of the City of Winnipeg and live within a few miles of the City of Winnipeg and come here daily as conveniently as anyone from St. James or St. Boniface or Fort Garry, therefore, for that person to be technically eligible under the wording of the proposed section for some extra allowance just doesn't make sense. While my honourable friends have every right to seek to bring about whatever greater commonsense they feel they can, and we would support them, that the particular proposal embodied in the bill doesn't make sense at all, Sir, not that part. The rest of what I've said indicates that the other provisions of the bill we support.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

MR. JORGENSEN: If I may just briefly respond to the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member will be closing debate. The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: If I just may briefly respond to the Leader of the Opposition on the third point that he raised. I recognize the validity of the comments that he has just made. It did seem to us that no matter how you tried to adjust that particular provision in the bill, there would be some problems. But if we had to err, we thought we would err on the side of some generosity. The situation he quoted could conceivably happen but the situation that is happening with several members of the Legislature right now is that they do live some distance from the Legislature but choose to commute. Just because they choose to commute, we felt should be no prohibition against them receiving the \$25 a day allowance which we think they're entitled to. The fact is that even though they may go home for the evening, it does cost money to travel those distances and secondly, all their meals have to be taken here and purchased here. So with that in mind, we felt that if there was to be an error, it would be on the side of some generosity as far as the members are concerned. In any case, \$25 a day is little enough in the light of the kind of expenses that one incurs in keeping up his duties in this Legislature in the House at the present time.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES — SECOND READING

BILL NO. 25 — THE CATTLE PRODUCERS ASSOCIATION ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 25, Adjourned Debates on Second Reading. Bill No. 25, The Cattle Producers Association Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Meer for Brandon East.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Brandon East adjourned the debate for me and I am happy to have this opportunity to respond to the legislation that has been introduced by the Minister of Agriculture. I would rather wish that he were here, however, to participate more fully and to receive the benefits, Mr. Speaker, of those of us who have had a lot of involvement with respect to , what I refer to, chapter after chapter of continued acrimony in the beef industry. I think that's probably as accurate an assessment as one could make, Mr. Speaker, because we have had a very difficult time over the years to bring together the beef industry or producers of beef in Manitoba under sort of one umbrella or one organization. There has really, historically speaking, never been a consensus of view on any issue relating to the production of beef in Manitoba, or in Canada for that matter. It's been a very difficult and trying period, not only for beef producers, but for legislators as well, who are trying to interpret the wishes of the industry and who are trying to in some way deal with the problems, the day-to-day problems within it, and in particular, problems of price instability, problems in marketing, and problems of getting the rest of the general public to understand what the industry is all about.

Mr. Speaker, I don't hesitate to point out that I do appreciate the difficulty that any government has, federally or provincially, in trying to bridge all those kinds of situations and coming up with some sort of policy that would satisfy a majority of any given group, and in this case, the beef producers.

But, Mr. Speaker, Bill 25 is just another chapter of continued acrimony, as I stated earlier. It is a document that will not sit well, Mr. Speaker, with those people in the industry, and in society, because this goes far beyond the beef industry, the kind of legislation that we have introduced here. This will not sit well with those people, Mr. Speaker, who value a degree of fairness, a degree of equity, Mr. Speaker, and those in particular who value the concept of freedom of choice and those who value integrity. This bill will not sit well with those people concerned about those values, and it's a reflection, Mr. Speaker, on the lack of thought, perhaps not intentional, but certainly lack of thought, lack of consideration on the part of our new government in Manitoba with respect to this question. I truly believe that they hadn't thought it through because had they thought it through properly, Mr. Speaker, we would have not had such a bill introduced as a government measure.

This is something that perhaps escapes some people, or the importance of it escapes some people, Mr. Speaker, that you don't legislate people into a voluntary association. Who the hell wants to be legislated into an association of any kind? A voluntary association should be there for the people who wish to participate in it, and if there is need for the establishment of a charter or some statute or document to give it recognition, then it should be introduced through the vehicle of a Private Member's Bill. —(Interjection)— And you don't even need that, I am told. Yes, you

can use other methods to achieve the same ends.

But here we have a situation where we have Bill 25, which is compelling people, at least initially, to belong to an association not of their choice. Yet, Mr. Speaker, they talk about the idea of government not being involved and extending greater democratic freedom to the people of Manitoba, and in particular to the cattlemen of this province, a contradiction in itself. It is a direct intrusion and intervention to suggest to any one of us in this legislative assembly or any Manitobans that they shall belong to this association.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe we have had its equal in the history of this Legislature. Now maybe I'm stretching it a bit, but I don't believe that we have had its equal, Mr. Speaker. I recall during the debate, the Meer for Gladstone talked about myself, Mr. Speaker, as favouring the NFU as a farm organization. Well, I would like to, Mr. Speaker, enlighten him a little bit in that regard and this is something that perhaps was not known by too many but perhaps should have been, but perhaps can be appreciated even at this stage.

The Farm Union came to the government, our government, two or three years ago and suggested to us that we pass a bill that would enshrine the Farm Union as the spokesman for agriculture in Manitoba, on condition that they had 50 percent plus one farmers in Manitoba within their membership, that if they had a majority of the farmers belonging to that association, that they would be the legal spokesman for all the farmers in Manitoba. That was their request, Mr. Speaker, and they put on a lot of pressure. They put on a lot of pressure, Mr. Speaker, to get such a measure introduced by the New Democratic Party government. And I think it is fair to say that they thought if there was ever a hope of getting it through, it would be probably through a more progressive government and therefore they made their attempt. But, Mr. Speaker, I lost not a moment in pointing out to them that as a matter of principle, we would never be caught in a position of legislating people into an association with other people or groups of people that they do not wish to belong to. We just would not think in those terms, Mr. Speaker, because we valued the right of individual citizens to choose their own groups, their own associations, people that they wished to involve themselves with on a voluntary basis, and that there should be no compulsion in association.

This is something that is an important principle to me, Mr. Speaker, and I was not in a position to bow to those kinds of pressure, but I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, they had more credibility with their request than this government has with this proposal, or the people who have requested of this government Bill 25, because at least they said, "We will prove to you that we will have a majority of farmers who are members of our organization before we would want you to invoke such legislation." At least they had that much credibility.

Mr. Speaker, we have here in this document incredibility, because we the Minister has not been able to demonstrate the kind of support for this kind of legislation that he should do in order — in fact, even if he had, Mr. Speaker, overwhelming support, if all of the cattlemen wanted this, it should never be introduced. If all of them wanted it, it should never be introduced, because what this bill does, is it advocates the role of government to a private organization. That is not why people are elected to government. We are not elected to government, Mr. Speaker, because we want to give up our authority to someone who is not responsible to the general public. That is not the purpose of the electoral process and therefore even if 100 percent-plus farmers in Manitoba, beef producers, wanted this legislation, the answer is no, it should never be done, in the interests of the rights of the citizens of Manitoba who have elected their government to be their spokesman and to be their protectors, Mr. Speaker. It works both ways.

So, Mr. Speaker, this document will not present itself as a credible document to people who value freedom of choice, who value honesty, equity, and integrity. It will do the exact reverse. It will only serve, Mr. Speaker, those people who have a dishonest or — maybe that's too strong a term — who want to take some advantage, people who wish to take advantage of a situation. Some people would call them exploiters, some people would call them racketeers, maybe some would be downright dishonest, Mr. Speaker. Those people this legislation will serve well and members will learn why before I'm through with my comments here this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is incapable of solving the problem of price instability and I say that not because it is my opinion, Mr. Speaker, but because the bill suggests that. This legislation, in Section 6, tells us that we cannot deal with the question of price stability, we cannot deal with the question of marketing, and therefore this legislation will do nothing with respect to improving the price mechanism and the prices that farmers receive for their product. Mr. Speaker, if anything this bill does, it guarantees to bring about opposition as it becomes operative. As people learn the implications of this legislation, it will generate more and more opposition if for no other reason than the principle that people should not be legislated into belonging to an association not of their own choosing.

Mr. Speaker, it's a flagrant abdication of the role of government, responsible government. Mr. Speaker, it smacks of a Ministry — and I don't want to be unkind, because we all go through these stages — but it does smack of a Ministry inexperienced, perhaps taken in by a pressure group,

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because of the shortness of time, the time of this government, only a few months, Mr. Speaker, before they made this decision. This government was only but a few months in being before this decision was taken. And I suppose it was a moment of weakness that took advantage or that caused the Minister to yield to these pressure groups who wanted to protect their vested interest, Mr. Speaker, who wanted to protect their own interest, not the interest of the cattlemen of this province, Mr. Speaker, as a whole, but a handful of people who want to continue to exploit, distort and take advantage of, in a marketing system that does not have to answer to the need for equity, fairness and fair play. And that's what we're talking about, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, this Minister yielded and his Cabinet allowed him to yield, and I think prematurely, Mr. Speaker, his Cabinet gave him the privilege of making this decision prematurely because, Mr. Speaker, he has not earned that privilege to date. This kind of legislation proves that he had not earned that kind of confidence.

Now, why do I say that, Mr. Speaker? I say that because I don't have to prove it. The Member for Lakeside proved it in his speech and his comments, his contribution on this very piece of legislation. When we rose to oppose this legislation in principle, the Member for Lakeside rose and said it can't be true; what you are telling us could not be so; we wouldn't do those kinds of things. And then he admitted that he hadn't read the legislation. And then it became known that many of Cabinet members haven't read the legislation. They relied totally on the Minister of Agriculture to do the right thing. The Minister of Agriculture, who got taken in by a handful of people, Mr. Speaker, but who finds himself now in an impossible position, finds himself now in an impossible position.

I am positive, Mr. Speaker, that the Member for Morris would not want to introduce this bill if it had not already been introduced. After listening to his speeches for eight years when he was on this side of the House about freedom of choice, about authority of government interfering with the rights of individuals, and his colleague, the Minister of Agriculture, is going to pass a law that will tell you and I that we must belong to an association, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I know that the Member for Morris is embarrassed. I am positive that he is embarrassed over this legislation, as was the Member for Lakeside, who denied that such things would exist in a Conservative document as are printed in Bill 25.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't know the kind of caucus meeting and Cabinet meeting that followed the speech of the Member for Lakeside but I do believe him that if he was drafting legislation he would have not drafted this one. I do believe him, Mr. Speaker, because I have come to know him for some period of time and I think he is a very committed person in terms of his philosophy towards these kinds of questions. So I don't know what kind of a Cabinet meeting occurred or a caucus meeting after the speech given to the House by the Member of Lakeside but I am sure that it was a rude awakening for some members opposite to find that they had fumbled into a situation where they either had to backtrack on their commitments to people who are not responsible to the people of Manitoba but only to themselves. You know, would they go back on that kind of commitment? Would they do the right thing, Mr. Speaker, is the question? Would the Minister say, "This is bad legislation. We can't give these kinds of powers to a private club," and offend his friends, offend his friends, or is he going to keep his friends and offend the people of Manitoba as a whole. That's his dilemma. That's his dilemma of the moment.

Mr. Speaker, when one goes through the various sections of this legislation — well, I am going to begin with the purpose of the bill, Mr. Speaker. The purpose and intent of this Act, as it states, Mr. Speaker, is to provide for the establishment and financing of an organization to initiate support or conduct programs for stimulating, increasing and improving the economic well-being of the cattle and beef industry in Manitoba by developing improved marketing methods, grading standards, quality standards, research and educational programs.

And you know that sounds not too bad, Mr. Speaker, excepting later on in the bill all authority to do those things is removed from this association. They have no powers, Mr. Speaker, because in another section of this bill it talks about restricted powers, which suggests that the association shall not engage in production, sale, marketing or processing of cattle on its own behalf, or exercise any of its powers in a manner contrary to this Act or the administration by-law. They are not going to be allowed to do anything in the marketplace, Mr. Speaker, except a public relations job. And that's the sum total of this legislation.

But a public relations job for whom, Mr. Speaker? For whom? The tens of thousands of farm people in Manitoba? No. To preserve the vested interests of a handful of people.

MR. GREEN: That's what he's doing.

MR. USKIW: It's to protect, Mr. Speaker, the elite. That's what this is, it is elitist legislation. It is to protect the elite in the beef industry in Manitoba and the secondary industries related to the production of beef.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have here the establishment of an association which involves between

12 and 15 members, and then you look at what powers they are going to have and how they are going to be appointed. You know the Minister is going to appoint these 12 or 15 people, but all the time he is suggesting that there shouldn't be any government involvement. But he is going to appoint this board, who are the association. They are the association and there will be no government involvement.

Mr. Speaker, the way this is set up, the board or the association, whichever he wants to call it, is going to be an arm of the Conservative Party. It's not going to be an arm of the cattlemen of this province, it's going to be an arm of the Conservative Party, who will handpick this group of people and call them the Association of Cattlemen in this province. —(Interjection)— Well, you know the Member for St. Johns makes a good point. The government, he suggests, is the arm of the cattlemen's group. Well that may be, Mr. Speaker, that's the extent of the legislation that is before us.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's examine that, because here we have a government bill — not a private member's bill but a government bill — launching a cattlemen's association. But you know tomorrow we might have a new cattlemen's association formed without legislation, voluntarily, by groups of people, as they have done in the past.

Mr. Speaker, what kind of attention is that government and that Minister going to give to any other association of cattlemen in this province after having legislated that if you want to be recognized by the Government of Manitoba you must belong to this one. This one will receive recognition. And that's what's before us, Mr. Speaker. You must belong to this one to be recognized by that government and by that Minister. If you choose to belong to a different cattlemen's association, you will have no credibility in the eyes of the government, you will not be speaking for the industry and you will be ignored, Mr. Speaker. That's what this does. The moment the government puts its stamp of approval on a document like this establishing an association, they are stuck with protecting it; no matter what it does, Mr. Speaker, they are stuck with it. They cannot afford to, they cannot recognize any other group thereafter because this is their creation.

So, Mr. Speaker, that in itself indicates that there wasn't much thought given to this kind of legislation, to the drafting that was done by the Minister and his support staff. I don't believe the Minister himself realized the implications of this kind of legislation.†

Now, Mr. Speaker, let's examine the objects and powers of the association. It says: "The association may advertise and promote the cattle and beef industry in such manner as it may deem advisable; and gather, compile, publish, distribute and furnish information with respect thereto; initiate, sponsor and encourage research into the production and marketing of cattle —these are motherhood items — encourage by education, information, advertising and promotion the marketing of a uniform high quality of cattle and to expand the markets for cattle."

They were going to do all of this through public relations, Mr. Speaker. "Co-operate with any organization having a similar purpose which is or may be established in Manitoba or any other province or territory of Canada."

Well, Mr. Speaker, you could reword that section and it would be right on target. That section means that you must provide grants to the Canadian Cattlemen's Association out of this fund. That's what that says, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly what that says. "Enter into agreements with other organizations having similar related objectives, in order to carry out its purposes. Subject to this Act do such acts as is deemed necessary or advisable to enable it to administer this Act effectively and to promote and to assist producers in the production and marketing of cattle in Manitoba."

—(Interjection)— Well, no, no. Some of those are very flowery statements, Mr. Speaker, but completely unenforceable by the prohibitions in the same bill, completely unenforceable. No capacity to deliver. If you're talking about assisting producers in the marketing of cattle, Mr. Speaker, all they can be talking about is public relations, educational programs where they cannot change the structure of the marketing system. That is something they cannot do. And even if they wanted to do it, they are prevented from doing it because of the very legislation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what your signals are; perhaps the Speaker would like to —(Interjection)— Oh, all right, thank you.

So, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is a document which will continue the status quo, which has not been found acceptable by many many producers in Manitoba.

Now the regulations or restriction of powers, Mr. Speaker: This association is restricted from getting involved in any field or endeavour in marketing. The association may make regulations as it deems necessary. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have never heard of an association passing laws that cannot be challenged by the Legislature or that cannot be supervised by someone responsible to the Legislature, but here we have an association who are going to be passing regulations but responsible to no one but themselves, to no one but themselves. Twelve people or 15 will decide on a set of regulations that don't even have to be approved by the Minister of Agriculture, whose bill this is, and if people are agreed as a result of those regulations, who do they go to, Mr. Speaker, if they are not happy with those regulations? The people have to go to the Association and if the Association

wishes, Mr. Speaker, they can tell the people to get out of their office because they haven't time for them, and they have no further recourse, Mr. Speaker; power without appeal to the courts, power without appeal to the Minister, power without appeal to the Legislature other than to change the Act itself.

Mr. Speaker, that is an insane document. They have the power to impose fees, Mr. Speaker, payable to itself, providing for the collection of fees by agents whom they will appoint, and be able to enforce the same, and again, no appeal provisions. If they set up a system that is not working well, that either the person who is paying the fee or the one collecting it finds extremely cumbersome, there is no body to whom they may place their grievance and get redress. There is no provision for that, they have to go to the same people and complain about their problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is authority that you must never vest in the hands of a private organization, never, because that is the role of government. If you want to talk about democratic process, the democratic process is right in this Chamber, it cannot be delegated and should not be delegated outside of this Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture talked about 80 percent of the cattle marketed in Canada come from provinces that have an organization such as is proposed in Bill 25. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture is going to have a tough time proving that point to us because I have searched that out and I have not seen any comparable legislation anywhere with respect to the beef industry in Canada, not anywhere, Mr. Speaker. If you look at the legislation in neighbouring provinces, Mr. Speaker, and I'm not going to go through it all, but you can look at Saskatchewan, you can look at Ontario, and you will find, Mr. Speaker, that all of those Acts require that the responsibility be placed in the hands of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council by regulation, not delegated out to any of these associations, none whatever, Mr. Speaker. In fact, very stringent requirements are placed on the Association for accounting, and the accounting must be done to a Minister or an inspector appointed by the Crown in each of these respected provinces. Mr. Speaker, it is still wrong, notwithstanding that, because you should never legislate people into an association.

I have here a copy of the legislation from Saskatchewan and their most recent amendments, and also Ontario. Nowhere, Mr. Speaker, does it give that kind of authority and power to a private organization. So the Minister really has no basis on which to claim that 80 percent of our cattle marketed are produced in provinces that have a similar association as the one that he is proposing to set up through Bill 25.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister also indicated that the Commission of Inquiry and the Joint Advisory Committee showed evidence for need of a producer organization. Well, Mr. Speaker, nobody challenges that. We all know — I said in my opening comments that there is a need for a producer organization because it is difficult to really find out what the views are of the producers of this province, but, Mr. Speaker, you must never legislate an organization into being. There is a difference, yes, there is a need for one but if the producers feel it is important, then they should assemble into an organization of their own on a voluntary basis and they will receive a great deal more respect from public authorities if they do it that way than if they do it through the means that is now provided for them in Bill 25. There is no way, Mr. Speaker, that any future government — any future government — can give any credibility to this Association because of the way it's been brought into being, or is being brought into being. It has to be looked upon as a wing of the Conservative Party and therefore that is the light in which they will be viewed by succeeding governments. I can assure members opposite that their future is not long; it's a short-lived proposal, Mr. Speaker, that is being introduced because their dependence will be totally on keeping that government in power. That is what boils down to, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, that is not a threat, that is very obvious, that when a government introduces a bill that brings about an association, then what else is it if not an association tied in very strongly with the government that has introduced the measure, as opposed to a voluntary association that collects memberships and holds annual meetings and makes policy decisions and subsequently present their views by way of submissions to the government of the day. There is quite a difference between those two approaches, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister talked about letters of supports; he talked about letters of support from the Chairman of the Manitoba Marketing Board. Well, you know, the letter that he tabled here doesn't support this measure. The letter merely advises the Minister on the problems of getting a consensus among the beef producers, and that if you are bold enough you may put one in without a referendum and eventually maybe people will forget and they will get used to it and you will have achieved what you want, and that might be an expeditious way of dealing with the problem of a lack of consensus out amongst the farmers. That is what this document says, what the Minister alleges is a document in support for his measure — which is absolute nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, likewise the letters from the UGG. They talk about the principle of an association, and who is opposed to the principle of an association?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that I can complete my remarks in five minutes, but if the members insist, of course, I will have no choice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster on a point of privilege?

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in my presence, the Leader of the Opposition designated the Member for Lac du Bonnet to be able to use the Leader's time with respect to this debate. Now, the Leader of the Opposition spoke, but he did not speak for over 40 minutes.

MR. SPEAKER: I'm sorry, I cannot accept that. Anything of that nature must be designated before the member starts to speak.

The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I'm not surprised that members opposite don't wish me to carry on. That is a reflection on the members opposite, not on myself.

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

MR. JORGENSEN: On a point of order, my honourable friend is threatening and accusing without having any justification. He has not reached the stage where his remarks are concluded yet.

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

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would then apologize to the Minister without Portfolio, but I did hear people opposite suggest that they were not prepared to grant leave.

Mr. Speaker, yes, the letters of support that were tabled by the Minister do indicate support in principle to the idea of an association, or the need for an association, but they do not indicate support for Bill 25 as such, and there is a vast difference between the two.

The Farm Bureau is another one which indicates support in principle, but, Mr. Speaker, I suspect there that there may even be a vested interest. You know, we have to examine why these letters of support are coming, what is the objective of that particular organization. Mr. Speaker, it is a matter of record that where commodity groups are established in this province, that by and large, most of them, if not all of them, make annual grants, financial grants, contributions, to the Farm Bureau. So if this organization is established and it is funded by the cattlemen of this province, voluntarily or otherwise, it seems to me the Farm Bureau will be a beneficiary. And so it is logical that they should send the Minister a letter of support because it will add to their financial position. That is really where we are heading, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)— Well, who is the Farm Bureau, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Inkster is asking. The Farm Bureau is an organization that is not based, Mr. Speaker, on a membership.

MR. GREEN: They never had the guts to sign up members.

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

MR. USKIW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I am not objecting to the existence of the Farm Bureau. I am merely pointing out that they are not a membership-oriented organization. They have a number of commodity groups who finance their operations and they try to represent the sort of broad viewpoint, but because they are financed by so many different groups, in many instances they are never in a position to come out with a clear statement of policy, and they have admitted that openly, because of divisions within their own ranks. That is the nature of our agricultural community, Mr. Speaker, I don't fault them for it. But let's understand what they are.

So if this organization is formed and funded the way that the bill indicates that it will be, then there is no doubt in my mind that the Farm Bureau will be on the receiving end, receiving another grant from another commodity group to finance its operations. That perhaps explains very much their interest in this piece of legislation. But even having said that, Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that they have gone so far as to support Bill 25 as it is written. They have gone so far as to support

the need for an association that would speak for cattlemen across Manitoba.

Now, the Minister also indicated to us that he had support from the Cow-Calf Association, and that is an association that has come and gone. There are a few left, Mr. Speaker, but I am told that their membership has virtually disappeared, other than a handful of individuals, and within the remaining handful of individuals, there is no consensus on this question, Mr. Speaker. There is a tremendous amount of bickering and arguing going on on this very proposal.

Then the Minister went on to illustrate that he had 4,000 letters of support. A copy of that is here, Mr. Speaker. He calls this support for his legislation. That's not what it is, Mr. Speaker. This was a letter, a campaign against the Marketing Board of a year ago; that's what this is. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting —(Interjections)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member's time is up, unless he has unanimous support to carry on, I have to call him on time.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, if it is any help to honourable friend, we are quite prepared to allow him to use up the remaining time this day, up until 5:30.

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

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the Minister without Portfolio. I think I should be able to complete my comments by then.

Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note the philosophy of this particular group, the Manitoba Cattle Producers Freedom Campaign, the 4,000 letters that the Minister alluded to, because on the bottom of their material, Page 2, it says "Keep government out of our pockets and out of our business."

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is putting government's hands into the pockets of beef growers by way of the levy. That is not what they have asked for and the Minister in introducing his bill used this as evidence that he has support for that measure, when it tells you in bold, black letters, Mr. Speaker, "Keep government out of our pockets and out of our business." This bill is the greatest intrusion into the business of livestock men in the history of this province, the greatest intrusion, Mr. Speaker.

Now, what did these people want, Mr. Speaker? They wanted a beef ombudsman. That's what they wanted. This is a year old. They wanted a beef ombudsman operating under the Ombudsman's Act. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't have to talk about the credibility of this organization. They know that they are incredible themselves. They don't need any convincing. A beef ombudsman under the Ombudsman's Act is impossible because the Act doesn't provide for such a thing. It provides, Mr. Speaker, for the Ombudsman to function in the area of government administration. That's all it provides for. It doesn't deal with private sector situations nor do I think this Legislature would want to pass a measure that would allow the Ombudsman to deal with private sector situations or grievances.

So what kind of nonsense? But this is the kind of material that was put out a year ago in order to convince farmers that they should vote against the beef board, that all we need is an ombudsman and he's going to solve all their problems. It was a dishonest proposal, they knew it was dishonest, but this is the kind of campaign that was carried on, Mr. Speaker. And then they wanted some requirement that the packers would daily advise the market information, there's nothing wrong with that, it's a motherhood thing, but you need some authority to require it. You can't just do it without some authority, Mr. Speaker.

And then they wanted a cattle producers organization to be funded by a voluntary checkoff. Well, there I agree with them, Mr. Speaker, that if we're going to have a cattlemen's association, then it should be a voluntary association and not introduced in this Legislature by a Minister of the Crown. It should be a voluntary association like all of the other associations that do exist in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, it wasn't very long after the introduction of Bill 25 and the response from this side that the Minister found himself in a very untenable situation, and so he issued a press statement, Mr. Speaker, talked about easy opt-out rights. You know, Mr. Speaker, that is a lie. This document is a lie, an absolute lie. Mr. Speaker, I challenge anyone to find me, in Bill 25, the easy opt-out provisions. I challenge anyone to do that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture on a point of privilege.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite from Lac du Bonnet is indicating that I have put out an untrue press release. I wonder if he would retract his statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to retract my statements but I'm going to read that statement into the record from his own press release, Mr. Speaker. It's headed, "Easy opt-out rights for cattle producers. Downey stresses voluntary checkoff in industry." Nothing in this bill talks about easy opt-out provisions, Mr. Speaker. Find it for me. I've gone through it up umpteen times. So Mr. Speaker, this is obviously not an accurate reflection of the Legislation that is before us. Far from it. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, it's dressed up to mislead the populace of this province, because nowhere, anyone reading that legislation could come up with that kind of a press release, unless they were instructed to camouflage what is being introduced into this Assembly. And that's what has been done, Mr. Speaker. It's a dishonest approach to the introduction of Bill 25.

Mr. Speaker, why are we in this situation? You know, this debate is not new, that is the debate about the problems of the cattle industry. In the term of the previous Conservative Government, the Roblin term, we had the Shewman Report dealing with the problem of what's ailing the beef industry in the marketplace. It recommended sweeping changes which were never acted upon, and then we had the Federal inquiry in 1976 which was never acted upon. And then we had a proposal such as this one, Mr. Speaker, but at least introduced in the way that it should have been introduced, a proposal on the part of the Beef Growers Association for a checkoff to finance their organization, and that particular proposal was put to a vote, as it should be and the vote didn't carry, Mr. Speaker.

In 1974, Mr. Speaker, we had 7,271 people registering for that vote, of which only 5,747 voted, a return of 79 percent. Mr. Speaker, 43 percent voted yes, and 57 percent voted no. So the Minister had his answer way back in 1974. Way back in 1974. Mr. Speaker, the Beef Growers Association came to me and said, "let's have another go at this referendum."

MR. GREEN: Two out of three.

MR. USKIW: I said, maybe there's a message in the last round. Maybe the people don't want just the checkoff, maybe they want something to be done about the important things in the beef industry.

So, Mr. Speaker, we had the inquiry commission report, and I'm not going to go into chapter and verse, but the substance of this document, Mr. Speaker, is very much along the lines of previous commissions of inquiry, recommending a public involvement in the marketing process, and Mr. Speaker, this isn't what we in government relied on. Because we didn't base our decision on this document, only because we knew that there was no consensus amongst the beef producers to proceed. And so the various cattlemen's associations, and there were several, came to me and said, before you implement any of these measures in this report, would you give us a chance to talk about them, about the recommendations, and so what did we do, Mr. Speaker? We said to them, we will appoint an advisory committee to the Minister, and this advisory committee will look at these recommendations and make their own set of recommendations, Mr. Speaker. And that's the important part. We went through that exercise. They had many, many meetings throughout the province, and they brought back a report.

I want you to know, Mr. Speaker, that the very people who made these recommendations were the people who later on launched a campaign to discredit the referendum, the very same people who endorsed — some of them, not all of them — who endorsed these recommendations to the Minister campaigned against their own proposals.

Mr. Speaker, the majority report of that advisory committee recommended that an agency to be known as the Manitoba Cattle Producers Agency be established under The Natural Products Marketing Act, without a prior plebiscite of producers. They recommended that provisional directors of the agency be cattle producers appointed by the Minister of Agriculture. They recommended that the provisional board be authorized to make regulations with respect to weighing, settlement, identification procedures in plants and auction markets, with respect to disclosure of prices paid by packers for animals sold direct. They recommended that we investigate alternative markets and to test competitive methods of selling cattle on a rail grade basis. They recommended to investigate producer complaints. The recommendation was to require buyers to post prices and discounts offered for rail grade purchases, to collect and disseminate market and price information, to exercise such additional powers as may be approved by a producer plebiscite, the provisional board be replaced by an elected board within two years, that directors be elected by registered producers within districts established on the basis of producer numbers and recognized geographic boundaries.

And here is the important one, Mr. Speaker. The elected board have all powers exercised by the provisional board and such additional powers as may be necessary to carry out all other functions as recommended by the Manitoba Livestock Meat Inquiry Commission. That was their recommendation No. 6, that once we have an elected board, we implement the full recommendations

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in this document. Powers additional to those specified in No. 6 be granted to the elected board only upon approval of producers, the plan include a provision that a plebiscite be taken on any section of the plan if requested by ten percent of the registered producers.

Now this was signed, Mr. Speaker, by a number of people. This is eight out of the twelve.: Armand Desharnais, Elgin Hall, Rudy Usick, Richard Loeb, Arnold Keyes, Charlie Mayer, Donald Voth, and Les Vatcher signed that recommendation, which was the majority report. Why, Mr. Speaker, after we moved into a referendum on their own report, did they launch a campaign to destroy it? Well, I'll tell you why, Mr. Speaker. Because they didn't trust the democratic process. They wanted to be appointed as a provisional board, Mr. Speaker, they wanted to be appointed as a provisional board in order to ensure that the implementation of this document would never occur. And when we went to the people and we said that we would not implement this document unless the producers voted for it, and (b) that the board would be elected from Day One, they said, no, we want no part of that. We don't want elections, Mr. Speaker, we want an appointment of a provisional board. And that was the rub in the whole thing, Mr. Speaker. That is not democratic procedure, that is dictatorship, which they are now backing up through Bill 25.

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

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Ste. Rose that the debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned until 10:00 a.m. Wednesday morning, with the Committee meeting at 8:00 p.m. Tuesday in Room 254.