



Third Session — Thirty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Friday, April 20, 1979

Time: 10:00 a.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell).

PRESENTING PETITIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Petition of the United Health Services Corporation, praying for the passing of An Act to amend An Act to incorporate United Health Services Corporation.

MR. SPEAKER: Readings and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the proceedings of the Sixtieth Annual Meeting of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada, and note for the record that . . . and I've given notice to the Honourable Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, that he is no longer the Attorney-General of Manitoba, and the report will be corrected.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, and has directed me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Member for Dauphin, that the report be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank yo,, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Highways, and the Minister responsible for the Emergency Measures Organization. Has his staff had an opportunity to assess the serious flooding situation in South Transcona, and specifically, who is responsible for dealing with flooding arising from the overflow from the huge drainage ditch running alongside Highway 15, in South Transcona, which is responsible for most of the severe flooding in South Transcona?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, it's my hope to be able to be in that part of the city later on today. I would have to indicate to the honourable member that the first responsibility lies with the municipalities concerned, in this case the municipality of the city of Winnipeg. If the situation is as he describes it, that the major portion of the flooding problem is caused by a provincial

waterway drain, a drain that is under the jurisdiction and the responsibility of the province, then there indeed would be some responsibility for the province to assume in this matter.

MR. PARASIUUK: Yes, I would hope that the — in supplementary to the minister, I would hope he could clarify that situation by this afternoon, in that the present situation is completely confusing to local people and I'm wondering if he could clarify the procedures. Right now, they are phoning the provincial flood line and the provincial flood line is telling them to phone the City. The City is informing those residents, who are really inundated with flood water, that they can be provided with sandbags at a \$1.10 a piece. This would appear to those people to be both mercenary and completely inadequate to deal with the flooding situation. Can the minister clarify that that is the existing procedure?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I'm advised that there is already some equipment in place and working to rectify the situation, but I'll accept the notice that the honourable member is giving me about that particular situation, which I know is involving him directly and send out for some information, perhaps to have available to the member within a matter of an hour or so.

MR. PARASIUUK: Yes, I don't want to get into a debate as to why the province hasn't been monitoring the situation with south Transcona better to date, perhaps they're relying more on the municipality than was justified. But I'd like the minister to inform me as to whether the province would be prepared to enter jointly into a program with the City to cost-share the public provision of safety and sand-bagging for residents who are being flooded by circumstances over which they have no control. Will you cost-share that with the City, if the City asks you that this afternoon?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, most members are aware, perhaps not the Honourable Member for Transcona, that there has been over the years, a formula worked out that involves cost-sharing, a formula that at different levels as costs rise that involve the provincial government and as well, the federal government on a specific set of costs, as they are known to us. At this particular point, we have not been able to make that assessment as to what figure or what potential costs we're looking at. As soon as that becomes even known in general terms to us, our officials inform Ottawa that we will be requesting aid, and that we have the kind of serious flooding in the province that would qualify us for federal aid, as well as provincial aid. I acknowledge to the Honourable Member for Transcona, that in this particular area, that is the immediate responsibility between the municipal authorities and the provincial authorities, there would appear to be some room for improvement in the matter of communications. Inasmuch as a citizen is caught in between not particularly knowing at all times just who he should direct his inquiries to.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona with a fourth question.

MR. PARASIUUK: Yes, I appreciate the minister's comments and the difficulty that the citizen finds being in a sense, passed between two levels of government. Just for further clarification for the confused citizenry, if in fact, the province does cost-share this program with the City and appeals to the federal government for some aid, will this cover both the costs incurred by the municipality in terms of trying to fight that flooding, and the costs and damages incurred by individual citizens in terms of property damage, or in terms of trying to protect their own property. Does it work both for the municipality and for the individual?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, again the well-practised experience that has been gained regrettably in this particular matter in this province over the years will be followed. There is a cost to the individual homeowner, something like that, in terms of providing immediate and personal protection for his property. The costs that are provided for by the municipality or senior governments are generally allocated in those areas that serve a collective or greater protection that is provided by the municipality or the government.

As to compensation, or eligibility for compensation, again, that is a matter that has been dealt with, as in the past, by either the Flood Compensation Board, or indeed, it may well be the activity of the new Disaster Board, or group that was set up as a result of the hurricane and wind damage last year in this province; some such organization would be the organization involved in assessing damage and potential compensation claims.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Could the Minister, further to the questions posed by the Member for Transcona, advise as to the present quantity of sandbags that are available for further provision to municipalities, and to others that are in need of sandbags.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, the Emergency Measures Organizations has some, over one million polyjute sandbags available in stock, and has some time ago, several weeks prior to this, in anticipation of the potential flood situation in the province, informed the bag manufacturers, of which there are several in this city, who have since informed us are in production of additional bags. The question that I asked the directors, both the directors of Water Control and Emergency Measures, just yesterday, on the general question of the availability of sandbags in the province — I am assured that there is an adequate supply.

MR. PAWLEY: Could the Minister confirm that, as of yesterday, the Department of Highways did not have sandbags available for sand-bagging in areas where it required the efforts and the work of the Department of Highways?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, what we're experiencing mostly in Manitoba is a series of flash or surface flooding, that is occurring in many different parts of the province at the same time. It's entirely conceivable that there would be an area where a district office, whether it's Water Control or Highways, does not have stockpiled a supply of bags. But I would have to take the particular question as further notice and make enquiries, but I am assured that there is a sufficient supply of sandbags in the province.

MR. PAWLEY: Can the Minister of Highways assure us that there are sufficient moneys within his budget to ensure a proper supply of sand bags for the Department of Highways?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I would have to ascertain first of all whether or not the responsibility for the supply of sandbags, maintaining a stock of same, whether in my relatively newly acquired responsibilities of the Emergency Measures Organization whether or not that doesn't lie with the Emergency Measures Organization, but I think there is no problem as I've just heard some very good advice from this side of the House.

MR. PAWLEY: A question further to the Minister of Highways or possibly to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, whether or not he can explain the rationale that within the City of Winnipeg, itself, apparently there is a variation insofar as the charges that are being levied for sandbags from \$1.10 up, and in some instances there are no charges whatsoever for sandbags. I would like to receive the rationale for this variation insofar as charges are concerned to the residents in the City of Winnipeg and also if I might add to residents in rural municipalities outside the City of Winnipeg.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, if there is a variation in the price of sandbags, that is the decision of the municipalities affected and if residents of those municipalities have any concerns they should take that matter up with the elected representatives of their municipality.

MR. PAWLEY: A further supplementary then to the Minister of Municipal Affairs, does he have any plans to meet with municipalities affected by the flooding in order to insure that the charges that are being levied, / insofar as sandned, bags are concer are not such as to prevent residents from insuring that there is protection of their property because of financial problems in providing the moneys required. And secondly, is he at all concerned to the extent that he would meet with municipalities in order to ascertain whether some rationale or general guideline of policy might be developed in respect to charges for sandbags to residents in flooded areas?

MR. MERCIER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would certainly would be prepared to meet with municipalities. At a meeting of our sub-committee of Cabinet dealing with this issue yesterday it was clearly indicated that the Emergency Measures Organization are dealing with individual municipalities, have received some complaints about some municipalities and are in the process of discussing those complaints with the individual municipalities.

MR. PAWLEY: To the Minister for Transportation, can he advise us as to why such meetings only

commenced to take place as of yesterday, when surely the situation had been foreseen for the past two weeks, and also if he can provide us with a report as to that meeting that has taken place between EMO and the municipal organizations?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, the Emergency Measures Organization has been meeting with municipalities since February, two months before the first sign of any flood. It's part of their ongoing work, indeed perhaps the most important work that Emergency Measures does is attempting to work with the municipalities throughout the year in outlining and in gaining their co-operation in accepting their responsibility as being, in the first instance, the body responsible for the safeguarding of their electors and their citizens. We operate somewhat differently than our American cousins do, Mr. Speaker, in the sense that in America and the American state the governor states a general area of disaster or a state of emergency and certain things follow from that statement. It's fair game, we can debate the question as to how we ought to do it, but over the years — and as was practised by the members opposite when they were government — our system works on the tier level. We begin with the local government responsible, namely the municipalities. If the situation develops into a more serious thing, we move to the other forms of government and then finally, if the figure, as our cost-sharing figures with Ottawa outline, that is where the senior government of the country comes to the aid of regional problems of disasters of this nature.

But let me assure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that meetings were held well in advance of the situation; the fact of the matter is that there is a degree of local autonomy of course exercised, and what the Minister of Municipal Affairs indicated is that — and it is causing us some concern — there is some variance from time to time as to practises and responsibilities that municipalities are prepared to accept. We would like to see that kind of a service being treated in a more uniform way and we're working towards that end. The other question of whether or not the — I've forgotten the other question by now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PAWLEY: A further supplementary. If in fact there have been meetings that have been taking place through EMO, regular reporting, could the Minister advise why he would be unaware of the situation in south Transcona?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, the kind of meeting that was referred to by the Minister of Municipal Affairs is the kind of meeting that I expect that we will have on very short notice, perhaps every day for the next four or five days. It's a matter that we wish to keep ourselves fully abreast of, and totally aware of what's happening from hour to hour, and I assure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that these conditions change from hour to hour. This morning at 5:00 it looked very much like Trans Canada Highway west was indeed going to be blocked because of water flowing over the major highway in our province, and by 8:00, you know, the situation had reversed itself and the corridor is safe for travel. So these situations are changing as all Manitobans know, or most Manitobans know, from hour to hour, particularly with the nature of this kind of flooding, which is surface and flash flooding. We're not experiencing — and our forecast, and I believe the weather that is being forecast for this weekend would lead us to believe that we will not be experiencing serious major flooding on our main rivers, that is the Red and the Assiniboine. What we are experiencing is flash flooding because of the unusually quick melt of a great deal of snow, and that's causing a lot of unusually, admittedly difficult situations for individual persons involved, for farmers or residents.

But I think the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is fair enough, or else I will have to devise a way of blaming the former government for this year's flood, but I believe he is fair enough — and given a chance, I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, I could find that way. But I'm sure he's fair enough, and as a long-time Manitoban understands the difficulties that our citizens have at this time of the year with water.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as the questions of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition relate to municipalities, and meetings with municipalities by EMO, I want to place on the record the fact that since the flooding of 1974, the Emergency Measures Organization has carried on annual seminars with municipalities during the winter months and I know that they were held in February of 1978, and again in February of this year in Brandon with most municipalities in attendance, and

they were at that time advised that there was a very realistic prospect of flooding, and since that time, Emergency Measures Organization have been working with municipalities, advising them of the problems and taking all the necessary steps to encourage them and have them prepare for the flooding that's now taking place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Minister of Highways. The situation in Transcona is in part a flash flood, but it has occurred every spring time, so it's something that can in fact be predicted. In the past, there was public diking in South Transcona. Could the Minister, when he examines the situations later this morning or this afternoon, determine why there has been no public diking in the South Transcona region this year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated to the honourable member that I'm prepared to make myself more knowledgeable about the specific situation that the member refers to.

MR. PARASIUK: A supplementary. I appreciated the Minister's comments about the situation varying, but if in fact the basement has been flooded and the basement is full of water, the water may recede but that house is still left there with a situation that doesn't change very quickly. And in order for homeowners to protect themselves they have to today probably, make investment decisions in the order of \$500 to \$1,000 with respect to sandbags and pumps. Can the Minister inform us as to how he will be notifying those citizens as to what type of assistance the province and the city may want to provide this afternoon? Can you inform us what mechanism for communication you will make to those people because right now no one is communicating with them?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, again, the first persons to call would be his municipal government and his local member.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. They have in fact done that. They have received no aid whatsoever; there is confusion as to whether in fact the flooding has been caused by a provincial waterway or by —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Speaker, if in fact the members on the other side of the House feel that this is a matter to sort of make fun about, I certainly don't, and I know that the Minister of Highways has certainly not been making fun of this particular matter.

I would like to ask him if he would set up or indicate to us, what communication mechanism he will set up with the local citizenry in that I as the constituency representative, am being flooded with calls from people saying: "What can I do? Who can I get information from?" I am asking him, the Minister responsible, what communication mechanism exists for emergency measures in this respect?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I assure the honourable member that within the hour, I will have Emergency Measures Organization contact residents in that area or some specific callers from that area, to explain the procedure. I would also assure that the Member for Transcona has that information in his hands before noon.

MR. PARASIUK: Thank you for reacting to my questions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if it would be in order for me to add to this debate that I trust that the Minister of Highways when he is examining south Transcona this afternoon will not overlook the flooding Seine River in St. Vital as well.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs. In view of the commencement of construction of the Winnipeg Arena, is the province now prepared to commit funding to the project?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Elmwood should or does know, the present construction program at the Winnipeg Arena was embarked upon by Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation, guaranteed by the city of Winnipeg without any commitment for funding from either the federal or the provincial government level. To date, as I previously advised him, the city is awaiting some confirmation from the Minister of Fitness and Sport at the Federal level, and as soon as they have received that commitment, they will be in touch with us to review further expansion and renovation of the Winnipeg Arena, and to date we have not been contacted by the city of Winnipeg, so I can only assume that they have not yet received that Federal government commitment.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I might just say in passing that the understanding is that Mr. Norrie, the Deputy Mayor, has received that commitment. That has already been indicated on radio. So I would say that in view of the Federal government's commitment through a letter apparently sent by the Honourable John Reid to the city of Winnipeg, will the Minister then match the \$5 million committed by the Federal government, a commitment which would bind any succeeding administration?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I have not seen any letter from Mr. Reid to date.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would also ask the Minister how he regards the city's guarantee of the \$3.5 million which would be spent by the Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation. Would he consider that guarantee as equivalent to a cash contribution in the event of a three-way \$15 million expansion?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, it's not how I see it. It's how the Federal government sees it.

MR. DOERN: I would ask the Minister that, regardless of how the Federal government sees it, is the province prepared to make a contribution to arena expansion?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I've quite clearly outlined the position of the provincial government. We are waiting advice from the city of Winnipeg authorities that they have received confirmation of the Federal government financing, and as soon as they do, we will meet with them and with the Winnipeg Enterprises Corporation to review the further proposals for expansion.

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

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct this question to the Minister of Finance. Could the Minister of Finance indicate whether the province is prepared to activate its flood assistance policy in terms of compensation policy in the event that more wide-spread flooding will occur this spring, and could he indicate whether the same formula that was used by the previous administration will be the basis for the policy?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I can't answer the member's question at this point in time. As the Minister of Municipal Affairs indicated a Cabinet sub-committee met yesterday with regard to the entire question, and any action that may be taken by the government would start with that committee.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, could the Minister take as notice whether or not the costs that may be expended by residents in the purchase of sandbags and flood-fighting equipment would be considered — in the event that a policy is accepted — would be considered as costs that would be eligible for compensation if the program goes ahead?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly take under advisement the necessity to advise the public generally of such a policy at the earliest possible date, and certainly we will advise the House as soon as there is a policy that ought to be brought to the public attention in that regard.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Due

to the fact that the Tritschler Inquiry appears to be embarking on a program to obtain evidence in the province of Ontario, which is a perfectly legitimate enterprise, would the Minister confirm that this inquiry, one of the main subjects of which is to determine why an estimated capital program went up from \$50 million to approximately \$120 million over a period of three and a half to four years, has now seen its own cost go up from an estimated \$150,000 to over \$1 million in one year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think that we'd be in the position of comparing apples and oranges, and I think the member recognizes that that type of comparison would fall into that category. The investigations that are being examined by the Inquiry Commission and I presume the one in question is one that is a tendered type of undertaking that was a part of the development, and was open to substantial question, whether or not the actual costs of the Tritschler Inquiry Commission are in that category, I would say no, they're not. The costs estimated originally for the inquiry are an estimate only, and were presented as estimates, and the actual costs that come in, Mr. Speaker, will in my view be worth every cent of the investment when you consider that you're dealing with investigation into projects that deal in the order of billions of dollars and you're talking about this type of an examination I think it's a pretty small investment.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, aside from the applicability or not of the comparison, would the Minister agree that the first estimate of cost of the Tritschler Inquiry was approximately \$150,000, that the present estimate is \$1 million from the government, Mr. Speaker, and an additional \$1 million from the Manitoba Hydro itself, for a total of \$2 million?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I've not been advised of the cost to the utility or the other participants that may be involved in the investigation. I don't recall the member opposite indicating to the House the costs that were borne by the people and the organizations that appeared before the CFI Inquiry Commission at the time that it held its hearings, but I do recall the figures that were used in general terms on the cost of that inquiry, which were several times the size of the numbers that the Member is referring to now.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, does the Minister to whom Manitoba Hydro reports, not consider costs to the Hydro utility as being public costs to the people of the Province of Manitoba, which have to be paid for by the public?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, certainly. But, Mr. Speaker, the category that Manitoba Hydro falls into in this particular case is no different than any other party that may have been appearing before the Commission of Inquiry, and I am sure that there are others that have borne costs as well in making their appearance before the Inquiry Commission, and that would include a number of the consulting firms that were involved in the contracts, etc.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with a fourth question.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we count it as a first question because it's a different question directed to the Honourable Government House Leader. Can the Government House Leader advise us whether this Legislature can expect to receive a motion made by one of the members of the Treasury Branches, which would give effect to the unanimous resolution of this House, that there be a committee established to examine into the question as to whether or not sufficient information is available to the public and that such information is available in an expeditious way? Some time earlier in the Session, a motion was passed unanimously, asking the government to consider the advisability of doing this; can the Minister advise us now whether we can expect a motion to that effect before the end of this Legislative Session?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): No, I can't give my honourable friend that assurance, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines, Natural Resources and the Environment.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, I would request leave of the House to

make a statement concerning the flooding, the run-off situation; information which has just been made available to me.

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

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: There may be other questions yet to be asked. I think that we could give permission. I, for one, want to ask a question. If you wish to set aside the Question Period to give the Minister the opportunity to speak, as long as we come back to the Question Period, I, for one, would have no objection.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I did say that I would be willing and I imagine other members would be, but if the Minister wants to wait till after the end of the Question Period, I would ask a question of the Minister of Finance, who, on April 6th, I asked about the answers to questions which he undertook to present to us when we concluded the Estimates of his department on March 16th, and he stated on April 6th and I quote: "The list is almost complete. I'll have it for him in a matter of a day or two". I am not aware that we have had that, Mr. Speaker, and today is, well, two weeks since that time. I wonder if the Minister could now respond to that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll check on that and I'll undertake to provide all the answers that are available and hopefully it will be all of them by Monday.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I suppose this would also be for the Minister of Finance. Last Session, by Order for Return No. 29, the government undertook to provide a Return on the item of "cost of separation payments in 1977-78 fiscal year re termination of employment". Since that fiscal year was more than a year ago, can the Minister advise why it's taking so long to supply that answer?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the member could indicate if there are any other numbers in addition to "29" that he's not received, because he did raise it on one other occasion, and perhaps I can indicate that I'll certainly check on that.

However, Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, and I've given the classic case of having filed an Order for Return that took two years to get back from the former government and we shall in every attempt make sure that we certainly don't abuse the privileges of the House to that extent and we'll get it back as soon as possible.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, the member has asked for numbers. I should tell him, since he apparently doesn't know, that every two weeks the Orders of the Day set out a list of unanswered Address for Papers and well, there aren't any of those left, but Orders for Return, and the Clerk's office has the list every day, every hour of the day, that the Minister wants to inquire.

I would like to ask, I suppose the House Leader, if not, the Acting First Minister, how long it should take to respond to Order for Return No. 55, asking for bids on the Lord Selkirk, which is long overdue as far as information is concerned?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, if the question was indeed directed towards me, I will undertake to ensure that that answer is provided as soon as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns with a fourth question.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Inasmuch as the government undertook to supply the response to an Order for Return No. 56, giving information as to trips by Ministers, Deputy Ministers, and Assistant Deputy Ministers on government business between October 24th, 1977 to May 17th, 1978, and inasmuch as that period is more than a year ago, may I ask, I suppose, the House Leader, why it should take more than a year to give the information that was then available?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that if he provides the numbers to the Minister of Finance as he requested, they will probably be looked after.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, you may be answering on behalf of Treasury Bench, but I have a right to ask the Treasury Bench direct and have done so. The fact is that these Orders for Return were accepted a year ago, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister of Finance can speak about history all he likes. I have a right to ask the question and I did ask it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. May I suggest again to the honourable member that if he had complied with the request by the Minister of Finance, we would not have this repetition that is occurring at this particular time.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I did not repeat the question on trips by Ministers up to May 17th, 1978. I asked it only once, and the Minister of Finance and the government have had every opportunity to know and ought to have known, what outstanding Orders for Return there still are, so that I am not being repetitive. I haven't asked this question and I haven't asked this specific question all year. I'm asking that of the House Leader.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, there seems to be some difficulty in getting answers to that particular question because if my memory serves me correctly, when we asked it, it took more than a year to get the answer as well.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Before we proceed any further, I should like to draw the honourable members' attention to the gallery, where we have 75 students from Grade 11 from Beausejour High School, under the direction of Mr. Koss. This school is located in the Constituency of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

We also have 75 students of Grade 9 standing from Crescentview School in Portage la Prairie, under the direction of Miss Demchuk. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie. On behalf of all the honourable members, we welcome you here this morning.

The time for Question Period having expired, I believe there was a request by the Minister of Mines for permission for a special statement at this time. (Agreed) The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. RANSOM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have some copies for distribution. This is an update of the information supplied yesterday, Mr. Speaker, that Deadhorse Creek at Morden crested on April 19, with a discharge only slightly below the record level of 1971. Flooding has also been experienced in the Town of St. Pierre, due to overflows from Joubert Creek. The Boyne River at Carman is expected to crest this weekend at a stage comparable to that of 1970. Peak flows on the Plum River at St. Jean and the Seine River just above its inlet into the Red River Floodway are expected on the weekend with the Morris and La Salle Rivers expected to crest one or two days later with peaks on all these rivers being close to those experienced in 1974. Although the Roseau River is rising rapidly at Dominion City, the crest is not expected to occur until the beginning of May. On the Pembina River, runoff is just beginning in the upper portion of the Basin. However, rapid increases in stage will occur in the next few days with overflows from the Pembina River in the Gretna area being similar to those in 1970.

Anticipated peak stages along the main stem of the Red River have been re-evaluated as a result of recent events in Manitoba as well as in the United States portion of the Basin. Some upward revision of the expected peak levels have been made.

In the Assiniboine Basin, runoff is just getting under way, except in the area downstream of Portage la Prairie, where runoff is well advanced. Omands Creek crested on April 19 and Sturgeon Creek is expected to crest on the weekend at a flow somewhat below that which occurred in 1974. The forecasts issued for the Assiniboine River on April 17 are still valid.

In the Souris Basin, runoff in the United States portion of the Basin and the western portion of the Basin in Saskatchewan is well advanced and runoff is under way in the Manitoba portion. Rapid rises in the stage of tributaries and the main stem may be expected in the next few days. The forecast which was issued for the Souris River on April 17 is still valid.

As in the case of the Assiniboine River, the area of Dauphin, Whitemud River and Interlake areas, the temperatures have been cooler, the snowmelt has been more gradual. Runoff in these areas is not expected to be fully under way until next week and flood forecasts for these areas, which

were issued on April 17 have not changed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to express our group's satisfaction at the frequent information that the minister is providing the House with. I would also say, Mr. Speaker, that I think that there should be no tendency on the part of the government to hope that they can answer all inquiries by referring to past practice. Because although this may be an answer which momentarily can satisfy, I don't wish to be partisan about it, but to satisfy the fact that they are able to answer the opposition, I can tell the honourable minister that we did not rely only on past practices, we tried to learn from what had occurred in the past and to add to the measures that could be taken. I sincerely think that the minister will deal with these matters, not merely on the basis of precedent but as dictates arise.

I would, Mr. Speaker, say that it would be an opportune time for him to deal with it to the benefit of all Manitobans. For instance, the question of the Boyne River at Carman, that there was some dissatisfaction with the residents in that area with the previous administration and there were some people who were irresponsible enough to say that the engineers and the Water Resources Department were basing their reports for the benefit of the New Democratic Party government. Some of those people may even be in this House at this minute, Mr. Speaker. So, you have an opportune time to see whether these engineers prepared reports for the benefit of the New Democratic Party government, and if they did, Mr. Speaker, I would urge that they be fired immediately. And if they didn't, Mr. Speaker, then I would urge the minister to tell these irresponsible people, that the water followed the same rules under the New Democracy as it did under the Conservative administration. The same thing, Mr. Speaker, relates to the flooding at Dominion City and I would urge the minister to be advising those people in the area, that the situation which arises from the waters flowing, does not arise from the particular nature of the government that is in power.

The measures, Mr. Speaker, that will be taken, I hope will be taken on the basis of past experience, the accumulated knowledge in dealing with these matters that has been obtained under all governments, who have had to deal with them and that there will be a further accumulation of techniques under this government.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Government House Leader.

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

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Crescentwood in the Chair for the Department of Education and the Honourable Member for Emerson in the Chair for the Department of Agriculture.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY — AGRICULTURE

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Albert Driedger (Emerson): Committee come to to order. I'd like to refer members to Page 7, Resolution No. 6, Minister's Salary; 1.(a)—pass — the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: I've listened to part of the discussion relating to the practice by the Minister of the sale of land by the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, and I am concerned at this stage, not so much with what happened, but the principle and the policy relating to the sale of government property. I am under the impression that when the land was put up for sale, there was a reserve bid, and the reserve bid was the cost of acquisition and of financing the acquisition. I'd like to know if that's correct.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Chairman, what concerns me is that the government was concerned

only, apparently, in recouping its investment, and not in getting the market value guaranteed to it through a reserve bid system. Is that correct?

MR. DOWNEY: You can go ahead. I'll answer it when you're finished; I'll bank your question.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the Minister suggests that he'll bank my questions, but the fact is that I am trying to get my information so that I will know . . .

MR. DOWNEY: Read Hansard.

MR. CHERNIACK: . . . how I can assess the policy of the department; and therefore, if I don't know the answer to my question, I can't very well ask the next question. I'm sure the Minister wants to make it possible for us to evaluate the program and practice.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, if the member wanted to refer to Hansard, that has all been asked and answered many many times, and it's already on the record. If he wants to repeat the question, I'll consider answering it now.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Minister for reconsidering whether he'd answer it or not. It's not a question so much of Hansard, it's a question of clarification as to the impact of the program, because the Minister has already said that his reserve bid is the cost, rather than the market. And what I'm asking him now to confirm is that it was policy that the government recoup the investment, and that it was not concerned with getting the return on the market value, or close to it, so as to be guaranteed that return by a reserve bid.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the member is asking me the question if in fact there was a reserve bid and I said yes. The cost of the corporation plus the carrying charges which is in fact the same policy that was on the Land Lease Program. That in fact that was the way in which that land is being sold which was leased without any opportunity for more than one individual to have an opportunity to bid on it. We are establishing a market price, Mr. Chairman, by in fact opening the land for sale to open public tender and in fact has sold in excess of some 43 percent over the actual cost of the corporation plus the carrying charges. So in fact, it has been bringing the market price through the open tender system.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I do not recall in detail the terms of the Land Lease Program but in the general way I believe it was designed to assist farmers who wish to rent land at reasonable prices to do so, subsidized even. Because as I recall it, the rental was 5 percent of the cost and there was an additional incentive to that farmer to be able to acquire ownership of that land by paying the cost to government. The cost to government was calculated for purposes of sale to the tenant on the basis of the market value as at the time it was purchased. —(Interjection)— Yes, so that the market value at the time of purchase was the price under the lease contract that was entered into with the lessee and the lessee then knew that if he developed that farm, if it became productive enough for him to be able to acquire sufficient moneys with which to buy it, the price was part of his contract. And therefore it is absolutely no comparison or no analogy with the situation of a person coming in from outside of Manitoba, and bidding for that at anything over the cost. There is no comparison in the false analogy between the Land Lease Contract . . .

MR. DOWNEY: You would like to make it a false analogy.

MR. CHERNIACK: . . . a false analogy between the Land Lease Contract and an outsider coming in to buy land. Now the Minister has interjected, "I'd like to make it a false analogy", I would invite him to make it a correct analogy and I would certainly do my best to understand his argument.

MR. DOWNEY: Again we've gone over this many times and I would just like to say that the only reason that it could not be used as an analogy is in fact that the land that was sold to the farmer that he has referred to under the Land Lease Program was a handpicked farmer by the last government. The actual cost to the corporation, the carrying charges, using that as a base on which they would sell that to their particular choice of a farmer is the reason why it is a false comparison. In fact, as far as I am concerned, the handling of public money is far more questionable than the

way in which we have offered the property that is surplus to the Corporation to all Manitobans, and if he wants to try to say that it is a false analogy, that is the only way in which I would consider it as a false analogy that in fact under the Land Lease Program the reserve bid was the same cost to the Corporation plus all carrying charges, but the fact was that all Manitobans and all farmers didn't have a chance to bid on that property, the few, or the one individual that the last government decided should have that lease, automatically had the right to buy that. Not taking into consideration the market value such as he's suggesting is done, we are taking into consideration the market value on the open tender system and are not selling it for less than that.

We are, Mr. Chairman, giving all Manitobans an opportunity to bid on it but they didn't, Mr. Chairman, that's where the false analogy comes in. If it be their friends, or if it be individuals who they think that they should give the right to farm that land at a five percent interest, plus the automatic right to buy it at that cost to the Corporation plus carrying charges, that, Mr. Chairman, is the problem. And the only deviation that has been from that as far as we're concerned is that if it's — and it's not land that had leases on it with ongoing farmers that were offering it for sale — it's land that is surplus to the Corporation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, now that we agree that the Minister's analogy was a false analogy, we can . . . —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, the Minister has been a member of this Committee for some period of time and has been part of this debate for quite a period of time, I can understand his wish to interject, but I think, Mr. Chairman, you should stop him so that we can have that. —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, I expect you to decide, not the Minister to decide whether or not he has the right to interject. The Member for Minnedosa is always the quickest to interject and the least to make speeches, so I try my best to ignore him. —(Interjection)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order please.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, could you call the Member for Minnedosa to order?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Chair just did. The Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Good, I'm glad of that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister makes illusions to friends and is trying to paint the Land Lease Program in a bad light, and he can do that and I'm sure he has done it — he's probably done it in places and before audiences where he could not get an answer from the government's side and that's fair game, that's politics — and now he's interrupting again, Mr. Chairman, —(Interjection)— and the Member for Minnedosa is interrupting again, Mr. Chairman, and I guess I have to suffer that as long as you're prepared to let them do it, Mr. Chairman, but I will attempt to continue in spite of that.

The Land Lease Program, as I recall it, was designed to assist people — both people who wanted to sell their lands and people who wanted to buy land or to lease land — and that program was designed on the basis of need and applications were made and decisions were made . by the Agricultural Corporation —(Interjection)— and the Minister is still interjecting, but I really started this discussion on a matter of policy. Now, he's become defensive and I don't blame him. I understand why he's becoming defensive but I will try to confine my remarks to the principle involved.

As I understand it, the Minister stated that the reserve bid was to protect the investment, that the market value determination by him was accomplished by putting the property up for public tender. The concern I have is that the reserve bid was not related to the market value and that means to me — and the reason I raise this now was not the history, I said that earlier, but the policy — and that is that the next time around when the Agricultural Corporation or this Minister or maybe this government — that concerns me even more — has what it deems to be surplus land, the danger is that it will follow the same policy of attempting to recoup its investment only and not relate it to market value.

And once the public gets to know that, that is a real danger to the tendering system and that's what I want to get clarification on. Does the Minister . . . he's been on the defensive all along on the basis of what happened. I want to talk about what's going to happen. Is he so insistent on justifying the previous decisions, as to state that it's going to be the future policy? That's what I'm concerned with.

Mr. Chairman, what concerns me even more now, is that the Minister refrained from answering what I think is a very important matter and that is, what is the policy of the department and of the government in relation to putting up for public tender, properties owned by the people of

and managed by the government? Do they have a policy on that?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the member is well aware of the fact that there is a Board of Directors that run the Manitoba Agricultural Corporation, which recommend to government, and the recommendations that will be coming forth on more land. As I said earlier in committee, we refused some of the sales where they did not reach the cost to the Corporation.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I'm really concerned about this and I want to point out that the Minister responsible for the MHRC answered some questions in the House the other day in relating to the sale by public tender of property acquired by the government with moneys of the people of Manitoba. We know that the Minister responsible for Economic . . . well, I forget the title, that was formerly the title, I suppose it was Industry and Commerce . . . was involved in the sale of, let's say, the Lord Selkirk, the Department of Highways is responsible for the sale of land and I think there ought to be a policy — and I believe there always was a policy — that there would be a reserve bid related to market value.

Now this Minister now said that we have a Board of Directors, and we wait for them to make recommendations. I would like to think that the government has a policy and that all agencies of government follow that policy and that government doesn't wait to see what each agency may, in its discretion, deem necessary or advisable.

And therefore, I am left with the statement by the Minister that the Board of Directors will make recommendations time-to-time. Does that then mean that they can recommend changes in policy without government being involved in advising them what government believes should be the policy?

MR. DOWNEY: Well, I'm sure there's certain situations that develop, Mr. Chairman, and I would just like to for the member, in case he is unaware of the fact that when he was a member of government, that there were land purchases made with public taxpayers' money that had no relationship apparently to the actual market price of which he's referring to. When we look at one particular parcel of land that has now got a cost to the Corporation of some \$106,000 and the highest — the highest — offer received, Mr. Chairman, was \$50,000.00. What friend was he trying to help when he gave him that kind of money for that particular land? What did he look at as far as market value is concerned?

Now, he's coming back and trying to criticize and ridicule the way we are handling the affairs of the province on a responsible manner, he's totally full of hot air. We've handled all this, we've debated it, it's all in Hansard, and I think we've hashed this all over. If he wants to continue to sit and debate it, I think it's a meaningless task as far as the Committee is concerned.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to make an issue of this, but the Minister said that he wants to know what friend I was trying to help. He knows very well I had nothing whatsoever to do with this program. I may have many friends, and I like to help all friends and all enemies, but the Minister had no right whatsoever to make the statement he did and I don't mind his having made it because it reflects on him rather than on me. So I'll let that pass. —(Interjection)—

The point that I'm trying to make in spite of the fact that the Minister thinks I'm full of hot air or is trying to make me think that and react to that and I won't, is that I'm trying to talk about present policy. The Minister is so defensive about what he did and what his government did, that he keeps referring to what he did. I'm only trying to develop what the present and future policy of the government will be in relation to selling of land paid for by people's tax moneys, and he keeps referring back to history.

I don't know whether he was a Conservative when the previous Conservative government got involved in selling out Manitoba's natural resources in the north to the Monaco Company, but I don't want to refer that and blame it for his helping his friends wherever they were. I don't know if he has any friends. But I am still insistent on attempting to find out government policy today.

The fact that it comes to that question about policy today because of what happened in the last year under the sale by the Agricultural Corporation is not what I am dealing with. No matter how much he wants to bring me back to his own feeling of guilt, I am still trying to deal with what is today's policy. In the future, tomorrow, next year, is this government through this Minister prepared to sell land on public tender with the reserve bid being related to cost and not related to market value? Are they going to continue that policy?

MR. DOWNEY: If there's any change in policy, Mr. Chairman, the public of Manitoba will know.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, from what the Minister said today, I take out only two features of what has been said today:

1. The policy was to set a reserved bid on costs.
2. If there's a change in policy the public of Manitoba will know.

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, if there was a change in policy to set the reserve price any other way than to have the cost to the Corporation plus the carrying charges, with the people of Manitoba having the right to bid on it, then we would certainly have to review all the Land Lease policies that have the option to buy at the cost to the Corporation plus the carrying charges. So, I would have to say that if there were a change, we would have to consider changing that total policy on Land Lease and the policy as far as the sale of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation land.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister has elaborated on what might be the features or the factors that they'd take into consideration in change of policy. But I want to confirm my clear understanding that the present policy is that the reserve bid on the sale of land will be the cost plus carrying charges, and that that is the policy today. Now, I believe that that is correct from what the Minister said?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, that, Mr. Chairman, is what really concerns me, because as I say MHRC is selling land — is being advertised for sale — Department of Highways sells surplus land. The government has on other occasions announced that it was going to sell land that had been acquired in the past and either this policy enunciated by the Minister will carry throughout government where there's terrible dangers involved or this department, for some reason, is going to continue on a different basis.

And let me tell you, Mr. Chairman, here we have this government embarking on a program in the last 17 or 18 months, of selling out property — land, mineral rights — owned by the people of Manitoba. They have sold some at a loss on the base of investment, and gleefully — well, I shouldn't say gleefully — they announce publicly, "We lost so many dollars because whatever it was cost us so much and we sold it on public tender for much less, and there is a loss," and they at tribute it to the previous government —(Interjection)— well, Mr. Chairman, I got another interjection from the Member for Minnedosa, "Get your facts straight," is what he is saying, and he's a man who has spent all his life dealing with dollars so I guess I have to make sure that I have my facts straight.

I now invite him to give me the facts so that I can get them straight. Well, he may not have heard my invitation, Mr. Chairman, so I'll repeat my impression.

I was saying that the government decided to sell certain properties owned by the government, or by its agencies, and in some cases sold them for less than the cost and the government announced the fact that it had taken a loss. At that stage the Member for Minnedosa said, "Get the facts straight." I invite him to give me the facts. —(Interjection)— You see, Mr. Chairman, he now says I'm trying to stick to agriculture, so he is not prepared to give me the facts on which he wanted me to deal and therefore I just have to say that he has made no contribution either from his seat or at the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa on a point of order.

MR. BLAKE: Mr. Chairman, this member can slip and slide around and make his insuations and draw some conclusions that aren't really there.

We were discussing the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Land Purchase Program, and I assume that he is referring to land deals that we have sold below cost, and obviously he's trying to slip in another deal like the Lord Selkirk, or something like that, which is usually his way to slip and slide around the facts of the case.

But I assumed that we were going to stick to the Manitoba Agricultural Land Lease Program and the Minister's Salary, and that was my reason for saying stick to the facts and gets your facts straight, ' Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. FOX: On a Point of Order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Kildonan on the same point of order.

MR. FOX: When we are discussing policies of government, there can be relevancy to the fact that you will mention other things which also fall into the same category of policy. If you are talking in respect to sale of goods that belong to the people of Manitoba, you don't just have to indicate that only in one department has this happened, but it may be happening in other departments as well, and that's the point that the Member for St. Johns was indicating. So I think, the Honourable Member for Minnedosa didn't have a point of order.

MR. BLAKE: I'm telling him it hasn't happened in this particular department.

MR. FOX: I'm just saying he didn't have a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Chairman did not rule the Member for St. Johns out of order.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, thank you. You know, Mr. Chairman, I'm not slipping and I'm not sliding. I'm going directly to the question of government policy. The fact that the Member for Minnedosa doesn't like the way I do it, is his problem, not my problem. The fact that he wants to make slurring remarks on any other member, is his problem, not my problem. The fact that he has an insulting nature is his problem, not my problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm out of order, am I not?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could the member remember to address his remarks to the Chairman?

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Well, but I remind you, Mr. Chairman, that the Member for Minnedosa talked about my slipping and sliding which is my usual manner and you did not bring him back to the subject. Now I'm back to the subject.

Mr. Chairman, the Member for Kildonan stated what is very obviously correct. There should be, in my estimation, the policy of this government dealing with people's property, with government property and that policy should be consistent. And this Minister has enunciated a policy as it applies to the land that he dealt with, which I believe is inconsistent with government policy in other departments and what I believe more important, is inconsistent with good practical management, and that's what I'm getting at. And I think it is important to know whether this Minister is deviating from or following general government policy on land. I believe he is deviating from it and I think that that is a very important question. If he says he is not deviating from it, then I would have to attack the entire government's policy if he has enunciated government policy generally. So I think it's pretty important that we know what we're at, and I don't care how much the Minister wants to refer in a slurring manner to friends or favouritism or anything like that, I am dealing with policy, I am dealing with manner of selling land.

And I want to point out to the Minister the great danger of what he has in mind, and that is that people, once they know the government policy, and he has enunciated it more than once, of putting a reserve bid on cost, can readily find out cost and no other reserve bid is in advance. And that's the important feature. When normally people are invited to make a market tender and are told there is a reserve bid, they have every right in the world to know that that reserve bid is related to market value and therefore, they have to decide what the land is worth to them, not what it's worth to the seller, but what it's worth to the buyer. And that's the way you get market value determined. I don't know why I have to tell such basic things to the Minister but he apparently doesn't know it. In order for people to be induced to bid market value and thus determine the market, they have to believe honestly that their competition in the bidding is also based on market value. But once they know that the reserve bid is not based on market value, then they start thinking in their own minds knowing as they well might what the cost price is, that they can put in bids in excess of cost price, less than market value, and proceed to buy the land at less than market value. It is false thinking that putting it up for bid for public tender automatically brings in market value. It is what is in the minds of the people who bid for it that determines what the price will be.

Now the government, as I understand it in this series of sales, did not refuse to sell to anyone

who bid over cost. Now, I don't blame them for refusing to sell for someone who bid under cost, but if, as they say, or as the Minister has said, that the cost was in excess of market value, then I have to ask why didn't they sell at market value? Why do they not sell to a bidder who bids market value regardless of cost? And that has not been answered. I'd like to know what is the policy? What is the policy; what will be the policy?

ow, you see, Mr. Chairman, I paused for the Minister to respond and he's not responding and. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. DOWNEY: Well, Mr. Chairman, as I have stated, I have dealt with it for several hours of debate and that should satisfy the members of the opposition.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I know that the Minister dealt in debate on this for several hours, he says, on the question of what they did. Now, I am trying to avoid discussing what they did. I'm trying to discuss the policy, giving the Minister my reasons for thinking that it's a wrong policy and since I gather from him that it's the existing policy, I thought he would try to justify the existing policy in response to my argument as to why I think it's wrong, and that's why I paused for his response and I still hope he will respond to that.

MR. DOWNEY: I will, when the member is finished.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Johns — pass. . .

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the Minister says he will when I'm finished. I've finished that point.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, when all the members have their opportunity, then I will respond to it.

MR. CHERNIACK: We don't know whether we are entirely finished until we hear more debate. The Minister does not have any opportunity or right to close debate to say that I will wait til everybody asks questions and then I will respond. He has a right to say: "I won't respond", or "to respond", and then if he raises some points that I disagree with I have a right to answer that. If he wants to change the rules somehow, he'd better do it in some other manner.

MR. DOWNEY: You haven't finished.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pass — the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Chairman, then let me repeat, that the great danger of the existing policy is that people who know the cost to government can pretty closely predict what the reserve bid will be, and if the policy of government is to accept tenders that are in excess of the cost, but less than market value, then that destroys the whole system of objective public tendering with closed reserve bid, and I think it's a terrible danger. And I think that this government through its Minister, has embarked on a very serious practice. Now, what bothers me is not only is it wrong in this department but it would be much more dangerous in other departments and yet there seems to be a difference in policy and I think that we're entitled to know and the people in Manitoba are entitled to know whether the Department of Agriculture is operating in a way different from the rest of the Province of Manitoba. And I think the Minister owes it to the people of Manitoba, if not to the opposition, to give a clear-cut explanation of why it is that his department is prepared to sell land on a different basis than the rest of government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. DOWNEY: The only response I have again, is to repeat, Mr. Chairman, that if there were any change in policy, it would affect the policy in which they had, which in fact, would have been same kind of a deviation. When we talk of the land lease program, which in fact, gives one individual the right to purchase it at the cost to the corporation, plus carrying charges, why should not the people of the province of Manitoba have an opportunity to bid on surplus land, surplus land at the cost to the corporation, plus carrying charges. I again refer, if there is a change in policy, which there isn't, then in fact, the total sale of the land lease land by the Manitoba Agricultural Corporation,

which was their policy, Mr. Chairman, will have to be reconsidered.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Charman, the minister is saying that, as if it's a sort of a threat, you know, if we're going to change policy, it'll affect others. In the first place, there is a contract involved and I don't know whether this government is prepared to ignore a contract and to pass a law, saying that we cancelled the contracts, or the minister doesn't recognize the fact that under that contract that he is referring to, people made a commitment to enter on to premises, to work land, to develop land, to dedicate themselves to it and must in —(Interjection)— Shall I repeat what the minister has just said, if that's his language.

MR. DOWNEY: I said balderdash.

MR. CHERNIACK: That's ot what you said, is it? In any event, Mr. Chairman, I want to know. He thinks that wht I just said was "balderdash", I want to know if that's true or not. My understanding is that —(Interjection)— now I'm going to give him a chance to explain it. My understand is hat when the land was leased to a farmer, he was committed to paying rent at a subsidized rate and that he had an opportunity to buy the lan under certain terms and on condition that he held the land for some period of time.

I recall the original contract was, that he had to pay the cost of carrying charges or the market value, whichever was higher and that there was a lot of complaints and I think from the Conservative opposition about that and the policy was then changed, that he would have to pay the cost and carrying charges, but could not resell the land for some period of time, that he could not be a speculator, by buying at cost and reselling at market. That's my recollection and that he could recapture part of that market at the rate of 5 percent per year, which implies 20 years before he could get the full advantage. Now, if that's "balderdash" then I want the minister to explain to what extent that is balderdash.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pass.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the minister, who again interjected balderdash and another descriptive word, i now not prepared to back up his statement. What I was saying, is that there is a difference, but if in principle, h thinks that that deal was wrong, then he should negotiate a change. If in principle, he thinks that deal was wrong, that should not affect the correct policy of how you sell land and that is I'm talking about the reserve bid. And peculiarly enough, Mr. Chairman, I started talking about the policy of how you set a reserve bid, and he has been dragging me off into various other venues, but I keep coming back to the reserve bid principle. He's justifying what I consider a wrong approach to the reserve bid, on the basis of how it affects people who have a contractual relationship with the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation. I don't se it that way at all. I don't see how you treat a person who has a contract, a lease and an option to purchase for certain land, you treat him in exatly the same way that you treat any other person and I suppose, any person from the length and breadth of Canada or maybe, even outside of Canada, who may want to bid for that land. Is he suggesting that it is the same thing?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pass. The Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: So, Mr. Chairman, we now have the situation where the minister has had every opportunity to respond and has not done so to the questions I've just asked and we have then a situatin, which to me is pretty clear-cut. The Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation follows a different procedure than, as far as I know, the rest of government has in disposing of what it deems to be surplus land. That tqt procedure is an invitation in my estimation of people to cash in on the fact that they have advanced knowledge of the approximate reserve bid, and know that the policy of the government is to sell that land above reserve bid, abve the cost, but not necessarily at market value. And that to me, is a very very dangerous procedure.

You know, members may think it's not important, but I think that it's terribly important that the government should be prepared to enunciate a policy, as it is done, that people who are invited to tender for land, knowing the reserve bid, know also that that reserve bid is not related to market value. I really think it's terribly serious and I dm't think that the minister has the right, in any way, to rely on this policy because he doesn't like what the former government did, because what the former government did was in his estimation wrong. It is improper for him as a minister to be influenced by what the previous government did, in determining how to deal with government property now. And h says, "Amen" to me, Mr. Chairman, and now I have to say to him thatit's terribly serious that he is not changing that policy. He is still prepared, without justification — I

make that point very strongly — he has not justified the policy is now following, except by referring to what the previous government did, and I think that's wrong when the government has land, either it or its Crown corporation has land which it considers surplus and wishes to sell it, it is prepared to sell it at less than market value. And he has not justified that, except by reference to actions of the previous government, and I think that is completely irresponsible, especially when he poses as a member of a government which is going to set all the bookkeeping straight and correct all the errors. He is now falling into a terrible trap and it deals with property owned by the people of Manitoba. And I think that that is inexcusable, especially since he has not justified this policy.

Now, I fear that since he is an influential person, as I recall it, he was and probably still is a Member of the Treasury Board, I think he was a Member of the Treasury Board, he may be influencing other ministers to deal with people's property the same way. And I think that that is a very bad practice, because then it means that the government will be selling its property at market or less, I'm sorry — at cost or less because once it is known that the government's reserve bid is based on cost and carrying charges, and that if the market value is less than that, then how can they sell it for more than market. They will be put into a position of selling at cost or less, inviting losses all the way. There will be a time Mr. Chairman, when they won't be able to blame the previous government, because how long can you keep on saying, "You did things your way." They're going to have to stand on their own feet, and make their own decisions based on their own practices, without being able to refer to previous governments, and trying to lay blame, or cast slurs.

And that, to me, means that they are going to be . . . well, I hope they'll be changing the policy, or that this Minister loses his influence to determine policy along the lines that he has enunciated. I think it's a very serious thing that he is doing, and I think that the worst thing is that he's not even justifying what he is doing, except by saying, "I don't like the way your previous government handled matters."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. George.

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It seems that the Minister of Agriculture doesn't in his usual way to this committee in the last prepared days that we've been . . . right from the beginning, was not to answer questions or put his government's policies on the line and explain them in the manner that will provide this committee with information and advise.

I'd like to ask the Minister, of the 120 staff positions that the department is being reduced by, how many of those positions — and I think we had, I'm not sure that I have my totals accurate — were vacant positions? Could the Minister indicate, approximately?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. DOWNEY: I believe approximately 80, Mr. Chairman. I believe there were about 41 people left with, that were in positions, out of the 120 that he's referring to.

MR. URUSKI: Of those 40 people, were some of those people transferred to other departments?

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask a couple of questions with respect to the Income Assurance Plan. The Minister indicated that he received a legal opinion with respect to the contract, and his responsibility under the contract, and also, with respect to the letter that he wrote, I believe it was last June — June 28th, to be exact — could he indicate who he consulted with respect to a legal opinion. Was it the Attorney-General's department that provided him that written legal opinion.

MR. DOWNEY: We had legal opinion from both the Attorney-General's department and outside the government, MR. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Could the Minister indicate . . . is he prepared to indicate what firm provided him with the legal opinion? Was this legal opinion the legislative legal opinion from Ray Tallin; was that sought as well within the Legislature, or just from the AttorneyGeneral's D epartment, and an outside firm?

MR. DOWNEY: From the Attorney-General's department, and an outside opinion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate who the firm was that provided him with the legal opinion, based on that letter that he has. I don't have . . .

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman, the department were instructed to get a legal opinion, and I don't have that.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate whether the opinion indicated that it was possible for the designation of the contract holder to be the third party in terms of handling the purchases, whether you could designate without renegotiating that contract with the contract holder to have him be, as well, the purchaser.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: That opinion the Minister indicates was substantiated.

MR. DOWNEY: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Has the Minister that legal opinion in writing?

MR. DOWNEY: I would have to check, Mr. Chairman. I think, the indication that I've had is verbally from the department. So I would check; I can't recall it, Mr. Chairman. It's some several months ago.

MR. URUSKI: Would the Minister be prepared to provide us with a copy of that legal opinion?

MR. DOWNEY: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, the actions of this Minister over the whole course of the Estimates has really shown that he wishes not to supply information, and wishes not to be open and aboveboard with this committee. The Minister, in his remarks, at least I have to give him credit that he indicated when his staff reductions within the department, he spoke about positions, and not in the manner that his First Minister has talked about, Civil Services being reduced by so many people.

The whole Conservative thrust, in the last couple of years, was to, I believe, continue the fraud that they are reducing the Civil Service; and this Minister, at least he was half-honest with us, that although he's playing with numbers, that there is a reduction in the staff, the vast majority of those positions were vacant. And if they weren't vacant, staff was being transferred, so in effect, the Minister was playing with figures, and there was no reduction in staff within the department. All that he was playing with was paper figures.

Mr. Chairman, this Minister, and it's been pointed out by my colleague, the Member for St. Johns, and the Member for Lac du Bonnet . . .

A MEMBER: Do you consider them colleagues, Billie?

MR. URUSKI: Yes, I consider them very able colleagues, Mr. Chairman. He has shown very clearly how he has mismanaged the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation by selling off its assets without regard for the current market value of those assets.

Mr. Chairman, as well, the Minister in handling the Beef Income Assurance Plan is attempting to really play both ends against the middle. He will want to come out, if his legal opinion is not accurate . . . He is setting up a system that, I believe, may have the effect of treating many producers inequitably. You will have those producers who indicate that they owe money, will voluntarily come forward and pay the portion that they owe under the contract, while you will have other producers in this province indicating that they will not, they will not pay any moneys unless they are challenged in court, Mr. Chairman.

And this Minister will, I believe, in a future attempt to paint the picture by saying, "Look, that contract wasn't good, the contract was written poorly, and that is the reason why the province could not collect the funds that it wanted to." And what you will have, you will have the spectacle, Mr. Chairman, of some producers paying, and some producers staying away, primarily, basically, on the basis that this Minister has tampered with the contract, has not lived up to the written word of the contract that we have before us, and he is going to be placing many producers in a very awkward position, and may affect them very inequitably.

Mr. Chairman, this Minister, as well, in dealing with the provincial regional offices of his department is prepared to move regional offices from one community to another without any rationale for the move, other than it can be interpreted that it's a political payoff to one community at the expense of another. That is what this Minister is prepared to do in dealing with the movement of staff and offices from one area to another.

Mr. Chairman, the Conservatives have been in office for a year-and-a-half in this province. This Premier, and this Minister, have gone to a Western Premiers' Conference, and have made public announcements that the crowrate should be reviewed. Mr. Chairman, the producers of grain should not have their incomes eroded, or tampered with on the basis that railways need compensatory rates, and the farmer will have to pay more. —(Interjection)— Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe maybe if we repeat some of these things often enough, that it may sink through some of the members on the government side. I believe this government is prepared to place the interests of railways ahead of the producers, even when the Premier of this Province has been rebuked by his colleagues, the three other western premiers, on his submission to the Western Premiers' Conference. And yet, this Premier says that the crowrates have to be re-examined.

By taking that position, Mr. Chairman, this can only lead to one thing: A shift of the costs from the national government to the individual producers. Producers in Manitoba, Mr. Chairman, can ill afford to pay at least an additional 50 cents per bushel of grain transported, but yet, this government is prepared to talk about and renegotiate — they're not prepared to fight the national government and indicate that transportation is a national policy, that improvements in transportation have to be made, but not at the expense of the producers. But yet, they are taking that opposite position.

Mr. Chairman, this Minister, as well, in his statements over a year ago, he made very brave statements with respect to the Marketing Board, under The Chicken Broiler Act, where Manitoba would negotiate, and he would only enter into a national agreement if Manitoba was in a position to be allowed an increase of one-half of one percent per year for the first five years, and that there be consideration at the end of that period for an increase in the market.

He continued to make that statement, that Manitoba was putting a tough position, that Manitoba could move live and processed products interprovincially without restriction. Well, Mr. Chairman, those statements that he made a year ago, and since then, have now come to haunt him.

One of the boards, the national boards, have now entered into an agreement, Mr. Chairman, with this Minister indicated that he had no knowledge, or was not prepared to move in the area, he was not aware, he was not involved in that decision, but the decision made by the Turkey Board in this province, Mr. Chairman, has placed the producers of Manitoba, in all commodity groups, in jeopardy, their position with respect to national schemes in jeopardy. And only because, Mr. Chairman, because this Minister, over the last year, was prepared to make loud noises with respect to future agreements in market share.

We have a situation now in Manitoba, Mr. Chairman, that the producers of all commodities can do nothing but lose. They are placed in a position that they will lose. If this Minister is serious about his position that national marketing schemes should be maintained, this Minister would now tell the Turkey Marketing Board that what they have done is illegal, that the position of Manitoba and the . . . the Member from Roblin last night was indicating that we should take off our . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina, on a point of order.

MR. DON ORCHARD: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I am not certain of the circumstances here, but normally, when questions are asked in the House, where a lawyer is involved in a legal case, we are not allowed to comment on the basis of conflict of interest. And in this case, when the Member for St. George is highly involved in the turkey industry, he might be purely questioning the Minister on a vested interest position, and hence would not be qualified; he wants to protect his own little nest, and, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that his comments might be out of order, and indeed, highly improper at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina does not have a point of order. The Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one brief comment, that if the Member for Pembina . . .

MR. ORCHARD: On a point of order, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Is that on the same point of order?

MR. PAWLEY: On the point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I already ruled the point of order out of order.

MR. PAWLEY: Well, I think that the member's logic would disqualify pretty well every member across the table from speaking on the agricultural estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The member did not have a point of order. The Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased that the member is at least interested that I am attempting to defend the interests of producers in this province, because if the agreement that the National Turkey Marketing Agency has agreed to, in deviating from the formula that was agreed to by the Province of Manitoba, and all the provinces in Canada, of establishing the market share agreement on the basis of historical market positions. Now we have moved away from that, Mr. Chairman, now the new market agreements that will be entered into from this day on, in the turkey industry, will be on the basis of population, of national share of population, and of population growth.

Mr. Chairman, this type of an agreement, and it relates back to the Minister's statements of last year, this type of an agreement places all the producers of Manitoba in an untenable position, where the Manitoba producers of all commodities who are organized nationally can do nothing but lose in the long term. They will be in a loss position, and it will be a death blow to orderly marketing, and national marketing schemes in this province if this Minister allows that agreement to go through.

Mr. Chairman, the Conservative Minister has been in office for more than a year and a half, and yet, Mr. Chairman, he has not been able to take hold and provide the leadership and direction to his department. Mr. Chairman, he has no Deputy Minister. He's been in office for a year and a half, and he has not seen fit to appoint a Deputy Minister. He has appointed one in an acting position. I ask the Minister whether the man that he has in that position is not good enough for the position of Deputy Minister. If he is not good enough, Mr. Chairman, you've had a year and a half in which to appoint a Deputy Minister.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister of Agriculture has also several key positions, where he indicated the positions are vacant. He has reorganized his total department, but he does not have any confidence in his staff, Mr. Chairman, because he has not seen fit to appoint Assistant Deputy Ministers to head up the branches that he has created. Mr. Chairman, he's had a year and a half to deal with his department. Is he not prepared to appoint the people in those branches? His department, Mr. Chairman, I believe remains in a state of chaos, with no leadership or direction shown by this Minister to his staff.

Mr. Chairman, this Minister is like the, as they say, the Prairie Schooner, with no helmsman and a broken sail. That is how he is handling his department.

Mr. Chairman, in this Minister's attendance, and giving of information to this committee, he was going to provide information to this committee to the point of view that he threatened members in that he indicated that if we did not stop our debate, that he was going to produce information. We have yet to see that information produced to this committee. The Minister hasn't indicated whether he will be prepared to be open and honest with the people of Manitoba. He indicated that he would consider bringing forward all the files of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation to the committee, making them open, for review, and all the loans made, in the same manner as the Manitoba Development Corporation has been opened up. But this Minister sits back and says, "I will consider it, and I will give you answers", but we have yet to see those answers.

Mr. Chairman' in view of his dismal approach to this committee, whereas this Minister of Agriculture has mismanaged the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation by selling off its assets without regard for the current market value of those assets, and whereas the Minister of Agriculture

has mismanaged the Beef Income Assurance Plan by setting up a system of operating the plan which may affect producers inequitably, and whereas this Minister of Agriculture, by his public announcements on national marketing, has placed the interests of Manitoba producers involved in national marketing schemes in jeopardy, and whereas this Minister of Agriculture, under the direction of his leader, have abandoned the grain producers of Manitoba for the sake of compensating the railways by wishing to review the crowrates: Mr. Chairman, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose, that Resolution 6.(a) be reduced by \$15,596.98, to the sum of \$3.02 — that being the price of a bushel of No. 3 wheat, which the producers of Manitoba can ill afford to lose an additional 50 cents a bushel if the program that the Minister has embarked on will succeed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. I would ask the indulgence of the committee while we consider whether the motion is in order.

Order please. The Chair rules that the motion as presented, according to Section 492, is out of order, and that it is not allowable to attach a condition or an expression of opinion to a vote, or to change the destination of a grant. The Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Chairman, then there would only be need to remove the words after \$3.02.

MR. CLERK: And the whereases.

MR. URUSKI: And the whereases?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. URUSKI: Oh, I see. That's fine, there is no problem there — no problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Yes, on a point of order, the other evening we had a motion put before the committee, and it wasn't proper, so it was not allowed. And we didn't get another opportunity to redraft it, so what is the ruling here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: I think that all that you were doing, Mr. Chairman, was demonstrating a courtesy. Apparently the Member for Gladstone doesn't believe in courtesies. If you're going to be railroaded on this, Mr. Chairman, we're quite prepared to carry on debate while the Member for St. George does complete the writing of the resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Chair for its indulgence in terms of my concluding remarks on this and I will place the motion as it appears the rules call, Mr. Chairman.

I move, seconded by the Member for Ste. Rose, that Resolution 6.(a) be reduced by \$15,596.98 to the sum of \$3.02.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, one of the most revealing areas of concern that has been increasingly developing on the part of the government as expressed through the First Minister as well as his Minister of Agriculture, is their position in respect to the crowrates. Mr. Chairman, we have witnessed the fact that the railroads are once more mounting an assault on the crowrates and are pleading the case that they are losing money. Mr. Chairman, many of us are less than fully sympathetic with the railways' problems because of their past conduct. They have let their branch lines run down until they are in dangerous condition and they have refused to purchase necessary equipment. Having done this they said the lines were inefficient.

Mr. Chairman, by the Minister indicating that he wishes to review the crowrates and by the First Minister indicating the same desire, what we are doing is witnessing a weak-kneed approach by a Conservative Government, Mr. Chairman, that is principally not concerned about the lot of the western grain farmer, even though they may represent themselves to be principally concerned about

the western grain farmer, but in fact are more concerned about the interests of the railways themselves.

Mr. Chairman, there are four various methods by which the review can undertake. One is that the crowrates could stay as they are and the railway companies be asked to absorb the losses. Secondly, the crowrates could stay as they are for farmers and a subsidy could be paid to the railway companies, and that would be either partly or fully making up their loss, and this is a solution that was recommended by the Hall Commission. Thirdly, the statute could be changed to increase the statutory crowrates paid by farmers or, fourthly, the statute covering the crowrates could be repealed and substituted with some other way of settling rates for grain. Now, Mr. Chairman, there is a vast difference in the implication in each of these four methods.

Mr. Chairman, the First Minister and the Minister of Agriculture continue to speak in terms of review, support for review of the crowrates. Mr. Chairman, they have left the farmers of western Canada in doubt as to their position, they have left the farmers of western Canada in doubt as to what they would like to see implemented and fortunately, Mr. Chairman, the other western Premiers saw fit to disassociate themselves from the irresponsible and weak-kneed approach of the First Minister of this Province as well as the Minister of Agriculture.

At the March 27th Conference, both Bennett of B.C., Lougheed of Alberta, and Blakeney of Saskatchewan, all echoed their opposition to the proposal that had been made by this government to that conference in Prince Rupert, and in fact the Saskatchewan Premier, Allan Blakeney, indicated that he disagreed on virtually every statement on the crowrates uttered by this government of Manitoba, and he indicated also that it in fact differed pretty well with every item, every position that Saskatchewan had in the past undertaken.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the problem is that this government wishes to negotiate from weakness with the railroads. They wish to open the door to the pressures and the assault that has been mounted by the railways over the past number of years in order to reopen and to review the crowrates. And, Mr. Chairman, it is suggested often that, oh, if we could review and increase the rates and the railway companies do better, that in fact service would be improved. In fact, what this government should be demanding from the railway companies, is a guarantee and an assurance that in fact if the rates are increased, whether it be triple or quadruple, that in fact service would be improved to the western agricultural producer.

Mr. Chairman, in North Dakota, in Minnesota, in other northern midwestern grain producing areas in United States, the freight rates are in fact triple and quadruple, the rates that they are in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Alberta, the western agricultural producers, and the fact is from the information that I have received, that the standard of service is not better, not better, insofar as providing transportation for the agricultural producer of the midwestern United States. There has been no improvement. And if in fact this government wishes to assist in isolation from the other western provinces, the railway companies to increase their rates, then I believe that this government ought to, as it being incumbent upon them, to demand a guarantee or an assurance that what we observed in the United States with the tripling or the quadrupling of rates would not be copied in western Canada.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that this is one of the most critical areas that is confronting us in western Canada. The crowrates were established in 1897 as a result of agreement with the railways. In return the railways received certain concessions and I believe, as a result of those concessions, it's incumbent upon this government to ensure that it does all that it can to retain the present rates, unless in fact the concessions which were given to the railways, the CPR in 1897 are to be returned to the public and to the Crown from whence those concessions had been given in the first instance.

A second area, Mr. Chairman, of concern to the opposition, is the fact that we had developed a policy commonly known as the stay option, a policy which had been developed in order to reverse the trends which had been in effect during the sixties, a trend which had been indicated and predicted by the TED Report, would drastically reduce the number of farmers in Manitoba by 1980 and thereafter. I want to give credit to the former Minister of Agriculture, the Member for Lac du Bonnet, who I feel carried on one of the most courageous and strenuous efforts in order to ensure the reverse of the depopulation in the rural communities in Manitoba. Many programs which one can list were developed during that period of time by the former Minister of Agriculture in order to assist and ensure the improvement of the health of the small rural communities in Manitoba. Despite his efforts, members often, across the way, did all they could to attempt to attack and to misrepresent repeatedly, misrepresent the policies and the programs by the former Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, what we are observing at the present time is the reverse of this situation. We are observing a program and an approach, Mr. Chairman, that is going to lead to larger and larger farm units. We're going to be faced with the increase in the size of farm units with an intensification of the loss of population, loss of assessment in rural communities, the fact that they will not be

the same numbers of people in rural communities in order to utilize the hospitals and schools and other facilities of rural communities. And, Mr. Chairman, the net result of that, will be developing problems in our urban centres particularly in the City of Winnipeg and the core area as more and more move and drift from the rural . . . —(Interjection)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, the result of that trend which is being intensified . . . —(Interjection)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: The intensification of that, Mr. Chairman, is what I believe we will be observing with the policies that are being developed and initiated by this Minister of Agriculture. I referred earlier to their weak-kneed position on the crowrates, we solved their position in respect to The Farmlands Protection Act. They weakened that legislation and the result of that weakening, Mr. Chairman, I forecast will be in the development of some larger farm units that will be occupied and will be operated by non-family farmers in the rural areas, and that was a program which I feel was initiated by the former Minister of Agriculture with a deliberate effort on his part in order to ensure that the family-farm families would maintain family farming in rural Manitoba.

Mr. Chairman, the problem is that this government is more interested in agro-business in larger farm units, with the consequent dwindling of farm population than they are in ensuring stay option and developing programs for stay option, for improving and increasing the number of family farmers, and the result of that, Mr. Chairman, unfortunately is, that the old TED Report which they had commissioned and which had forecast a steep de-population trend, is probably going to be re-initiated, re-intensified because of the . policies of this Minister of Agriculture by his First Minister, and therefore, Mr. Chairman, it has been very rare that the opposition has seen fit to introduce a motion such as this during this Session.

I believe I'm correct in saying this is the first such motion that has been introduced. It's not done frequently, it's only done after a great deal of serious consideration and, Mr. Chairman, the opposition has no hesitation in supporting this resolution with enthusiasm because of the lack of policy direction, because of the abandonment of former policies which were intended in order to improve the lot of the family farmer in Manitoba, and by the consequent injurious effects that this is going to have to our rural communities in the province.

QUESTION put.

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

Yeas 3, Nays 7.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I declare the motion defeated.

(a)—pass. Resolution 6—pass.

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,244,200 for Agriculture—pass.

That concludes the Estimates of the Department of Agriculture.

SUPPLY — EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN: **Mr. Warren Steen (Crescentwood):** I ANs' would like to draw the member attention to Page 30 of the Estimates, Item 3. Financial Support, Public Schools. The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Mr. Chairman, moving along through the Estimates now we are to the largest item in terms of dollars and cents, and that's the school grants basically, plus some other items included in there but that really constitutes the main one and I would suspect that this really is the item of greatest concern to the people of Manitoba. Because contained within here, contained within the amount of the cheque as it were that each school division receives is a reflection of the type of education program, of the general thrust of this government in education programing and so forth. So that being the case, Mr. Chairman, as in other items of the Estimates one can not really get away from debating the philosophy of the education program of this government; one cannot get away from attempting to articulate our philosophy. But taking things in their proper sequential order, I think that at this point in time it's very important that we do have the government

articulate its position, its philosophy of education in crystal clear terms. And then after that is done, we would be able to pass judgment on the adequacy or inadequacy of the level of funding, we would be able to pass judgment on the types of programs that are being funded and so forth. So that being the case, Mr. Chairman, I must put the question to the Minister, once again, that we would like the Minister to spell out his government's position on a number of policy issues related to his department.

Now on checking back Hansard I note that on Tuesday night the Minister said, and I am quoting from Page 2726, the Minister said in part, "In 18 months I think I will have the pleasure of being able to point out some rather clear policy directions that we have taken." Well, Mr. Chairman, you know this brings me to the envelope story. This government has been in office for 18 months and now the Minister says that he needs another 18 months, 36 months, three years to have the pleasure of being able to point out some rather clear policy directions. But, Mr. Chairman, in September and October of 1977 when the Conservative Party ran in the election, it did not say to the people of Manitoba, elect us, give us three years to examine the education program in Manitoba and some time in 1980 we will present a program, a model, a blueprint of an education program for the people of Manitoba. The Minister and his colleagues in the months of September and up to October 11, 1977, they went out and said to the people, "Elect us, we know how to run the government and we know how to run the Education Department." They didn't tell us very much then what they will do in running it but they said they knew how. They said they knew how then. Now the Minister is saying, give me another 18 months and then I will point out some — and even here he's hedging — some rather clear policy directions. He's not even assuring us that in 18 months time he will present to the people of Manitoba any clear policy directions. He simply expresses a hope that they may be rather clear.

Then, you know, just reviewing Hansard because I regret that I was unable to attend the sitting of this Committee on that evening, I note that the Minister said something that really puzzles me. He says, "But what governments can do is interfere to a certain extent or cloud that process or distort that process by policies of curriculum, policies and assessment, different policies that prevent that professional from maintaining particular standards of achievement in the pupils in their classrooms." Is the Minister suggesting, Mr. Chairman, that this government is interfering in some way with the delivery of the education program? I would like to think that —(Interjection)— Oh, now the Minister is saying that we did. Now I would want the Minister —(Interjection)— I did. Well I'm glad to hear that so at least the Minister is admitting that during the last year when I was not the Minister of Education, when Mr. Turnbull was the Minister, that there was no interference. Well I'm glad. I'm glad to hear that.

Now you know this reminds me of a point that I made last night. The Minister said, "I can only say that I'm very pleased that people with that type of thinking", he was referring to my colleague the Honourable Member for St. Vital, "weren't around when I was going to school because I didn't know at the time I was a poor kid. No one bothered telling me and I wrote the same tests as everyone else and the teacher didn't treat me one bit differently than the so-called student who came from a higher socio-economic level." And then he goes on to say, "And as a result I had the same opportunities. I take great exception, Mr. Chairman, to those who would suggest that if we live in a poor part of a city or in an area that is economically not as fortunate as some other area that you should be exposed to a different type of education. I say that is rank discrimination," says the Minister and he repeats that again. Yes and he said it again. You know, Mr. Chairman, that certainly has overtones of what I said last night when I reminded the Minister of the debate about a universally accessible public school education program which occurred in this province in the 1870s when at that time you will recall, Mr. Chairman, I had reminded the Committee that the argument against a public school education program funded out the public purse was that that would be an encroachment upon one's private human rights, that this choice should be left up to the individual as to whether he wants to send his children to school or not.

Here what the Minister is saying really is we've got to provide the same type of education program right across the board for all children regardless of their particular needs. Let's forget about any special needs that a child of a certain socio-economic level may have; let's forget about the special needs that a child who may be new to our particular environment and culture may have, either from another part of the province, or from another country; because, if we do that, the Minister is saying to these people, "You know, we'll be discriminating. Surely you don't want to be discriminated against, so therefore we'll provide the same program, we'll provide the same program for all." That is really what the Minister is implying, Mr. Chairman.

Then he also says, "You know, when I went to school, we were all provided the same educational program, the poor and the rich. There was no difference then." And then he says, "I'm glad that there weren't people like the Honourable Member for St. Vital around at that time. We were all treated the same." You know, it brings to my mind the comment that I made in the letter to the

Honourable Minister of Economic Development about his two-bit, and which he admitted is a two-bit program, because he said he only spent about \$25 on it; his professional bird service program, when I made reference to the ostriches on that side of the House. And here, the Honourable Minister is admitting having been an ostrich at that time, having buried his head in the sand, and he did not see the community around him. He wasn't aware of the fact that — yes, it's true, he had the good fortune to be able to attend school, and to obtain an education, as others did, but he failed to take into account the tens of thousands of people who did not have an opportunity to attend school. And there were many of them.

And in rural areas, and poor rural areas, the honourable member should well know, that the school drop-out rate was high, that not only was the drop-out rate high, the incidence of illness was high, and hence the attendance rate was low. And the honourable member well knows that there were not programs geared to meet the needs of every child at that time, because those kids who were not able to toe the line, who were not able to progress at the rate that their teacher expected them to — where were they put? They were put at the back of the class; and they sat there, and they sat there, and they sat there until they got fed up with sitting and quit school.

That's what happened then, and the Minister knows that, because there was no other way at that time, when the teacher had all grades from One to Eight, and on occasion 30, 40 and 45 pupils, there was no way that a teacher was able to deal with the 14-year-old who had missed a couple of weeks of school, who may have been in Grade Four or Five — and there were some 14-year-olds at that time, even in Grade Two. I remember them up at Hodgson, Marble Ridge School, 14 years of age, and still struggling through a Grade One or a Grade Two reader, alongside six-year-olds. And the Minister, I'm sure, remembers that, so there was no meaningful program designed for them then.

So, it wasn't all that rosy at that time, as the Minister may try to make it appear that, "Look, in my day, we never even mentioned the word poor, and somehow we all managed to get through school." Yes, the Minister managed to get through school; I was one of the fortunate ones to get through school at that time; and there were others, of course. But there were tens of thousands who did not manage to get through school, and the Minister knows that.

Here, we're talking about financial support for school divisions, and on Tuesday night, in talking about local autonomy, the Minister briefly said, or attempted to reassure the people of Manitoba that it's not his intention to in any way encroach upon or erode the measure of autonomy that school divisions ought to enjoy. But in the same breath he also said, "By the same token, I see the area of responsibility of the department to be one that takes a very strong and forceful form in a formation of curriculum and program formation for the school systems of this province."

Now, Mr. Chairman, prior to issuing the pay cheques and the grants to the school divisions, I think that the Minister ought to explain what he means by this statement to the school boards, because the problem that I see is this: Here the Minister is saying that he intends to take a very strong and forceful form in the formation of curriculum and program formation, and then he says, "But the actual running of the schools, and so on, always has been, and always will be, under the jurisdictional responsibility of the boards."

But here's a dilemma that the school divisions are going to find themselves in. The Minister, in exercising his strong and forceful role in the formation of curriculum, which he indicates he is going to exercise, will indicate to the school boards that you must teach this, that, so much of this, so much of that, and then some school board might say, "Well, but we need some time. We need 30 minutes a day, or an hour a day, for some other education program that is of particular value, relevance, and need, and benefit, to our students." The Minister is going to say, "Well, sorry, you can't do that, because I am assuming the very strong and forceful role in the formation of curriculum; I am the Minister of Education; what I prescribe must come first; so here are the regulations, this is what you must do, and if you feel that you must enrich or vary the program in some way to meet your own particular needs, well, you find your own time, and ways and means of doing it, and find your own money to do it with."

So, really, the two do not square, the two statements that the Minister made, that he is going to take a more stronger, the more forceful role, but at the same time, the school divisions are going to enjoy the same degree of autonomy. And, by school divisions, I am including the school boards and the teachers. The two just don't square, Mr. Chairman. So the Minister has to explain that to the people of Manitoba.

Related to financial support, the task force did make certain recommendations not only with relation to funding of school divisions, but also the operations of the Public Schools' Finance Board; and on Tuesday night, the Minister, in response to the question as to which recommendations of the task force did he adopt, and which did he not adopt, with reference to the question regarding the recommendation of holding back of funds, I must admit that he did respond to that by indicating

that there may have been some slight misunderstanding, or an unawareness of some of the provisions of The Public Schools Act, and so the task force may have gone a bit overboard in its recommendations. But, insofar as the recommendations in general are concerned, and the balance of the recommendations, the Minister's reply was, "As far as the other task force recommendations, we have considered these, and some of them we have acted upon in the reorganization of our department and some of the policies within our department. Others we have not seen fit to act upon at this time, and quite possibly will not at any time act upon them." Well, Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that the people of Manitoba are deserving of that type of a nonchalant answer as the Minister had given them. You know, "Some recommendations we've acted on, some we haven't." I think that the Minister owes it to the people of Manitoba to be more specific and more precise in spelling out those recommendations which he did accept and those which he did not accept.

Now, you know, then he goes on to say, and again in his cavalier manner, he says, "If the Member for Winnipeg Centre is asking that we go through with the Task Force report on education clause by clause and tell him those that we have adopted and those that we have not adopted. I can give him that particular information. It will take a day or so to gather it together." Well, you know, maybe it tells us something about the Task Force, Mr. Chairman, because if the Task Force report were a document intended by government to be taken seriously, you know, then the Minister, in dealing with it, in studying the recommendations and considering the pros and cons of adopting the recommendations, over the past twelve months he would have memorized the recommendations. He would have memorized them. He would have been able to stand up and recite all the recommendations and not only recite the recommendations but also he would have his responses to them memorized and he would have them all at the tip of his fingers. Now, obviously the Minister received the Task Force report and I guess it's sitting somewhere in his office accumulating dust and from time to time somebody, one of the cleaning staff, you know, brushes the dust off, if it's on some open shelf or maybe it's buried in the back of some file, and the Minister hasn't looked at it since the day that it was delivered to his office.

So that type of answer that some recommendations we've accepted and some we didn't. Now, fair enough. We do not expect the Minister to take two, three, four, five hours to deal in great detail with his analysis of a Task Force recommendation and spelling out right down to the minutest detail as to how each was disposed of, how each was dealt with, but surely the Minister could indicate in broad general terms, because the Task Force report at first sets out a few basic premises and a few basic observations and the Minister could indicate to us whether he agrees with those general observations and recommendations or does not, which ones he has implemented, which ones he proposes to implement and which ones he proposes not to implement. But I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, that that is not the type of a response that we will get from this Minister, because this Minister ignored the Task Force report, as it was meant to be ignored.

Then here, the school divisions are going to receive \$204 million to deliver a program wherein this Minister is going to set certain standards, he says. He's going to set standards, and he is looking on provincial testing as a means of assisting those people in the classroom. You know, here is the Minister standing up and saying, "We've floundered around in the education world all these years with no standards. I am the great Messiah. I am going to set standards for our education program. Those 12,000 teachers teaching in the public school system all these years, none of them had set any standards for their classes, for their students. I am going to set standards, and now we're going to have standards." —(Interjections)— Mr. Chairman, the Minister knows that making that type of a statement is an insult to the Member for St. Matthews. It's an insult to his teaching ability. What the Minister is saying to his colleague, the Member for St. Matthews, that the many years that he prides himself in, because he's been in the school system for many years, you know, because he was a youth a long time ago, I think he told us. You know, in all those years that he taught, he had no standards for his students. He had no standards. He still has no standards, because the Minister is still developing them, but hopefully within the next eighteen months or whatever, the Member for St. Matthews will be —(Interjection)— well, he was an aspiring Minister. Remember his name was touted as an appointee as Minister of Education. And so, in eighteen months, hopefully the Member for St. Matthews will be able to go into his classroom and say, "Now class, after not having had standards for all the years that I've taught, thanks to the present Minister of Education, thanks to the Conservative Party, we now have standards developed by this Minister of Education, and here they are."

But you know, the Minister is very silent, and I was going to say surprisingly silent, but it's not surprising, because that really fits in with the general pattern, with the general overall philosophy of this government. The Minister is talking about the end result that he hopes to see, but expressing no concern about what he is going to do to assist those young people from our society, from the various walks of life, from various socio-economic strata, from various cultural backgrounds, what

he is going to do to assist those children to find their way into that education system and reap the maximum benefit of what the Minister hopes to offer them in order to achieve those standards that the Minister hopes to set for them. The Minister is saying nothing about what he's going to do at the entry point. In fact the Minister said that this is discrimination, talking about the poor and the rich. When I went to school, nobody talked about the poor and the rich. I didn't know the difference between poor and rich. So you know, it reminds me of what I'd said last night about building the cathedral and starting with the dome and working down. It just doesn't work that way. So that program — if the Minister is starting from the top and hoping to build downward, that program is going to collapse. It's going to collapse. It won't work, Mr. Chairman. And the recipients of a school grant cheques will want to know what the Minister is going to do to assist them in teaching their children to reach those standards that the Minister is going to prescribe for them. It was interesting that later on in his remarks the Minister . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member has three minutes.

MR. HANUSCHAK: . . . did admit that in the days when he and I went to school that — I suppose he was referring to that time — he said, "We have passed that particular point long ago. In fact there was a time that those were the only" — he's referring to the university-bound students — "that those were the only students who attended our high schools, Mr. Chairman, those who were thinking of going on to university, with the odd exception." And he's right. And he's right, that those by and large were the only ones. And those who weren't going there quit and went out into the world of work if they were able to find work. He's right.

Mr. Chairman, here again, you know, he makes this statement, but there is nothing in his Estimates to indicate that he intends to do something about those who, for whatever reason, either because of not having the interest or not having the intellectual capacity or whatever, may not pursue a university education. There's nothing in the Estimates to indicate that he is going to provide for — the term that's commonly used nowadays is "special needs". Oh, a modest amount, a very modest amount. Mr. Chairman, you spread that and you spread that over the province and it would hardly show. It's like, to use a common expression, "spitting in the ocean", and that's about as much difference as it would make and the Minister knows it. So really, it's not only the concern that the school divisions have over the decrease in the school grants, which this figure is, and the Minister knows it, because in terms of purchasing power, even as compared to last year, there is a net decrease in the level of support to the school divisions. But over and above that, to compound the problem, to rub salt into the wound, the Minister is developing an educational program designed for the economic elite.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, this is the second occasion where we have had the benefit of hearing the Member for Burrows expound at great length on a variety of topics that he links very tenuously to the topic under discussion in the Estimates. He doesn't seem to be at all interested in discussing the matter at hand, but he likes to move around through his philosophic heaven there, where he can touch on this point and that and make some rather ridiculous statements. He keeps reiterating that I have not enunciated any clear policy directions, and I say, Mr. Chairman, that they have been enunciated. I am enunciating them. I have stated very clearly where we will be going and testing. I have talked about a policy in curriculum. I talked about our policy in research, and as we move through programming curriculum, community colleges, universities and the other parts of the Department, I certainly will state very clearly where we are going there.

But I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that he doesn't want to hear clear policy directions. And perhaps when he does hear them, he can't recognize them, Mr. Chairman, because he's never been accustomed to clear policy directions. So he has some problem realizing really what they certainly are. He stands up and makes some, as I say, absolutely ridiculous statements. He says there's nothing in these Estimates for certain types of children, certain types of programs, and a statement like that is absolutely ridiculous, Mr. Chairman. It shows that he obviously doesn't do his homework. He doesn't look at the Estimates. Even a summary scanning of the Estimates would indicate to him what is there and that there is a considerable amount of money and a considerable amount of increase in moneys in the areas of special needs and in several other programs within the Estimates. But he seems quite satisfied to stand up and mouth these distortions, and I suppose he feels, Mr. Chairman, that someone is going to believe those things. I say that if you keep saying that sort of thing, you eventually come to the point where your credibility disappears completely.

As far as the Task Force report is concerned, we have had some discussion on it here. I have informed the Member for Winnipeg Centre that I'll be providing him with a list of those recommendations, those that we have adopted, those that we have not adopted, and of course,

again, the idea that I would stand up and from memory recite every one of these is an indication again of the ridiculous nature of what the Member for Burrows is talking about. We have not ignored that report, Mr. Chairman, at all, we have looked at it rather carefully and we have used a number of the recommendations which I think have been long overdue. So I would say again, Mr. Chairman, that the Member for Burrows seems to have some tendency not to really stick to the Estimates. He obviously has done little research himself in this matter and so he is quite happy to wander around on a whole variety of topics, touching on this and that and wildly making statements, hoping that he may touch on something.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Inkster, and I might remind him that we are on Financial Support.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, that's item number 3. I derived that from the very directed debate which took place on that item for the last 35 minutes. I couldn't have mistaken, Mr. Chairman, where we were under. And therefore there has been no necessity for you to remind me but nevertheless it's acceptable, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to, first of all, just get an acknowledgment from the Minister that school grants and other assistance would be the grants that are included to all of the public schools in the province of Manitoba, and that amount that also goes to the euphemistically referred to independent schools. That that would be included in the term "school grants and other assistance."

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, the money under this particular heading is the money that goes to the school divisions of this province.

MR. GREEN: The school divisions of this province receive moneys which they then channel on to what are euphemistically referred to as independent schools. My impression is, Mr. Chairman, and I'm going to use a small "c", conservative figure, that the increase in the amount that the school divisions would get which would then be passed on to the so-called independent schools is roughly \$2 million, that of the increase of 193 to 204, there would be included approximately \$2 million which would go to independent schools directly from the school divisions, that that amount would be increased in the neighbourhood of \$2 million. If I'm very much out, I would like the Minister to correct me before I go on on a bad assumption.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I believe the increase would be in the neighbourhood of \$1.8 million.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, I regard \$1.8 million as being in the neighbourhood of \$2 million, but nevertheless I will accept 1.8 as being the figure. Mr. Chairman, I regret that my colleague, the Member for Burrows — oh, he's here — is not still in the House, because I do have somewhat of a difference of interpretation with him and in this regard I am much more closely identified with the Minister when it is suggested that no policy directions have been set for the Department of Education under this Minister.

On the contrary. Perhaps, although not articulately and explicitly expressed, I do see a clear policy being developed by the Conservative administration and by this administration with regard to the educational needs of the children of the province of Manitoba. The policy that I perceive, Mr. Chairman, is that there will be a lowest common denominator system for the vast number of students in this province, that this system will be standardized, probably by small bureaucratic minds, that it will be monolithic and that it will be regimented, and that it will be made available to all of the citizens of the province of Manitoba who cannot do anything better. And the conscience of the Conservative administration will be mollified by the fact that they will be able to say to every citizen in the province, "There is a school. You can send your child to Grade 1. He will learn to read, write and arithmetic, which is what we say is important. The particular personality of your child, his needs and his possibilities are not something that we can pay a great deal of attention to, because we don't have the money to and we can't afford it." And therefore we will grind out of the system all of the people who, for reasons either which are beyond their control or for possibly bad judgment on their part are required to make use of that system. That that will be the public school system circa 1984, Mr. Chairman. And when I use the term 1984, I am using it both literally, although I don't think you're going to get there quite that quickly, and in its sort of mythical sense, related to George Orville's book, that at the same time, Mr. Chairman, the Minister is not going to subject those people who he thinks are important to a standardized monolithic and regimented system.

So in the long run, Mr. Speaker, he will say, for those who are fortunate enough to do so and for those who are important, and for those who are smart enough, you will take your children out of the public school system. We will let your money follow you and you will set up a private school system which we will refer to as independent schools, and at those schools your child will be given the kind of attention that is needed, that fits his personality, that enables him to reach his aspirations, and that deals with him not as a unit in our standardized system, but as a human being whom we wish to make possible the greatest attainment of that potential which lies within him to attain. And there will exist in this society, Mr. Chairman, if the Conservative Party gets its way, this dual and parallel school system, one for the masses and one for the important people. Mr. Chairman, let me say how dangerous and insidious this is. Because I believe, Mr. Chairman, that I am a strong supporter of public school education, a strong supporter of an educational system which makes available to all of the citizens of society quality education, not based on economic needs or economic position, not based on ethnic division and not based on any form of separation. I believe in that type of system. But, Mr. Chairman, I am as selfish as the next man. If the public school system is a garbage can and I've got the means, I'm going to take my child out of the public school and send him to the good schools. And that's what the policy of the Conservative government will lead to. It will lead, Mr. Chairman, to the systematic degradation of our public school system.

And it is not a lack of policy. And in this I disagree with my friend the Member for Burrows. Perhaps it hasn't been laid on the table, but it's there, Mr. Chairman. It's there and it's in a position where educational opportunities in this society are at the crossroads. They can move in the Conservative direction or they can move in a direction which will provide for the needs of all of the citizens our population. Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to try to document what I am saying. I don't wish to make what the Minister refers to as ridiculous statements and I don't expect him to agree with me, but I do want to show him that I have grounds for saying what I am saying and that my fears are genuine and that he can satisfy me, Mr. Chairman, but he won't, that my fears are not germane and should be dismissed. . Now first of all, Mr. Chairman, we see that the minister has given an extra \$2 million to a maximum of 8,000 students in the province of Manitoba. Eight thousand are not even getting them because not every so-called independent school is now subsidized. But those children are getting \$1.8 million, roughly \$250 per child increase. —(Interjection)— That's right, an increase. That the balance of — how many students, how many students in the school system, total?

A MEMBER: 215,000.

MR. GREEN: So 207,000 students, well, I'm taking off now the 8, 215 total? All right, 215 in the — no, well, I'm not going to quibble, I'm going to do it his way because it's better for him, it's easier for him and you know how kind I am to the other side. So we've got 8,000 students who are going to get \$2 million. Two hundred and seven thousand students are going to get \$7 million, total \$7 million increase. Now, Mr. I know that there is reason for that. I know that what the minister will say — well, yes, but these 207,000 students have been getting public funds all along and the others have not been, so therefore, there has to be a catch-up.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with that question. I have been, I hope, a consistent proponent that public moneys should go to public schools, and that if a person is not as satisfied with the public school system, which is everybody's right, he is entitled to send his child to any school that he wants to at his expense. The minister now says he can send them to one of the standardized schools or the independent schools and he will get public moneys to send them to that school.

But, Mr. Chairman, if we are going to take this attitude of parental choice, followed by money to its logical conclusion; two things must happen. I can envisage a parent not being satisfied with the independent schools, he wants to send his child to a school in England, Oxford, Harvard or wherever you want to send them and he says my tax money, in the neighborhood of \$1,000 a year is now being used by you to educate other children. If I opt out of your school system and send my child to Oxford, why can't I have my \$1,000, so that I can educate my child as well? What is the minister's answer to that person?

Mr. Chairman, what is the minister's ultimate answer to the ultimate question of where this policy is leading to? You are now giving some money to the parents that send their children to independent schools. Why is that parent not entitled to the same thing as every other parent in our society on the same logic, that his tax money should be repayed to him and, you know, the Member for St. Matthews is nodding his head and that's where they are going; that is, the tax money should be paid to him and he should take that money and direct it to whatever school he wishes to. —(Interjection)— That's right, the so-called voucher system.

And, Mr. Chairman, I suggest to you that what the Member for St. Matthews is saying, is the

policy of the Conservative government, that that is the ultimate direction and that, I suggest to you, will do exactly what I said it will do. You will have a standardized, regimented, monolithic, public school system, which everybody will go to, who can't afford anything else. You will have a private system, where all of the people who send their children to the private schools will get all of their money back or at least per capita, that is going to educate children in the public school system and they will use that money plus to set up an elite system. Now, the minister can stop it by adopting, what I said last year because I believe that there should be a much less standardized, much less monolithic, much less regimented public school system. I believe that we were on the way to obtaining one and I believe, Mr. Chairman, that there are many many many things to be done in the public system to make it more amenable to dealing with the needs of individual children. Many things, but those things will never be done, Mr. Chairman, if you provide a significant section of the upper middle class and upper class people a way out of the public system, because Mr. Chairman, they will then lose complete interest in the public system and their interest indeed, will be to reduce spending on the public system because it will come out of their tax money, whereas they will want to devote all of their moneys to the education of their own children.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the minister can say that we won't permit that to happen and I can give him a very good formula, I'll give him two formulas. Mr. Chairman, would the minister consider say, that public moneys will only go to an independent school on two conditions, the two conditions are as follows: one, that no tuition will be charged to the children attending that school; that the children who go to any school that gets public moneys will not be charged a tuition. I want to do better than the minister is doing. Now, they pay a tuition, plus they pay taxation; I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that any school that receives public money will not charge tuition; and the second condition, Mr. Chairman, any school that receives public money will be universally accessible, that it will be populated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Now, Mr. Chairman, what's wrong with that. I am suggesting to you, that the independent schools that are getting money from the general public do not charge an additional fee. If they do not charge an additional fee, then we will know, Mr. Chairman, that the amount of money that is going to be used to educate the children at that school will not exceed what is being used to educate children at other schools and the people who attend the standardized school will not be doing so in order to give their children a preferred elite education. And it will not be in their interest to send their children to these schools in order to avoid the public school system which they regard as being a second-class education system and which will be a second-class educational system if this proceeds.

Secondly, Mr. Chairman, since these schools will be receiving public money, they should be universally accessible, they should not be restricted on the basis of race, creed, color or religion. And I say that, Mr. Chairman, with respect to all of the schools. I do not mind them setting up a school which is based on bringing together people of Roman Catholic faith, bringing together people of Jewish faith, but Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting that if a Protestant wants to go to one of those Roman Catholic schools and comes on a first-come, first-serve basis, he should be admitted to the school. That if a Ukrainian child wishes to go to Ramah or the Peretz school and comes on a first-come, first-serve basis, he should be admitted to the school or, Mr. Chairman, there should be no public funds to that school. Now, I say you cannot have it both ways, you cannot ask the state to support you and still say you are an independent school. If you are state-supported, then Mr. Chairman, you have to do those things which indicate that you are willing to use the public's money for the benefit of the public generally. So, Mr. Chairman, I am suggesting to you, and I will attach a third condition, which I should have mentioned it when I started, but the third condition is that that part of the school system, of the independent school system, which is designated towards the teaching of doctrine of one particular faith or another, be in accordance with the Public Schools Act. 3:30 in the day and optional — is that what the act now says, that it has to be done at 3:30 and it has to be optional — and it is not a requirement for the children to attend, nor is it a requirement that they pass any such exam. But that that facility will be available and from 3:30 to 4:00, that part of the school system which wants to teach a particular belief, whether it be Catholicism, whether it be Judaism, whether it be the tenets of the Mennonite faith, whether it be Protestantism, whether it be Conservatism, whether it be New Democratic, whether it be Socialism, that it is not a part of the educational system which is supported by public funds and is facilitated at 3:30 in the day and is optional and is not part of the standardized system.

Now, Mr. Chairman, how could anybody who says that they are sincerely interested in seeing to it that everybody gets an equal opportunity to education possibly reject any of those condition? What is there that is wrong with them? One, that there be no tuition charge, my God, I would think that they would jump to that idea. And if they didn't charge tuition, Mr. Chairman, I would say

that they should be fully funded — same way as anybody else, fully funded, but no tuition charges. Secondly, that they are available on a first-come, first-serve basis to any student. Thirdly, that any religion that is taught, is taught after the hour of 3:30 in the day and is not part of the requirements — is optional.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I think that those conditions should be perfectly satisfactory to those people who profess to believe in accessibility to education, parental control of the educational system, who profess to say that all they are seeking is to make sure that their child can go to a school of their parental choice. I don't think that they will be acceptable, Mr. Chairman, because what started approximately 100 year ago as an argument as to whether or not you were going set up French Catholic schools in this province is no longer that type of argument at all. The argument has been and was for the last 10 years as to whether or not the public will become involved in separating the school system on the basis of class and on the basis of race and on the basis of religion. And if that is to be done, Mr. Chairman, and I will certainly be one of those who are opposed to it; at least there should be the rules that I have specified.

Now, what has happened is a very unusual thing. Mr. Chairman, we have now a law which was dealt with last year, whereby the School Division of Winnipeg can send money to private schools and you had indeed, Mr. Chairman, certain people whose main claim to getting elected at the school division level, was so that they could take moneys out of the public school system and send it on to private schools. And, you know, that's democracy. That's democracy and if that was the basis upon which they were elected and the people wanted that to happen, that's okay. I don't think that the issue was clearly before the public. I think it's becoming more and more clear as to what is going on and we are liable to have some progress in this area. But let the minister know that his so-called option to the school division was regarded by several divisions as a direction to the school division. I don't blame him for that, I don't blame him for that; I blame the hypocritical school trustees who said that. There are school trustees who have for years voted against diverting public money to the private , school system, who said the province is now telling us we have to do it, and the province didn't tell them we have to do it and we know that.

So, anybody who hasn't got the courage to stand up and vote on the basis of the things as they are I have no sympathy for them. Those particular trustees deserve to be repudiated by the electorate and I will not blame the minister for their particular votes. I will blame him for setting up the policy which enabled them to run for cover in that way. But nevertheless it is they who ran for cover not him. He gave them the opportunity. He did almost a reverse of the health system. That under the health system it was Trudeau who gave them the right to run for cover and it was the Health Minister who ran for cover and blamed it on Trudeau. He didn't have to run, he didn't have to say that the provincial expenditures will be reduced. But when he's asked why he did it' he said that Trudeau made it possible. And the same thing here, the Minister made it possible and some Winnipeg school trustee, I think Mr. Slingsby was one of them, said well the provincial government makes this necessary.

MR. DOERN: The devil made him do it.

MR. GREEN: Yes, the devil made him do it. man who uses that is just as culpable if not more so than the Minister who made it possible. Now, Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether my particular point of view on this question is going to succeed, I don't know whether there won't be a mixture of points of view. But I have alternatives for the Minister as to how he can deal with this question to make sure that what I am saying — and let us recall what I have said — and how he will prove me wrong.

I said that there's a systematic policy on the part of the Conservative government to see to it that the public school system is standardized, monolithic and regimented, that people who wish to escape that standardization, monolithism and regimentation, can go to a private school and that private school will be available to people who want to pour additional money into their children's education and they will become elite schools and we will have two systems running parallel, an elite system and a system for the masses and all your Human Rights Legislation will mean nothing, Mr. Chairman.

You know we have Human Rights Legislation that says you can't ask a person their race, creed, colour, or religion, I don't think you even ask them their age or political affiliation. None of those questions will be necessary. Who is going to pass Human Rights Legislation saying you can't ask what school they went to. And if you can ask them what school they went to and we have this

system then it will be the school tie, Mr. Chairman, that tells. .

MR. CHERNIACK: You can't wear a school tie?

MR. GREEN: You can't wear a school tie. Well, you see I want that. It will be the identification as to what you need. All of this personal investigation legislation won't be necessary. Because all you will have to know if you are looking for the elitest is what school they went to.

Now, Mr. Chairman, the Minister can prove me wrong. I am going to suggest to the Minister a way out of this dilemma in addition to the ways that I have already suggested. Here's an alternative system. That since you want to make sure that the public school system and the children who go to it are treated equally, and I assume you do, I am going to assume you do for the purpose of my argument. I probably don't assume you do but for the purpose of this discussion I'm going to accept the fact that you do. Then I say, Mr. Chairman, you take the private school in the City of Winnipeg and you fund them only to the extent that their total funding does not equal per child, does not exceed per child what you are paying for them in the public school system. Now do you understand what I am saying?

You take Ravenscourt and you find that Ravenscourt is spending \$2,000 per child and the public school system charges \$1,500 per child. Let us assume, and I am taking two figures and I don't know whether they are correct, but I say that you cannot fund Ravenscourt unless their costs are lower than \$1,500 per child because over \$1,500 per child, you are funding elitism. You are not funding a school system to provide equal opportunity. But everything that they spend in excess of what you are spending in the public school system is the funding of elitism and I suggest to you that that is not taking place in many school divisions in the Province of Manitoba. Even in many of your standardized schools, what I say will be the ultimate is not yet occurring because many of them have been working from behind for 10 and 15 years. But once they start to receive public funding, Mr. Chairman, once we get the development that I am talking about there will be more spent on the children in the private system than will be spent in the public system and you will be providing public money to private schools. So there should be, Mr. Speaker, at least, at the very least, a cap on the subsidy to standardize schools so that the amount that is being spent per child in those schools does not exceed what is being spent in the public school system.

Then there will be a chance that there will be a quality of education. I suggest to you that what will happen is that many of your so-called standardized schools will say, we don't want public money

A MEMBER: Independent.

MR. GREEN: Yes, independent schools will say, we don't want public money. If we have to do that we want a class system and therefore we'll forego the public money, charge our students what we want to and give them exactly what we say. Well, Mr. Chairman, wouldn't it be better if we provided for that kind of thing to happen in the public school system? Instead of providing a standardized monolithic and regimented system, why can't we do what was happening in the Province of Manitoba over the last ten years that we were getting away from standardization.

Mr. Chairman, I know that we were doing it. How do I know, because I experienced it. I had three children, four children attending different types of school systems within the public division that wouldn't have been possible ten years ago and won't be possible ten years from now if the Minister has his way. Sacre-Coeur is a public school. Any child can go there. If we had yielded to making public moneys available to private schools it would never have been a public school and it would be reserved to an elite group. —(Interjection)— Of course, Mr. Chairman, we made money available to Sacre-Coeur on the basis that it was a public school that there was no religion until after 3:30 if that was to be the case; that there was no tuition and it was available on a first come, first served basis and it's in the public school system. All of the French public schools in the Province of Manitoba which followed the change in legislation of 1968 made the old argument about French and English schools irrelevant. They are all public schools. And most of them are public schools. Why could not, Mr. Chairman, the Minister pursue in the school divisions that we have that kind of variety, that kind of attention to differences, to different desires in education, to the different needs of children in a school system which involves the population of \$600,000, it would be easy? It would be more difficult in the country. Why could we not have in the Winnipeg School Division, a school within the system . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Time is up.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if I could just have 3 or 4 more . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it the will of the Committee? Agreed. Carried.

MR. GREEN: Why can we not have within the public school system, a school where we have rigid discipline so that a parent who says, I don't like this free class and free time. I want my children to go to a school where he is given demerits if he doesn't dress properly, is given demerits if he doesn't arrive on time, is rigidly examined, is required to wear a certain type of clothing. I won't send my child to that school but I can tell the Minister that there are people who want such a school.

One of my children went to Argyle School which the Minister should know is a completely different type of school, one of my children went to Sacre-Coeur which is a completely different type of school in the Winnipeg system. One of my children went to St. Boniface College from the Winnipeg School Division sending him there on the basis that the Winnipeg School Division bought that service being the only public service completely in French at the Grade 9, 10 and 11 level. All of these things happened within the public school system and did not require me to seek an elite school for my children on the basis that it wasn't available within the system.

And I say, Mr. Chairman, that what the Minister should be doing is looking at why people send their children out of the system at considerable expense to themselves and why do they do it? They do it because the Minister says he's going to have a standardized, monolithic and regimented — and I'll say it to them if they were sitting in front of me in Cabinet and they know it — bureaucratically standardized public school system, exactly to turn out units and that's the biggest impetus. It's no longer a question merely of religion or dogma or ethnic differences although those things certainly have encouraged a great number of people to send their children to private schools. But it is, Mr. Chairman, the notion on the part of some that the system is not looking to the individual and diverse needs of the community both at the parental level and certainly at the age of the student.

So, Mr. Chairman, we can have two things happening, we have two choices in my opinion. We have the choice of going the Minister's direction in which case there's going to be a lowest common denominator public school system and a parallel independent school system which will be divided on the basis of race, on the basis of religion, and worse, on the basis of class. He can stop that by taking the suggestions that I have made even if he wants to go with two separate systems. Or, Mr. Chairman, we can say that all of those people who see a need for a private school system on the basis of having greater flexibility for themselves and for their children and for their children's needs, we can do that within the public system but we can't do it if we are going to standardize and regiment it. Therefore, Mr. Chairman, I urge the Minister to prove me wrong by saying that he's going to get up and say that any school that receives public moneys is going to have to leave children come in with no tuition fee. That they will go into the system like in any other public school.

Two, Mr. Chairman, that they will admitted to the system on the first come, first served basis, regardless of race, creed, colour or religion.

Three, that the religion will be taught under The Public Schools Act at 3:30 p. m. and will be optional and not part of educational requirements, part of parental requirements, but not part of educational requirements when we talk about the compulsory features of a child's progression in terms of grade and in terms of achievement.

Or he can at least say, Mr. Chairman, that no private school will be funded in such a way that the cost per student in that school is exceeding the cost per student, the amount being paid for education in that school exceeds the amount that's being paid in the public school. And if you have a school in which \$2,000 per child is being paid for education and the public school system pays \$1,500 then there should be no moneys going to that school that is paying \$2,000 because then you are subsidizing a higher cost educational program for those particular children.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we are going to have opportunity in the years to come to see what I have talked about here developing in one direction or another and I don't think there is any secret about which direction I am going to be pushing for. I don't know who is going to succeed, Mr. Chairman, but I can tell you that in my opinion it is one of the most fundamental issues as to what kind of society we are going to live in. And for those people who like to use the word socialism — and I'm not one of them — I've never sold a program on the basis of it being socialistic nor have I ever said that I am not a socialist to people who accused me of being a socialist. It has never embarrassed me to be called a socialist. If they called me a Liberal, I would be very frightened, and I would be very concerned but if they are calling me a socialist, I say, "Well that's fine, I have no objection to the word." But for those people who say that they are socialists, there can be no socialism, Mr. Chairman, if the children of our society are brought up in a class system of schools,

which is where we are headed for if we pursue this position.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Chairman, I'm not at all surprised at hearing the remarks of the Member for Inkster. I think he has consistently, over the years, adopted a certain principle in this regard, and stuck to it. During our debate on the legislation last spring and early summer, he of course was most vehement in his opposition; mind you, that particular opposition was not shared by the gentleman who, at that time, was the Leader of his Party, and the former Premier of the Province; nor was it shared by the Member for Burrows, who supported the legislation; or in fact a number of his other colleagues I could go on and name them at this time, but I think that's probably irrelevant to the discussion we have under way.

As I say, he made a great point, and I think it's a valuable part of our democratic system of making sure that his position was well-known through the use of the media, and I certainly commend that. I think that's an excellent approach to take on any new legislation to make sure that people are aware of what's happening, both from his viewpoint and from mine.

And of course I have said to him before, I'll say it again, that if he was this vehement in his opposition in the eight years that his government was in power in this province, I don't know why he didn't do something about it. He merely seemed to sit by and watch the same system perpetuated, and certainly one that he can't subscribe to, and even in the legal sense, and certainly he is a gentleman I understand well studied in the law. He sat by and watched legislation being used that is being questioned for its legality, and I have to be somewhat critical of him in that regard, Mr. Chairman.

I can't agree with some of his initial statements, where he talks about the lowest common denominator system at all. My goal, and the goal of this government, is to help the public school system of this province reach as high a standard as is possible; we will assist the educators in every way that we can within the resources that we have to achieve the highest standard of excellence in the system for all children. We will do that in the academic area, in the vocational, the special needs, in all areas, Mr. Chairman, and I say that that is not looking at a lowest common denominator system.

I would suggest to him that that is the interpretation that a large number of people in this province had, about the educational system in the eight years that his government was in power. I heard that term used a great deal during those eight years, and I happened to be a part of the educational delivery system, during those eight years, and this was the common label. He is now trying to attach it to us, when we are in fact trying to do just the very opposite, and he somehow would like to attach the label to us that the only thing that we are interested in is the three Rs. Well, Mr. Chairman, certainly we recognize the importance of that particular area. I've said before, I'll say again, that any student must have those basic skills in those particular subjects to build on in the development of his own personal education, and I really don't think that the Member for Inkster can quarrel with that too much. But he would like to leave the impression that is the only part of a child's education we're interested in. Well, I refute that outright.

I'm very pleased to see that the Member for Inkster has affirmed what I firmly believe, that the P.C. Party will be in power in 1984, and I believe that was one of the things that he mentioned in his earlier remarks. I can't agree with him that we are trying to produce an educational system in this province where you will have one system for the rich, and one for the masses, Mr. Chairman, not at all. We have been following a system of equalization grants, which recognize that those school divisions in this province that have lower assessments should receive more money; we have been attempting to equalize certainly the financing of education, through that type of step, Mr. Chairman. I would say that that certainly doesn't indicate that we are trying to re-enforce those who are more fortunate financially, than those who are less fortunate.

The Member for Inkster of course has suggested that, by clarifying the shared-service legislation, we of course are going to boost the private school system to a great extent, that we will see a tremendous expansion in that system, and that it will harm the public system. Well, let me say to him that in the year 1976 to 1977, we saw an increase of 600 more students in the private system. We know who was in power at that time. What was the reason for it? Was it a disillusionment with the public school system of that day? In 1977 to 1978, Mr. Chairman, last year, we saw an increase of 200, and I understand that there have two new small private schools get under way in this province in the past few months. I see no indication, Mr. Chairman, of any huge expansion in this area, as has been predicted by the Member for Inkster, and also by the Member for Elmwood.

So, I would say that the years will certainly indicate how wrong they are in their prognostations. Certainly, our government believes in the Public School System, and at the same time we believe

that in a free society people have the right to an alternative, and of course the clarification of the legislation, Mr. Chairman, is something that is past history now. It had to be done. We had been living with a hypocrisy, and I say that the gentleman opposite had been living with an hypocrisy, as the government in power, and we did something about it. I'm rather proud of it, Mr. Chairman, but the Member for Elmwood, of course, could live with it, and then once being out of power, he was very critical of it.

However, I also have to say to the Member for Inkster, that I cannot accept his statement that only upper-class people go to private schools in this province; I'm sure that if he did an analysis he would find out that in many cases just the very opposite is true. And when he talks about funding, Mr. Chairman, I think that he should be aware that the average amount of moneys per student going through to students in the private system, amounts to some \$380, on an average. To the public system, over \$1,000 per student, Mr. Chairman.

And let's just consider for a minute what would happen if all the students in the private system were to come back into the public system: We would be looking at a total increase to the taxpayers of this province of some \$16 million, and it's quite right, Mr. Chairman, with the clarification of the legislation last early summer that it has necessitated the provision of some \$3 million in the payment of grants, new agreements, but the difference between \$16 million and \$3 million, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest to you is rather considerable.

And of course I must remind the Member for Inkster there is no public money going for the teaching of religion in these schools. Any grants that are qualified for, must be for subjects that are the equivalent of those subjects being taught in the public school system. So I say to the Member for Inkster that I am sure he will never change his position in this regard, nor will the Member for Elmwood. I remind him that a large number of his colleagues take the position that certainly coincides with mine, and the Member for Burrows I see is now here, a former Minister of Education, who supported the clarification of the legislation. I have no great hope that I am going to convert the Member for Inkster, but I suggest to him that we have taken the right path in this regard. We have taken what has to be the courageous path, at the same time, we have taken some steps which I feel have received a great amount of approval among the educational community, in that we have required that teachers in the private schools now be certified. This did not exist under the previous government, that they now must be providing an equivalent education to qualify for any type of provincial grants under the sharedservice legislation. That wasn't there under the previous government, they didn't even bother cleaning up that particular aspect of it, Mr. Chairman.

But at the same time they were prepared to pay out, what, a half-a-million dollars in the last year in shared-service agreements, at the same time knowing that in some cases they may not be legal, that there was some question as to the legality. But now, Mr. Chairman, of course, having seen the passage of the legislation, they feel that this is something rather terrible. I suggest to the Member for Inkster and his colleagues who support that particular position, that time will show, and I believe it is showing that it was the proper step to take.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I must admit that I am disappointed in the Minister of Education. I shouldn't be; he spoke as a politician does and can, and we are all politicians here. I had hoped that he would be a little more statesman-like in dealing with the matter raised by the Member for Inkster, because he knows very well — the Minister of Education knows very well that the question of aid to private schools is not a matter of New Democratic Party policy and that there was never any attempt to make it appear that we acted as a party caucus with a Whip in questions dealing with the aid to private schools.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I do not believe that the Conservative Party, as such, has taken this stand on the question either. I don't believe that the Conservative Party would accept the policy of being in support of the private school system. I don't believe the Conservative Party is in favour of aid to private schools as such, because if it were, it would have made different kinds of speeches than saying, "Well, you had an Act and you had legislation and you had agreements, and they may or may not have been legal, and since there is a question about it, since it's there, we will make legal what you were doing that was not legal, and therefore we must do this in order to be consistent." That's the position they took last year, and frankly Mr. Chairman, I don't think the First Minister spoke on this question in the last Session, and I believe that the First Minister is not one who is in favour of aid to private and parochial schools, and religious schools, I don't think so. I believe the Minister of Education is, and other members are ; I don't believe the Member for Rock Lake is in favour of private, parochial, religious schools. I don't believe he is, I may be wrong, he's here to correct me. I don't believe the Member for Roblin is in favour of that either, although he nods his head, so I guess he is.

But, Mr. Chairman, they voted, and you as part of the group voted last year as a government measure on the basis of making legal what was in doubt before, existing agreements. So the courageous step they took was not the step of saying, "We are in favour of private schools, therefore we will assist them."

For example, Mr. Chairman, if private schools are entitled to support, why are they only getting \$380, is it, when the cost is so much greater? I mean the cost, other than the religious teaching aspect of it. Why are they now trying to cash in on a bargain, by this Minister saying, "Well, it's only costing us \$3 million, and if those children went back to the public school system, it would cost \$16 million." Is he arguing that it's a good bargain, and therefore we should take advantage of a good bargain? That has nothing to do with principle. As a matter of fact, I disagree with him. The fact is, that if those children went back in the public school system, then people who are concerned with egalitarian choice, and that is freedom of choice based on what is offered, and being made available, we say that's good. The children are returning into a system which is the public school system, and which is available to them, and they will trickle in, a few per classroom, a few per school, and they will not bring in a per-pupil cost done on a mathematical basis, or arithmetic, I should say. There's no big mathematics involved in it.

But he knows, he must know, that three children added to a classroom, that 15 children added to a school, do not bring in additional cost on a per-pupil basis. But I'm using his figures, which I don't accept. If \$16 million is what it would cost, then why is he using the bargain method of saying, "Why, we're saving — what is it? — \$13 million."

What disappointed me, Mr. Chairman, is that the Member for Inkster posed a review of the philosophic approach to education and the conflicts in it, and I had hoped that the Minister of Education would deal with the philosophy. Instead of that, he dealt with history — eight years, which were a pretty good eight years for Manitoba, are the symbol he has to use to justify what he is doing, and the symbol that he has to use in order to attack what existed. If he likes what happened, he says, "Well, you did it, so I'm doing it." If he doesn't like what happened, he says, "Well, you did it, so it was wrong." And that is a political ploy which is his right, and opportunity, to use, but, Mr. Chairman, after a while, the people of Manitoba will become as bored as we are on this side by his constant references to eight years.

You have to live in the present and you have to live in the future, and if this Minister has any philosophy in education, which one would expect him to have because of his background, he should start talking about what we should do now, and what we'd do in the future. He should know — if he doesn't know, I'll tell him — that no one that I'm aware of on the New Democratic side of the House in the last government, was fully in agreement on this question of educational availability, nor was any one of them, I believe, happy with the progress we had made.

I think we made tremendous progress in making available in the public school system so many of the programs which the Minister has adopted, and which he now enunciates, as an indication of the availability of choice within the public school system. I think that the introduction of community schools has made a tremendous stride forward in education, and I would like to think that an educator, which is what this Minister was, would recognize and be pleased with what progress was made in the past, and would look ahead, rather than back.

And I listened carefully to what he said, and all that he said, really, was, "Looking backwards and justifying what was", and also "On the basis of legality". The one important thing is that he said, "We, the Conservatives, believe in a free society, which means there has to be an alternative".

Well, on that basis, that alternative could well be within a system that this Minister takes full responsibility for. He should not say, "The free alternative includes going out of my purview, and I will certify the teachers, but from hereon in, you will finance yourselves beyond the 300 and some odd dollars" that he mentioned. I think that it would be to his pride if he could say, I am working towards accommodating all the needs in a free society, to parents and to students, within the purview and within the jurisdiction and within the supervision of the public school system, which is that for which so many have fought — was it 80 years ago?

We made strides, but this Minister does not talk in terms of progressive views for the future. He hasn't said one thing about how he would like to envision the future system. It seems to me from what he did not say, that he's quite satisfied with what we're doing now. He, unlike some of his backbench, is not prepared to rely on the three Rs alone. I even have a clipping in my desk, somewhere, which says that he made a speech saying, "Do not rely only on the three Rs; why, there's much more in education." He should turn around when he says that, and talk to people in his backbench, who seem to rely much more on that.

But, I would like to hear him talk about the future, and his plans for the future. And let me tell him, Mr. Chairman, just like those of us in the New Democratic government for eight years did not accomplish all we wanted to accomplish in the school system in education, so I assure

him, he wouldn't either. But I'd like to know what he's aiming at; and he did not tell us. I'd like to know how he envisions the future. Does he envision a growth of the private school system, assisted by aid on his part? Does he envision that that's good? Does he disagree with the Member for Inkster that it will be one or the other, and if so, how does he see it in the future? Can he get off the political horse he's riding, and start talking about education and the important values in education, and what he would like to see happen in the future, without having to say, "You guys did so and so", or, "You didn't do so and so." Can he talk about what he believes ought to be?

Because if he did, then in relation to the private-public school system issue, we can get some clarification of what he's trying to do. And since he makes it appear as if what has been done has the full support of the Conservative Caucus, then let him speak on behalf of the Caucus. You know that we never, on this side, were able to enunciate a position on the future of the public school-private school system as being party policy. Well, if he can, he should. And if he can't, he should, as previous Ministers of Education in the NDP government, say, "This is my opinion, at least. This is what I project."

But this Minister did not say anything about what he envisions should be the situation, what could be, and what dangers we should look out for. And that's what I find disappointing. You know, I made notes; when he started to speak, I started making notes, and I have "eight years" several times, and I have "Conservatives" several times, in my notes. I have his statement that the expansion of private schools in 1976-77 was a big increase, and not so big last year. Is that good, is that bad? He didn't say.

What does he want to see happen in the future? Is he prepared to let things coast along as they have, with the pressures from society reacting to it, as we did, to a large extent? Is he going to do the same thing, or would he like to influence a direction? And, if so, which way? And I think he owes it, as I think previous Ministers of Education owed it to the people to enunciate it. The fact that they didn't justify his, does not justify his not doing it. The fact that they may have done it, supports the fact that he should. But whether or not they did, whether or not they did the right thing, should not influence his statements to the public as to what he thinks should happen, and what he envisions.

He did not do that, and that's why I am disappointed; and I don't know whether I'll get back from him the same "eight years" and the same "financial constraints" — you know, it is now kind of a broken record that's coming out of that government. In 18 months, they haven't really advanced much beyond the first month in turning back to the past, and reflecting on it.

Well, Mr. Chairman, I've been here longer than anybody else in this room, in dealing with legislative matters. I've heard it all. What I'd like to hear from this Minister is not a reminder of what I have heard in the past, but rather, what I can envision for the future under his stewardship. He was proud that apparently the Member for Inkster said something about the Conservatives in 1984 — that to him was, I think, the most glorious thing he heard today. "Goody, goody, we're going to be in power in 1984." Well, if the Minister of Education will be in power in 1984, what will be the changes between 1979 and 1984, under his stewardship, in the field of education, in relation to the growth of the public school system, in relation to the growth of the private school system, in the relation to the possible efforts that he will make to co-ordinate their activities in some way so that they will benefit with each other, rather than compete with each other, using the same taxpayers' dollars.

What is he going to do to try to, firstly, create a better balance in costs; and, secondly, to let them complement each other. I want to conclude, because it's almost 12:30, and we will be stopping at 12:30, with the news release which appeared today, April 20th is the date of it, from MAST, where they make the statement which I want to read.

Aid to private schools: "School boards have no choice but to sign agreements with private schools to give financial aid, as per the government regulation, said Mr. Rouse. This puts them at the service of private schools as accountants, but gives them no control over quality of education."

I would like to hear this Minister accept or deny this statement; but I'd like more than that. I think he will say "It's not true; school boards do have a choice." I would like him to explain to us why it is that the school trustees believe they have no choice; I would like to know why the school boards are expected to be involved in this aid in any way, and if so, what responsibilities does he impose on the school boards in order to make them do something as part of the responsibility that they have been given, or to approve, to enter into agreements. Because I think it's clear that they must enter into agreements before the government will provide subsidies. What is expected of them to ensure for the government some sort of undertakings that the government wants to have before it pays money? I hope he will respond to that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 12:30, I am leaving the Chair, to return at 2:30 p.m.