



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

28 Elizabeth II

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 28, 1979

Time: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Before we proceed, I should like to draw the honourable members' attention to the gallery, where we have 20 students from God's Narrows School, under the direction of Miss Adamson. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Churchill.

We have 35 students of Grade 6 standing from the Boissevain School, under the direction of Mr. Somers. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Mines, Resources and the Environment.

We have 20 students of Grade 5 standing from the Wabowden School, under the direction of Mr. Mihaylk. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Thompson, the Minister of Labour.

We have 27 students of Grade 6 standing from James Nisbet School, under the direction of Mr. Dedenus. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

We have 35 students of Grade 8 standing from Nordale School, under the direction of Messrs. Kazina and Skabar. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

And we have 15 students of Grade 7 to 9 standing from the Hugh John McDonald School, under the direction of Mr. Furtado. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

On behalf of all the honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Annual Report of the Alcoholic Foundation of Manitoba for the year 1978.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney) introduced Bill No. 65, An Act to amend The Mineral Taxation Act. Recommended by the Lieutenant-Governor)

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Can the Minister confirm that, in fact, his government is proceeding on a course of action which will require graduates from nursing to work for a six-month period of time in Manitoba's hospitals without pay.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: No, Mr. Speaker. In fact, just the opposite.

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

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister confirm that in an address to the Manitoba Association

of Registered Nurses in Brandon, that he did as Minister of Health indicate that he fully endorsed the establishment of a six-month clinical practicum for student nurses as a method to provide job orientation in the complexities of the health care system?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I can confirm that, and I can also confirm that I sent a clarifying telex to the executive of the MARN following that address, because of some misunderstanding apparently by some members of the executive of the implications of that statement. I had met with the MARN executive just two weeks previous to that. We discussed the whole concept — what I was talking about, was paid job orientation.

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

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Honourable, the Attorney-General, to ascertain from him if he has as yet met with the President of the Manitoba Bar Association and with the Chairman of the Legal, well, I guess it's the lawyers' group, the criminal lawyers' group in relation to the practices of the Police Commissions in dealing with criminal suspects and their right to have access to lawyers?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I've met with the President of the Manitoba Bar Association.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the member has not met with the other group any indication of any reluctance to discuss it with them, since the Minister has reported that it was his intention to meet with both the President of the Manitoba Bar and with the Chairman — I think it's Mr. Brodsky, I'm not sure of who is the Chairman of the Criminal Trial Lawyers' Association?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I believe I had indicated that I would be meeting with the President of the Manitoba Bar Association and the Chairman of the Criminal Justice Subsection of the Manitoba Bar Association, but the President, in coming to the meeting, did not bring the Chairman of the Criminal Justice Section with him.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Honourable, the Attorney-General, has already met with the President of the Bar Association, can he advise us if there is any change being developed in regard to the practice of the police in the interrogation and holding of criminal suspects in regard to their access to lawyers as soon as they wish to see them?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the result of the meeting with the President of the Manitoba Bar Association with respect to this matter was that he indicated that the resolution, which the Member for St. Johns is referring to with respect to right of access to counsel, had not been considered by the Criminal Justice Subsection Bar Association, or by a meeting of the Bar Association. He indicated that he would raise the matter at their convention in the middle of the month of June, in order to have the convention consider that matter; and in his view he thought it would pass.

I then indicated to them, upon receipt of a resolution from the Manitoba Bar Association, I would be prepared to raise the matter at the next meeting of Attorneys-General, which I expect to occur within the next few months.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Attorney-General if he is planning to visit Breezy Point, Minnesota, in order to hear the discussions that take place in regard to this very resolution?

MR. MERCIER: No, I'm not, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Attorney-General whether he is not prepared to make a further investigation and establish a policy in regard to this question of access to lawyers by people suspected of crime until after the Bar Association and all the Attorneys-General of Canada get around to it, and meanwhile has he ensured that at least the minimal policy, and that's my description of it, of Winnipeg police is being carried out by the rest of Manitoba police.

MR. MERCIER: Yes it is, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable House Leader. I want to know whether the House can expect that there will be a resolution at this session setting up a committee to consider whether or not citizens have ample access to information, and if not recommending steps to improve such access.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): That matter has not been given consideration as yet, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Acting First Minister. I would like to ask that Minister if there has been any change in the traditional practice of accepting the highest bidder on a tender call.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephones.

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West): Mr. Speaker, I believe the member has some specific question of tendering, some specific department in mind. Perhaps if he could be specific we could deal with it.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Indeed I do have a specific, but before that I wish to know whether there had been any change in the government's traditional tendering practice. Perhaps the Minister could answer that.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, I cannot identify any particular change in government practice with respect to tendering policies, and that is a very general statement. There are many individual problems with respect to tenders and it's very difficult to generalize in the whole spectrum of tendering within the government.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Mines and Environmental Management and ask him whether he can confirm that the highest tender submitted for a catering contract at Birds Hill Provincial Park was refused by the government, or by the Minister.

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

MR. RANSOM: That's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that that was the situation and that is not a change from past practice or policy.

MR. WALDING: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister prepared to inform the House at this time why he failed to accept the highest tender?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I had advised the honourable member that when the details of the particular case were brought forward to me that I would be advising him of those reasons and that is my intention.

MR. WALDING: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that this matter was first referred to the Minister perhaps two months ago by the the individual concerned and about a month ago by me, can the Minister explain to the House why it has taken so long for him to ascertain why this high bid was refused?

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

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, because some of the first information that came to me seemed to be rather incomplete and in discussion with the Honourable Member for St. Vital, it was evident that the information that I had at that time was not satisfactory to him, and so I had asked for

additional information. When that information is available, I will make it available to the honourable member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Fitness and ask him whether he has any information on the problems associated with the holding of the next Pan American Games in Latin America?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sports.

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, since the city of Hamilton has been mentioned as a possible backup city for the next games due to certain problems apparently in the staging of them, would the Minister be prepared to investigate the possibility of offering Winnipeg as an alternative site for the holding of the next Pan Am Games, in view of the great success of the 1967 effort?

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I can check into the particular situation that the member refers to and get back to him on it. We still have many of the fantastic facilities that were used in the '67 Pan Am Games in place in Winnipeg, and I'm sure could be used for an event such as that again. I could check into the matter and report back to the member.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask a question to the Minister of Highways in regard to construction work near Easterville on Easterville road and PTR No. 327. I wonder if the Minister could tell us whether there is any provision in the contracts that have been let or any preference given to the hiring of local residents in that construction work?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, there has always been every effort made to encourage the use of local labour and local manpower when available, however, specific conditions written into the contracts are not the case, the open tendering system being adhered to by the Department of Highways.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can tell us who has the contract to do some brushing or bush clearing at the side of the roads in that area, and whether any local people have been hired on that aspect of the construction or the maintenance?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, as to a specific contract, I'd have to take the question as notice and report back to the member, perhaps tomorrow.

MR. McBRYDE: I'd like to address a question then to the Minister responsible for Manpower, and ask the Minister for Manpower whether he is still recommending urging his colleagues in Cabinet to give preference to local residents in terms of construction and work projects that take place near the remote communities?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Yes, I am, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, then I wonder if this Minister could tell us how come there is not a single resident of Easterville employed in the construction work now going on near their community?

MR. MacMASTER: The Minister of Highways has said he'd report back on that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. I wonder if the honourable minister is prepared to monitor the gasoline prices at the retail outlets in the city and rural Manitoba on a weekly basis and report back once a year to see what gasoline prices are fluctuating up and down, and which pumps, and which companies are the culprits of this alleged practice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I believe I responded to that question the other day in the House. Perhaps if my honourable friend would check Hansard he will be able to get the answer to that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Resources with regard to the allocation of wild rice leases and particularly the allocation of wild rice leases in the Whiteshell. Can the Minister indicate if there will be any change in the policy in that regard? In previous years I believe most, if not all of the wild rice leases in the Whiteshell Park were allocated to Algonquin Wild Rice Producers Company Limited, which represented a number of Indian bands in Manitoba.

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

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, there may be some changes in the manner in which the leases are made available.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the Minister. Can he indicate if the leases that have been allocated to the Algonquin Wild Rice Producers Limited, which I believe are long standing commitments by the Government of Manitoba to the Indian owned company, would he confirm that these leases will be honoured; that this company will be able to renew their leases this year as per prior agreements and prior commitments made by the Government of Manitoba to the Indian people in Manitoba?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I would have to check on specific arrangements that the member says were in place. There are discussions ongoing with my officials right now in terms of how the leases will be made available. It is certainly the intention to recognize the long standing interests of those people who have had the leases.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Speaker, my question is quite simple and straightforward and I don't believe I've really received a straight answer as of yet. Perhaps I can rephrase it to get a more direct answer. My question is: With respect to those leases that have been signed, many of them I believe which contained commitments for 4 or 5 years in duration where already commitments have been made by the Government of Manitoba to the Indian people through the Algonquin Wild Rice Producers Company Limited, is the Minister saying that he is going to break those commitments and break those leases unilaterally and take the leases away from the Algonquin Company and award it in some other manner?

MR. RANSOM: No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any provision of any leases being broken. Now I would have to check to determine whether or not some provisions of agreements may not have been kept and leases may have lapsed as a result of that, but I am not aware of any situations such as the honourable member refers to.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, I would hope the Minister could take that question as notice and report back if there are impending changes.

On another matter, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister if he has yet developed a policy for park development, and in particular I would like to know if he has developed a policy with respect to the development of the Whiteshell Park.

MR. RANSOM: The matter of parks policy is one that's being developed within the government, Mr. Speaker, and when the policy is approved by Cabinet in caucus it will be announced.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: A question to the Honourable Minister of Highways. I wonder if the Minister can advise the House if he's going to revise the highway program for the year ahead now, due to the flooding conditions in the south. Will there be certain construction projects in the north, that are in my constituency, now cancelled due to the flooding problems in southern Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the honourable member for not giving me notice for that question, but I would indicate to him that it's my hope that with the sun shining that we will in effect be able to complete more or less the highways program as was planned. There will be a fair amount of remedial work done in those parts — in that part of the province where we've had severe flooding. I have as yet not made any adjustments in the highways program as initially laid out during the earlier part of this session when my Estimates were being considered.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Thank you Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Northern Affairs. Can the Minister indicate if his department has been meeting with the chief and band council at God's Lake Narrows band for the purpose of drafting plans for a bridge to span the narrows in that community so that the band members will have greater access to the air strip during break-up in the summer months?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

MR. MacMASTER: I can't say for sure, Mr. Speaker, whether discussions are being conducted at the moment, but I know that discussions have taken place. I can't answer the question precisely whether discussions are taking place today.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the Minister is, then will he be prepared to undertake to report back to the House as to the status of those negotiations at the present time?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Manpower and Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Minister of Labour. In light of public statements appearing in the paper over the weekend in reference to the accuracy of lead-in-blood testing done at both labs doing testing in the city, and in light of the fact that those statements by recognized professionals in the field seem to contradict criticisms made by the Minister in this House earlier this year, is the Minister now prepared to table documents to substantiate his earlier attacks on the lead-in-blood testing procedures done at the Health Sciences Centre?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Those particular procedures aren't for me to table, Mr. Speaker, and I reiterate what I said before, that the discussions took place between the Health Sciences people and our own people and our particular procedures and systems were reviewed by people from the Health Sciences Centre and they have, I understand, recently hooked themselves in with an international quality control procedure, and I'm pleased that they have.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and is a follow-up to the question from the Member for Roblin regarding gasoline prices. Would the Minister confirm that his department will indeed be monitoring gasoline prices to determine the overall effect to the consumer of price wars, followed by massive co-ordinated price increases in gasoline prices.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, I responded to that question last week, and our investigations indicate that prices across Canada, at least from Toronto west, range in the 92 to one dollar mark depending on the mark-up that is taken by individual dealers. Winnipeg and Regina seem to be the arenas for price wars, and anytime that the price falls below that 92 to one dollar price, it seems to me that the consumers are getting the bargain. I don't know of many occasions where the price in Winnipeg has exceeded that general average price in western Canada, taking into consideration, of course, that the price in Alberta is somewhat lower due to the fact that there is no tax on gasoline.

But generally speaking, in cities across western Canada and Ontario, the prices are, outside of the wars that exist in Winnipeg and Regina, the prices range between 92 cents and one dollar per gallon.

MR. PARASIUK: A supplementary to the Minister. Since price wars often result in small independent gasoline service station operators being driven out of business by the large companies which can withstand the price war, has the Minister and his department, in their studies, been monitoring whether the price wars have driven small independent gasoline station operators out of business in the Winnipeg area? What has the figure been over the last 18 months with respect to the number of small independent service station operators being driven out of business?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, over the years there have been a number of the so-called small independent dealers that have been driven out of business, or closed down. I don't know whether that percentage has increased latterly or not, I would have to see if I could find that information out for my honourable friend. I don't believe that we have it at the moment.

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

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, in determining that information, I would like the Minister to indicate to us whether, in fact, the Conservative Government considers it important to the competitiveness of the gasoline service station sector to have small independent operators operating, or do they consider it sufficient to allow the large chains to drive the small ones out of business?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, no, we believe that the independent operators are a very vital part of the whole process, and we would like to see them remain. At the same time, Sir, unless my honourable friend is suggesting that we set the price of gasoline in the Province of Manitoba at a level that would be comparable to high levels across Canada, I'm not too sure that we'd be prepared to take that step. First of all, it would be ineffective and secondly, it would be very difficult to police.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Resources, and I would like to ask him why his government has not yet come up with a policy with respect to development in the park at the Whiteshell Park. After 20 months of PC government, we still do not yet have a policy, and people are very concerned about the type of development that will be taking place there in the future. I wonder if the Minister can give us an indication when we will be hearing from him and his government with respect to a policy regarding the development of that park?

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

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, there were many areas of my department that were either lacking in policy or where it was necessary to make changes in policy. The Parks area is certainly one of those, and there had been no plan there for eight years. We are very close to having a policy for all parks in place, and in the meantime, I have given the assurance to the House that there would be no further major developments take place, as did the former Minister of Tourism last year, that there would be no major developments take place until an appropriate plan was in place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question either to the Minister of Economic Development, or perhaps to the Minister of Agriculture, since this directly affects the

farming community. I wonder if the government bench could advise the House whether it is now, or considering making representation to the new federal government respecting the establishment of a prairie rail authority, which was a key recommendation in the Royal Commission of Chief Justice Hall.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Not at this time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, I wonder if the Honourable Minister of Agriculture could advise the Legislature whether the government has a position with respect to the prairie rail authority, as recommended by the Hall Commission.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that a lot of the work that could have been done by the Prairie Rail Authority is now being heard by the Canadian Transport Commission, and it would be a dual body with authority to do the same kind of a job.

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

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, considering the Honourable Minister's answer, I would like to ask him, if he does not believe that it's very important, that it is imperative, that we have this Prairie Rail Authority as recommended by the Hall Commission, which would be a division of the Canadian Transport Commission, and oversee in particular the payment of subsidies to the branch lines to ensure the upgrading of branch lines rather than their neglect that has occurred previously under the CTC.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I really found it difficult to pick a direct question from the Member for Brandon East. I think that, if it's an authority that he's looking for to put money into the rail lines, I think probably that if and when that were to take place, because we certainly have to look at the money being made available to put into the road system as well as into the railroad system to weigh which way the taxpayers' money should be spent in the most effective manner. So I think we have to definitely look at the total picture, and not just a complete rail retention program.

MR. EVANS: Then, to confirm my understanding, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask this supplementary. I understand, therefore, that the Government of Manitoba is not necessarily interested in seeing this key recommendation of the Hall Report being implemented; that is, the recommendation that a Prairie Rail Authority centred in the prairies be established.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I suggest to the honourable member this is a time for asking questions, not for making statements.

Does the Honourable Member for Brandon East have a question?

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for your advice in this matter. My question is, for clarification, is the Minister now telling the Legislature that the government of Manitoba is not prepared to see this key element, this key recommendation of the Hall Report implemented? Is that the position of the government of Manitoba?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Brandon East I am sure is quite aware of the fact we have been working with communities to retain rail lines that they identify that they themselves want to see retained, and we will continue on that path. If there's any different policy or any different approach taken, I'm sure the member will be made aware of it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. THOMAS BARROW: I direct my question to the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker. It's repetitious but I would like an answer. It is the environmental jurisdiction problem at Flin Flon which the Minister is well aware of, and which has been asked at least 10 or 12 times in this House. Would the Minister today please give an answer?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable Member for Portage.

MR. LLOYD G. HYDE: Yes, I'd like to address a question to the Honourable Minister responsible

for Highways to a certain whether some action can be taken to eliminate a situation that if not dealt with I'm afraid will end up as a tragic accident, that being the heavy flow of traffic exiting from the two new malls west of Portage into the through traffic of the No. 1 Highway.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to inform the Honourable Member for Portage that the situation has been brought to my attention by several people, and indeed I think one of the council members from the RM of Portage, and the department is currently acquiring some additional lands to put some additional storage lanes in that general area. We are aware of the fact that the commencement of the shopping mall at the west end of Portage has altered the traffic considerably and we'll be monitoring the situation and see what we can do to assure ourselves that the kind of situation that the honourable member suggests may happen will not happen.

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

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Mines and Environmental Management. I'd like to ask the Minister whether the matter of garden allotments on the outskirts of Winnipeg are part of the Minister's responsibility.

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

MR. RANSOM: It's a good question, Mr. Speaker. I'll take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Highways and is a follow-up to the question put forward by the Member for Portage. Since it is a practice in the city of Winnipeg for developers of shopping centres, if in fact they create some extra burden on the highway traffic system, to bear some of the costs of the additional highways facility put in place, is it the intention of the government of Manitoba to sit down with the developer of that shopping centre to determine whether the shopping centre developer should be footing some of the bill for the increased highway capacity, or is it going to be the general taxpayer of Manitoba that'll bear that cost?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the Honourable Member for Transcona that by and large the same application of policy applies in both urban and rural settings. In the city the general taxpayer, of course, pays upwards of \$4,000 to \$5,000 per lane mile for the maintenance of all the arterial streets through the city of Winnipeg. On those streets such as TransCanada No. 1 and/or other arterial streets we do put up the signalling facilities as we would in the case of Portage la Prairie because we're dealing with the TransCanada Highway. More or less the same general application applies, developers that require specific highway improvements pay for them. I think the Honourable Member for Dauphin can indicate that that is the case right now with the shopping mall being developed there, where the developer requesting specific highway construction to facilitate traffic flow onto his parking lot is in fact being charged with that amount. I want to assure the Honourable Member for Transcona that within the Department of Highways we treat urban and rural people in much a similar way.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, a supplementary to the Minister. Since the Dauphin shopping centre developer is being assessed a levy, does the Minister now say that the Portage la Prairie shopping centre developer isn't going to be assessed in a levy because he's building a shopping centre beside the Trans Canada Highway instead of just beside a normal provincial highway? Is that his rationale for not charging the Portage la Prairie developer a levy?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I was merely answering in a general way that the same general rules apply. I'm not aware of the specific details involved in this particular case. I am aware that there has been growth and development in the city of Portage la Prairie, particularly in the last 18 months, which I know that we're all very pleased with, and that at the same time Trans Canada is the major

thoroughfare through the province and the Department of Highways has to concern itself with the type of traffic changes, the different patterns of traffic that develop from time to time. I can assure the honourable member that I will ascertain the specifics in the case involved: It could well be that the developer in Portage la Prairie has and is contributing to certain portions of costs, but the question that was raised by the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie deals more specifically with the Trans Canada Highway, and that is and continues to be 100 percent provincial responsibility.

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

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, I would ask the Minister of Highways, when he's investigating the Portage situation to take into account the fact that there is a by-pass around Portage, paid for, I presume, by the federal government and the provincial government, which fully by-passes Portage la Prairie on the Trans Canada, and that the No. 1 or the Trans Canada running through Portage is a secondary route for major motorists travelling around, or by-passing Portage. Just as No. 1 through the city is a secondary road where the city rules are put into effect, and where the developer has to pay his fair share if he presents a burden on the existing road or highway structure.

MR. SPEAKER: I want to thank the Honourable Member for Transcona for his comments. I wonder if he has a question now.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes. I'm sorry that you didn't hear my question, Mr. Speaker. I asked the Minister if he would take that into account, that is a question, Mr. Speaker. I think that the Minister heard if you didn't.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer Affairs and follows up on the questions about gas pricing. I wonder if his department is studying or whether he could assure us that the lesser profits accruing to the gas companies because of the price wars in the city of Winnipeg, whether he could assure us that the gas companies are not picking up that profit in rural and northern Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. JORGENSON: I can give my honourable friend that assurance, because the prices that are charged in the various points in the province of Manitoba by the gasoline companies delivered to that particular point are fairly constant. The variation takes place when it gets into the dealer's hands and the price wars commence there.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Highways. I would like to ask the Minister of Highways when the gravelling for the completion of the Moose Lake road will begin and whether he will be taking steps to ensure that residents and equipment from the community of Moose Lake will have opportunity to work on the completion of that Moose Lake road.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take that question as notice as to when the actual work will commence. I would hope it would be soon. On the second part of the question — yes, I will make every attempt to see that local suppliers of both equipment and manpower are given every opportunity to enter into the work.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The hour for Question Period having expired, the Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: 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 into a Committee of Supply, with the

Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Labour and Manpower and the Honourable Member for Roblin in the Chair for the Department of Government Services.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY - GOVERNMENT SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. J. Wally McKenzie (Roblin): Committee come to Order. Resolution 59: 3.(a)Senior Administration (1)Salaries—pass — the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Just before we get there, did we complete all of 58? Did we do Security Services for example?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes we did. As I look at it here, they're all passed.

MR. DOERN: Okay, I have some points to make there but I'll wait till the Minister's Salary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're on Supply and Services.

MR. DOERN: Right. I guess my first questions are for the Central Vehicle Branch so I'll wait for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a)—pass; 3.(a)(2)Other Expenditures—pass; 3.(b)Central Vehicle Branch (1)Salaries—pass — the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, just there in general, I have some broad questions there but I'll hold those for a moment. There is one peculiarity that occurred during the Session during some questions asked by my colleague, the Member for St. Vital, and that was that business about the Minister's whitewalls and I found that a very peculiar operation, namely that I thought it was standard government policy that when you're purchasing vehicles to have companies bid and then the bids would be received and then there would be a decision taken on the lowest bidder in the sense that Minister's vehicles tend to be perhaps one notch higher than the normal standard Civil Service car, which is common throughout the country.

So in this particular case, we had a vehicle purchased and then the Minister himself made a substitution and to me, although we're not talking so much about money here as we are about a principle, I'm just wondering whether this is an exception to the tendering practices, whether the Minister is going to accept substitutes from any member of the administration, whether this is an aberration or what? Because although on the surface it looks all very well, it strikes me as peculiar that the department would be responding to somebody who would say: "Listen, I've got a deal on batteries, I have a deal on seat covers, I have a deal on this, I know where I can get a radio cheaper." I mean, surely there are procedures which for various reasons should be followed and I am just wondering on what basis this was allowed and whether this was going to be a new innovation in the department. Because although there may be some merit in it, I see some serious pitfalls as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pass.

MR. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, maybe the Minister didn't hear me. I asked him on what basis he allowed a Minister to make a substitution for tires on his vehicle?

MR. ENNS: I'd have to check as to the actual dates, but I don't believe I was the Minister and I can assure the honourable member that wouldn't happen under my stewardship as Minister of Government Services.

But seriously, there is a change that I should indicate to the members of the Committee. Well, I don't even know whether that is a change so much, it's a practice that I can recall being in place during the '60s, in any event, where this government has perhaps more ministers from different parts of rural Manitoba, and while the tendering practice remains the same, the allocation as to which dealer supplies the car after the tender has been made, whether it's at General Motors or Ford, something like that, the Minister can request that the car be supplied by a dealer within his constituency. That is not being rigidly, you know, adhered to but it is an option and I suspect that perhaps that has been the case in the past.

The specific matter that the honourable member raises, I would have to agree with him. It's

not a practice that we would want to allow to develop. Guidelines are established in terms of the size and classification of the vehicle that's deemed appropriate for any particular administrative post or indeed for the executive council's requirements and within those guidelines, given the choice of different makes of cars that happens to meet the Minister's requirements, those guidelines are followed and will be followed.

MR. DOERN: I'll just make a concluding comment here, before my colleague asks some questions and just say that I am glad that the Minister says he does not feel that this was a wise procedure to follow because of certain pitfalls, and you know, I'm sure that the Minister is well aware that when you start making exceptions for short-run gain, you may be getting involved in long-term problems. I've talked to people, for example, in the catering business and they tell me that they often have all sorts of wonderful opportunities to save money on food, but there are little problems associated with it like — for instance, you may be offered a whole van full of poultry, say as a specific example, where a refrigerated truck crashed and then the poultry, I guess, was written off and it was then offered to somebody at a bargain price. The problem being that maybe the meat was no longer any good. There's a question there and this is very common in the food industry and I recall as Minister of Public Works, having some problems where a well-known car dealer, after he had made an arrangement with the province to sell a number of vehicles and decided he wanted to substitute batteries. He got a deal on a carload of batteries and he wanted to make that change, and as a result of making that substitution I think, without approval from the department, he had the tender withdrawn from him. He lost that contract because he was trying to sort of make an end-run based on some particular beneficial deal that he had made.

So I'm simply saying to the Minister that this is an area that should be looked at closely and for the benefit of a short-run advantage, some longer term consequence might ensue.

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

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister would explain to the Committee just what the system is of tendering for tires by the department?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I have to ask the honourable member, the department and/or other departments of government purchase tires in wholesale lots for different use and different vehicles, particularly the Department of Highways, I'm assuming if the honourable member is referring to the tires on the fleet, on the cars that we put on tender — it's still done on bulk purchasing, that the garage then receives and are put on. We are tendering basically for the standard vehicles that are used throughout the service, the black — no whitewalls. On the executive cars the whitewalls are tendered for.

MR. WALDING: Just for clarification, Mr. Chairman, does the department actually purchase the tires in bulk, or do they negotiate a certain price or discount price with a certain supplier?

MR. ENNS: I'm advised that for the general fleet it is a tender — that is bulk tender — that is sent out to the various tire manufacturers, for the cars it's a tender sent out to the manufacturers for the cars.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, does the department then take possession of the tires in bulk or . . . ?

MR. ENNS: I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that the tires are tendered for in bulk and the vehicles are then equipped with them from that supply.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister if there is a set quality?

MR. ENNS: The original car, when tendered, comes supplied with five tires — four and a spare — and that is part of the tendering process of the vehicles. The replacements that are required from time-to-time, those are tendered separately — their tire tenders — and are then stored or available to be drawn on by the central garage to be put on the vehicles as required, but the original is tendered with the tires.

MR. WALDING: I thank the Minister for that information, Mr. Chairman. Now I'd like to ask him if there is a certain standard or quality of those replacement tires that are used on Minister vehicles?

MR. ENNS: I am advised that they are standard four-ply radial tires, whitewalls —(Interjection)— not whitewalls, no whitewalls I am told.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I am under the impression that tire manufacturers make different sorts of tires in different qualities, from a very cheap one to a tire that might cost ten times as much as the cheapest with a concomitant increase in the amount of mileage that might be obtained from such a tire. Now I want to know from the Minister, has the department done any cost benefit studies as to which is the cheapest or most economical quality of tire to purchase, and if so, which quality of tires do they purchase for Ministers' cars?

MR. ENNS: I have been advised that in general the policy is to stay with the first-line standard tire of similar quality to the one that came with the original purchase of the vehicle. In other words, the classification of the tire in the way the original vehicle when purchased was equipped with, that is the classification of tire that is purchased in bulk for replacement.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the Minister inform the Committee how many thousand miles the department expects to get out of each of those tires?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, knowing the wide variation of the kind of use that government vehicles are put to, government employees working in northern Manitoba under much rougher road conditions, government ministers like myself driving on unimproved trails as I do every day on provincial road 518, the wear and tear on tires is considerably different as compared to say, my colleague, the Minister of Tourism, who does most of her driving in the city or on trunk highways. Do we have an average mileage life of tires in general? I am advised it varies from to 20,000 to 40,000 miles in much the same way, you know, that variations exist in the private sector use of cars and tires.

MR. CHAIRMAN: May I just correct the Committee. We should maybe pass that Salary item (a) and Other Expenditures. This is likely what we're dealing with now, isn't it, in (b)(2)? So we'll pass (1) and then carry on with the questioning in (2). Would that be okay with the members? (b)(1)—pass; (b)(2) — the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister what the cost would be of five first-line standard tires such as he would put on a minister's car.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, perhaps we could take that question as notice and come back to that.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I didn't want to know to the last cent. If the Minister could give me an approximate figure, a round figure, say to the nearest \$10 or so.

MR. ENNS: Between \$30 and \$90.00.

MR. WALDING: Is the Minister telling me that the department can buy five tires for \$30.00?

MR. ENNS: No, per piece, per tire. We'll find out; we'll make a phone call right now and we'll have it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b)(2)—pass — the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to deal with one of the favourite topics of the Minister and myself; the Provincial Garage, and before I do that I would like to ask why there has been a \$1,150,000 increase in the Other Expenditures for the Central Vehicle Branch? I assume this is for the purchase of new vehicles but can the Minister indicate why there has been such a substantial increase in estimates for the garage; \$4.6 million to \$5.8 million?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, members will appreciate that in the past 15 or 18 months while ongoing studies with respect to the government fleet have been taking place and are still taking place, there has been of course, no reduction in the number of miles that have been driven and the principal sum is for additional vehicles to be purchased to the fleet — replacement vehicles to be purchased to the fleet — to keep the fleet within some semblance of order.

MR. DOERN: Can the Minister give us the size of the fleet today and the projection for this fiscal year?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I have been advised that at the current moment, some 2,315 vehicles comprise of the government fleet.

MR. DOERN: 2,315, and can the Minister indicate how many leased vehicles there are?

MR. ENNS: I am advised, Mr. Chairman, that currently, aside from perhaps one or two that could be under daily lease, but there are no leased vehicles in the fleet at the moment.

MR. DOERN: So if we . . .

MR. ENNS: That figure by the way, Mr. Chairman, if I may just interject, the central vehicle fleet at March 31st, 1979, is 2,314. That breaks down to some — just for further information — 372 trucks; 467 vans; 1,293 sedans, passenger sedans; 122 station wagons; and 60 other; for a total of 2,314.

MR. DOERN: Are there any helicopters in the fleet?

MR. ENNS: No, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, then, if my figures are right, going back over the past year or two, there has been a reduction of maybe 50 to 100 vehicles in the past year or two, or this is the impression that I have.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, for accurate comparison, I just related the figures as of March 31st, 1979. March 31st, a year ago, 1978, there was 2,415, so the member is correct; in the order of 100 vehicles. Most of them being made up in the sedans, passenger sedans. In 1978 we had 1,327 passenger sedans as compared to 1,293 at March 31st, 1979.

MR. DOERN: In addition to the government fleet, does the Minister have some figures for us on the amount of money that is paid to individuals for operating their vehicles, because I assume that there is a considerable amount of money and that if you buy less cars, you're either allowing people to lease vehicles and you say you're not leasing any or you are paying them to operate their own vehicles. And I just wonder if you have — first of all — a figure for this fiscal year on the amount of money budgeted for the payment to individuals for operating their vehicles.

MR. ENNS: Those charges are shown in the various departments. We can provide that for the honourable member and I'd undertake to have that information in a comparative way, say last year to this year, perhaps have that information available to the honourable member later on in the discussion of these Estimates. The staff informs me they cannot provide that information at the moment.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I assume that it is likely that we will conclude Estimates tomorrow in this department, at least, I would hope so, and if the Minister could ask his staff to pull them for tomorrow afternoon, that would be useful. If not, then I would ask the Minister if he would forward that information as soon as possible during this Session.

My point being this, Mr. Chairman, that the size of the fleet alone is only one factor and there certainly has been hardly any change in the past year or two. We see a difference of 100 vehicles on some 2,300 to 2,400; I don't know what that is, about 5 percent, 4 or 5 percent reduction but it's only one part of the picture, because if it simply means that individuals are being paid so many cents a mile to operate their vehicles then I think it's a well-known fact that it's cheaper to operate a car by the central fleet than to pay an individual because there used to be a discrepancy that ranged from about 12 percent or so to operate a vehicle and payments were made of around 21 cents per mile. So we have to have some fresh figures and perhaps the Minister could provide that as well. Does he have figures on what we now consider to be the correct charge per mile considering, you know, everything: maintenance, depreciation, etc.? How many cents per mile do we assume it costs us to operate our fleet and also what are we paying these days to individuals when they use their vehicles for government purposes?

MR. ENNS: Apparently, Mr. Chairman, we are charging to different departments, the rate of 15 cents per mile on an average of 18,500 miles per unit. That makes up the bulk of that revenue of \$6,776,200.00. As I indicated earlier, the question of what the appropriate charge ought to be today, in 1979, and to what extent the Government Services in the central garage is in effect undercharging or subsidizing, if you like, user departments, is something that I would hope we'll have clarified and if new policy initiatives are to be taken, that they will be in place for the coming set of Estimates.

MR. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, the amount of money paid to individuals is set out in the Manual of Administration and I wonder if we could have the current range of figures. I realize there is the north and the south and so on, but it used to be in the range of up to 21 cents a mile. Could we have the current figures from the Manual?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I can undertake to provide the member with a photocopy of the current printed Manual that is in use. I am told that it starts generally at the rate of 21 cents and then varies with different types of vehicles, different use, but I'll see that the current Manual, you know, is reproduced and given to the honourable member for his records.

MR. DOERN: So anyway, the point I think, Mr. Chairman, is two things: one is that it costs more money to pay individuals to use their vehicles. It's less efficient if one is organized well, and secondly, when you give the size of the fleet, if you simply reduce the fleet and increase the amount of payments, then there is no saving to the government but, in fact, increased charges. And the original point is that the size of the fleet is slightly smaller but basically about the same. I know that if the former Minister of Government Services were here — citizen Sid Spivak — that he would probably be very distressed to learn that the fleet remains about the same. Because in the marvelous document, the Task Force Report, he was suggesting, and whoever it was who was working on this particular area, was suggesting that the fleet was to be reduced by I guess about 25 percent or more. No, it must be much more than that — from 2,450 to 1,700. So they wanted to reduce 750 vehicles, which is about 30 percent, and the Minister, by either accident or design, has only made a mild adjustment there.

The other thing . . . therefore I assume again, as we asked the Minister last year when he was promoted to Government Services, and then demoted, and now once again has fallen into the good graces of the First Minister and given the assignment again; he said at that time that in terms of the Task Force Report, that he wasn't following it. I recall making notes at the time, he said he'd only read it, that it had no direct effect, and that basically as when they run movies on television or in the theatre, they say any resemblance between any real characters and this report is purely coincidental.

MR. ENNS: That's only on CBC, Russ.

MR. DOERN: On CBC, I see. So, I don't want the Minister to develop an obsession with the CBC. You know, he mustn't take that approach. He must have a more balanced approach than some of his colleagues.

But I gather, as last year the Minister said in response to a series of questions, that he was not taking the Task Force as his Bible, that he wasn't trying to follow the recommendations, that he was on his own lights in that regard; so could he comment. Has he attempted to make any changes in his position, or is he still following his original position of ignoring the recommendations in the Task Force Report?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, we anticipate that there will likely be some further reductions resulting out of units now turned in as surplus to departmental requirements. What's happening is that these are currently being used to meet seasonal requests, and will be further considered following seasonal use.

If additional vehicle requests continue to come from departments, it may be necessary to utilize some surplus vehicles to cover new requests. The former Minister of Public Works is aware that there is a heightened requirement use for vehicles — a fair number of them on a seasonal basis during this time of year and throughout the summer — so that there is a distinct possibility that without any basic change in policy, but simply through the tightened-up numbers of staff requiring the vehicles, this figure that we're currently at could be reduced to a somewhat lower level.

But the honourable member is correct, that there is not at the moment, and I don't perceive at this particular instance on any predetermined course of fleet reduction. The member is well aware that it involves a whole scale of considerations, certainly not the least of them being the negotiations

that any government finds themselves in with MGEA with respect to their work conditions and the job description in terms of where vehicles are currently assigned to a particular job.

The question as to whether or not a somewhat arbitrary target limit for government fleet as set out by my former colleague is attainable will only be borne out as a result of further refinement of the study that's now under way with respect to the government fleet in general.

MR. DOERN: I'm glad the Minister made that statement, and I would simply point out to him that it may be a coincidence, but that Mr. Spivak supported the Task Force Report and initiated it, and got defeated at the poll. So I simply point that out for the Minister's own benefit, that there might be some bad luck there if he follows . . . Well I believe it was both a federal election and a provincial referendum.

Mr. Chairman, the other question is, of course, the provincial garage. I wanted to ask the Minister about the future of that building. At present, I gather it's being used to house a track for track and field, and I happen to have mixed emotions about that, because I'm a very strong supporter of track and field in Manitoba. I used to compete; I've been to some Olympics to see them; I love the Pan-American Games — I raised that today, as a matter of fact, by coincidence. And here it is, ironically, that what was designed as a provincial garage, with the concurrence of the department, the superintendent of the garage and many of the people sitting here now, this was an established need for this facility, an autobody repair facility, administration, automotive repairs, based on the fact that the present site was too cramped, inefficient, contrary to National Building Code requirements, contrary to Fire Code inspections, so on and so on. And as a result, the new facility was built, it was almost completed, the new administration came in, and has kept the facility more or less vacant ever since.

Now, it was pointed out by Mr. Ziprick in Public Accounts last November, that the interest charges were about \$280,000 a year, and there is also a \$90,000 charge for heat, light and security. So essentially you have a figure of about \$370,000 a year, \$30,000 a month, and what would to me be a logical policy, Mr. Chairman, would be to use the facility, which was designed for the requirements of the department, and then to make other uses of storage, or whatever, of the downtown facility down the street from here. There's certainly been no real reduction in the size of the fleet, and there has been no serious attempt to make another use of the building.

It's designed as a garage, it's logical to use it as such, but I suppose one could consider costly renovations, which I wouldn't recommend, but that would be a possibility, to renovate the building for other purposes. I think the Minister realizes, as I do, that when you take a building with a particular purpose and change the purpose or the function of that facility it will cost you dearly to do so. So here we have a garage, basically 18 months old, or new, and it's being used for storage or for minimal use as a temporary track and field facility.

But it doesn't seem to me that this Minister or this department or this government, assuming they intend to sell off the facility or make some other use of it, has made any serious attempt to do so. They've simply continued to keep the facility empty. If it's costing \$370,000 a year to do so, they have now spent, in effect, about \$555,000 to do so. And that would seem to be a waste of the taxpayers' money. So I just ask the Minister, first of all, what he has done, he and his former colleague, Mr. Spivak, about selling the facility, renting the facility, converting the facility, and/or what the present Minister intends to do in terms of the next year or two.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I'm sure the honourable member will agree that, with respect to the major cost item that he referred to, the interest charges, they would be there with it fully utilized as a provincial garage for which it was built or in its present state, it's underutilized use, so the costs in terms of interest charges are there in either case. Let me indicate to him that what we have attempted to do was to make use of the facility to the extent possible without foregoing any of the options open to the department or government for its eventual use, which, in my judgment, will still be for the purpose that it was built for.

The present occupants are, as the member has pointed out, the city of Winnipeg; it does store and maintain and has in fact used the facility for their track, Skills Unlimited uses the facility and has used the facility for the last 6 months, their facilities having suffered damage in a fire. There's no lease signed with them. They hopefully will be in some of their own facilities later on in the fall. In addition to that, Manitoba Telephone Systems does operate out of the same facility; they have some — I forget the actual amount — I believe some 5,000 or 6,000 square feet, 6,000 square feet of space that they are making use of.

The general answer, though, to the honourable member's question is that while the reduction in the government fleet hasn't occurred to the extent that was forecast by some, including my

my former colleague, but what of course hasn't taken place is, I suppose, the anticipated growth in terms of government vehicles. I don't have the progression of that growth that occurred in the eight years of the administration that he was part of.

And along with that, of course, the increased staff requirements to fully man that kind of facility hasn't been required as well. So you know, I will not argue with the honourable member that there aren't some costs attached to the fact that a building of that size and nature isn't being fully utilized. That's very obvious. But on the other hand, for a government that has expressed its concern about growth within the public sector, particularly in this area, those have not occurred. For instance, I indicated that it's — you know, I can't fault the former Minister of Public Works all that much for having built that facility when you consider that in 1969 the government fleet stood at some 1,450 vehicles. And that then jumped up in the ensuing years to 1973 to 1,800 vehicles, to 1974 to 2,000 vehicles, to '75 to 2,163, to 1976 2,287, to '77, 2,366, to the point where we started at, 2,415 in March of '78.

Now it's quite conceivable with that kind of 200 to 150 to 200 growth rate per year that was anticipated that a New Democratic Party administration would have required the full services of that facility, assuming, as I am prepared to assume, that my former Minister of Public Works would not have built a new facility just to , meet today's needs, would have built for some expansion. Well, that expansion hasn't taken place. In fact, a reduction has occurred, and is still occurring. The initial requirements, additional staffing requirements, I can't recall right now, but were substantial, in the order of 16 to 24 or 26 additional bodies required to staff that new facility. Now, that hasn't taken place. Those have to be counted among savings, if you like, particularly if I am being charged with costs accruing as a result of that building standing near empty.

I will indicate to the honourable member that I believe that the facility is not the kind of facility that lends itself to easy transition to other use without very extensive and costly renovation. That has not been considered by government. There is ongoing concern and planning taking place with respect to eventual use of the old facility in connection with requirements of the Attorney-General's department, which the member is reasonably well aware of. A lot of that planning took place during the time that he was in office, and we feel that under those circumstances the course that we are following is a prudent one. We are making use of the facility or not denying the use of the facility to any group of citizens or agencies that can use it without requiring any costly renovations. We're not getting ourselves into any long-term lease arrangements with any of these temporary users for the precise reason that we want to have every option open to us should the occasion occur in the future where the transfer and the full utilization of that facility for its intended purpose takes place.

But we feel that faced with the current situation that that is the best kind of a status report that I can give the honourable members with respect to that facility.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, the Minister just made an interesting point or reference to the fact that it may be in the near future that there is a decision taken, I suppose, to build an extension to the Law Courts, or a new Law Courts, or court facilities, in the central core area and that the Minister indicates he may be holding as an option, the demolition of the old garage and the construction of a new facility of some sort on that land. Is that what he has just suggested?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I am just indicating that I am aware of the desirability and the pressures that emanate from the Attorney-General's department from time to time with respect to a more permanent way, a more satisfactory way, to provide the space requirements for that department. If that can take place in the course of the next two or three years, then the situation would alter considerably with respect to our attitude towards the Provincial Garage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b)(2)—pass — the Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: I might say, Mr. Chairman, in that respect, you know, the honourable members opposite have taken my colleague to task, the Attorney-General, for lack of courtroom space, for lack of other facilities; I, quite frankly and I suggest part of the action of this government is that we would have had somewhat different priorities. In other words, instead of building a \$4 million or a \$5 million garage, the question could well be asked, you know, should not have the legitimate requirements of Attorney-General's department been looked after first.

MR. DOERN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I won't list for the Minister's benefit all the various actions that our government did take to meet the requirement of the Attorney-General including some which we'll be able to discuss in this department, like The Pas Correctional and the Brandon Jail, and so on and so on. There's an endless list of where we moved on a whole front in terms of trying

to meet those requirements.

I ask the Minister this question: Given that you have an old building used as a garage and a new building unused, would it not be logical for the Minister to consider a switch to use the new building which is there and to have the other building empty? I don't see the hang-up about keeping this new facility empty when it could be utilized. It would make the department more efficient; it was tailored to their needs and then the old garage could be vacant. I mean, given that you have two buildings, one which is more suitable and one which is less suitable, why not take the logical decision and move into the new facility and leave the old one vacant for the time.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, that precludes that any substantive changes with respect to government fleet and policy toward the government fleet will take place. That policy decision has not been arrived at as of yet. There is, as much as I have indicated to you, that I have not . . . and these Estimates don't reflect a major reduction in the government fleet, but I would not want the honourable members to preclude from that that it could not take place. And if in fact that does take place, then the whole question of the requirements of that size of facility still is a very open question.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I know that the Minister is a biblical scholar of note, and I would simply say to him that the road to hell is paved with good intentions, and his government and his ministry has, for the past 18 months, been reviewing and considering the development of new policies and new directions in this regard, but so far nothing has happened.

We had the Task Force Report which I think the section on Public Works must have been — I would estimate the amount of time and hard thinking on the section, several pages in the Task Force Report on Public Works and Government Services, must have been about 15 minutes, because whoever did it had a smattering of knowledge only about the department — it's pretty thin stuff.

So I'm saying that there was this so-called Task Force Report which the Minister obviously is not very keen about — as I am not — but since that time very little has happened. Mr. Ziprick, appearing before Public Accounts, mentioned that he hadn't pursued this matter any further because of the fact that there is a new policy "under consideration" and, "a review is being made", so he says, until the policy matter is cleared up, he doesn't feel he should pursue the matter any further.

I'm simply saying to the Minister, given that 18 months have passed, there hasn't been any new policy implemented — maybe there's one being kicked around, but we haven't seen it, the Minister hasn't provided us with it. So, you know, I assume that soon or in the future at some point that policy will be formulated. But let's say that there is no evidence of that policy up until the present time, and you know, is the Minister suggesting that he is, in fact, going to address himself to that question again, and if so how long is it going to take for him to put that policy — first of all to develop it, and secondly to implement it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b)(2)—pass — the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister is in a position at this time to answer the question that he took as notice a few minutes ago regarding the price of tires for the Minister's cars?

MR. ENNS: Well, we have a price quoted here, replacements for non-executive sedans run at between \$20 to \$30 approximately the same as the original equipment; on executive cars, Ministers, they run at between \$65 to \$80 per tire, whitewalls, steel-belted.

Now the other question that was asked earlier with respect to the General Manual of Administration in terms of mileage charges, south of the 53rd parallel from employee's residences we pay up to the 4,000 miles — 21-½ cents per mile; from 4,000 to 10,000 miles — 15-½ cents per mile; mileage over 10,000 miles — 13-½ cents per mile. North of the 53rd, those rates are up by 3 cents — 24-½ cents, where in the south it's 21-½, and respectively.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Minister tells me that he pays between \$65 and \$85 each for tires for the Ministers' cars. I find that a little strange that he could not be any more accurate than that as to know from the tender just what it is that they pay for those tires. If we take the average there of \$75, that would indicate that a set of 5 tires would be \$375.00.

The Minister of Amateur Sports and Fitness says that he has saved the government \$172 on a set of tires, which would indicate that he got them for \$203, or about \$40 a tire.

MR. ENNS: Yes, but he's a used car dealer.

MR. WALDING: Now I would have to ask the Minister, since his colleague can purchase tires at so much cheaper and at such a saving over what the Department of Government Services can, is the Minister now purchasing his tires from his colleague and saving the people of Manitoba \$172 on every government Ministers' car?

MR. ENNS: No, Mr. Chairman, I'm not purchasing them from my colleague, but I'm going to have words with my staff.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, that's hardly a satisfactory answer from the Minister. I'm enquiring from him why he is wasting the taxpayers' money buying tires at \$75 each when they can be purchased for \$40.00?

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think what the department is saying in general the tire class and type is matched as close to the original classification of tires that came along with the vehicle when the vehicle was purchased, and there are variations. A Minister who chooses to buy or to drive a smaller compact vehicle, as some indeed do, there can be quite a difference in the pricing of those tires. Other Ministers, such as the Minister of Agriculture or the Minister of Highways, who spends a great deal of their miles driving through rural Manitoba, purchases a heavier standard sedan vehicle and have again, understandably, a different price range for the replacement tires required for that vehicle.

I would suggest, Mr. Chairman, that the item that we're dealing with, with all due respect, is not going to change the world.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, the Minister's right, it's not going to change the world but I brought the matter up, and expressed it in those terms simply because of this government's stated intention of restraint and saving money and cutting back wherever it can. The Minister has still not answered my question, given that whatever the size and type of car is, there is still a range of tires which will fit it, of different grades and different qualities, which will give different mileages. Now, the Minister has still not answered the question as to why he is spending \$75 a tire, on average, for Minister's tires, when they can be purchased at some \$40 a tire. Now, does he consider this to be wasting money by purchasing these expensive tires or is there some other factor that comes into effect?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b)(2) — the Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, other than those I mentioned, relative to the kind of vehicle for which tires are being purchased, I can't offer any further suggestions. The suggestion, of course, that I'm sure the department people present and indeed other Ministers present will take to heart that this is of course, precisely what the review of Estimates is all about — that questioning of the nature of the Honourable Member for St. Vital will bring to bear on the purchasing practices of this government, and will, no doubt, have their effect.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister if he is aware of the establishment where his colleague, the Minister of Amateur Sport, purchased those very reasonably priced tires.

MR. ENNS: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I didn't hear the first part of the honourable member's question.

MR. WALDING: I'm asking the Minister if he is aware of the establishment where these tires were purchased?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier, they were purchased by tender. They must come from different firms at different times. I can't be more specific than that. If the honourable member questions me as to where the last bulk lot of tires purchased by the Provincial Garage came from, I'm sure the Purchasing Bureau could supply that information to me. Presently I'm told the latest tender was won by Uniroyal and we're purchasing Uniroyal tires.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Chairman, I'm referring specifically to the set of tires that his colleague, the Minister of Amateur Sport, purchased for his car. Now, presumably since he paid so much less, he did not get them through the Department of Government Services and according to my

the department was sent out to purchase them at some other outlet.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the particular set of tires in question were Uniroyal, were purchased through our garage — the difference being that he purchased a different style of tire. He had a particular liking for a particular tire, which in effect was of lesser quality and consequently, lesser price. The Minister in this instance was practising the restraint program on a very individual and intimate way.

MR. WALDING: And the next question, Mr. Chairman, is it the Minister's policy in future, and can he so assure the Committee, that future replacement tires for Ministers' cars will be of this cheaper type that will save money for the people of Manitoba, or does he intend to go on spending \$172 more on a set of tires than his colleague has indicated is necessary to do?

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Chairman, earlier the Honourable Member for Elmwood indicated what the road to hell was paved with, I can indicate to you only what I know the road to Woodlands is being paved with and I blew out a tire the other day on that piece of road, and whether my colleague, who travels on all weather, trunk highways from Trans-Canada — I think No. 12, chooses to purchase a lesser tire, I'm not so sure that I will recommend that to all my colleagues, particularly those who find themselves travelling upwards to 30,000 miles a year through all kinds of roads.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. WALDING: I'm from St. Vital.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I apologize, the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And can I suggest to the Minister that it had probably been found by previous experience that by purchasing a more expensive tire that (a) it was safer and (b) that the driver was able to get many more miles out of that tire than he would have done a cheaper one. And it was simply by experience, if not an actual cost benefit study, that the decision had been made to purchase those more expensive tires, and that by paying less, a less efficient or less well-made tire was purchased and that it could well be that there was no saving in fact, involved in this case.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I was waiting for precisely such a suggestion. I think the Honourable Member for St. Vital hit the nail right on the head and I'll be sending a memo to the Honourable Minister of Tourism — or Sports and Fitness.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister tell us where those notorious tires were purchased, what firm, what outlet were they purchased from?

MR. ENNS: Uniroyal, purchased through the Central Garage — except as I understand it, the tire that the department purchased as standard for that vehicle had a particular style of whitewall which wasn't, you know, acceptable to the Minister. He preferred a different style which was cheaper. So, you know, in this particular instance, the public purse was being saved some money. But I agree with the honourable members that this kind of an individualizing, if you like, you know, perhaps is not the most appropriate way of purchasing what is, in effect, government property for government use.

MR. DOERN: I assume the Minister must have received permission from the Minister of Public Works or Government Services to do this. I assume that the Minister of Fitness didn't phone up the garage and give direction, and if he did . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. According to Rule 19(2), the hour of 4:30 having arrived, I'm interrupting and proceedings of the Committee for Private Members' Hour and will return again tonight at 8:00 p.m.

LABOUR AND MANPOWER

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This Committee will come to order. I would direct the honourable members' attention to Page 61 of the Main Estimates, Department of Labour and Manpower, Resolution No. 79. We are on Item (d) Employment Services: (1) Canada-Manitoba

agreement (a) Salaries—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, that considerable length of time ago, that we were dealing with this item, there were some questions from this side of whether or not the Minister would provide us with the list of persons available for redeployment or to be redeployed because of the layoffs or firings within this section and other sections under the Minister's jurisdiction, and whether or not that there was positions under this section of Salaries, that would, in fact, be available to persons looking for redeployment. So, I wonder if the Minister, now having had that time to consider the matter and to get his information from his staff, would be able to give us that redeployment list.

MR. MacMASTER: I don't recall the member asking under this section or under the — it should be under the Civil Service Commission, and we discussed the re-employment list and the methods that were implemented and used quite thoroughly under the Civil Service Commission. I remember the member asking would people be given consideration — previous employees — in relationship to any new positions that came up in Northern Affairs and I had said, "Yes."

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, will the previous employees be given consideration for any new employment that comes up under this section?

MR. MacMASTER: Yes.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, would the Minister then provide us with the redeployment list, so we could see if this commitment is being carried out?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a)—pass; (b)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, could the Minister give us some explanation of this section?

MR. MacMASTER: To the Member in specific, from The Pas, the \$454,000 you're looking at, that's the same system we were talking about under Northern Affairs, that's 85 percent of what we have spent. The total figure that we've spent in that particular area is \$534,000 and the breakdown of that is \$12,000 for casual wages; other fees are \$9,500; rentals are \$20,000; printing and stationary is \$23,500; postage, telephone and telegraph is \$30,000; furniture and furnishings is \$15,000; buildings and maintenance supplies is \$10,000; utilities is \$7,800; equipment is \$7,500; automobiles are \$75,000; travelling, \$120,000; clothing, \$7,500; subsistence, food and shelter, \$75,000; transportation, other than employees, \$12,500; other miscellaneous is \$60,000 and grants \$48,800.00.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the grant item within the Other Expenditure, could the Minister explain that?

MR. MacMASTER: That's the money to the Manitoba Metis Federation for the relocation program in Thompson.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I wonder then, while we're on that item, if the Minister could tell us the number of people that the Metis Federation out of Thompson are now dealing with under that program.

MR. MacMASTER: I'll get the specific number, Mr. Chairman, I believe it's in the neighbourhood of 20 families that have come in that they're still dealing with.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if that Program is now getting up to capacity in terms of the number of people it was designed to handle?

MR. MacMASTER: No, it isn't, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b)—pass; (c)—pass. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, on the Northern Youth Employment Program, I wonder if the Minister could explain to us the problems that were encountered in this Program last year, and what steps have been taken to overcome those problems in the upcoming year?

MR. MacMASTER: I'm not aware of any major problems last year with that particular Program, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, has an evaluation been completed of that Program as it operated last summer?

MR. MacMASTER: It was reviewed, Mr. Chairman, and found to be reasonably satisfactory.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I wonder now if the department has reverted back to hiring adult supervisors for that Program, or whether they intend to continue attempting to use youth as supervisors on some of the projects?

MR. MacMASTER: Yes, we have reverted back to adults, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, was that done as a result of the evaluation, and did not the evaluation show that there were considerable problems in the Program last year because of the change made, using youth supervisors instead of adult supervisors in that program?

MR. MacMASTER: There were some examples where the young people had difficulty dealing with the younger ones, and it was felt that adults would do a better job, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would just like to make a general comment on that section. I am aware, of course, of a number of problems that occurred within that Program because of a change made by the Minister, or by his staff, in the way the Program operated last year. And yet, Mr. Chairman, had I not been aware of those, the Minister would have said there were no problems with the Program.

And, Mr. Chairman, a number of times he's assured us that there's no problem with the various programs under his jurisdiction and in a number of instances we have specific examples where there were problems. But it appears that some of those where he's told us there were no problems, we've become now quite doubtful, because only in those cases where we have specific examples and confront the Minister with those examples, does he even admit to any problems.

Mr. Chairman, I'm glad that the policy has changed back again, because the Program as it existed was reasonably effective. There were a number of adults within the communities that did build this in in terms of their employment throughout the year, perhaps in the winter, doing some winter fishing or some trapping, and then when the season came for the Youth Employment Program, they were hired as supervisors and had the opportunity to work during the summer. Some of them found themselves in a fairly difficult situation last year because of that change. And, Mr. Chairman, I think that it probably could have been realized that the hiring of some of the students on the Project to actually be the supervisors would cause a considerable problem, because it's a little bit harder when you're dealing with your peers, especially in the age of the people in this Program, to try and supervise them and make sure that they are working hard.

Mr. Chairman, that was one of the reasons for the Program. One of the built-in designs of this Program was that the students would get a chance to see what it was like to have to work, Mr. Chairman, because some of these students would be considering leaving school. And so we wanted to be sure that they had had some idea of what would be expected from them if they did leave school and go into the regular work force.

So, Mr. Chairman, in the past attempts were made to make sure this Program was not an easy program, or a simple program, or a program where people could slough off, but a program that required full-time work, and heavy work or difficult work, so that the students would have the opportunity to see what full-time work was like, and also have the opportunity to earn those funds during the summer so that they could return to school in the fall.

Mr. Chairman, I'm glad the Minister has recognized the problems in the administration of the Program last year, and has now re-evaluated and changed back to the previous existing method of administering the Program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (c)—pass; (d)—pass; Item (1)—pass.

Item (2)—Salaries—pass. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, how many staff man years are we talking about under this Section?

MR. MacMASTER: Four, Mr. Chairman, all regular employees, and all are filled . now.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if a vacancy occurs in one of these four positions, will the Minister be giving priority to persons on the redeployment list, and will the Minister table for us or give a copy of that redeployment list to this side of the House?

MR. MacMASTER: That redeployment list will be considered, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item (2)—pass; Item (3), Other Expenditures—pass; Item (4), Grant Assistance—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, could the Minister give us a breakdown under this Section, could he just give us a breakdown of those grant items that we're talking about under this Section?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. If I could just have the honourable members' attention just for one second, we have in the gallery today 18 students from the Buffalo Grove High School in Chicago, Illinois. These students are on a singing tour, and are accompanied by the their director, Miss Linda McEachern.

On behalf of the honourable members, we welcome you here today.
The Honourable Minister.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. . . . —(Interjections)—

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's not within my limits to ask them to sing us a song this afternoon, but I'm sure that if it was allowed in the House, that they would be happy enough to oblige.
The Honourable Minister.

MR. MacMASTER: The Grant Assistance, there's \$130,800 to the Manitoba Metis Federation Core Funding; there's \$60,000 to the Manitoba Metis Federation Education Program; there is \$6,000 which was additional, going into the Manitoba Metis Relocation Program in Thompson; and \$1,800 . . . I'll have to get the explanation for the other \$1,800, Mr. Chairman, I haven't got it here.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, since this Minister likes to point out and brag about how he has everything in its logical place within his department, and that's why transfers took place back and forth between sections, I wonder if he could explain why the Grant Assistance is under Employment Services? The Grant Assistance as he explained it, except for the \$6,000 addition to the MMF Thompson Relocation Project, is basically for core funding and education, and in the past has appeared under different sections of the Estimates.

MR. MacMASTER: It was felt appropriate that at the time of preparing budgets, that the core funding moneys should come under this particular section, Mr. Chairman, and the \$1,800 that I hadn't accounted for on the 19860, there's a possibility that that will be used in the Flin Flon Relocation Program, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if there is any logical reason then — the Minister's reason is that that was a decision made somewhere in the Estimates' process — but the item that's under consideration here is the core funding for the Metis Federation which is the core funding that has been going on for a number of years now, which is basic funding to that organization for its operations period. And the Education Program, Mr. Chairman, is specifically related to Education and I believe in the past that section appeared under the Department of Education Estimates. So I wonder, Mr. Chairman, why they would put it under Employment Services or is the reason to make Employment Services look like it has more money, because it has been cut back so drastically that there has to be some attempt to make it look like there is some dollars under Employment Services because this government has reduced the employment programs in northern Manitoba so drastically that they are now embarrassed with the figure that they are left with.

MR. MacMASTER: Well, Mr. Chairman, there is no embarrassment with the figure that's left. As I said the core funding, it was felt that this was as an appropriate place as any under these particular Estimates for it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (4)—pass; Item (d)—pass; Item (e) Selkirk Training Plant: (1) Salaries — The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate how many students are in training at the plant presently, whether or not there are any intentions to expand the number of students that will be in training in that plant?

Possibly, while the Minister is obtaining that information, I could pose some further questions that the Minister might wish to elaborate on as well. I'm wondering if the Minister could indicate what the present average length of stay is insofar as students at the Manpower Training Corps, whether there has been any change insofar as the geographic boundaries from whence students are drawn or encouraged to come to the plant, and also I would like the Minister's comments insofar as the very excellent work that has taken place in the last number of years pertaining to social counselling — assisting those students and their families that reside within the town of Selkirk to relate to the various social economic requirements and activities in the area — whether or not that program, which I believe has been very basic, very crucial to the overall success of the Manpower Training Corps Plant, whether that is being continued so as to ensure the overall success of the operations.

In addition, the Minister could provide some information as to the number of staff, whether the number of staff is the same now as it was one year ago.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, a variety of questions, and I think I have all the answers now. We propose to take in about 24 people every three months, which is a substantial increase from previous times.

The length of stay is six months; the drawing area from whence the people come into the program is generally the same area. There is still the Home Advisory Capacity and the Plant Counselling Capacity, and there was 11 last year, staff, and there is 11 proposed for the year 1979-80.

MR. PAWLEY: I wonder if the Minister can indicate whether or not there is any evaluation of the present operations of the plant, and any consideration being given to expanding the present operation of the plant due to its past success.

MR. MacMASTER: There is a — as I mentioned to the Leader of the Opposition — there is a substantial expansion in numbers of people coming into the plant and utilizing the program.

And the other answer in relationship to evaluating it, I think the evaluation is, as has been said, that it was working well. We intend to increase the input by numbers of clients if you wish, students if you wish, that come into it, and we'll evaluate that to capacity to carry on as efficient an operation with the increased numbers as we go along, but the specific answer is yes, we will be evaluating the increased number of people who have been participating in that program.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, in addition, I'm wondering if the Minister would comment. I believe in times gone by there has been interest from the Federal Department of Parks to acquire products from the plant, and I believe that for reasons of restrictions or prohibitions, and I believe this occurred prior to change in government, those orders were never accepted by the plant. I wonder if the Minister can advise whether or not, besides the Parks Branch, Manitoba being and has been the sole customer, whether or not there is any intention or any examination as to whether to expand the customer range to include federal government Parks Branch, or any private entrepreneur that might wish to acquire the products of the plant for retail sale.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, our first priority of course was the province, as has been the case, and we have issued one order to the federal government not too long ago, I understand.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to express a few words. I believe that this plant, with the attendant social counselling that has gone with the plant and the home advisory service has been one of the most successful operations. I believe it has succeeded in attracting a number of potentially skillful young people from the various Native communities throughout the Interlake into training; and I believe it can be safely said that a majority have entered into the industrial

field and are working in various plants in the city of Winnipeg and other centres throughout the province.

And I believe that in the existence of a plant such as this could very well be the seeds of future manpower training, and job skill creation. Plus the fact that there has been sufficient support, and I'm pleased that the Minister has confirmed that the Home Advisory Service is being continued. Because, what has happened is that the families moving into Selkirk, after a short period of time, with the assistance of the Home Advisory Committees, Home Advisory staff, have fitted very very comfortably within the urban centre; probably better than they might have in a larger urban centre, and have been able to commence new hopes and aspirations for the future.

So, Mr. Chairman, I want to simply indicate that I'm pleased and satisfied that the Minister has indicated that the present service is being maintained. There was some concern as to whether it would be. I'm pleased to receive the Minister's assurance that the present operation will be maintained, and that I do get the impression that the Minister would not be altogether reluctant to even see some positive expansion if need be in the operations of the plant in the future.

So, that's all I wish to say in respect to this particular item, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister has a general breakdown in terms of where the trainees are coming from that are taking advantage of this opportunity at the Selkirk Training Plant, the geographical location of the trainees?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MacMASTER: Mainly in the Selkirk area, Mr. Chairman. I could, I suppose, produce a list of communities that they're coming from, if the member so desires, but it's . . .

MR. McBRYDE: Interlake?

MR. MacMASTER: Yes, up to that area, too. I could get a list for expediency's sake, I suppose, a list of communities that the people do come from.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the reason I asked that question is that where a considerable number of people in the past, like from my own constituency, from the Peguis, Fisher River, Jackhead, Fairford, Little Saskatchewan, and Lake St. Martin Reserves, and from some of the other more remote communities in that area that had taken advantage, I think my primary interest was to see if there was a change in this pattern, whether there was much change in where the trainees were coming from, whether there were more from further south now or whether they were still getting the same number of trainees from the northern Interlake area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. On this item, and because of the response the Minister gave to my colleague, the Leader of the Opposition, I wonder if the Minister could explain to us the criteria that he has used in making a decision in this type of operation. The Minister, of course, has indicated his satisfaction with the way this operation was going. And I wonder, therefore, if he could tell us what the differences are in his mind in terms of the . . . as for example the Youngs Point operation that was operated by Northern Manpower Corp at one point, which was doing inside furniture, such as cupboards, etc., for the Remote Housing Program and other housing programs. Or the Cranberry Portage Project, what would be the difference between the Selkirk Training Plant and the Cranberry Portage Housing Operation that employed a large number of Metis people from the community of Cranberry Portage?

Or, what would be the difference between this operation, and some of the MANWOP operations that were based upon a study of this operation, that his colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Development, has done away with? Or, what would be the comparison between this operation, for example, Mr. Chairman, and Minago Contractors? Does this operation make a similar kind of profit that Minago was making before this Minister shut it down.

I'm having trouble, Mr. Chairman, understanding the criteria in terms of which survive and which don't survive, of those operations that are performing a very similar function, and I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if it relates to the fact that this particular plant wasn't under the Minister's jurisdiction originally, when he made some of these other cuts, and therefore it managed to survive, or is there some clear criteria based upon evaluation and logic that would say this plant continues, and others

are closed down.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I simply talk about the plant in question, and I've had a good many people review the history of it, and talk to me about it, and it's serving a very worthy cause. And it's mingling the training with the relocation, and the Home Advisory functions are all working well into this particular program.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm very pleased to hear that. I've had a number of people talk to me about the very worthwhileness of a number of northern projects that are very similar in nature to this project. And those other very worthwhile projects have been eliminated by this Minister. So I wondered if there's any clear criteria on which he bases the decision as to which worthwhile projects, training and employing people from remote communities, mostly native people, whether there's any clear criteria on which he bases his decision that one should be cut out, done away with, and those job opportunities and training opportunities lost, and this operation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I can understand the Minister's unwillingness to answer the question, because obviously he has made some decisions without criteria. And, Mr. Chairman, I would say, without proper consideration and forethought, without proper planning and realizing what was going to happen to people being trained and employed in those projects. And, Mr. Chairman, we have outlined a number of those in the past. And I cannot see a clear distinction between this operation and those, except that the Minister had those other operations under his jurisdiction when it was important to him to make a good impression on the Premier.

Now he's made that impression by showing how much he could cut, even though it was worthwhile, productive, and many people had spoken to me about the worthwhileness of it. Now, Mr. Chairman, the Selkirk Training Plant has fallen under his jurisdiction, and since the serious cutting of employment projects is completed, there is no need for him at this point in time to cut this particular operation.

I wonder, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister would be willing, since he's able to justify this Selkirk Training Plant, if he'd be willing to go back to his colleagues for next Estimates, or this year with supplemental, and explain to them the worthwhileness of this Selkirk Training Plant, and let his colleagues know there are still facilities in a number of communities that are now not in operation because this Minister closed them down, where a very similar type of operation could be established.

It could be established at Youngs Point near The Pas. It could be established at Cranberry Portage. It could be established at Camperville, Mr. Chairman. They could even be established in Thompson. And I wonder if the Minister would be willing to go back to his colleagues and let them know the mistake that he made in his early days as Minister, and encourage them to approve this kind of project for northern Manitoba.

MR. MacMASTER: The particular programs that the member is talking about were well-explained last year in our Estimates, and some of them are still in operation. Some have hopes for expanding their operation, and as I have said, we are expanding this particular operation, this one here, the Selkirk Training Plant, this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. BARROW: Yes, before you pass, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask a few questions about the Sunrise Homes Manufacturers in Cranberry Portage. Could the Minister expound at all on this program?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. If I could just mention to the honourable members, we are on an item called "Selkirk Training Plant". I have allowed a little bit of latitude in comparison, but discussion on other items other than Selkirk Training Plant, I would believe to be out of order. I would recognize the Honourable Member for Flin Flon if he's going to proceed on the Selkirk Training Plant.

MR. BARROW: I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman. My colleague brought it up just prior to my getting up, so I am. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: As a comparison to the honourable member, but not to be discussed at this

point. (1) Salaries; (2) Other Expenditures—pass. — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes Mr. Chairman. The nature of the recoveries from Canada, the source of the recoveries from Canada.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MacMASTER: It comes from the Canadian Unemployment Insurance Commission and it's your Basic Job Training Maintenance Program that we're talking about here, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)—pass; (e)—pass. (f) Employment and Youth Services, Item 1, Administration Salaries—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. MacBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a general question under this section. I would ask, Mr. Chairman, under any of the items that are administered under this section, is there any assistance, any employment opportunities, any of these items that are at this time, or will this summer, apply to the community of Easterville?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MacMASTER: I think in general, Mr. Chairman, there are several of them that could, if the proper applications were forthcoming.

MR. MacBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think under this section here, that is an employment section and youth services, and I know that that community attempts to take advantage of any opportunity available to them. But I think, Mr. Chairman, under this item, it would be appropriate to just get into the record the problem as seen by the community of Easterville in terms of their employment situation. Mr. Chairman, this is from a letter from the Chemahawin Indian band which is located at Easterville, dated May 9th, 1979 to Mr. Ken MacMaster, Minister of Northern Affairs. And this is from the chief of the Chemahawin Indian band, Mr. Percy Mink.

"Dear Mr. MacMaster: I've been approached by one of my band members in regard to the possibility of the Chemahawin band obtaining provincial government contracts for the loading and hauling of gravel for use on the Easterville road and PTR No. 327.

"The Chemahawin band would also like to express some feelings on the recent Conservative government cutbacks. Last year, along with other corporate companies, Minago Contractors were cut. Minago, I feel, did a lot more to help the Chemahawin band than any other government body or agency. Minago trained and hired people from Easterville to work while construction of the Easterville road was under way. Now the private contractors are doing the work and no one from Easterville has been hired. On top of that, there are timber cutting crews along the road who are not from Easterville. There are sawmills operating with no one from Easterville working on them. As per the letter of Letter of Intent, the forebay agreement, permission to cut in the Grand Rapids Forest Management Area West had to be obtained from the federal Department of Indian Affairs Branch. To this date I believe none has been granted to those presently there.

"At present our fishing is closed, our fence post operation was shut down by the provincial Conservative government, our band logging was shut down by Indian Affairs. Our grazing lands were flooded at our old reserve, our duck hunting areas are flooded. Our additional trapping areas are flooded. With muskrats selling at approximately \$6.00 each, we're losing considerable moneys. Our trappers used to catch 4,000 to 5,000 rats per spring. What choice do we have but to collect welfare to survive?

"We want to work and support ourselves. All we need are a few opportunities such as Minago to get us started. But since Minago is closed, what option do we have? Therefore I'm requesting your department's assistance in helping the Chemahawin band to purchase a gravel truck and loader and also to see the Chemahawin band receives contracts for the loading and hauling of all future work required on the Easterville road and PTR No. 327. My people and I anxiously await your generous and favourable reply." And that's Percy Mink of the Chemahawin Indian band.

Now Mr. Chairman, the letter summarizes a few of the things that I have raised in this House in the past in regard to many remote communities. It puts them specifically in the context of the Chemahawin band at Easterville, and Mr. Chairman, the same thing applies to the non-treaty people in the community of Easterville and to their particular community council. And Mr. Chairman, that is why I would ask the Minister, and maybe the Minister's officials have a chance to check further whether there are any of these programs under Section (f) here that in fact will be going to Easterville this year. In the past, Mr. Chairman, they've been able to, through constructive, meaningful

been able to employ most of their people for a good part of the year. Occasionally they've had to plug it in with programs like this, such as Winter Works and Youth Employment Program, the Canada Works, etc. to plug in the gaps of employment opportunities in that community and avoid people in their community going on welfare.

So I wonder if the Minister could give us some indication in that one specific example, if that community will be receiving any assistance under this section.

MR. MacMASTER: I can't say to the member at the moment whether they will or they won't, but the opportunity is there for them under several of these particular headings, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if we could get the staff man year breakdown last year, this year and what changes there are in that.

MR. MacMASTER: Last year there were seven regular, 22 term for 29 positions and one was vacant during the course of the year, and I have dropped that particular vacant position and we have converted the term to regular so this year, instead of seven, there's 27, there's regular and there's one at the moment term for a total of 28.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. Under this particular section, I wonder if the Minister could indicate — Mr. Chairman, it covers the whole series of categories here or a whole series of separate operations, basically. I wonder if the Minister could indicate, since this government came to office, how many people have been fired under this section.

MR. MacMASTER: There weren't any people fired, Mr. Chairman, but there were three people that took severance from employment with the government.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes Mr. Chairman. I just wonder if the Minister could clarify for me whether all staff are under (f)(1) or whether, for example, No. (7), No. (6) or No. (5) would have staff components in them as well.

MR. MacMASTER: We can talk about the staff in (5), (6) and (7).

MR. McBRYDE: Okay Mr. Chairman. I wonder then if, since there are also staff provisions in those sections I won't deal with them. I wonder if the Minister could clarify if those three people that took the option, Mr. Chairman, when the government gave them an offer they couldn't refuse, I wonder if he could confirm that those were offers that, if you resign voluntarily we'll give you three months' severance pay. If you don't resign voluntarily you'll be fired and you won't get three months' severance pay. Is that the option that people were given?

MR. MacMASTER: I can't say if that was the option. I just know that the people in question chose to resign and take the severance pay.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes Mr. Chairman. I would just like to submit for the record that that was the option given to those people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass; (2) Other Expenditures—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, could we just have a brief breakdown of this section?

MR. MacMASTER: I'll spell out to the member if there is any differences in giving the headings; no, there's no difference as far as amounts go and the headings were Wages and Other Assistance Fringe Benefits, Professional Fees, Real Estate Rentals, Furnishings, Printing and Stationery, Postage, Telephone, Equipment, Automobiles, Advertising and Exhibit, Publications, Freight, Travelling, Other Expenditures, Educational Assistance, Subsistence to Non-Employees and Transportation for Non-Employees and there are two grants. One has been finalized for a Junior Achievement Program in Manitoba. It's a pilot project this year, called Summer Enterprises, Manitoba. And the other amount of \$25,000 we are presently meeting with the Winnipeg School Division and the City of Winnipeg's Parks and Recreation group, and we expect a program to be implemented in that particular area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry, I missed the amount for this undertaking called the Junior Achievement Program, and when the Minister is repeating that, if he did give the amount for that program, I wonder if he could explain what they hope to accomplish with this program.

MR. MacMASTER: There's 25,000.00. The federal government has funded 18 counsellors who will be endeavouring to develop small companies to do a large variety of things, and our funds will help them with materials and space. They expect to employ approximately 150 young people who, through the companies they organize the different activities they carry on will pay for their own salaries.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes Mr. Chairman. In light of that information, I wonder if the Minister could give me a little better breakdown for helping me understand the administrative structure of this section, because he did indicate that some salaries come under (5), (6), and (7). He has an item called Wages in this section and I'm not clear, Mr. Chairman — like the 27 staff that are there — would some of those staff relate to programs lower down or would they just be involved in the head office administration for this whole section? I wonder if he would give us more of a breakdown in terms of those staff and to what component they belong to?

MR. MacMASTER: The staff that we were talking about deal with the staff for the core funding for the (1), (2), (3) and (4) and this I mentioned to the member that (5), (6) and (7) there is additional staff there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, then of that 27 people then, how many would be for number (2) and how many would be for number (3), and how many would be for number (4)?

MR. MacMASTER: It's all intermingled as of one operation with that core group of people running those particular programs, Mr. Chairman. It's terribly difficult to break out the number of hours and work each one is assigned to what particular program.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, are the wages that he mentioned under Other Expenditures; I'm not clear how that fits in there. Could he explain that at least?

MR. MacMASTER: The amount is identical to last year; \$1,500, and it is just calculated out as the amount of money that might be assigned to that particular program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)—pass; (3)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I'm sorry, under the item that were on; it's still not clear what the wages . . . We have Salaries and then under Other Expenditures we have Wages, and I still can't quite figure out what the wages would be about and why they're not under Salaries instead of under Other Expenditures.

MR. MacMASTER: I'll try and get it precisely broken out how we came with that figure, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, would like to make a comment on this Other Expenditure section; a new program for \$25,000.00. When the Minister has been involved in reducing most of the programs and most of the programs for northern Manitoba, now his new initiative for this year is \$25,000 for a Junior Achievement Program. Now, Mr. Chairman, as I understand the Junior Achievement Program, it would be similar to the Special Northern Employment Program, which was basically seed money to people in remote communities to assist them to start enterprise in their community that would provide employment in their communities. Of course, Mr. Chairman, the sum of that program ranging from \$5 million to \$8 million a year, was somewhat more substantial than the \$25,000 we have for Junior Achievement.

But, Mr. Chairman, the Special Northern Employment Program was a program for adults who were unable to find employment. It was a program to begin enterprises to assist adults who were unable to find employment, Mr. Chairman, a program designed to assist the breadwinners for families who were unable to find employment. I wonder if the Minister could just again explain his logical reasonable rationale. I say again, Mr. Chairman, I don't think he's been able to do it in any of

the questions that I've asked in terms of why this instead of that, and the Minister has not been able to answer those questions. But perhaps, Mr. Chairman, he would like to attempt to answer this one in terms of: why eliminate the Special Northern Employment Program to provide the support for entrepreneurial activities or community economic development activities in remote communities for the bread earners of families, at the same time start a new program called a Junior Achievement Program? Mr. Chairman, maybe the Minister could tell us exactly where he hopes these achievements are going to take place because I'd be very doubtful, Mr. Chairman, that the achievement is going to take place in Pine Dock or the achievement is going to take place in Jackhead or the achievement is going to take place in Cross Lake under this Junior Achievement Program to allow the kids to play at entrepreneurs for the summer when, Mr. Chairman, there are some adults that don't need to play at entrepreneurs they need to have that opportunity for development and this government has cut off that opportunity. Could the Minister give us the rationale for this dramatic new thrust of the government and tell us how it compares with the thrusts that were cut out, like SNEP?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, SNEP certainly isn't on the agenda and it's not even in my department any longer and the section that we're dealing with is Youth Services, and what we're talking about here is a program for high school students.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, the answer of the Minister says one thing clearly. Again, he has no rationale, no planning, no proposal in terms of development. He is willing to cut a program to create jobs, to create entrepreneurial activity for adults where it is most needed in communities where there is up to 80 percent unemployment. He is willing to cut that out and ask us to approve \$25,000 so the kids can play around this summer. Mr. Chairman, I just can't buy that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)—pass — the Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to make a few general comments on this section, Employment and Youth Services and to express my disappointment in the actions of this government with respect to employment generally in northern Manitoba, and particularly as it relates to the youth in the northern part of our province. I think the unemployment picture of the youth in Manitoba generally is quite bad, but in northern Manitoba it's really a disaster, and it is becoming a larger problem as time goes on. If the Minister were to look at the population statistics, population breakdown for northern communities, he would see that the bulk of the population in the northern communities is in the school age group and younger. If you look at a diagram, a schematic diagram, the way they draw up population statistics, normally the population is quite evenly distributed over the entire age group scale from one year old to the seventies and eighties, but in northern Manitoba, Mr. Chairman, the population is highest in the lower age groups. In most northern communities you would find that two-thirds of the population or more are under eighteen years of age.

And given that situation, Mr. Chairman, we have a severe problem not only right now, but a very serious one approaching us. There is really nothing being done by this government, Progressive Conservative Government, to address themselves to that very serious problem. They are not even addressing themselves to the present problem where we have high school students in northern Manitoba, whether they are attending school in northern Manitoba and/or attending school outside of the community and having to come back to the community for the summer period, there is really nothing being done by this government to provide anything near adequate employment opportunities for those people. There is just almost nothing being done.

The Youth Programs that they discuss here are simply inadequate to deal with the present situation, not to mention, Mr. Chairman, that they are not at all addressing themselves to the more serious problem which I have just mentioned and that of the very high degree of population at the lower age levels in these communities.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that we have a very potentially explosive situation in that because of this large population at that age level that are coming on to the job market, finding themselves frustrated at the lack of opportunity available to them, not only in the northern communities but if they come out of the northern communities because of their lack of identification with the urban centres, they have more difficulty than other youth in obtaining employment in the urban centres, more heavily populated centres. They become very easily frustrated by their attempts to find employment in the urban centres so they tend to go back to their home communities and become even more frustrated there because of their not being able to find any kind of useful productive employment at that level. There are simply no opportunities available for them.

And, Mr. Chairman, we see this government cutting back in the programs that the previous government had brought in for youth and youth employment in northern communities. We find them

cutting back in areas where community people who are given the opportunity to hire students for the summer programs. We find them cutting back in areas where the government used to provide some advice and assistance to the young people in terms of moving out of their home communities and finding employment in other areas. We find them cutting back on programs like New Careers, which were designed to assist people in obtaining employment, useful productive employment in career oriented positions.

And, Mr. Chairman, just generally, it's very disappointing and I believe that this government will have an increasing problem on their hands, and because they are not dealing with it effectively — not dealing with it, period — there will be an even greater problem facing future governments in this province, because you cannot have a large population like the one I described coming up, growing up in the remote communities, of being educated, coming on to the labour force and not being able to find any opportunities available for them without having a very high degree of frustration. And that frustration I believe will manifest itself in various types of anti-social behaviour because it is well known that in areas where people are not able to find opportunity in a relatively affluent societies such as we have generally, then we will have problems, juvenile problems with young people in the communities.

The communities themselves see some of these things coming up and they are asking government to take a look at these things. They are asking government to begin to take action with the present problem and to plan for the future problems in this area, and yet this government, as by its very nature in philosophy will I believe, sit back and do absolutely nothing. They will fall back on their standard excuse: "Let the private sector do it." It's the "Let George do it" attitude that they seem to be following. They don't believe that government has a role to play even in this area, this very important area of dealing with the youth and young people in our northern communities and assisting them in obtaining the kind of job experience that they would need in order to migrate eventually from those centres to areas where there are employment opportunities.

And if these young people are not able to obtain that work experience in their own area, it will be very difficult if not impossible for them to migrate out of there to obtain employment, long-range permanent employment in other areas. The long range future, of course, for many of the young people in these remote communities will be to move out of the community. There simply are not enough jobs — potential work locally to deal with the increasing populations of many of the smaller communities.

But Mr. Chairman, this government is not even dealing with the present population that is located in the communities. They are not doing anything to assist the communities to relate to the resources that are there available to them. Their idea seems to be to just sit back and let the private sector do it, if there is something to be done there, the private sector will do it. Well we know from past experience, Mr. Chairman, that that simply will not work, and this government just refuses to recognize that that will not work, and they are simply sitting back and doing nothing. I suggest to them, Mr. Chairman, that the way to deal with this problem is to deal with the present situation with a good group of people working and planning for the future for the people in these communities.

The present unemployment problems of the communities must be addressed right now, because another aspect of this problem of course is that many of the adults in those communities are not working, and if they're not working, do not have the opportunity to work, then there is a certain welfare cycle sets in, where if the parents are on welfare and they have 10 children, pretty soon you not only have one family on welfare — you have 11 families on welfare, and it becomes a cumulative thing. Unless you start now and you start addressing yourself to the problem now and assisting those communities by providing useful productive employment to the head of the family, the head of the household, giving that person the opportunity to work, giving the young people in that person's family the opportunity to relate to that kind of existence where the head of the household, or the mother or whatever goes out and puts in a productive day of work, if they grow up in that kind of a situation, Mr. Chairman, they will have a different attitude towards work than if they grow up in a household that is supported by welfare. And that's just a common sense evaluation of the situation.

Mr. Chairman, what we are facing in northern Manitoba is a very serious problem because if the welfare cycle is to set in with that kind of a population, the fiscal ramifications of that are horrendous, and this government — the government that's supposed to be concerned about taxation and all the rest of it — should be concerned with that fact. It's a simple economic fact that if the population that is two-thirds under the age of 18 right now, in 20 years time, less — in 10, 15 years time, 5, 10, 15 years time in fact — over a period of time as those people come on to the work force, there will be no jobs available — given the record of this government — there will be no opportunity for them, they will have only had the opportunity of living in a welfare situation in many cases, and if that same population were to move on to the welfare roll, Mr. Chairman,

you're looking at a very serious situation. You're looking at 3 or 4 times the problem of welfare costs at the present time. And this government has admitted, since they've been in power, that the welfare costs in northern Manitoba have doubled, and Mr. Chairman, the blame for that can be placed squarely at the feet of the Progressive Conservative Government because they simply are not taking action in the area of job creation.

They take a look at the Job Creation programs that the New Democratic Party had brought in while in government, and they scoff at them. The First Minister sets the example and the tone for his caucus and his Cabinet by getting up and saying they are not going to have any make work projects in northern Manitoba; they're not going to have any more Special Northern Employment program; they're not going to have any more programs to assist people in Resource Development in northern communities. They don't believe in that kind of thing.

Well, Mr. Chairman, the direct result of their actions is higher taxes and a higher tax burden for the people of Manitoba, because if the people in these remote communities are not able to find useful productive employment, something that produces something for the money that they receive, then it's simply a tax burden because the people of Manitoba have to support those people in any case. The people must have food to live, if they don't have jobs, if they're not able to find at least enough work to be able to even collect Unemployment Insurance benefits, they are directly on the welfare rolls. Mr. Chairman, this government, the Progressive Conservative Government, ironically, after campaigning on a platform of job creation is now becoming the welfare government, and it's obvious, Mr. Chairman, that they will become as time goes on a greater and greater welfare government because they're not doing anything to address themselves to the employment problem. They're not moving into the communities in any kind of meaningful way to assist the communities to have jobs at the local level, and Mr. Chairman, that must be done now. The problem must be addressed at this time, they must be working not only with the young people in the communities but, as I mentioned, the older people in the communities must have useful work as well to be able to create an atmosphere and a condition in the community which will lead to a working society in the north.

People in many of the remote communities facing 70, 80, 90 percent unemployment are not able to avail themselves of work experience. The young people have no working model to follow, if their father and mother are not able to find any employment, they don't have that working model to follow, to learn from, to guide them in terms of how they will develop as a person in our society.

Mr. Chairman, obviously this Minister in particular, and this government in general is just ignoring this problem — absolutely ignoring it. In all of the areas that the Progressive Conservative Government have cutback — we can go through the examples in almost every department, we went through it in this Minister's Northern Affairs section, we went through it in the Minister of Resources section, we went through it in the Health area, Mr. Chairman, Education, New Careers Program, the various programs that were designed to give disadvantaged people the opportunity to move from their disadvantaged position into the advantaged position of being able to have a useful productive job. All of these programs have either been cut in one way or another, and many of them have been eliminated. Mr. Chairman, this is not the time to be cutting or eliminating programs; this is the time to be bringing in new programs, new thrusts and new concepts in order to be able to deal with that problem in northern Manitoba.

And I know, just from looking across the room here, several members sitting at the backbench are laughing and chuckling and the Minister of Consumer Affairs is sitting with his hand on his chin obviously not very concerned about this problem.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour being 4:30, and in accordance with Rule 19(2), I'm interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour, and will return at 8:00 p.m. this evening.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. While we are waiting for other members to come in from the other Committee, I believe the Honourable Member for Gladstone had a request.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON (Gladstone): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've a couple of changes on Economic Development tomorrow morning. It will be the Honourable Mr. Banman of La Verendrye for the Honourable Don Craik of Riel and the Honourable Mr. Gourlay for the Honourable Mr. Ransom.

MR. SPEAKER: Are those changes acceptable? (Agreed)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: The first item of business in Private Members' Hour on Mondays is Resolutions.

RESOLUTION 1 — RIGHT TO WORK(AS AMENDED)

MR. SPEAKER: The first Resolution at the top of the Order Paper is the Resolution which I had taken under advisement, a Sub-Amendment moved by the Honourable Member for St. Matthews to an Amendment moved by the Honourable Member for Burrows. My first look at the sub-amendment moved by the Honourable Member for St. Matthews, at first glance appeared to be nothing more than a rewording of the amendment moved by the Honourable Member for Burrows. However, after seeking advice on it, I did find there was some difference in the interpretation given by the wording by the Honourable Member for St. Matthews.

I would like to quote to you from Citation 438 of Beauchesne Sub (2):

"A sub-amendment must attempt to explain the substance of the amendment, and may not substitute an entirely new proposal." And further down in Citation 441(2):

"A sub-amendment must be relevant to the amendment it purports to amend and not to the main motion."

I've checked the wording of the amendment moved by the Honourable Member for St. Matthews, and I find that indeed it does meet the criteria of those two citations, and therefore I rule the sub-amendment to be in order. The subject matter will drop to the bottom of the Order Paper and we will proceed with Resolution No. 15.

RESOLUTION NO. 15 — FOOD PRICES REVIEW COMMISSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan, that:

WHEREAS incessant and unacceptably high levels of inflation continue to erode the standard of living of thousands of Manitobans and particularly those on fixed incomes including old age pensioners, and,

WHEREAS the soaring price of food accounts for a significant portion of such inflation, and

WHEREAS there is inadequate detailed information on the causes of rising prices for food including lack of data on price mark-ups and structural features of the food processing industry as well as of the wholesaling and retailing of food, and

WHEREAS there is some evidence of diminishing competition in the retail sector which can lead to higher prices and abnormally high profits,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the government consider the advisability of establishing a Food Prices Review Commission, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Commission be given the authority to collect pertinent economic data, to analyse and monitor price trends and to publish reports, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Commission be required to make recommendations to the government on any appropriate action that might lessen the degree of inflation of food items.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a subject, a topic that is uppermost in the minds of all Manitobans, indeed all Canadians today. That is the subject of what I might describe as runaway inflation.

Inflation in general along with unemployment is probably the major economic problem area facing Canada today, and indeed Manitoba is no exception. But food inflation in particular, Mr. Speaker, is extremely serious, and according to the statistics we see more than double-digit inflation well into the area of being almost double the rate of inflation that we're experiencing generally.

According to the Statistics Canada reports, the overall price index for Winnipeg is now running between 9 and 10 percent, I believe on an annual basis — that's comparing April to April, 1979 to 1978. We're now running at around 9.8 percent in Winnipeg, and we're running at that rate for

the country as a whole — 9.8 percent.

However, I regret to note that in April over March, that is the one-month adjustment, one-month change — Winnipeg, the City of Winnipeg, experienced a rate of inflation that was the highest of any city in Canada, along with the City of St. Johns, Newfoundland, where we had a 1 percent rise in the consumer price index — this is the total price index.

Usually food is responsible for about half of the increases. I don't know what it was responsible for in this last round of figures, but usually during the past year the food inflation has accounted for approximately half of the rise in the overall consumer price index. And more specifically, Mr. Speaker, in April of this year, the latest information shows food prices rising at a rate of 16.5 percent.

And unfortunately, when we compare this with what's been happening with wages, we see that the overall food price rise is more than double the rise of the wages earned by working people in this country. The average weekly wages of Canadians is now running just over 7 percent. Now I have to qualify that — this is for the month of February, 1979 over February, 1978. That was the latest information I could obtain from the statistics reports of the Statistics Canada organization. February over February showed an average weekly wage rise of 7.5 percent.

So when you compare that with what's happened with food, Mr. Speaker, 16.5 percent, you find that, as I said, the inflation in food is running at a rate of more than double the rise in the average wage of the working people of Canada. And this, of course, goes for the Province of Manitoba as well. Although I don't have the specific data for weekly wage rises in Manitoba, they're not too far off the national average in terms of changes.

And therefore, the real income of Manitobans, the real income of Canadians, is dropping. Whenever the rate of overall inflation rises, as it has been rising, faster than the overall rate of wages, then the real income of those workers, the real income of the wage earners, can do nothing but deteriorate. And indeed, this is what has happened. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, there's ample evidence that the food industry — I'm talking particularly about the retailers, and the large retailers in particular have been experiencing enormous profits. I'm not standing up advocating that such retailers obtain no profits — of course not. I don't want my honourable friends opposite to think for one moment that I am wishing to deny any business a reasonable rate of return on investment. That is not my point.

But the information we have is that corporations such as Westons had profit increases over 84 percent. Last year Weston's profits, according to information released through the news media, Weston's food chain profits were up 84.2 percent. I might add also, Mr. Speaker, that that food chain controls 34 percent of the retail sales in Canada. So they indeed have a lot of market power.

And at the same time, I would note if you took Dominion, Weston's, Safeway and Steinberg's — the Big Four — you're looking at four companies controlling 71 percent of the retail food business in Canada. So while workers' real incomes are not rising, they're in effect declining, you see these enormous profits occurring. We must realize — we do realize — I'm sure the Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs will point out to us that the Province of Manitoba is not an island unto itself, that it cannot possibly attempt to control all food prices or indeed all consumer prices.

In fact, he would argue that the jurisdiction over prices is rather limited. I would be inclined to agree with him. I would be inclined to agree that at the provincial level, there's a limit — a very serious limit — to what a government can do — a provincial government can do to contain prices. As a matter of fact, I sometimes think it's a very great challenge for the federal government indeed, no matter which party's in power, short of out and out price control arrangement, it is very difficult in view of the international inflation we're experiencing. When you have the international price of oil rising, and other prices rising in the international markets, and considering that we are a great trading nation, considering that we import vast quantities of goods, it's no wonder that if inflation does occur in countries such as the United States, or in Europe, or in Japan, that we will also receive some of that inflation. So it's very difficult, even at the federal level, I would admit, without some very serious type of price control.

But while admitting that there are limits in provincial jurisdiction, what I am proposing in this Resolution, Mr. Speaker, is at least one step in the right direction — one step which I think is realistic, it's not asking the government to spend; I'm asking them to consider the advisability of it. I don't think it's an expensive proposition, I think what I am proposing can be done with staff that are available if not within the Minister of Consumer Affairs' Department, certainly in Industry and Commerce, or Economic Development rather, or some other departments — Finance, I know there are a lot of economists that could probably be seconded to work on what I am proposing.

I think that it's a realistic proposal to at least monitor price trends, and to make available to the public of Manitoba information on what is happening. Now I know the Minister will, and can

indeed quote Statistics Canada reports, and say, "Well, we've got information." And indeed we do have — good information. It's basic information. But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is only a start. What I am proposing would be to go behind some of these figures, for this agency that I'm suggesting here, the Food Price Review Commission, to go behind these figures and to ascertain in more detail the reasons for the price rises in this province.

I think it's possible to argue that one reason for price rises — undue price rises, is the erosion of competition that has occurred, the erosion of competition that has occurred in Canada, and indeed in the Province of Manitoba. At one time, we had virtually thousands of independent grocers in our province, and over the years, these independent grocers have become a smaller and smaller group, Mr. Speaker. And indeed, even with the wholesalers — I heard one figure where 20 wholesaling companies have gone out of business in Manitoba over the past number of years. So that all in all, there is certainly less competition in the food wholesaling and in the food retailing business. And it seems to me that when you have a lessening of competition such as this, that there is a greater possibility of unreasonable price mark-ups, there is a greater possibility of excess profits being made.

Certainly, the lesser the competition is, the more the Manitoba consumer is at the mercy of the remaining large food chains. Indeed, there has been evidence in other jurisdictions where competition has lessened because of the growth of the large food chains. I believe the Province of Alberta, a couple of years ago, was very concerned about Safeway in particular having an abnormal percentage of the market in some of the Alberta cities, thereby allowing prices to rise more than they might otherwise.

And what makes me wonder too, Mr. Speaker, is when we hear of some prices going up because of international phenomena that we can understand. And they're quick to explain to us that, for example, the price of coffee — it's quickly explained to us that the price of coffee had to go up because of certain crop failures in Latin America, or what have you. And that's understandable. If there is a crop failure, there's likely to be a price rise.

But for the past year or so, we've had good coffee crops in the world, as I understand, and while the price has come down somewhat, I'm not so sure that it has come down back to the level that is probably due because of the better coffee harvests. So here is one example that I use — that it would be worthwhile, I would suggest, for a Manitoba Food Prices Commission, to take this one item and just ascertain whether the price of coffee has come down to the level that is fair and reasonable. The coffee price has come down somewhat in the last few months, but it's certainly nowhere near the level it was prior to the sharp increases of a couple of years ago.

So I think therefore, Mr. Speaker, that we need to keep on top of the situation, and I appreciate that in Ottawa there is a monitoring agency of sorts. The federal government did set up a monitoring agency. But I'm not so sure that it is geared to meet the needs of Manitoba. I think there is plenty of argument to be made for a joint federal/provincial effort in this respect. I think that a Prices Commission such as I am suggesting, a Review Commission such as I am suggesting, could look at the costing of food right from the farm level right through to the final retail level.

I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that farmers do need fair prices — and I'm not suggesting that they are getting unreasonable prices. In fact, the case is usually for farmers not to receive the price that is coming to them. I'm not denying the need for reasonable profit. But I say that the situation is serious enough that it should be examined by this agency that I am suggesting in this Resolution.

I would point out too, Mr. Speaker, that at the federal level, the former Conservative finance critic, Mr. Sinclair Stevens was very vocal in attacking the former government — the government of Mr. Trudeau — in this whole matter of monitoring prices. As a matter of fact Mr. Sinclair Stevens is quoted in an article of a daily newspaper on Tuesday, February 20th, whereby he says that action is needed because inflation is getting out of control again.

And he suggests, in his statement in Ottawa, that the government — and he's talking about the federal government — should arm the centre for the study of inflation and productivity with stronger investigatory powers. He says that what the federal government had established wasn't strong enough, wasn't effective enough in terms of their powers to investigate.

Mr. Speaker, I reiterate, this is what I'm suggesting here; essentially an investigation body, a body that can collect any additional information that is required over and above that which Statistics Canada has and, of course, not only analyze and monitor what's happening but also to publish, on some basis and I think to that extent it might make up for the lessening competition that has occurred in our province. We've had a lessening of competition, an erosion of competition and I think to help make up for that, I think that it is possible that we might make up for that by providing the consumers with more data on food prices.

And, of course, I suggest that we needn't stop there; I suggest also in my resolution, that the Commission may make or would be required to make recommendations to the government on

action, whatever that may be. And I repeat, the action may be very limited, what you can do may be very limited, but nevertheless, I believe that it is a worthwhile endeavour.

I could go on at some length, Mr. Speaker, in detailing the negative effect that inflation has had on people in this province. There are many pieces of information about persons in certain categories, in particular, being hurt. There's no question that those people living on old age pensions, people living on relative fixed incomes are the hardest hurt. They're always hurt the hardest when inflation is rampant as it is today. And there all kinds of stories of people having to eat less or certainly having to eat poorer quality food, in order to get by on a shrinking dollar.

Not long ago, a Winnipeg newspaper issued an analysis of what happened to workers' wages compared to what had happened to the cost of living — to the cost of food rather, in the past seven years and it suggests that apart from three categories, two or three categories, every occupation in Manitoba experienced a lower increase in wages than the increase in food that occurred in those years. So, rising prices is nothing new, but the fact is that prices have risen more rapidly in the past several years and as I said, making it a very very serious situation. And as I suggested, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, according to the latest report of Statistics Canada, the city of Winnipeg, which is the only city reported by Stats Canada for Manitoba — there is no survey conducted for Brandon or Portage or any other centre, so the Winnipeg price index has to do for all of Manitoba; but unfortunately, the city of Winnipeg showed a price increase of 1 percent between March and April in the one month, which was the highest, along with the city of St. John's of any city in Canada. But taking it year to year, leaving the one month change aside, taking the year to year comparison, we're at 9.8 percent overall, which as I said is nearly double digit inflation, nearly 10 percent and it may get worse.

So, I suggest to the government, Mr. Speaker, and to the Minister, in particular, that this is a reasonable proposition. We're not asking for the impossible and I think it's worthy of his consideration; it's worthy of the government's consideration. It's just possible, Mr. Speaker, that something effective may come out of this without hiring any more staff, without hiring any more civil servants, with getting a task force together that would back up this particular Commission. I am sure there are members of the public that would be willing to serve, if it was deemed advisable to bring in people who are not in the government service to be on the Commission itself. And there all kinds of administrative arrangements that one could consider, and I'm not wishing to get involved in that, because I don't think that's necessary. It's the principle of studying of food prices, the principle of some possible action being recommended by such a commission that I'm concerned with and I do recommend it very seriously to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. WARREN STEEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a few comments in regard to the Honourable Member for Brandon East's resolution for the establishment of a food price review commission. I believe, over the last 10 or 12 years, we've had more commissions look into more food pricing arrangements and attacking the national food store chains on a regular basis, both at the federal level and at the provincial levels. I agree 100 percent with the member, that food prices are rising exceptionally high, but I'm not so sure that another commission is going to correct the problem. All it's going to do is tell us basically what he has just finished telling us — that food prices are out of hand and who is to blame? Are we going to go back and ask the farmer to take less? The Member for Brandon East said that it's about time, I believe, that the farmer got his fair share. The Safeway clerk-cashier is now earning in the neighbourhood of \$14,000 and \$15,000 a year. I don't think that I want to ask that Safeway clerk and I'm sure the Member for Brandon East doesn't want to ask that clerk in the Safeway store to accept a lower wage than has been negotiated with the store by the unions on behalf of the employees in Safeway and the other major food stores.

He talks about the large profits that are made by these food stores, but is he talking about the profits, in relation to their investment? I wonder if he's doing that. But I wanted to mention that — because the Member for Brandon East has made reference to inflation regularly, during his comments on food prices — that from the Time magazine, January 15th, 1979, it gives some illustrations, yet these are American illustrations but I think in many cases they apply here in Canada, of how prices have changed from 1969 to 1978, over an 11-year period. A Hershey chocolate bar, for example, was a nickel in 1967; in 1978, it was 20 cents in the States. Any of us using the chocolate bar machine next door, knows that we're paying 30 cents. So, that chocolate bar has gone up by 300 percent.

Dental work in the United States has gone up by 200 percent in that period. The cost of filling a cavity, from '67 to '78, has gone from \$5 to \$15. The price of gasoline — and the Member for

Transcona and the Member for The Pas are very interested in the price of gasoline. In 1967, in the United States, it was 40 cents a gallon; today, it's 77 cents — an increase of 93 percent. Accommodation — a three-bedroom house in 1967 was \$32,000; today, it's \$54,000 — an increase of 69 percent. A loaf of bread in '67 was 35 cents a loaf; whereas today, down in the United States, it's 73 cents for a loaf — 109 percent increase. Hamburger, a pound of hamburger in 1967 was 59 cents a pound; in '78, it was \$1.49 and today, it's over \$2 here. A pair of blue jeans, you talk about the necessities of life being food, clothing and shelter and transportation — well, blue jeans, that's clothing and it's a fairly common form of clothing, particularly worn by our youngsters, in 1967, in the United States, you could buy a pair of blue jeans for a youngster for \$4.79; where a year ago, it was \$15.50 for blue jeans — an increase of 224 percent. Tuition in the universities, including room and board, and the example they're using at the University of Georgia, where it used to be \$1,159 a year and now, it's \$2,371 a year — this is tuition, including room and board — so that's 105 percent increase.

So, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Member for Brandon East, yes, food prices are rising faster than wages are rising, but I point out that many other things besides food prices are rising at a very rapid rate and I wonder if another commission is going to give us any answers, real answers, other than to tell us something that we already know and that is that food, shelter, clothing and transportation are all rising at a very rapid rate. So, I kind of wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether another commission is going to do any good at all.

I think that the Minister of Consumer Affairs, with his colleagues in other provinces and the Minister at the federal level can monitor it to the best of their ability and to the best of the ability of their department and do their best when incidences are pointed out to them, where corporate companies are gouging the public. But I for one, don't believe that the largest food retailer in Winnipeg, which is gouging the public at all. Their prices Safeway, is are very much in line with the mama and papa stores, if not lower in most cases and their competitors, Dominion and Loblaw's. Safeway earn a good profit, yes, but a percentage of their total investment, it's not a good profit in my opinion. I don't know how people would go in to the food store business and try and operate on a less than 9 or 10 percent profit per year. Most bankers would tell you you're crazy to invest in a business, if it wasn't earning better than that, because the interest charges that you're going to pay for your money are going to be better than 10 percent. And yet, Safeway and the other major food stores continue to put up elaborate stores; we as consumers continue to ask that these stores be air conditioned, that so that we can push our carts along the aisles wide enough and have a chit-chat with our neighbours and so on. And that we're always, as consumers, asking the food store industry to come out with more elaborate packaging. We want more throw-away packaging and this is all going to be passed on to the consumer, the purchaser of food.

So, Mr. Speaker, I question whether another review commission is going to tell us anything more than we know already today. So, quite frankly, I can't support the resolution for setting up another commission. I agree with the Member for Brandon, that food prices are too high but who are we going to ask to take a pay-cut, the farmer, the in-between person or the person working as the cashier and stocking the shelves and I don't think that the company itself is getting a fair percentage for their investment. Yes, they are making large profits but when you consider the billions they have invested into their plant, they're not gouging the public. So, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I would be inclined to support this resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I see that the Minister of Consumer Affairs was moved by his colleague to get up and speak and I defer to him but I think I'll give him the opportunity of speaking after myself.

I think the Member for Crescentwood correctly said that there is no need for a commission, if they didn't add the reason why, if the government was doing its job. You don't need a commission, you don't need another commission to do what the government has the power to do right now. It has a Trade Practices Inquiry Act, which was passed in 1935, which gives the government sufficient power to look at prices — not at every price, but to pick out those prices that seem to have gone up in outrageous manner or in an administered manner — like sugar, like bread and do an analysis, look at the book, get the information and determine whether the price increases have been fair or unfair. And this government in Manitoba has that power but it's refused to act and I think that the reason why it's refused to act, is that it wouldn't want to embarrass itself by contradicting its own rhetoric.

You know, we have a situation, where the Minister, the present Minister of Consumer Affairs, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has stated publicly over and over again, that he really believes that the government shouldn't be involved in the marketplace. But I think he doesn't

go beyond that and indicate which area of the marketplace isn't working. Is it working with bread, is it working with gasoline prices, the whole oil cartel that exists in Canada? Is it operating with respect to sugar? Is it operating with respect to cement? Just think of all the instances when the government, through the Minister of Consumer Affairs, has been asked to look at a particular price increase' This has been going on now for two years: cement, gasoline, bread, sugar.

My colleague, the Member for Logan, asked the Minister if he would investigate to determine whether food prices, the prices that we pay for imported fruit and vegetables would go down as a result of the lowering of tariffs. That surely should have been an opportunity for us to determine whether a reduction in tariffs would mean a reduction in prices. And it has been pointed out that at least federally, that generally that hasn't taken place. Now what's important is for a province to come along and to see what exactly is taking place within our boundaries, because our transportation costs may be different; our warehouse warehousing costs may be different. There are things that exist in Manitoba which perhaps would give a reason for the prices not going down or perhaps would indicate that the price decreases really aren't being passed on to the consumer.

And I was surprised when the Member for Crescentwood indicated that not much can be done about this. I wish the member would take a look at what's taking place in Conservative Ontario. There is a Royal Commission in Ontario right now on grocery retailing and the findings to date, or the testimony to date, before that Royal Commission has been rather revealing and I'm wondering whether in fact the government's been following that development in Ontario at all. We've had people come forward — Lobe has come forward, who is part of a smaller chain — he's come forward to testify that there is too much corporate concentration in the grocery retailing business in Ontario. He said Loblaw's and Dominion have too great a share of the market; there isn't sufficient competition; the market isn't working; prices are not the result of the interplay of supply and demand in the market; they are the result of administered prices and rebates on the basis of volume.

And we have a situation in Manitoba where Safeway has a greater share of the market than does Loblaw's and Dominion in Ontario. So the Ontario government was moved to set up this Commission, which has been operational now for about half a year. I asked the Minister of Consumer Affairs last year to investigate what was taking place in Ontario, to determine whether in fact the problems that are being defined in Ontario exist in any way, shape or form here.

Now I would grant that it's difficult for a province in many instances to do that much about inflation. Most of it's imported; most of the inflation that we've experienced in Canada has been imported. But to the extent that we can, the government should carry out its mandate and I believe that the Minister, ideologically, just

can't bring himself to do that. He is an incredibly passive Minister of Consumer Affairs. Every time he's asked questions about prices, his first response is to assume that there is a market working, or his second response is to assume that the federal government is doing something about it, or the third response is to assume that nothing can be done about the problem anyway.

And that's not why we have a Ministry of Consumer Affairs. That's not why the budget for Consumer Affairs is as large as it is. It's a significant budget for a province the size of Manitoba, but it's not doing very much. Contrast the work of this administration in the area of prices with that of the previous administration that did look into cement prices; that did work with the city in terms of looking at cement prices. I doubt if this administration has looked at cement prices that tenders the bids on tenders to determine whether there has been similarity in cement prices. Yet, it's been asked over and over and over again and surely with only two large cement companies operating, each with differing capacities, each with different economies of scale, you would have some differences in the way those two companies should bid. I can't believe that you will have two plants giving identical bids for cement and then saying that there isn't some administering of prices with respect to cement, because the plant sizes are different, the volumes going through those plants are different, the distribution systems are different, and there should be some differences in prices and the city's experience; common prices for cement a number of times. They've at least tried to do something about this through the federal government but the federal government has been very lax in this area.

The province has done nothing. The province has done nothing even though it's been asked repeatedly. So when the Member for Crescentwood says we can't do much about prices, and prices are a phenomena that we have to live with, we on this side of the House disagree with them entirely. Prices are a problem that have to be looked at. That is the number one problem facing the average consumer of Manitoba. And are they getting any support from the Minister of Consumer Affairs? They're getting none; they're getting no response whatsoever. A Minister who says really: "Let the market operate; I have faith in it." Basically we should abolish the Consumer Affairs section and we should just leave it as a Ministry of Corporate Affairs. And here is a Minister who, if he believes some of his rhetoric, would try and promote more competition, would not want to see this merger

taking place within the grocery retailing business, would not want to see the concentration at the wholesaling level, would not want to see concentration at the distribution level.

Let's take the example of bread prices. I've been asking the Minister questions about bread prices going back to January of 1979, and this arose because the federal government indicated that it was going to remove its subsidy for milling flour in Canada. And when that was announced the bread companies, retail companies, indicated that there would probably be a bread price increase of something in the order of seven cents. And towards the end of December of 1978, there were indeed increases in the order of seven to nine cents. So on January 11th, I wrote the Minister; I asked him to investigate the recent bread price increases. I asked him to investigate the industry. I asked him to use The Trade Practices Inquiry Act as was done in 1973 with some success. The Minister refused saying that he was already carrying out a study and that he would get back to me, which he did on April 24th, 1979, and he indicated at that time, the price of a loaf of bread had increased by about four or five cents. And for that period of time, he was right. That letter was correct.

But what he didn't take into account was the history of that bread price increase, because as of January 11th, 1979, the bread prices had increased by seven cents. In some stores they went up to nine cents because I was keeping track of the weekly increases in bread prices and so was the CBC on its noon program. What we found was that after I wrote the letter and made the letter public, bread prices decreased by two cents, and I am surprised that the Minister in assessing or reviewing what had taken place with respect to bread prices, wasn't aware of that and isn't aware of that today. If the market was working, we shouldn't have had that increase in bread prices and then a dip when a public fuss was made about it.

And the thing that's interesting is that after I'd received this letter of April 24th, 1979, we've had a recent two-cent a loaf increase. You can't attribute that to the subsidy; you can't attribute to the removal of the subsidy; you can't attribute that to any type of margin pass-ons, because that's already taken place with the four to five cent increase in bread prices. So what accounts for the recent two-cent increase in the price of bread? I think what's accounting for it is that the retailers feel that the heat is off and that they don't have to be held accountable for their actions in this respect. I think the Minister is completely wrong in not pursuing this area. That's one of his major responsibilities especially with respect to something as important a staple in a family's diet as bread.

You know, the two items — the two items — that are probably most important to lower income families are bread and milk. Those are the two most important items. And the Minister has gone out of his way to avoid looking at both of them. He has a research department; he has a staff. If that staff was utilized; if the Minister adopted a higher public profile; if he used some oral suasion, especially in the area of bread, I am quite certain that we would have experienced the situation we did in 1973 when the previous New Democratic Minister of Consumer Affairs called in the president of Safeway; called in the vice-president of Toastmasters; sat them down and said, "We think the price of bread is too high; we think that you people are passing on too much in the way of costs."

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. PARASIUK: And the Minister went on to say that if there weren't any adjustments made, he would have to set up an inquiry under The Trade Practices Inquiry Act and the bread companies held off. They said they were going to go ahead with the bread price increase anyway. But as soon as we appointed that Commission; as soon as the Commission was appointed by the government, the next day bread prices in Manitoba decreased about three to four cents, and we found ourselves in the enviable position of having bread price increases which averaged three to four cents a loaf less than the bread prices in other provinces. So there is that margin — there is that margin — if you've got an aggressive government committed to protecting the interests of the consumer.

And you know when you look at something like profit increases that my colleagues the Member for Brandon East and the Member for Crescentwood have talked about, the key thing with profits is: are they fair when they're a 58 percent increase? Is that a fair profit increase?

And secondly, are the profits being re-invested? And the profits aren't being re-invested to improve the plant and capacity in Manitoba so that future food prices are less because of increased economies and skill. That's not been happening at all. Indeed, what's usually been happening is that this profit, this extra gouging, has been taken and invested in other areas, often real estate, other areas where the risk is less, other areas where possibly the return is greater, especially when you take into account certain tax dodges with respect to mineral and energy resource development investment.

So who's going to protect the consumer in this province? The few consumer agencies, privately

funded or sometimes funded with some public funds that are drying up because the federal and provincial governments are acting in a very tight-fisted manner, cutting off any type of access to counsel that non-profit consumer agencies might have. So given that government is cutting off funding to these non-profit pressure groups, who is left to fight the battle for the consumer? The disorganized consumer, who isn't being faced with a market that is operating that well. We can see that when it comes to the retailing industry, grocery retailing industry, you have some major giants operating: Safeway, Loblaws and Dominion. You have very few others. You have fewer companies to choose from when it comes to wholesaling.

So, given that concentration, given the fact that you basically have 1 million disorganized consumers trying to deal with three or four very powerful retailing networks, it's critical that the government act as a referee, and this government has relinquished that role, and since it's relinquishing that role, since it won't act, we have to establish something that will act, and that's why I do support the establishment of a commission, a commission that would bring to the public's attention what is going on and force the Minister into doing the job that he's not carried out to date and one that so far he's given every indication of not carrying out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Brandon East has introduced a resolution that, in its outward appearance, might appear to be a step that could be taken, but he qualified that to a considerable extent by acknowledging the limitations of any such inquiry, and I am inclined to agree that there are serious limitations. I'm not the only one that considers that. The previous Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs held pretty much the same view, and I quote a statement that he made in the House in 1975. He said, "Mr. Speaker, it's true that over the course of the months that I've been Minister of Consumer Affairs I have initiated and tried to initiate inquiries into various prices of different goods and services. And if I could be reasonably sure that those inquiries could lead to restraint on price increases, then I certainly would mount more inquiries." So I come to the conclusion that, in spite of the fact that he did attempt to do as the Member for Transcona has suggested, discovered that the effort put into those inquiries were not producing the kind of results that he had hoped to achieve.

Although I may not entirely agree with the conclusions drawn by the former Minister, I do believe that one has to recognize what the real problem is. And my honourable friends have put their finger on it, but they refuse to acknowledge it. Inflation is really the culprit, and what causes inflation is where they refuse to acknowledge. Inflation and I don't know how much evidence has to be presented before my honourable friends before they will grasp the significance of increased government spending as one of the main culprits in inflation. Not so much the increased government spending, if it's accompanied by increased productivity, but increased government spending paid for out of borrowed money is the real cause of inflation, and I find it passing strange that day after day, although my honourable friends draw to my attention repeatedly, occasions where price increases are causing hardships, and I don't have to be told that, we're all aware of the difficulties and the hardships that are imposed on the people of this country and particularly those on low incomes by constantly escalating prices.

But at the same time one would expect that they would recognize that if governments continue to advocate and indeed spend more money, then they're creating the very problem that they seek to overcome, and my honourable friends are very good at that. There isn't a day that goes by in this House, with one single exception; there isn't a day that goes by in this House that my honourable friends are not advocating more spending. And it doesn't seem to bother them at all if there is not a corresponding increase in the wealth-producing sector, which is necessary if your spending is not going to get out of line.

I ask my honourable friends to take into consideration just what would be the effect if there wasn't the huge debt that has been accumulated in Ottawa and indeed on a much smaller scale, but in proportion equally as large, in the province of Manitoba. At one time, when I was a member of the House of Commons in Ottawa, the Finance portfolio was one of the smaller portfolios in terms of dollars spent. Today it's the second largest, second only to Health and Social Development, which spends something like \$14 billion according to the 1979-80 Estimates. The Finance Department are spending \$11 billion. The major proportion of that is to service the public debt with money that they are not receiving because each year they go into debt by a further \$11 billion. That's a recipe for inflation, and that's a recipe for the problems that we face with increased costs. And unless my honourable friends are prepared to acknowledge that and are prepared to accept that as a root cause of the difficulties that many people in this country are being faced with, then there's no hope that anything we may say on this side of the House, or anybody else may say is going to have any effect.

Now, the federal government have appointed commissions ad nauseum to — I don't know how many times food prices have been investigated. And the significant part of every single one of those investigations is that there has never been once that the Royal Commissions, the independent commissions or whatever commission has been appointed, has ever been able to put the finger on any one single culprit.

In recent years there have been three bodies that have been set up by the federal government to carry on this responsibility, the Food Prices Review Board, the Centre for the Study of Inflation, and Productivity, and the latest one, the National Commission on Inflation. And my honourable friend from Transcona accuses me of not looking into the whole question of bread prices. That particular situation was examined very thoroughly, and I was in touch with Mr. Renouf on the National Commission of Inflation, who also conducted an investigation into this particular subject. The conclusions of that commission were the same as the conclusions that we came to in the province, the removal of the subsidy plus increase in cost created by a variety of factors, none the least of which are increased wages, none the least of which are profits —(Interjection)— of course profits. My honourable friends — and that's one of the difficulties with my honourable friends — they refuse to acknowledge all of the other component parts of those increases, and zero in on that one because it's the easiest one for them to convince the public. But I think it's a phony one. Profits, yes, but what of the marketing boards that have been set up? My honourable friends are not opposed to marketing boards, surely.

And they were brought into existence for the purpose of attempting to provide for the farmer the same kind of bargaining power that is available to the working man through his labour unions.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hour being 5:30, I am interrupting proceedings. The Honourable Minister will have 12 minutes when the matter next comes up for discussion. I am leaving the Chair. The House will resume at 8:00 in Committee of Supply.