

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Tuesday, 8 July, 1980

Time — 8:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: My question is to the Minister of the Environment, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask the Minister of the Environment if he can indicate what level that the province is using or what standard the province is using in regard to permissible levels of asbestos fibres in water supplies?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): . . . get that information for my honourable friend, Mr. Speaker.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you. I would ask the Acting Minister of Agriculture, or the Deputy Premier if he wishes to answer, if he can confirm that it has just recently been announced that an interchange agreement has been reached in principle between CPR and CNR in regard to the Port of Churchill?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I'm not in a position to either confirm or otherwise on that matter.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

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

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This committee will come to order: I would direct the honourable members' attention to Resolution No. 5. Resolution No. 5—pass — the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAM USKIW: Mr. Chairman, at 5:30, there was some indication given to the Ministers opposite that we had intended to raise some questions with respect to the measure that has been introduced at this session to freeze assessments and we wanted to know, precisely, whether or not the Minister was in a position to explain to us just what he intends to do with respect to the practical problems of the freeze, namely the fact that a number of municipalities are either in the process of or have just completed their reassessment and therefore they find themselves somewhat disadvantaged by the fact that the rest of the province will be frozen with respect to reassessment for a period of three years, and that whether or not that isn't going to have some very negative effects on those municipalities that have already been reassessed.

We recognize the school Foundation Program as part of that mix; we recognize that there is a substantial difference in value attached to some of the holdings in some of the municipalities and, I think, obviously one has to mention St. Andrews, which has had their assessment last year and I believe has now billed their taxpayers on the base of the most up-to-date assessment, and I believe St. Clements is currently under way, and there may be a number of other municipalities in a similar position. It seems to me that we ought to have a clear statement from the Minister as to just how he perceives this assessment freeze to be carried out without undue repercussions on those that have already completed the reassessment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, inasmuch as there is a bill before the House that was introduced by the Minister of Municipal Affairs yesterday, I would refer the question to the discussion under that bill. I'm not in a position to answer the questions placed by the Member for Lac du Bonnet and, as a result, I would request that they be held over for consideration under the bill.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I don't really mind that. I have no quarrel with when we discuss the matter that I raised. I don't want, though, the Minister of Finance to leave us with the impression though that the Minister of Municipal Affairs is not in a position to answer now, if he so chooses.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I have to suggest that if that's the procedures under which you would do Interim Supply that that's a new departure and that the questions that are to be placed can be placed before the Minister presenting the bill before the House, which in this case is Supplementary Supply.

In that case, I have to tell the Member for Lac du Bonnet, I'm not in a position to answer his questions, but the questions will be answered under the bill, which in this case was introduced to the House yesterday, and there will be an appropriate time and opportunity for that exchange to take place.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I indicated that I didn't mind at which point we received the information or the answers from the Minister, whether it's now or during the course of debate on his bill. It's here now, but it is true, Mr. Chairman, that in the past we have had different Ministers responding under supplementary estimates in areas where they have had the responsibility, program areas of their responsibility, so that it wouldn't be precedent setting if the Minister of Municipal Affairs wished to respond at this point in time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution No. 5—pass — the Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Mr. Chairman, before Resolution 5 passes, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Government Services. In view of the fact that there's going to be an increase in his indemnity, and I'm just wondering, now that he'll be paid more, hopefully would be able to devote more time to the needs and the concerns and interests of members of this House, when he intends to introduce a bill for the relief of members of the Legislative Assembly, and in line with that to take appropriate action to install the necessary facilities to enable them to quickly, readily, and easily to relieve themselves in order to keep in line with a ruling made by a Chairman of one of the Committees, namely, the Chairman of the Privileges and Elections Committee. I would like to quote, Mr. Chairman, that on July 2nd, 1980, the Chairman of Privileges and Elections had ruled as follows, and I am quoting from Page 10: "I am the Chairman of this Committee, Sir. If you do not abide by the rules of this Committee I will ask you to relieve yourself." So hence to accommodate all members, male and female, I would ask the member whether he is prepared to accommodate his colleague chairing this Committee who wishes the members of his Committee to have this opportunity and to abide by his ruling?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. HARRY ENNS (Lakeside): It has been a longstanding rule of this Chamber that different members of the Treasury Bench do not interfere with the legislation that a particular Treasury Bench Minister brings forward. The bill that we are dealing with has been brought forward and is presented to this Committee for consideration by the Minister of Finance. On such important policy decisions I would expect the Minister of Finance to respond in his appropriate way.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I'll refer that question as if it were properly placed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before I try to pass this item, I am just trying to get the mood of the members, and it has some bearings as to my rulings, you know, whether it is fun and games, well, fine; if it is not, then we will try to proceed.

Resolution No. 5—pass. Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a further sum not exceeding 95,000 for Salary and representation allowance increases — 95,000—pass.

We are now on Supplementary Estimates of Expenditure No. 2, Resolution No. 1, Drought Relief Program, 41,445,000, Item (a) Emergency Feed and Transportation, 40,275,000; Item (b) Emergency Water Supply — the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet on a point of order.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, unless it has escaped me, I didn't think we completed the last set. I believe we dealt with Resolution No. 5. Oh, I am sorry, the rest is a summary of the total, is that correct? Okay, all right, that's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We are on Item (b) Emergency Water Supply. The Honourable Member for St. George. Can I read the Resolution and then we will speak on it or is there something prior to reading the Resolution.

Item (b) Emergency Water Supply, 1,170,000 — The Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are on the Resolution dealing with the Department of Agriculture and dealing with the funds that have been requested by the government in terms of dealing with the drought program.

What we have found, Mr. Chairman, over the last while, and I believe the Minister of Agriculture should be in a position this evening to, at the very least, indicate to the people of Manitoba and members on this side what government policy is with respect to the allocation of hayland in terms of the Drought Program.

Mr. Chairman, we have given the Minister notice. The Member for Lac du Bonnet, about ten days ago, asked the Minister for his policy with respect to the area of Netley Marsh and the formula of allocation, Mr. Chairman. On Monday evening I indicated to the Minister the situation that had occurred in the Red Deer Lake area north of Swan River in the RM of Minitonas or in the Porcupine Forest Reserve; and also on Monday, Mr. Chairman, I indicated to the Minister the problem that related to his department overruling a notice put out by the Department of Natural Resources in the Gympsumville area in an attempt to allocate land for haying purposes on the draw basis, and the Minister has been, to say the least, skirting the issue. He made the impression today that the government is relying totally on the municipalities to do the allocating with no formula. He has indicated to us that we are depending on the goodwill of the municipality.

Mr. Chairman, that is fine and dandy if you want to attempt to shift responsibility onto the municipalities and the municipal councils, but the fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, there should be some basis, some

formula, some basic policy that the government is working upon in terms of allocating these lands to deal with the allocation for hay during this drought period. Is there going to be any guarantee for the farmers in the area that they will have the priority of cutting that hay or utilizing the hay, the farmers within that immediate area, or is the government prepared to allow farmers from other parts of the province to come in and purchase that hay. Then what will happen? The government will be faced with the situation of having to then transport hay into the very area where the hay was cut.

Mr. Chairman, it certainly isn't, to say the least, clear or co-ordinated. The Minister today in answer to the Member for Lac du Bonnet indicated it was his recollection that the allocation of hay or haylands to people in the Netley Marsh, I believe his words were, "on the draw basis." I'd like to know what the government policy is so that farmers in rural Manitoba would know what the government's intentions are.

Mr. Chairman, as well we would like to know, and I would like to know, what assumptions in this program are there with respect to the receiving of assistance and cost sharing from the federal government. We have seen statements by the federal Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Immigration from Manitoba indicating the likelihood that Ottawa will not cost share the Manitoba programs; that they have come out with a federal program.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that there is some responsibility on this government if they are going to Ottawa, and have gone Ottawa a number of times and indicated that, look, we would like you to cost share on our programs. But, Mr. Chairman, what we have seen over the last several years is that the Premier of this province has come out and indicated that, first of all, the last Budget of the federal government wasn't tough enough; that the federal government was spending beyond its means and it could do a better job; that the province of Manitoba had done a great job in terms of managing its fiscal responsibility. So, Mr. Chairman, you can't go on one hand and bash Ottawa for spending too much and then attempt to go ahead and go to them, cap in hand, and saying look will you cost share some of our programs that we have preempted you with.

Mr. Chairman, you can't have it both ways. You can't say to Ottawa you have been overspending in dealing with your fiscal responsibility and now come and cost share with us, now that we've preempted you on this program.

Mr. Chairman, I think the First Minister has an obligation to the people of Manitoba to go ahead and meet with the Prime Minister of this country and at least find out, or put himself in a position to find out, and tell the people of Manitoba whether he is going to receive cost sharing for the drought relief program. It's evident that the federal program will bring dollars into the province but certainly it will not offset the provincial budget, and maybe, Mr. Chairman, maybe the chickens are coming home to roost. Maybe Ottawa is telling Manitoba that you can't continue to Ottawa bash and expect co-operation, Mr. Chairman. Maybe you can't continually tell Ottawa that, look, you have been spending beyond your means, you haven't been

doing a good job financially and then come to them and say please cost share on these programs because that will help us out in terms of our fiscal responsibility. Is that the situation that Manitoba has now placed itself? For what? For nothing but, Mr. Chairman, I believe for political gain on behalf of the crowing of the First Minister of this province saying look how tough we have been on the spending in this province. Now the chickens are coming home to roost. His deficit will be increased, Mr. Chairman, — (Interjection)— Well, the turkeys, Mr. Chairman.

We may have, literally, a bunch of vultures looking for handouts that they really can't now expect, Mr. Chairman, because they have bitten off the hand that fed them, and their budget will be going out of sight.

Mr. Chairman, I think the First Minister of this province probably has a lot of explaining to do, and not only explaining to do, I think he has a job ahead of himself, if he expects some co-operation and cost sharing of this program to lessen the deficit, the highest deficit in the history of this province. Mr. Chairman, either the Member for Rock Lake didn't hear me, or didn't want to hear me. He should remember the words of his First Minister, Mr. Chairman, who raked Ottawa continuously over the coals during the federal election and prior to the last federal election. Who was the big hero, Mr. Chairman, in western Canada about fiscal responsibility; about living within your means, Mr. Chairman? The Member for Rock Lock should remember who said who was spending too much money in this country; the federal government was spending too much money.

Now they're in a bit of a bind, Mr. Chairman, that they are saying look, come and cost share with us. But that's not happening, Mr. Chairman. Ottawa is really telling them look, we haven't got the funds; we have our cost sharing program; we have given out what we believe a program for drought relief in terms of one segment to the economy.

Mr. Chairman, what is this government going to do with respect to the hog producers of this province? Hog producers have been in a deficit income position over the last year, Mr. Chairman, even though prices have risen in the last little while to above 50 a hundredweight, it is still roughly at least a minimum of 10 to 15 a hundredweight below their cost of production. How long does the provincial government believe that the hog industry can hang on before many of the barns in closed, in fact many of them have been closed all ready, Mr. Chairman. It seems that there is no provision in this program, or anywhere in their estimates; I would like to know from the First Minister and the Minister of Finance, what are their intentions with respect to assistance to the hog industry, who they know are keeping a good portion of our packing plants running. They know that hog producers are suffering at least a 10 to 15 a hundredweight loss on every hog that they sell on the marketplace, clearly well below the cost of production, and what do we hear, Mr. Chairman, we hear nothing? We hear the Minister of Agriculture, at one time indicated that he was prepared to support them, and then, Mr. Chairman, he denied that very statement saying no, he's not going to help the hog producers. What do our supplementary estimates have in terms of assistance for the hog industry; nothing, Mr. Chairman?

But I believe, Mr. Chairman, there is one of aspect of the whole government's thrust, which I believe they are really keeping their heads in the sand. They are really not addressing themselves to the problem and the problem really comes down to cash flow in the rural economy. Mr. Chairman, I don't think we've really seen the tip of the iceberg. I believe that what we will see is that we will see many more businesses close, Mr. Chairman. We will see many more farm units being foreclosed as they have been, even though the Minister of Agriculture wishes to deny and has denied last week and says look, the drought isn't the problem, our farmers just got themselves into a financial mess and they can't get of them; they're poor businessmen. That's the attitude of this provincial government saying that the farmers are poor businessmen, they got themselves into this economic position and that's why they're being repossessed. Is that an attitude of a provincial government that wishes to, and professes to be a friend of the family farm, Mr. Chairman? And when it comes to the provincial government indicating its position with respect to corporate intrusion into primary production, oh no, Mr. Chairman. They're not involved in primary production at all, Mr. Chairman, Cargill Grain in the hog industry is not involved. Mr. Chairman, do you know that Cargill recently made a purchase in Great Britain of a turkey production and turkey processing facility, in Great Britain, of 2.5 million birds a year? You know, 2.5 million birds is practically twice the production of turkeys in this province, in this entire province, Mr. Chairman. And what did they do in British Columbia? They bought out the processing plant in British Columbia, in terms of poultry processing, one of the largest processing plants in British Columbia, and they're not involved in the agricultural industry? Let the Conservatives get their heads out of the sand. The farming community is in desperate trouble, Mr. Chairman. It is in desperate trouble. Not only of the drought, it is in desperate trouble with respect to cash flow, Mr. Chairman, and that cash flow snowballs to the entire rural economy, and snowballs right into our city. All you have to do is go down to the little businesses in the shopping malls in downtown Winnipeg and find out how many of them are making great booming sales, and hear those business people talk. If ever there was a time when the province should be looking at either an interest moratorium, in terms of trying to carry over those small businesses and those farmers, at a time when they should really be assessing their crop insurance program. The Minister can talk about it all he wants, Mr. Chairman, what I predict is that there will be, in certain areas of this province there will be very few payouts; because there will be some crops, but the income from those crops, or from the insurance, will not cover the input costs and the high interest rates that many of those farmers face.

Mr. Chairman, whether the Conservatives want to believe it or not, many of those farmers have had to borrow their entire spring production needs in terms of fertilizers, in terms of all their fuel costs, in terms of their equipment costs, all those costs at what? Not at 12, 13 percent, at 17 and 18 percent interest, Mr. Chairman. You just go talk to some of the farmers who are now looking at the drought which has really taken its toll, and wondering where the

next dollar will come from because there is virtually no income, Mr. Chairman. There is virtually no income in rural Manitoba, and if, in some sectors there is some income, I venture to say that the Minister of Finance should really regard that as a holding pattern. Most of the farming community who have some income in terms of the poultry industry, some of the dairy industry, there is some money, but I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, the entire rural economy, the people are very afraid to make any moves because they don't know what's ahead of them. They are very uncertain.

Mr. Chairman, for a Minister of Agriculture and the government to have what one could consider a cavalier attitude towards the economy of rural Manitoba and not even wanting to prepare legislation, to have it on the books in case they need it further down in the year, they have indicated that no, we're not even looking at it. We are relying totally on our banking institutions, they will carry our farmers out and our Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation will pick up the slack and bail out the farmers that haven't been able to make it.

Mr. Chairman, if the government lending agency does assist some farmers and bails them out where banks were going to foreclose, I want to know whether all the farmers of Manitoba will have that kind of an opportunity so they are not forced off their farms. Will MACC bail out and take over from the banking institutions which may be repossessing, and have been, Mr. Chairman, and have been repossessing farms in western Manitoba. The Minister denied it last week, Mr. Chairman. I spoke to a bailiff from Brandon and I happened to be speaking to her and she indicated that for the first time that she could recall, and I'm using now her words, this was the first time that the banks were becoming nasty with small business and farmers in the western part of Manitoba, that they were, in fact, foreclosing.

So Mr. Chairman, I believe the Finance Minister and the First Minister should indicate what assistance, what direction are they going to take, or are they going to continue to float along as they have been in the last couple of months, uncoordinated, trying to go from one crisis to another, trying to deal with the crisis without any long term strategy, without any direction because it's clearly apparent that the Minister of Agriculture does not know where he goes.

The Minister of Agriculture, when we question him, I believe gives the impression to myself that if we question him once and we forget about the questions that we raised, even though he doesn't provide the answers, the problem will go away. Mr. Chairman, the problem won't go away, the situation still exists out in rural Manitoba. The farmers are very upset with the land allocation program, there is no concerted effort on behalf of the government to deal with the situation with respect to, not only the drought, Mr. Chairman, but with the economic conditions of one of our primary sectors, and that is the hog industry, who have been suffering, and who have, Mr. Chairman, by resolution, at their recent meeting in Portage la Prairie, passed a unanimous resolution seeking government aid. Mr. Chairman, it happens. I would have to say that some of them may be reluctant to come to the government. I don't

know why, but I venture to say that if it was an NDP government you would have had demonstrations of the like you wouldn't have seen in terms of the plight of those producers, they would have been here on the doorsteps. Yet although we see some of them meeting with the Ministers and we know that many of them have already gone bankrupt, a number of barns have closed, just ask the Member for La Verendrye how many barns in his constituency have closed. He doesn't know how many. How many barns has Cargill filled in his constituency with respect to the hog industry? Or the Member for Emerson, in the Grunthal area, how many hog producers have gone on contract with Cargill Grain in terms of producing of hogs? —(Interjection)— No. Cargill is okay, we're friends of the farming community, we don't mind Cargill, we will compete against Cargill, Mr. Chairman; that's the attitude of the Conservative Party and the Minister of Agriculture. Those farmers are real true free enterprisers, they can compete with Cargill.

Mr. Chairman, the farming community, the hog industry, is in trouble. Cargill, I believe, is just sitting on the sidelines and waiting for a number of farmers, more farmers to go bankrupt. They will pick up the slack. Those barns will be filled in months because they will follow either the MACC representative who is going to foreclose, or the banking institution who is going to foreclose, and after the foreclosure takes place they will move in and say, hey buddy, do you want to contract, we will pay you so much, you keep the hogs for us. And who will then have control of the industry in Manitoba. All that talk about free market and free sharing, Mr. Chairman, will have gone out the window. We'll have lost a large number of farmers who will not be able to come back. They will not be able to come back because the industry now is not as it used to be in terms of being labour intensive. The industry is now capital intensive. You need hundreds, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of dollars of initial investment to be able to get into agriculture today in terms of building and equipment, let alone the land question, Mr. Chairman. So that they are in trouble. And what do we have? We have a nonchalant Minister of Agriculture; we have a government that indicates, well, they're not in trouble, they have no difficulties.

Mr. Chairman, we will wait and see how many hog producers do go out, how many farmers alone, who are in the grain industry, and how many small business people in rural Manitoba will go out as a result of the nonchalant cavalier attitude of this government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 1—pass. Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a further sum not exceeding 41,445,000 for Agriculture—pass.

Resolution No. 2. Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a further sum not exceeding 485,000 for Highways and Transportation.

Air/Radio Services, 485,000, Item (a) Salaries, 178,000; (b) Other Expenditures, 307,000. — (Interjection)— I read out the whole thing and we will take the whole item as one if the honourable member doesn't mind.

The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: It is really a very straightforward request of the Minister to explain what the item is. I have some idea, but I would like the Minister to explain what is it that the government is asking for here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, both (a) and (b) are operational costs for the new water bomber that has been acquired. Those are expenditures for salary and general operating costs for the new water bomber.

MR. EVANS: Well, can the Honourable Minister advise then to what extent does this increase our capacity to fight fires from the air, as it were? Do we have at the present time ownership of other water bombers? It was my recollection and is simply rather vague in my memory that we didn't necessarily own firefighting equipment, but that we would rent appropriate aircraft for firefighting, water bombers, rather than purchase them, because, of course, they are only required hopefully for very short periods of the year. Now, I imagine there is always a problem of being able to obtain the required equipment when a fire or fires become bad.

At any rate, could the Minister indicate whether this acquisition, what does that mean in terms of the totality? How many water bombers do we own now or is this the first one and how does it — if he could give us some sort of an idea of what is our firefighting capacity with the Air Service Division?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, we did own one CL-215. We rent two Cansos that have been under lease for many years, and this will give us a complement in large aircraft of two CL-215s and then we will have on lease two Cansos. We had another one rented during the recent problem. Whether or not it is still on demand, I am not sure; another one from Newfoundland that was kindly loaned to us by the province of Newfoundland. We have a number of helicopters that are on a standby rental basis, and I believe we have some Turbo Beavers, perhaps two, that are equipped with water carrying capacity and perhaps one other aircraft, one Otter, owned and operated by Government Air Service. So that is basically the aircraft support.

Of course, the CL-215 is by far the largest in the fleet and by adding this one it adds substantially to the total aerial capacity. To the extent to which it adds to the reduction in damage from forest fires is another question. It is not as easy to arrive at, it certainly multiplies very rapidly with the addition of the CL-215 or a number of CL-215s in the aerial capabilities, but that is the size of the operation at the present time.

The next item, of course, in the estimates is tied in because the Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets, which comes under the Department of Highways and Transportation shows the amount committed for the capital purchase of the machine.

MR. EVANS: I thank the Minister for that explanation. As I gather then, this particular item relates to the operation and maintenance costs of

the Air/Radio Services Division and not to the actual purchase cost of this particular water bomber.

I would like to ask the Minister with regard to this, and I don't want to belabour this, but I want to ask the Minister what is the current policy now with regard to using privately owned chartered air service as opposed to using the Government Air Division. The Government Air Division has certain capacity for flying Ministers, civil servants, and other officials about the province on business, particularly to northern Manitoba. Is there a specific policy of giving a percentage of the business to the private carriers or is there any particular policy in this respect?

I can tell you categorically, we were inclined to use the Government Air Division as much as possible, because we thought this was the cheapest way to go. At any rate, I just wondered whether this was the most economical way to go as far as the taxpayers of Manitoba were concerned. Has the carrying capacity of the Air Division been reduced? I am not talking about the firefighting side of it now, Mr. Chairman. I am talking about the capacity of the Government Air Division to transport people around, to transport government officials around to carry out necessary government business in various parts of the province. Has the capacity of the Air Division been reduced or is it being maintained, and is there an increase in the demand for services by privately owned operators?

MR. CRAIK: First of all, Mr. Chairman, the Government Air Division has been reduced by about 50 percent, from some 30-odd aircraft in 1977 to some 16 or 17 at the present time. No complaints about the level of service, everything is going along about the way it should go along, indicating it was terribly over-subscribed and over-built before. The first place we go for aircraft transportation is to scheduled airlines, which is cheaper than running Government Air Division aircraft. If we can't get people there by that method we go to government Air Division and if we are stuck, we go to leasing. So we have no policy for a percentage of leasing an aircraft, but if necessary an aircraft is leased and that is the policy of the government. We are satisfied with what has taken place. The air ambulance service has worked satisfactorily. It's not uncommon for a Minister flying in the north to find himself stranded in a location because his aircraft can't wait, it's off on a medic evacuation service, but that's all part of the system. But in overall terms the cost of the system has been reduced by pretty well 50 percent in its size, is operating efficiently, at the present time we are adding to the fleet by one large water bomber, primarily because of the pressures caused by this summer's requirement, but will probably be regarded as being an overall good acquisition, saving of course some better development such as a national firefighting force that could be mounted at the federal level or by the armed services or by the private sector that would have a mobility that could provide some sort of small proportion of each province's requirements and move back and forth across the country as the requirements arose. That is one of the features that we would like to see developed, regardless of whether it's at, as I say, by the federal government, the armed services or some mobile force that could represent a smaller

proportion of the total nation's requirements and be available for mobility across the country as it was required. Until that arises our decision at the present time is that we probably will retain this service in the government air service.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: I wonder if the Minister could advise whether there has been any change in the administration, the head of the government air division, or whatever the term is. It used to be a Mr. John MacDonald and I'm just wondering whether that person is still in that same capacity as he was for so many years in the previous government, and whether there's been any change?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. CRAIK: The head of the air division, Mr. Chairman, is Norm McCoy.

MR. EVANS: Is Mr. John MacDonald connected with this air division in any way?

MR. CRAIK: No, Mr. Chairman, he is located in the Department of Highways. He's not in the air division.

MR. EVANS: The Minister says he's located in the Department of Highways but my understanding is it is the Department of Highways and Transportation. Is the Minister, just to clarify, saying that Mr. John MacDonald, who used to, if not being the director of the air division, was connected somehow with transportation services, is he no longer connected with such services in any way or, in other words, if he's still in the department, is he totally removed from air service?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the member is correct in that the air division is within the Department of Highways and Transportation but Mr. MacDonald is not in the air division. I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I gather that Mr. MacDonald is in Government Services. The head of the air division is Mr. McCoy.

MR. EVANS: With regard to federal government contributions, I agree it would be very good if we could develop some sort of a national fire fighting capacity. It may be more efficient, I'm not sure. Has the government of Manitoba received any indication as to federal cost sharing on fire fighting, and I guess I'll have to ask with regard to the water bombing component, or the air service component of fire fighting, is there any indication from Ottawa as to some cost sharing in this aspect of fighting fires?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I can't give the member a fixed figure or proportion that has been indicated by the federal government. I can only indicate that the Minister of Immigration and Employment and the Prime Minister has also indicated their willingness to cost share on the fire fighting costs but it has not been resolved at this point in time what their proportion of the costs may be.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. R. (Pete) ADAM: Thank you, just one further question to the questions posed by my colleague from Brandon East. I'd ask the Minister if he could indicate, on the salaries, whether that is part-time people who have been brought in during the emergency, or how many additional permanent SMYs are we looking at?

MR. CRAIK: It represents an additional 7 people, Mr. Chairman, 3 pilots, 3 aircraft maintenance engineers, and 1 avionics technician. That represents the 178,000 contained in this item.

MR. ADAM: I would like to ask the Minister if these are permanent positions or only temporary positions during the emergency, or whether we are going to have these additional people on a permanent basis, whether or not the CL215 is in operation?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, they are permanent positions.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2—pass, Resolution No. 2—pass. Resolution No. 3, Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a further sum not exceeding 3,950,000 for Highways and Transportation.

Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets, 3,950,000, Item (c) Other, 3,950,000—pass — the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Would the Minister of Finance give us a breakdown of this item?

MR. CRAIK: That's the capital cost of the CL215; one CL215.

MR. EVANS: If I heard the Minister correctly, this is the cost of the CL215. There are no other physical asset purchase in this item. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution No. 3—pass. Resolution No. 4, Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a further sum not exceeding 5,000,000 for Natural Resources.

Forestry, 5,000,000, Item (e) Forest Protection, sub (3) Forest Fire Suppression 5,000,000—pass — the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, does this reflect the total cost of fighting forest fires this year or is it the additional amount of money required over and above some amount that had been estimated? I imagine that's what it is but I'm not sure. Could he advise the total amount of money, and this is surely an estimate, but how much money has been spent so far this year in fighting fires and, as I said, is this 5 million to supplement a previous item, and what is the total available then?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the total shown under this item, I think in the main estimates showed 1 million. We had 2 million in the first Supp Supply and there is 5 million here, which would bring the total to 8 million. That does not include, of course, the costs of the operation of the CL-215 and the other water bomber that is operated by Manitoba Government

Air Service. This item is for the manpower and equipment rental in the remainder of the firefighting operations. I might add that the original 3 million now is completely spent and we are starting on this special Supp Supply now of 5 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 4—pass; Resolution No. 5, Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a further sum not exceeding 500,000 for flood control and emergency expenditures. Flood control and emergency expenditures 5 million—pass — the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I think that was 500,000, not 5 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I apologize, 500,000.00.

MR. EVANS: At any rate, again, I wonder if the Minister of Finance would give us a brief explanation of this item; what additional flood control costs were there that requires this additional 500,000.00?

MR. CRAIK: Well, it comes under the item of flood control and emergency expenditures, Mr. Chairman, but it actually is related to the drought as well. It's the costs of the Red Lake evacuation to Winnipeg that took place from Ontario, and there were costs incurred with regard to that evacuation. These costs will be recoverable from the province of Ontario. But in the meantime, we have to show it as a cost because there is an expenditure and a cost incurred on the province of Manitoba, but it is recoverable from the province of Ontario, and the estimate of the cost is 500,000.00.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is the Minister telling us that the total cost of housing and generally caring for the people that came here from various points in Ontario to escape fires, that more or less the total cost is going to be covered by the Ontario government? Are they assuming the total bill, or are we, as good cousins, neighbourly citizens in this great country of ours, are we sharing part of that cost? Or is this a cost that's being entirely — I gathered from the Minister's statement, I just want it clear, that 100 percent of the cost of assisting the unfortunate people of Ontario who had to flee fires is being paid for by the Ontario government.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, we do expect to recover the full costs of assisting the Ontario communities that evacuated to the province of Manitoba and most of this item is consumed by that requirement, and most of it was associated with the Red Lake evacuation. I can't tell you offhand whether this involves reimbursement to the city of Winnipeg who were heavily involved in that service as well, but this represents an estimate of the cost to the province of Manitoba primarily associated with the Ontario evacuation and is shown here, on advisement, as a separate item in the estimates of extra cost.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution No. 5 — the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would ask the Minister if he could advise . . . last year there

was a program for flood assistance in Red River Valley and which excluded the other areas of the province, some areas which did sustain flooding problems, and there was no assistance available for farmers or farmsteads outside of the Red River Valley area, and I would ask the Minister, I know there has been some ongoing discussions with the federal government in this regard, and in fact I believe the Minister of Government Services did issue a press release or a news statement that he expected that there would be an agreement on extending the programs to other areas in the province, and I would ask the Minister if he can advise just when people can expect, or farmers living outside of the Red River area can expect assistance in this regard because I do know that there are a number of farmers who had to move their entire farmsteads away from flood areas, and also I do know that there are a number of people who are anxiously waiting for some kind of a program similar to what has been undertaken in the Red River Valley for diking and for the diking of farmsteads and for the lifting of approaches, access roads and so on. I wonder if the Minister could give us some information as to what stage these discussions are at the present time.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the province has agreed in principle to moving outside of the Red River Valley on the flood protection programs. We have asked the federal government to cost-share; we do not have a decision back from the federal government on that cost-sharing. We have also asked municipalities to advise us on designated areas for this assistance. We do not have yet, back from the municipalities, complete advice on that matter, but the province is prepared in principle, to move in that direction. So we're waiting on those two final decisions before we can give a final undertaking to a community such as the community of Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: I wonder if the Minister could put a price tag on what kind of a program is he referring to? How many dollars would be involved? Do they have a figure that they are working on? I am just wondering, would it not be advisable then to let the public know that they should be in contact, any people who require financial assistance for diking of their farmsteads, etc., that they get in touch with the municipality, in order that the municipality can bring that information forward. Otherwise, if the public is unaware that a municipality is conducting some survey, they may miss the entire program.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I can't give the member any more information at this point, because the two major items are still unresolved, principally the cost sharing, but there is an undertaking, or agreement in principle by the province to undertake these kinds of projects in areas outside of the Red River Valley and as soon as we have the agreement on the items that I have indicated we'll have more information available.

MR. ADAM: Yes, just one last question. I know that last year there were some farmers who had to move their entire operation from one location to another, in fact, I do know of one farmer who had to spend

around 100,000 in order to move his operation from where he was. He just could not take it any longer and he had to move out. I'm just wondering whether or not this program will be retroactive to 1979, in order to cover those people such as this one resident that I happen to know of who had to undertake an expenditure of somewhere around 100,000 in order to move his farmstead and buy another farm and so on, and move all the buildings and whatever was required, but there was quite an extensive investment that he had to make in order to stay in business. I am wondering if there will not be some assistance retroactive to pick up some of those costs that should have been picked up really last year?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I would just point out that it's not a compensation program, it's a protection program. It wouldn't be intended to go back and pick up old claims for compensation. The intent of the program is to provide protection against future damage.

MR. ADAM: That raises another question. I understand, Mr. Chairman, that in the Red River Valley there were some buildings that were moved from one location to another. I'm just wondering if there isn't a conflict here of one program where, I believe, now I stand to be corrected, but I understood that there were some buildings that had been moved to different areas and that the costs were picked up and this is what I'm talking about.

MR. CRAIK: That, Mr. Chairman, comes under protection not compensation for damage but rather protection against future damage.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution No. 5—pass. Capital Expenditure. Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding 24 million for various capital purposes. Schedule A, The Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation, 19,300,000—pass — the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister, by way of introduction, could explain how this 19.3 million will be used. I'm sure it's related to the drought but, at any rate, there may be other elements in here. I thought there may be some additional lending by the MACC to drought-stricken farmers who are short of cash or whatever, but at any rate could we have an explanation?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, relative to the drought there are no additional requirements under the MACC, if this is the regular MACC requirement and comes under the self-sustaining debt as indicated here, I don't think there is any further that can be added to it. It's a fairly regular annual amount that is voted to the MACC and comes to the total of 19,300,000.00. If I can just add the Insulation Program, the 3,700,000, is an indication of the continued demands on that program. That's the program administered by the Manitoba Hydro and charged to the Hydro ratepayer if they avail themselves of this loan program. It's at a preferred interest rate that makes the upgrading of heat conservation in their homes very attractive, and we

estimate that the demands in that program this year will lead to some 3.7 million of renovation.

The other item, 1 million, the Co-operative Loans and Loans Guarantee Board Guarantees of 1 million is again, at this point in time, I don't think anything that can be regarded as being anything other than an ordinary request for capital authority under self-sustaining debt.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the honourable members, the Honourable Minister has brought in the other items under Schedule A, so I'll read them off and we'll handle the whole Schedule A as one, and you can ask questions on any item.

Insulation Loan Program, 3,700,000; The Co-operative Loans and Loans Guarantee Board Guarantees, 1,000,000—pass — the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: I have a general question. What about the other government agencies, Crown Corporations that quite often require Capital Supply; Manitoba Telephone System, Hydro, Water Services Board on so on, where are they? Is there another schedule to come or are you not borrowing for them this year?

MR. CRAIK: There will be some borrowing, Mr. Chairman, but there's enough capital Carry Forward Authority in the Schedule A's, with their reduced capital requirements they have enough Capital Carry Forward Authority to satisfy their needs. I might add on that we've been fortunate in the last 12 months that with the reduced capital programs that we have not had to go into the markets to borrow money during this high interest period and, of course, the interest rates are still, in relative terms, fairly high. We're not having to come back and ask for authority for any additional requirements. That does not mean that the Crown corporations will not be borrowing. I think in fact that they will be borrowing for their requirements, or the government will be borrowing on their behalf, but there is no additional authority required from the Legislature.

MR. EVANS: One question then for clarification. In effect the Minister is telling us, Mr. Chairman, that the 24 million here, as shown in Schedule A, is the total borrowing requirements for 1980-81 by this government — authority.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, no, that's not the case. The borrowing requirements will be higher than that undoubtedly. This is the additional authority required for the Schedule A borrowings, and the borrowing requirements are not indicated by this amount. This is the additional authority that is required for these Crown corporations that are listed here to go out and borrow money above the authority they now have. Other Crown corporations have a carry forward authority that they can exercise.

So we can put this into perspective, Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate what carryover capital authority he has for the various major agencies and corporations?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: I thought perhaps if the Minister wanted to reply to the member I would yield the floor, but I wanted to ask the Minister, and he can answer while he's getting the information that he requires. I want to ask the Minister, what is the policy on the lending rates for the MACC loans, because I understood that it was during Agriculture estimates, I believe, it was one percent above prime that we were advised that it would be, but since the prime rate in the banks has stayed relatively high in comparison to the Bank of Canada's lending rate, I wonder if the . . . what is the policy as far as the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation is concerned? Is the Manitoba rate lower than what the interest rate at the bank is?

MR. CRAIK: The usual rate, Mr. Chairman, is to the likes of the Water Services Board and the Agricultural Credit Corporation, is about 1/4 higher than the rate at which the province borrows, which would place it generally below the bank prime rate, and this is set periodically, I think it's quarterly that it's set by the province. I think this question was asked earlier in the session as I recall, and the last rate to the Agricultural Credit Corporation, the Member for Lac du Bonnet may be able to recall, I replied to a question, it seems to me it was about 10 3/4 percent or somewhere in that range, it was somewhere in the 10 to 11 percent range. I don't have a more recent number than that, but it generally speaking is just slightly above by about 1/4 the rate at which the province can borrow in the market.

MR. EVANS: I don't know whether the Minister answered my question, maybe he didn't hear it, and that is, how much Carry-over authority does the Minister have? If he gave me the answer, I didn't hear it.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I could get those figures for the member. I don't have them here. I announced in the budget that the total borrowing requirements of the government, including the Crown Corps, was in the order of 200 million this coming year, so that of course, what's shown here is 24 million, and the government's borrowing requirements will be dictated to some extent by the deficit that is incurred in this coming year, but at the time of the budget, we were looking at a total borrowing requirement, Schedule A plus government, of about 200 million. So to answer specifically his question, if he wants to know what existing authority there is, I can obtain that for him.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Schedule A—pass; Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

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

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Virden, that report of committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: 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 ways and means of raising the supply granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Ways and Means with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This committee will come to order. Committee of Ways and Means, Main Supply. Resolved that towards making good certain sums of money granted to Her Majesty for the public service of the province for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1981, the sum of 1,895,290,900 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund—pass — the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: I gather we don't have any bill or any piece of paper or any information on this. — (Interjection)— After we pass this resolution, then we see the bill and have a debate?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee of Ways and Means Supplementary Supply. Resolved that towards making good certain further sums of money granted to Her Majesty for the public service of the province for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1981, the sum of 31,095,000, be granted out of the Consolidated Fund—pass.

Supplementary Supply No. (2). Resolved that towards making good certain further sums of money granted to Her Majesty for the public service of the province for the first fiscal year end the 31st day of March 1981, the sum of 51,380,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund—pass.

Capital Supply. Resolved that towards making good certain sums of money for Capital purposes, the sum of 24,000,000 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund—pass.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Committee of Ways and Means has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report same and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Virden, that the report of Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. CRAIK introduced Bill No. 74, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1980; Bill No. 75, The Appropriation Act, 1980; Bill No. 23, The Loan Act, 1980; and Bill No. 106, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1980 No. (2).

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, if I might just rise on a point of order, we are now at the second reading stage and I wonder if it would be the desire of House first to, by leave, introduce it for Second Reading, have the bills distributed and then it is up to the wish of the Opposition or the members of the House as to which they might want to do.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there agreement? (Agreed)

SECOND READING GOVERNMENT BILLS

BILL NO. 74 THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION ACT, 1980

MR. CRAIK presented Bill No. 74, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1980, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. PETER FOX: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Lac du Bonnet, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 75 THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 1980

MR. CRAIK presented Bill No. 75, The Appropriation Act, 1980, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Brandon East, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: On a point of order, we have the printed copy of Bill 74, but we haven't yet received the other copies and I am wondering, inasmuch as

they are being introduced for second reading, are we going to be getting these copies this evening.

MR. SPEAKER: My understanding is the printed copies will be arriving momentarily.

The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I believe they are here and ready for distribution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: I wonder if the Minister would withhold reading the Capital Bill. You will have leave for the others, but just hold on to the Capital Bill, we will deal with it another day. You haven't come to that one yet.

**BILL NO. 106
THE SUPPLEMENTARY
APPROPRIATION ACT, 1980 No. (2)**

MR. CRAIK presented Bill No. 106, The Supplementary Appropriation Act, 1980 No. (2) for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

**BILL NO. 23
THE LOAN ACT, 1980**

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I would move on conditional leave that, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources, that Bill No. 23, an Act to Authorize the Expenditure of Money for Capital Purposes and Authorize the Borrowing of the same be now read a second time.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Conditional leave seems somewhat odd to me.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan on a point of order.

MR. FOX: I cannot understand the request of the Honourable Minister of Finance in respect to conditional leave. I can't give conditional leave. I am also aware that the Honourable Member for Inkster asked that it not be introduced now, so he already has his answer that he doesn't have leave.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to give leave. I hope that you will see me standing when the adjournment is requested.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister has asked for leave. Has the honourable member leave? (Agreed)

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if I could have some indication from the Opposition House Leader as to what bills they may be prepared to deal with at this stage.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker, if we can have about a minute or so, we will get a couple of members in here, and we will call Bills No. 47 and 79.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Brandon East is prepared to speak on Bill 76. It happens to be in the name of the Honourable Member for Gladstone. If, by leave, he can go ahead, then the Honourable Member for Gladstone can still keep the bill in his name.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there agreement? (Agreed)

**BILL NO. 76 - AN ACT TO AMEND
THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT**

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 76, An Act to amend The Consumer Protection Act. The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just have a few words to say about this particular bill. I have spotted a number of items in it that I would like to make some reference to.

First of all, I want to say generally, in my view, a consumer protection legislation is the kind of legislation that is relatively new in parliamentary business. I would say that it's probably come into its own in the last 10 or 15 years and that you have seen right across Canada, and at the federal level, various kinds of bills brought in to somehow or other protect the consumer against certain business practices that the consumer may be very very helpless in coping with. I think on balance that this kind of legislation is good legislation, that is consumer protection legislation, and I say that, Mr. Speaker, because I believe that generally speaking the buyer is at the disadvantage; the consumer is at

a disadvantage. I'm not suggesting that business firms are not prepared to be reasonable, I submit that most legitimate business firms are reasonable and do follow up in terms of the quality of the merchandise or the quality of the service that they offer and indeed are prepared to make correction, where necessary, if products are deemed to be faulty or the service was lacking in some way. But at the same time, we know that in this consumer-oriented society that we do have many many firms that perhaps are marginal and some of whose practices are subject to question from time to time.

I do believe the theory that the consumer is always supreme, the buyer is always supreme, is a rather fallacious theory. I believe that the consumer, in many ways, is manipulated by the producer. I'm thinking of the secondary manufacturing industry; I'm thinking of the basic portion of the economy of Canada and the United States where you have the rule of what I would call oligopolies, large corporations who innovate products perhaps and who do attempt to judge consumer needs and so on, but at the same time, do have a considerable amount of control. And I say that control is exercised through advertising and through other types of sales practices to influence the consumer somehow or other. I think, in many ways, the consumer is at the mercy of plans and procedures carried out by the large corporations, and certainly the large corporations seem to be very capable of controlling their prices. We do not, even in times of falling agricultural prices, of falling primary product prices generally, we do not at the same time see prices of the secondary industries dropping or declining. As a matter of fact, even in the face of what looks to be like a widening North American recession, we find manufacturing industries, including the automobile industry, ready to increase prices. There is no question that we do not have enough real or true competition in a great portion of our economy, particularly in the secondary manufacturing area, we don't have the kind of competition that you find in agriculture, for example, or some other primary industries. What we do have, therefore, is a large portion of our economy that, in effect, can somehow or other control prices; that do not have to suffer if you will, or experience if you will, real price competition. There may be competition for service, there may be advertising competition, there may be other non-monetary types of competition, but you do not see the same kind of competition that you find in the primary industry sector.

I say that, therefore, Mr. Speaker, it is the consumer that is manipulated and the consumer really, in many many ways, is at the mercy of the major producers, the major corporations. So I say consumer protection legislation is necessary. I think it's been recognized, as I said, in the past decade or so, that governments have some responsibility to assist consumers in offsetting certain bad business practices, certain procedures that, in effect, cause the consumer to be cheated.

The problem, as I see the legislation that we have, which is legislation that was evolved some many years ago when the New Democratic Party was in government, the trouble I see with a lot of the legislation is that there is very little teeth in it. There is a lot of opportunity for members of the

department to become involved at the request of consumers who are agreed, for whatever reason. But, my experience in dealing with some constituency problems is that the staff can do very little to help those particular consumers who, for whatever reason, felt that they were hurt by some particular business.

I have two cases dealing with insulation problems, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency and these were brought to the attention by the constituents to the Consumer Bureau. And, because there was not direct solicitation of sales involved, apparently the department could do very little to help those particular buyers, those particular consumers. I am not faulting the staff, I know the staff are conscientious and I know they did try to help these particular people that I speak of. But, it seems to me that about all they could do was to appeal, in effect, to the business involved, at least according to these constituents, virtually shafting them in the process, providing service that was not adequate. I'm talking of two problems relating to insulation of houses.

So, as hard as the staff may try to help the aggrieved consumer, it seems to me that there is very little, in most cases, maybe the Minister can correct me, but it seems to be that in most cases the department can do very little.

Talking about the Amendment before us, Bill 76, I see that there are some changes that may be worthy of note. Many of the changes are minor, they are perhaps keeping the department in step with inflation, but in Section 1, which refers to Clause 1(b) of the Consumer Protection Act, there is now, as I can see it, there seems to be some protection taken away from a certain category of buyers. According to the Act, according to this legislation, as I see it there is some protection being taken away from buyers of goods and services who purchase those goods and services for carrying on their business. And I wonder why that particular group is now excluded from this Act. I can imagine many cases where business persons, who purchase goods and services, may need the protection of this Act, particularly if you are dealing with the bulk of Manitoba business, which happens to be very small enterprise, over 85 percent of our enterprises can be classified as small business.

So I don't know why the Minister would want to discriminate against this particular category of consumer, if you will, a consumer who, in turn, may be a producer, and I don't know what the implication is in this respect.

And I see elsewhere the bill wishes to single out the role of the Department to be involved in mediation of a dispute between buyers and sellers with respect to warranties and I am wondering what effect this will have, the mediation of disputes relating to warranties. The director of the bureau, or whatever the section of the department is called, is the responsible official. And, again, I'm wondering why do we have to make reference to the director being the mediator of warranty disputes. It seems to me, in many ways, this is what the department does, it attempts to mediate, it attempts to use its good offices. And while there may be some successes the point I'm making, Mr. Speaker, is that in many ways there is no teeth, no effective mechanism, that the department can use to really and truly bring about

consumer protection. I appreciate that there is a fine line that has to be followed, you can't go too far one side or the other of that particular line, but, I believe, at the moment we are rather weak in some aspects in attempting to protect consumers.

Again, there is reference made in the Act to a director, or a person who would again be involved in the mediation of complaints. And again, I say this points out to the relatively weak approach of the bill, and that is the role of the conciliator, the role of a mediator, the great emphasis on moral suasion. And I say, with all respect, Mr. Speaker, to the good intentions of the department, and of the staff, that moral suasion is sometimes not effective. And, in deed, it seems to me in the case of these two constituents moral suasion was no effective whatsoever and I wonder why we couldn't put more teeth into the Act.

I would like, in one area in particular, to make reference to the role of contracting services. There are many many people involved in contracting work, in construction work, physical construction work in this province, and they need no licence to get into business, there is no requirement for them to be bonded, all they need to do is advertise that they are in the business of construction. And, Mr. Speaker, there are just too many people who are in getting into that business perhaps who have no right to be there. Because we have many instances where these would be construction contractors are not able to deliver the goods, are not able to fulfil contracts And many, either verging on bankruptcy or going into bankruptcy, but in the process, hurting consumers by not providing adequate repairs or construction to their homes or garages or whatever it is that these would be building contractors are involved in. And I think it is high time. I don't know whether it could be under this type of legislation or particularly what specific legislation, but I think it's high time that these building contractors be bonded. There's just too many fly-by-nights in this business. I would say that, generally speaking, we have a very good building construction industry in Manitoba and that there are some excellent contractors, legitimate operators, but as I say, there is no mechanism whereby you can screen and keep out the fly-by-night and it's these that are not only hurting Conservatives but they're hurting the legitimate contractors as well.

I suggest that it would be useful for the Minister to look into this matter. There are different ways he could get information on this, both through his own department and perhaps through the federal government's department, dealing with Consumer Affairs. There are just too many people being hurt by would-be building contractors. I think there's need to bond these contractors, that's one step in the right direction, and there may be need also to licence them in some way or other to help ensure that we have bona fide people entering that particular service or business.

I believe that the Department of Consumer Affairs can be more helpful to the people of Manitoba if it would disseminate more information. Why not single out some of the bad firms? Why not single out some of the firms that have not dealt with their customers adequately? Why not put ads out in the paper?

Now the Better Business Bureau tries to fulfill a role in that respect. You can phone the Better Business Bureau and ask them about the rating of a certain company or other, and that's fine. But I think that the public would be well served, and indeed the industry would be well served, if there was some dissemination of information of companies that are operating in a way that's less than satisfactory. I think we'd all be better off.

I think that in the area of automobile repairs, in some provinces I know there are, I believe British Columbia and Quebec and I'm not sure about Ontario, are quite aggressive in attempting to pin down would-be automobile service companies that are selling the unwitting consumer, the unknowing consumer, unnecessary parts, whether it be shock absorbers, brake relinings, whether it be batteries, or what have you. There are many many people who don't understand what's under the hood of a car and can be sold just about anything if they're told that it's necessary to have this part replaced.

It reminds me of an experience I had myself, Mr. Speaker, where I went to — and I'll mention the name of the company — a Canadian Tire store in the downtown area of Winnipeg, to purchase some tires, and in the process I said, I'd like you to check my brakes to make sure that they're adequate, that there shouldn't be any replacement of parts for the brakes and so on; I want to make sure that I have good brakes, I'm going on a trip and so on — this is two years ago — and indeed they did check the brakes for me. And as I said, I was intending to purchase tires as well. At any rate, as it turned out, they didn't have the kind of tires I wanted, but they did check the brakes. I paid them, I don't know, 5.00 or 6.00 or whatever it was, some small amount, for that service, because they had to take the wheels off to inspect them and so on. I said, well, that's fine, I don't need to have a brake relining job — is that the expression?

I had to go to the other Canadian Tire store to get the tires. So I went to another part of the city the day after to get the tires, and in the process of the tires being changed, the wheels had to be taken off, and a gentleman in a long white coat came up to and says, you know you need your brakes relined. I said, well, that's incredible, I just paid 5.00 or 6.00 to another store for this very purpose, to find out whether I did need my brakes relined. He said, oh, yes, you definitely need them. I said, well, before I do anything I paid to have this checked out, I'm going to go back to the original store. So I completed my purchase, I got my couple of tires, and the next day I went back to the original Canadian Tire store. I talked to the manager and told him what had happened. I said, you told me I don't need new brakes, and yet I've been to your associate store to get these tires because you didn't have the tires that I wanted, and I was told that I need brakes, so what is it? He was very disturbed at this and said, we'll look into this immediately. He got the mechanic that was involved, and all three of us, the manager, the mechanic and myself, we all looked at it, and he went over it carefully with an instrument, and so on. He said, sir, you do not need any brake improvement or any brake adjustments or any brake parts. So I say, this is one small example.

I believe that there are just too many consumers being sold unnecessary automobile parts. Quite often the average driver, I believe, does want to keep his or her automobile in good shape, and particularly if they're not too familiar with mechanics, they will quite often agree to the replacement of shock absorbers or an exhaust system, or whatever, even though that replacement was not called for. I do believe that there are some provinces who take a very aggressive approach in this matter, because they know that there is a lot of abuse going on; I cite Quebec in particular, and I believe, British Columbia — I don't have my notes with me — but I believe there are a couple of provinces that are prepared to act in a very aggressive fashion to protect consumers of automobile parts and supplies.

At any rate, I repeat, Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is a need for more information. Let the department single out some of the companies that are abusing the consumer, that are hurting the name of the industry. I'm sure for every one bad apple there are 20, 30 good apples, and I think generally speaking we have a good service sector in Manitoba. We have good people, generally, in industry; we have good people, generally, in the service sector, but there are some operators that are less than desirable and it's these few perhaps — and maybe not so few sometimes — that we all have to be concerned about, both for the consumer's welfare and for the benefit of others who are in that particular industry group.

Mr. Speaker, I've made a few suggestions, offered a few thoughts. I don't know whether the Minister is interested or not, but I repeat, there's not enough teeth in the consumer protection legislation that we have in this province and it's time we tightened it up. As I said, specifically, we should be bonding building contractors because there's just too many people being ripped off by fly-by-night operators, and I think in the area of automobile repair, in particular, there is need for us to help the consumer who may not know enough about automobile maintenance and repair to be taken to the cleaners, so to speak, in purchasing unneeded parts.

I'm quite aware of the Latin phrase, 'caveat emptor' — let the buyer beware. I agree, let the buyer beware, but I think that society does expect government to play some role in assisting the consumer. The existing Consumer Protection Act has gone a fair way in that direction, but as I stated, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to see us go even further and have more meaningful consumer legislation than we have today.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there agreement to have the bill stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Gladstone? The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I adjourned the bill because the Honourable Minister was not able to be here. Consequently we will pass on if anyone else wishes to speak; otherwise we will go to committee.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MRS. JUNE WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to speak very briefly on this, and that is to express my concern that the Minister has not dealt with the computerized pricing code. I believe that this is where it would come? I beg your pardon? Well, I couldn't find it. I wonder if the Minister could tell me where that section is. I have read the bill and I could not find the item that deals with the computerized code. All right. It says, in such a manner as may be required by the regulations. Did the Minister, in his opening remarks then, deal with this? All right, I wonder if I could have a copy of those opening remarks please, Mr. Speaker? Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: I just have a few comments to make on Bill 76, Mr. Speaker. I want to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. What bill are you referring to?

MR. ADAM: I think we're on Bill 76.

MR. SPEAKER: That's right, yes. I misunderstood the honourable member.

MR. ADAM: I believe, Mr. Speaker, that it's time that we have some clarification as to consumer protection as far as pricing is concerned in grocery stores. I believe, by and large, the large shopping centres and the wholesalers, the jobbers, would like to move towards the scanner type of pricing, and there is some concern. The bill does not clarify how this is to be achieved. There are consumer groups that have suggested that they would like to be able to see the majority of goods priced in grocery stores so that they can compare prices, so that when they're going around doing their shopping, they know what they're buying. They know what their budget is, they know how much they can spend, and if the goods are priced, they are able to make a comparison and they are also able to know just how much they are spending when they are loading up the carts, rather than get to the cash register and find out that they've purchased a lot more goods than they had anticipated.

I believe that the legislation provides that this be done by regulation. There's one section here on the disclosure of cash price of goods or services would cover, I believe, the pricing of goods in grocery stores. And there is some concern by the small rural stores, Mr. Speaker, that because this is left to the discretion of the Cabinet, and that it be done by regulation, that they may have to price every item in the store. So there has been some concern expressed to myself by some rural storekeepers in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, I can't believe that Cabinet would pass regulations that would require every item in the store to have a price tag on it, if that is the intent. It doesn't say here that it's going to be done. It only says that the cash price of goods or services may be required by regulation, and it doesn't indicate whether it should be done. I'm suggesting that there should be some protection for people who do their

shopping, that the price be indicated. However, there is concern by some of the grocery stores that if that were to be required, that everything in the store would be required to be priced, and there are some things that are never priced in a store, Mr. Speaker, such as soft drinks and chips in bulk and bread is never priced — there may be one price tag on a whole cabinet — and gum is never priced, and penny candies are never priced. There are some legitimate concerns by some merchants that this could happen.

By the same token, Mr. Speaker, the larger stores and the larger chain stores and, I believe, jobbers would like to see that section out of there. I am sure the Minister is going to get some representations that this be done away with. They don't want anything that would stop them from bringing in the scanning system of pricing and they're worried that the Minister may do it by regulation. I don't see anything here that indicates that system is going to be brought in, Mr. Speaker, but they're concerned that some government in the future may do that. So they are going around, I understand, Mr. Speaker, they are soliciting the support of small rural merchants, to seek support to have this bill amended or even defeat this bill, Mr. Speaker. I believe it is because these small rural stores have not had proper information or communication on this particular bill. In fact I have sent out a few copies to some of the stores who have contacted me on it and I am trying to indicate to them that they have no . . . I can't surmise that any government would come in with that kind of regulation. I don't think that this government would or any government in the future would come out with some unreasonable regulation that would be a hardship to merchants.

By the same token, I believe that there is some concern on the part of the jobbers and the distributors, the wholesalers, and they would like to see this done away with because they want to come in with the scanning system as soon as possible. Of course some small stores would not be able to afford the cost of putting in the kind of system that would price their goods by scanning. So I just want to bring that to the Minister's attention, that I have had representations and I'm sure that he will as well.

Another point I want to bring to the Minister insofar as consumer protection has to do with a few years back we brought in consumer protection for farmers to obtain parts for their farm machinery, particularly during harvesting season. We brought in legislation, I believe, over the opposition of the Opposition of the Day. It was brought in by the former administration.

Mr. Speaker, the same problem is being experienced by truckers, transportation, the people who are in the business of transporting goods in the province of Manitoba and other provinces. From time to time they have the same problems as the farmers have in obtaining parts in order to keep going and, Mr. Speaker, there are times when great big tractor units are tied up for a month or two waiting for parts. So here is another area where we should be coming in with some kind of consumer protection. I don't know how, what kind of a bill.

I think the Member for Brandon East did touch upon it insofar as the parts and services from garages, but the member did not touch upon the

availability of parts and this is what I'm suggesting now, that if you require certain parts, especially for a big tractor unit where the trucker is held up for months on end trying to get some part way down in the United States, I think there should be more responsibility. When a trucker pays 70,000 for a machine, he should be able to obtain parts within at least a reasonable period of time and not be held up for a month or a month and a half.

So with those few comments, I just wanted to bring to the attention the concerns that have been made to me and I bring them to the attention of the Minister, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: If there agreement to have the bill stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Gladstone?

The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I suppose that one should get used to standing in their place and speaking to a bill such as this, after having gone through the amount of legislation or non-legislation, I might say, that we have during the past three sessions, and I do believe that this particular bill is typical of the efforts or, again, the non-efforts on the part of the government to play an activist role in society. It's ironic, it's almost tragic that these amendments are being brought forward in regard to a bill that is called the Consumer Protection Act. Because these amendments, taken as they are, are not going to do that much to protect the consumer.

The Minister laughs. I don't know why he chuckles. Perhaps it is because we have gone through this conversation before; perhaps it is because we have discussed these very same items and someone from the back bench says "many times", and many times more I can assure you, because as long as there is an opportunity to put forward a philosophy and an opportunity to put forward ideals, I will do so, and I will do so because that is part of the role and the legitimate function of an Opposition MLA.

But that aside, let us talk, not what my role or my function is in this chamber, because I know, Mr. Speaker, that you like to run a tight ship and keep us speaking to the bill, let us talk about this particular set of amendments. We can talk about it in a number of regards, but I would like to talk specifically about the items that the Member for Ste. Rose just addressed his remarks to, and that is in regard to pricing and that is in regard to a new technology that is coming on-stream, a new technology that is bringing with it, as do all new technologies, certain problems.

Now, that is not to say that the technology itself is wrong, nor is it to say, as will be suggested and has been suggested from time to time when anyone provides a critique of certain technologies, that that person is anti-change, that person is old-fashioned, that person does not wish to see new processes, does not wish to see progress. That is not the case at all. But I for one, and I know many of my colleagues and I'm certain many of the Minister's colleagues like to see this sort of concept brought in in an orderly fashion and with the least negative impact. Now many times there is unavoidable negative impact with technological change. In the workplace we see it all the time, where you see a

new process, it comes in, that puts people out of work. Well this is indeed, when we talk about computer pricing, perhaps one of those processes and I would suggest that if one looked at the results of where computer pricing has been brought in full effect, one will see that it has had that impact of throwing people out of work because of the technological achievements that are made. But that's not in this bill and that's not the responsibility of the Minister. That's worker protection. That's the responsibility of the Minister of Labour who has some very good, sound, enabling legislation dealing with technological change that he can put in place. —(Interjection)— Why do I want to talk? Why don't you want to talk about it, that's the question; not why do I want to talk about it, but why do you not want to talk about it? Why do you not want to face up to the problems of a modern society that is rapidly undergoing constant and consistent change? Why do you not want to develop techniques and powers and legislation regulation to deal with that, to try to channel it?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If the honourable member will address his remarks to the Chair, I would appreciate it.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Speaker, I would address my remarks to the Chair but I know you're not of the same opinion. —(Interjection)— Now you should deal with that, Mr. Speaker, because one of your — I'm not certain whether it's proper to call him your colleague, well, one of the members of the opposite side have said that you are but that is something; I don't want to put you in an unfair advantage, as he has had, of trying to make you explain yourself.

I want to talk about this bill and I want to talk about what computer pricing can do to the consumer and I want to talk about what action can be taken by an enlightened and progressive government, and I don't use those terms very often in the same sentence when talking about that Progressive Conservative government that sits opposite us from day to day, and that's about all they do is sit. This legislation is a typical example of a sit down government; a government that won't stand up and take a stand; a government that won't bring positive forces to come to play.

But what does this particular amendment say? And I don't have it before me and that's somewhat of a disadvantage. I don't have the words before me but I can tell you, because it's just a very short clip, what it says. It says that if the Minister so feels that it is necessary in a time future to come, because of computer pricing, he will be able to, by regulation, put in place certain items and certain regulations and certain restrictions on computer pricing.

Let me read it out directly so that we have no problem with it whatsoever. It is under the title of Disclosure of cash price of goods or services. "2.1 The cash price of goods or services or both shall be disclosed by the seller to the buyer or high purchaser in such manner as may be required by the regulations." Here, you can have that back, because it's not much use to me and it's not much use to the consumer, and it is not much use to the society at large.

What are they saying here? The Minister has indicated that they are talking in regard to computer pricing and why phrase it in this sort of terminology? He said, we have used these words because we don't know: (1) whether computer pricing is going to be a problem; and (2) the inference that one can take is they don't know what they are going to do about it if it is problem. So what they are saying, and it's a saw-off, that's a proper terminology, Mr. Speaker; it's a saw-off amendment. What they're saying is if at some time in the future we have a number of complaints in regard to computer pricing, we have the opportunity to put in regulations. Why couldn't they proceed in a different manner, in a more positive manner? Why didn't they write in this bill . . . And they have the staff and the people to provide the proper wording, which I don't, so I'm going to throw it out in conceptual terms rather than in language that would be in a bill, but the impact or the effect should be the same. Why can't they say that we recognize that with advancing technology problems sometimes occur and we are dedicated to the protection of the consumer and, therefore, if it is deemed to be a problem, the government will do what it can in order to alleviate that problem?

Now, a quick glance at what I said and a quick glance at what is written in here would not show up the subtle differences which I intend to put on the record, and the subtle differences are, in that way you are dealing with it in the positive sense, in that way you are putting a principle down, and legislation should have principle; there is nothing wrong with principle.

We had a discussion about The Public Schools Act, I believe, the other day, and the Minister responsible for Education said, well, this is a pragmatic bill, there is no philosophy in it, and the implication is that there's no principle. This is the same sort of legislation.

We are going to find ourselves faced with that problem invariably. Every jurisdiction that has had computer pricing come in has been faced with two problems. One problem is the employment, the impact that it has on employment, and the other problem is the impact it has on the consumer being able to best realize the price of the item that they are paying.

Let's look at what the computer system does: (1) The price is in a computer bank. There is a whole set of lines on it and there is a scanner that the clerk has, and as the clerk runs that scanner across that set of coding or that set of lines, that goes into the computer and the computer kicks out a price for that particular item. You can pick that item up on the shelf and you can walk from the shelf to the cash register and the price can change. If there is no price on that particular item as it sits on the shelf, the price can change. All someone has to do, sitting maybe 1,000 miles away . . . It may even be an automatic change. Let's look at this example. Say they had two inventories in. The shelf inventory was bought at a certain price, the new inventory was bought at a different price, and they can have this figured out to the specific item as to when the price should change. Say you're walking into the store, you happen to pick up the inventory change and as you walk to the counter the price changes on you. That is not a figment of my imagination. That is a reality and

that can happen, and the consumer should be protected against that price hike being unknowingly imposed upon them, and you can do that by legislation that points out very specifically the need for that, and this legislation does not.

I was hoping that the Minister of Highways had something that he could add to the debate in that regard because perhaps I'm wrong but that's how I understand the system and, if there is not a price on the item, how are you to know? They will extend the system into more sophisticated system, where perhaps underneath each item that's on the shelf there will be a little digital readout. That little digital readout will give you the price of that item and while you're walking to the counter at the same time, that digital readout could read and you get to the counter and you say, hey, this price here is not what it was when I was back there at the shelf, and you can walk back and it will have changed also because they can intermesh all this electronic sophisticated methodology in determining price, and the consumer becomes a victim of the technology. And that is what the bill should do; it should protect the individual consumer from becoming a victim of that kind of technology and that is not what the bill does do.

I believe that the item has been discussed in some detail. I wanted to put those specific remarks on the record because I had not heard them before, although that does not mean they were not placed on the record before. But I feel it is important enough, even if they were, to take this opportunity to make certain that it is a part of the record. There are many people who are concerned about this. I know the Minister has received representation from a senior citizens group in this regard. I know because they have sent members on this side copies of that representation and petitions and statements and they are quite concerned about the effect that computer pricing will have on them. Why is that group so concerned? Well that group is so concerned because they are the ones who, because of the makeup of our society, are forced to live in many cases on less than adequate incomes and so they watch every penny and pennies mean something to them, and that is why they are concerned about the manipulation of pennies that can go on because of sophisticated technology that they have no control over. They are never going to get control over it.

The senior citizen or the person who is concerned about this — and it doesn't have to be a senior citizen — can walk into a store and can say, I don't like that computer pricing, and what do you think that store manager will say to that person? What would you say if you were the store manager? You have a lot of money invested in that computer pricing. You would tell that particular person to go to another store. You'd say look, there is a Safeway down the block; there's a Payfair down the block; there's a Seven Eleven down the block; there's a Family Store down the block, if you don't like my store, go somewhere else. We've all been told that from time to time when we complained. We've all heard that sort of suggestion sincerely given from management. So the consumer has no control in that regard. As a matter of fact, if this technology blossoms, which it has in every other jurisdiction that it's been brought into, what will happen is the manager of one store will say go to another store;

you'll go to that other store and the technology will be there, the computers will be there, and they'll force you to another store, and another store, and another store.

The Minister is chuckling again, because he thinks that's a funny scenario. I don't believe it's so funny. I think it's a possibility. —(Interjection)— What am I trying to tell you? I'm glad you asked that question. I missed what the First Minister had to say. The First Minister had to say, try the gum store in Moscow. I would suggest to the First Minister that he try some of the stores in South Africa, or in Chile as it stands now, because that's where his heart and soul is.

The arrogance of the government is coming out more and more and more every day, Mr. Speaker, and I don't want to digress because I know you want to keep me to the subject matter at hand, but I feel it's necessary sometime to answer the ludicrous remarks that are cast across this floor in as best a manner as possible, and I would suggest that they only discredit their authors; but that's another point and that's for the public decide, and I am certain they will.

Let us get back to what is not for the public to decide and that is the introduction of computer pricing. Now, if the First Minister had been here at the beginning of my remarks, he would have understood, or at least he would have heard, I'm not certain he would have understood. He would have heard me say that technology can in many respects be a positive thing. It can be a positive addition to our society but we have to watch out for the negative impacts.

What I am trying to lay out and put before us and discuss is some of those negative impacts and how the government, how this legislation can best deal with that. I don't think that should be too difficult a task, although dealing with this particular government, I have realized that they don't always listen to reason nor to fact, nor to the specifics of a case. They many times are locked into an ideological stance that does not allow them to move, and I think this bill is an example of that also. They don't want to protect the consumer. They are not concerned about the consumer that's told to go to another store —(Interjection)— Or the Manitoban who is told to go another province, interjects the Member for Transcona, and he's correct about that. That's another speech for another time. —(Interjection)— No, the same place; another speech for another time.

What I wish to point out is that is within the realm of power of the government to do something about this problem, and they have chosen not to. I can only suggest that it is a conscious choice, that they don't want to do anything about the problems that come associated at some times with the developing technology. They have once again proven it with this particular bill.

I would like to talk just to one other specific of this particular section and that is in regard to how the government's going to act if it may be required, and I assure them it will be required, and that is, they are going to act by regulation. What is the difference between legislation and regulation? Legislation gets debated in this forum. Legislation gets brought before a committee for the public to make representations, so the store owner from the constituency of the Member for Ste. Rose can come

and say, this is a problem that I may face if you bring in this particular legislation. —(Interjection)— They are broke all over, Mr. Speaker. I mean, the Minister of Highways has made perhaps the most accurate statement that he can make and that's to say the people of this province are broke, but — (Interjection)— Just in Pete's area, just in the Member for Ste. Rose's area, now they're telling me. Well, that will remain to be seen.

Legislation provides an opportunity, regulation does not. Regulation is made behind some closed door in some room. The typical expression is a smoke-filled room. I'm not certain that it is any more, but in some closed room in a closed circuit, and it is not subject to either debate in this House — unless it's brought in, in an indirect way; it's not subject to direct debate in this House — nor is it subject to public representation. I believe that this issue, which is an issue that can be isolated and an issue that can be pointed to as symbolic of many of the issues that we face, is exactly the type of issue that needs public representation; is exactly the type of issue that needs public input; is exactly the type of issue that needs an extended and comprehensive debate by members such as are assembled here, and also those who would wish to come before committee. I believe that because it is a major issue and I believe it to be worthy of more than the two and a half lines that it is given in this particular Act.

The Minister has been promising us for a Session now, two Sessions, because we brought in a bill, the Member for Logan brought in a Private Members' bill last year in this regard. I am not certain whether it was debated. Was it debated in the House? No, it never made it to be debated in the House but I can assure you that it was more comprehensive than this. I can assure you that it provided a better mechanism for dealing with this problem than this, and that is a statement — I believe a very profound statement — as to the difference in philosophy between the members who sit opposite and the members who sit on this side. I believe that this is in keeping; again it is the typical type of bill which we have grown to expect, a do-nothing bill, a denial of the fact that there is a problem, but you can't deny a problem categorically. They are caught betwixt and between the rock and the hard place when they know that there's a problem, but they know they don't want to do anything about the problem. They don't want to behave in an activist way, so they find themselves forced to bring in this sort of nebulous statement which means nothing, will do far less, and can only cloud and confuse the issue rather than provide some positive action to deal with the issue. It's happened too many times in this House to let it go by unchallenged and that is why many members on this side have stood and spoke to this bill, and that is why we had hoped some others from the opposite side would have, but we have been disappointed but not surprised by their lack of participation.

Having said that, I had promised myself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be brief. I think I have accomplished that. The only reason I throw that in my speech, Mr. Speaker, is it always gets me applause. It always gets me a tap on the table. I can't understand —(Interjection)— The Minister of Highways has said that they have come not to believe me when I tell them I'm going to be brief and

I've just told them I going to brief, so thank you very much.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs will be closing debate.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, just a couple of words, there were a few points that were raised during the course of the remarks that I just want to deal with. The Member for Brandon East made some reference to a provision in the Act that provides for the Director of the Consumers' Branch to carry on mediation. I think I explained, if he'd read my remarks or was in the House when I introduced the bill, and the same holds true with the Member for Ste. Rose, if they had been in the House when I had introduced the bill they would have heard me explain that particular provision. The purpose of that provision is to provide in the bill something that the Directorate Branch is doing already. One of the most effective ways of settling complaints and settling disputes between the buyer and the seller, the lender and the borrower is through mediation and we have found that during the course of the years that type of mediation does more to effect a settlement between the producer and the consumer than all the court cases in the world. So we are simply providing in the bill that opportunity for the director of the Consumers' Branch to officially carry on that function. That's one point.

The second point that was made by the Member for Churchill, who has a capacity to see problems in almost every aspect of our lives. I have never known anyone that could see so many difficulties in such a short time as my honourable friend. I would think that if the honourable member was on this side of the House — and God help that it ever happens — that he would have a policeman following every car in the country to make sure that they don't go over 30 miles an hour or 60 miles an hour, or whatever the case may be. He would follow them all over just in case they exceeded the speed limit.

Now rational common sense, which seems to be lacking in my honourable friend, tells you that you cannot do that; you simply cannot do that. Society would not pay the cost of it, in the first place, and your consumers would not stand for it; the public would not stand for it, but that's what he's suggesting, Sir, that's what he's suggesting. He even has the audacity to admit that he has never seen a computer check-out counter. He has never seen one of those stores that is using the system and yet he poses in this House as an expert. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to him that he should go and watch one once in awhile, to learn how it operates before he comes in this House and tries to tell everybody here how the thing operates. He might learn something.

There has not been one single complaint coming to my office, Mr. Speaker, not one single complaint coming to my office, Mr. Speaker, not one single complaint coming to my office about the computer system. There have been complaints from the Consumers Association, from other people, about the labelling, the pricing, and that's all. Nobody complains about the scanning system. The scanning system is a technological advance that is a benefit to the consumer and to the retailer as well, and nobody is asking me, nobody has come to me and asked me

to try and stop that system. They have had, I think, legitimate complaints with respect to the pricing. And all this amendment does, with respect to the labelling, and all this amendment does, is to give me the opportunity to deal with that particular situation and to attempt to remove the source of that problem. That I intend to do, and that's why the provision is in the bill.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that problem perhaps will even be taken care of by itself. I think that the retailers will recognize that the problem exists and at the present time there are only three stores in the city of Winnipeg, three stores in Manitoba, that have the computer scanning system. There is one in Garden City, one in Charleswood, one on Pembina Highway. Two of them are Loblaws, one of them is a Food Box. And these are the supermarkets that are, if you like, doing the pioneering in this whole question of computer scanning. We've been monitoring them very carefully. We've been talking to the people who shop there and we've been attempting to find out just what their complaints are, having determined that there are complaints, having determined that there is some uneasiness. And there's always uneasiness when there is something new put on the market, when there's a new technology that has advanced. Until the public are accustomed to it and know what it's all about there is, and will be, uneasiness. My guess, Mr. Speaker, that once they become accustomed to it, once they understand how it operates, there will be no more difficulty with the scanning system than there is with the present system, not in the least. But I am not waiting to take that for granted. I am placing in this bill a provision that will enable us to deal with it if we have to, and that's what the provision is there for. I am not concerned about all of the hair-raising stories that my honourable friend tells in this House, how terrible this system is.

Every new technology, according to him, is a disaster for society, and yet, every new technology that is developed in this country is a benefit to society. He'll never accept that. He'll never accept that. He is not the kind of a person that wants new technology. He wants us to turn the clock back forever and forever. If my honourable friend had his way we would all be using buffalo chips for fuel in this country, back to the old days. That is the time that we would have the purest of society. But I can tell my honourable friend that kind of a society is not acceptable to the people of this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: I wonder, Mr. Speaker, if the Minister would be kind enough to submit to a couple of questions in regard to his statements.

MR. JORGENSEN: My friend knows that he has plenty of opportunity to ask questions when we get into committee, but I do not object to him asking questions if it's going to satisfy his ego.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Speaker, I assure you it's not to satisfy my ego and I'm not even certain it will satisfy my curiosity, but I'll ask the questions just the same.

The Minister indicated that he was amazed that I had a capacity to see problems in every new technology. I would ask the Minister point blank if he does not see how certain problems could arise with the particular technology that we are talking about in regard to computer pricing. The question is very specific. Are there not problems that could come about as a result of this new technology?

MR. JORGENSEN: No greater, Mr. Speaker, than there are problems with present technology, no greater. All that is required is an opportunity to accustom oneself to it and to understand it. Once you understand the system then it becomes very easy to live with.

MR. COWAN: So is the Minister then saying the only problem he perceives that could accompany the introduction of such a system to be one of understanding?

MR. JORGENSEN: The one problem that we see right now, the one that is being identified and the one that's being dealt with in this bill. That's the only one that's been brought to my attention. That's the only one I can foresee with respect to the scanning system.

MR. COWAN: If the Minister will take the opportunity to peruse my contribution to the debate he will find that is the only problem that I have talked about. But I will allow him the opportunity to read what he obviously did not listen to.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, will you call Bill No. 82.

BILL NO. 82 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE CLEAN ENVIRONMENT ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 82, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for The Pas.

The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make a few comments on the principle of Bill No. 82, An Act to amend The Clean Environment Act. I am especially pleased that the Minister responsible for the Environment and the Minister of Highways are in their seats and that the Minister of Environment is in such good aggressive spirits this evening, so he'll be able to listen and comment on my contributions.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a lot in Bill 82 in terms of the principle of the bill. Basically what it does, is allows the province, the officials, to in fact move in when there is an environmental accident and to have dangerous chemicals removed. It also allows the Minister to make regulations in terms of hazardous chemicals. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address myself to both the principle of the bill and the intent of the bill. I think that this is the bill that the Minister

was promising us was going to do something significant in terms of the kind of problems we dealt with in the province of Manitoba. But basically, Mr. Speaker, what we have is a bill that does a little bit to strengthen the hand of government in terms of protecting our environment and does a little bit to weaken the strength of the people to protect themselves and to protect our environment.

Mr. Speaker, I think basically, the intent of the bill in realistic terms is to demonstrate or to make it appear as if the government is doing something in relation to the environment because, Mr. Speaker, this government and this Minister have been very hesitant to make any moves, to take any action. They would rather sit back and rely upon the statements of industry and the advice of industry in terms of our environmental protection. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't blame industry, because certainly the industry wants to protect their sales, wants to protect their production of certain chemicals and certain hazardous materials. So I don't blame the industry, Mr. Speaker, I would blame the Minister and the government in terms of not taking proper action, in terms of not being familiar enough with the problem in order to take appropriate action and having to rely solely on the advice of industrial people.

An example, Mr. Speaker, in terms of this bill being very limited and not going far enough and not doing enough, and the intent of this government in terms of environmental matters, I think an example that demonstrates the problems that we are going to have with Bill 82 relates to the chemical 2,4,5-T. I'm sure that the Minister of Highways would like to hear a few comments on that chemical as would the Minister of the Environment.

Mr. Speaker, earlier on in this session, when we dealt with the estimates of the Minister in regard to the use of hazardous chemicals, my colleague, the Member for St. George, asked the Minister a number of questions in relation to the use of 2,4,5-T, and on Friday, May 2nd, 1980, the Minister of Environment indicated at that time, and I quote from page 3200 of Hansard, "It is our intention to effect a ban on 2,4,5-T," that is the Minister of the Environment speaking. Later on in the same series of questioning, the Minister indicated that "we will be asking for their co-operation, that is, the other departments, in getting the message through to farmers that we are going to be recommending the banning of 2,4,5-T."

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was a pretty clear indication from the Minister of the Environment in terms of the intent of the government, as Bill 82 is supposed to be an indication, in terms of the intent of the government. But, Mr. Speaker, it seems that when the Minister checked with his colleagues, the Minister of Highways especially, and found out that the Minister of Highways had 2,4,5-T in stock and was intending to use it, then the Minister had to back-track from his proposal. And that is rather strange, Mr. Speaker, because the Minister of the Environment in his comments, talked about that he was not going to get himself in the same position as the Minister responsible for the Environment of Ontario did. The Minister said, "I'm not going to get myself into that kind of situation like the Minister of Environment of Ontario did," so we have the situation where the Minister said he is going to ban

the use of the chemical 2,4,5-T and then we have the Minister coming back to this House and saying, "Well, we're not going to ban the use; perhaps the use of 2,4,5-T isn't dangerous."

Since the Minister of the Environment hasn't been willing to say that much in terms of what he is going to do in terms of his earlier statement, it's fallen on the Minister of Highways who is a firm believer, Mr. Speaker, that there is no danger, that there is no possible harm from the use of the chemical 2,4,5-T, so I guess the Minister of the Environment must be relying upon the Minister of Highways' expertise in this particular area to his advice that there is no problem and no danger in the use of 2,4,5-T.

Now what does the Minister of Highways, Mr. Speaker, base his reliance on? He bases reliance on two particular documents. He bases his reliance on the review of safety for the use in the U.K. of the herbicide 2,4,5-T. This —(Interjection)— Yes, the Minister of Labour is quite correct, Mr. Speaker, we have been through this before and we'll probably be through it quite a few more times, because his Minister of Environment has said that there was going to be a ban on the use of this chemical. And his Minister of Highways says there are no problems with this chemical, but then he comes and asks us on this side of the House, well, what are the problems? I mean, I got my information from the people connected with the chemical industry in the U.K., who say there are no problems, and the Minister of Highways says, I have my information from Dow Chemical that there is no problem with this chemical, so what are you guys talking about? I mean, if Dow Chemical says it's safe, certainly this chemical must be safe.

Mr. Speaker, the Advisory Committee in terms of the United Kingdom, which the Minister just said again, is the document that he relies upon for his opinion that the use of the herbicide 2,4,5-T is completely safe. And, Mr. Speaker, what does the Advisory Committee say? In their letter of transmission of this report, which, Mr. Speaker, is not a scientific study, but a review of existing studies, a review of existing data, a review of existing documentation, that was done previous — in fact, Mr. Speaker, in 1978 they made their initial recommendations that they didn't think that this was a harmful chemical, and this document was forwarded on March 7th, 1979, so the review of existing data was done before March 1979, and most of the review was done in 1978, Mr. Speaker.

In the letter of transmission, in the document that the Minister relies upon for saying that the use of this chemical is safe, it says: You will see that we envisage further reviews in the light of any new data, e.g., the report of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released last week following field studies on miscarriage rates in Oregon which is yet to be evaluated by the advisory committee". So, Mr. Speaker, the Minister's source, what the Minister is relying upon to tell this House, to reassure the people of Manitoba that the use of 2,4,5-T is safe and to convince himself that the use of 2,4,5-T is safe, the people that prepared the review of the studies say that there is new information available that must be evaluated by them.

The other document that the Minister of Highways relies upon, Mr. Speaker, is Dow Canadian Inside

Edition which is a P.R. magazine put out by Dow Chemical. Mr. Speaker, in their article in this magazine of April . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Highways on a point of order.

MR. ORCHARD: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have never referred at any point in time in the House to the article that the Member for The Pas has attributed to my information package.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, we know that the Minister of Resources and that the Minister of Highways, from their action, from their comments, we know that the Minister of the Environment depended quite heavily, in terms of his information with the vinyl chloride spill, on Dow Chemical; and we know that the Minister of Highways and the Minister of the Environment have not been willing to say that there are other studies available that show that 2,4,5-T is harmful. The Minister of Highways stood up and said, "Well, show us where there is one study. Show us where there is one study that shows that 2,4,5-T is harmful". So, Mr. Speaker, I'm making the assumption that he is relying upon the information that comes from the industry which, of course, says that the use of this chemical is safe and is relying upon the British study which is a review that was done basically in '78 that says that their information and the data available is outdated when they transmitted that information and that further review is required in light of the new information that has become available.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recommend to the Minister of Highways and to the Minister of the Environment a document that I'm sure they have, because the Minister of the Environment says that they will be monitoring and getting the information from the U.S. hearings that are going on now. The Environmental Protection Agency has filed their preliminary brief, their preliminary documentation which quotes a number of studies on the effect of 2,4,5-T. Mr. Speaker, I would recommend that the Minister of Highways add that document to his reading list, as should the Minister of the Environment. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, I really appreciate the help from the temporary interim Member for Thompson, that he is able to provide us with here this evening because I'm sure that the Minister who represents that part of our province should be concerned, should be concerned on this subject, Mr. Speaker, because the people of northern Manitoba are the ones that the Minister of Highways is using the chemical 2,4,5-T in northern Manitoba. He's not using it in southern Manitoba, he's using it in our constituencies, not in southern constituencies. So I'm sure that the Minister of Labour is quite interested in this subject in terms of his own constituency and the people in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, what the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency, studies and I don't think I'll list all the scientific documentation or scientific studies that they referred to within their brief, but it covers a number of areas in relation to the use of 2,4,5-T. Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the use of 2,4,5-T by the Department of Highways in northern Manitoba.

There is also a considerable use of 2,4,5-T in southern Manitoba by local government agencies, by weed control districts, etc. The Minister of the Environment has the authority now to deal with this chemical and he has the authority also to issue approval for the use of this chemical by the local government bodies. It is my understanding that 18 municipalities were applying for approval to use 2,4,5-T for spraying along roadsides for brush control purposes, and the last time I asked the Minister a number of approvals had been given for the use of the chemical.

The Environmental Protection Agency of the United States in February, 1979, suspended the uses of the herbicides 2,4,5-T and Silvex, which is a similar chemical, and issued notice of intent to cancel regulations of the use of these chemicals. Why the Environmental Protection Agency was suspended for the forestry, rights-of-way and pasture uses of 2,4,5-T and the home and garden, aquatic weed control/ditch bank and commercial/ornamental turf uses of silvex which, Mr. Speaker, is the uses that we use 2,4,5,-T in Manitoba. So the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States has banned the use of 2,4,5-T for those uses that we use this chemical for in the province of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, similar bans have come from the province of Ontario, from British Columbia, from Saskatchewan and from New Brunswick. As I indicated earlier, our Minister of the Environment said that a similar ban would be taking place in the province of Manitoba. So, Mr. Speaker, what does the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States say to the Minister of Highways, say to the Minister of Environment in terms of the use of the chemical, 2,4,5-T, they say basically that the dangers in the use of 2,4,5-T outweigh the advantages of the use of this chemical, the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States based on studies that they report upon in this report which I believe that the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Highways have at their disposal. If not, Mr. Speaker, perhaps we could provide him one from this side of the House to go along with the information they have from the U.K. study and from the Dow Chemical information that they have available to them.

The Minister of the Environment, during his estimates, when talking about the environment, said it is better to be safe than to be sorry. And yet, we have the Minister now saying that it's better to be sorry than to be safe and the Minister of Highways supporting him in that particular position. So I'm asking that the Minister would take a look at the evidence on the other side of the case. You have the evidence coming from Dow Chemical which, of course, is biased and you have the evidence coming from the Environmental Protection Agency which says that the use of the chemical, 2,4,5-T, is in fact harmful.

The summary of the position of the Environmental Protection Agency says that the use of 2,4,5-T and silvex on forests, rights-of-way, pastures, rangeland and rice, and the use of silvex on rice and fruit crops and other uses of these herbicides pose a risk of a wide range of adverse health effects on humans. This conclusion, and based upon animal toxicity data corroborated in part by newly developing epidemiological data, which show that human

exposute to these chemicals may result in cancer, increased susceptibility to disease through suppression of the immune response, and increased risks of bearing defective children or of terminating pregnancy by miscarriage or stillborns. Because the use of 2,4,5-T and silvex results in distribution of these chemicals to the environment in which they are used humans may be exposed to these chemicals and, therefore, at risk have experienced the adverse health effects reliably reported in exposed laboratory animals and exposed human populations.

Mr. Speaker, they divide their evidence in a number of categories. One is the exposure of test animals, which is a laboratory experimental way in terms of the testing. The exposure of test animals to TCCD, which is the dioxin which is contained within the chemical 2,4,5-T as part of the manufacturing process, or silvex induces cancer or tumours indicative of cancer risks, anatomical birth defects such as cleft palate and abnormal kidneys and other genital affects, gestational affects such as stillborn animals and early death among newborn animals and suppression of the immune system. Moreover, TCCD exerts fetotoxic and teratogenic affects not in one animal species only but in each of the three species in which it has been tested. Laboratory studies clearly demonstrate that TCCD is toxic at very low levels of exposure.

The most recent study gives indication, Mr. Speaker — and the Minister will be interested in this because the Minister has said that it is only the dioxin within 2,4,5-T that is causing the problems — 1. That the dioxin causes problems at very, very small dosages; 2. That the most recent studies indicate that the pure 2,4,5-T without dioxin in fact can be a carcinogen. Mr. Speaker, I think that's the kind of information that the Minister of the Environment should be looking at.

Mr. Speaker, besides the extensive animal testing on rodents, on monkeys, etc., which show that there are birth defects from 2,4,5-T, that 2,4,5-T is a cancer-causing agent within the use of animals for experimental purposes, the other nature is to look at the areas where humans have been exposed either accidentally at the workplace or accidentally when spray of the chemical 2,4,5-T has drifted when it has been sprayed.

Mr. Speaker, the workplace tests in areas of manufacturing of 2,4,5-T demonstrate or show that in fact that 2,4,5-T is a cancer-causing agent. I quote again from the EPA study, Mr. Speaker, "At least six recent separate epidemiological studies have found a significant relationship between exposure to 2,4,5-T, silvex, indoor TCCD and cancer or reproductive disorders in human populations."

Mr. Speaker, the study goes on to report in detail the various studies that demonstrate this affect and the Minister, if he refers to his document which I am sure he has now, can get the exact source of the studies for his use.

One of the studies is the study of LC Oregon, which is a timber area where 2,4,5-T has been sprayed quite extensively by the Forestry Service and the timber companies. The statistical study, the data study, shows that the number of miscarriages and the number of birth defects increase within the months, the two months after the spraying season of the chemical 2,4,5-T.

Mr. Chairperson, you can experiment on animals and you can experiment on rats and monkeys and those test results show the negative effects of 2,4,5-T. You can't experiment on human beings but, Mr. Chairperson, you can look at the data that is available and, as I mentioned, the data comes from industry, from industrial workers, from areas where there has been accidents with the use of the chemical and from areas where the spray has drifted into populated areas so that people have been affected. And that study shows that the chemical 2,4,5-T has affected people in the area where it is used, in the area of miscarriages, in the area of birth defects. Mr. Speaker, I believe that study meets the criteria of the Minister of Highways in terms of a scientific data.

Of course, we also have available, Mr. Speaker, the Dow Chemical Company submissions — (Interjection)— I really appreciate the help from the Minister of Labour and the Minister of whatever she has left. I really appreciate their help, Mr. Speaker. So we do have the submissions from the Dow Chemical which questions the studies that the EPA reports. We have the EPA studies which question the studies that Dow Chemical relies upon to make their case. But I think the clear case, the clear situation is, Mr. Speaker, is that there considerable doubt about the safety of human beings in areas where 2,4,5-T has been used and the studies have shown that 2,4,5-T has negative effects on test animals. Very harmful effects on test animals and the data that's available suggests that similar effects happen to human beings with a fairly minimal or a fairly moderate exposure to the chemical, 2,4,5-T.

The other data that we have available is that within the province of Manitoba, according to the Federal National Research Council of Canada Study, indicates that 2,4,5-T is found within the water systems of the province of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The EPA Study also demonstrates that this chemical does not dissipate into the atmosphere, does not disperse at the level that the Dow Chemical Company has maintained that it has. More recent studies show that, in fact, there is longer-termed effects on the environment, in the soil, in the water and in fact the rate in which it passes through the human body and through animal bodies, traces of the chemical, 2,4,5-T. So, Mr. Speaker, there is enough doubt from the studies that are available that reasonable objective people would be doubtful about the safety of the use of this chemical, 2,4,5-T, within the province of Manitoba. Until there is evidence, scientific evidence, that show and demonstrate that this chemical is safe, I think we should follow the advice of the Minister of the Environment and be safe rather than sorry and follow the example of the Environmental Protection Agency of the United States and follow the other provinces in Canada that banned the use of this chemical. In the province of Manitoba, until we can assure ourselves that the use of this chemical is safe, that we should put a ban on this chemical. The Minister should give notice now that after this season is done that, in fact, he will put a ban on the chemical so people are not ordering and renewing their supplies of the chemical. He should give notice that that ban is going to come into effect before the next season when it's time to use this chemical.

Tuesday, 8 July, 1980

Mr. Speaker, the bill before us, Bill 82, does a little bit. It looks like it does more and in light of the actions of this government and of the Minister of Highways and the Minister of Environment, I don't see this bill having very much effect at all because they are not willing and not able to use the information that they have to protect the people of Manitoba.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried, and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning. (Wednesday)