

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**  
**Monday, 2 June, 1980**

Time — 2:00 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**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

**HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside):** Mr. Speaker, for the information of honourable members I should like to table several copies of the provincial fire report for this date.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Notices of Motion . . .

**INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

**HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West)** On behalf of the Hon. Gerald W. J. Mercier, introduced Bill No. 78, An Act to amend The Executions Act, The County Courts Act and The Provincial Judges Act; and Bill No. 77, The Family Law Amendment Act being An Act to amend The Queen's Bench Act, The Family Maintenance Act, The Judgments Act, The Marital Property Act and The Real Property Act and to repeal The Parents' Maintenance Act.

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

**MR. SPEAKER:** Before we proceed I should like to at this time introduce 22 members, ages 14 to 16 from the School For The Deaf, under the direction of Miss Irene Zdrill. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable First Minister.

We also have 37 students of Grade 5 standing from the Gillam Elementary School, under the direction of Mr. Doerksen. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Churchill.

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

**ORAL QUESTIONS**

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

**MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Can the Minister of Labour advise whether or not negotiations are still under way pertaining to the strike involving the Manitoba Health organizations, the Manitoba Health Services Centre and CUPE?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson):** Mr. Speaker, I'm not specifically aware whether they're at the table or not, but I understand that the union is having some type of membership meeting this morning. That's really all I know about it.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Labour advise whether or not he has received a report from a conciliation officer, or indeed has he appointed a conciliation officer to work in the dispute?

**MR. MacMASTER:** A conciliation officer has been working for quite some time, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, has the conciliation officer reported to the Minister?

**MR. MacMASTER:** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, has the Minister undertaken at any stage to call the parties to the dispute into his office for discussions or to assist the process of negotiation?

**MR. MacMASTER:** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise why the conciliation officer has not reported after, I understand, a number of months of work?

**MR. MacMASTER:** It's not routine that a conciliation officer report day by day on a set of proceedings such as this, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a seventh question.

**MR. PAWLEY:** My question didn't relate to day by day, but whether he had not received any report at any time from the conciliation officer?

**MR. MacMASTER:** That wasn't the original question, Mr. Speaker, and the answer is no.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, is the Minister prepared to establish an industrial commission of inquiry as provided for in The Labour Relations Act for such disputes?

**MR. MacMASTER:** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Inkster.

**MR. SIDNEY GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister to whom the Manitoba Development Corporation reports. Mr. Speaker, I note from the hearing of committee that the Minister indicated that moneys with respect to McCain Foods, that the commitment was given in 1979. Is the Minister not able to confirm, or is it not a fact that the agreement to advance moneys to McCain Foods took place some time in 1976-77?

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**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport.

**HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye):**

Yes, Mr. Speaker. I haven't had a chance to read the Economic Development Committee report as it came out in Hansard, but I think it was clearly understood by the members that were present at that time that the loan was negotiated, I believe, and the final commitment made in the latter part of '76 and '77, and the funds were not disbursed to the McCains Food Company till I believe somewhat a year and a half after negotiations were completed in the year of 1979. So I agree with the member that that is precisely right. It was back in 1976-77 that the negotiations took place and the commitments made but the money wasn't drawn down until 1979.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Inkster.

**MR. SIDNEY GREEN (Inkster):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the Minister of Municipal Affairs with respect to the Local Government District of Alexander. Has the Minister yet decided whether he himself is going to make some motion to have this matter referred to the Committee of Privileges and Elections or other actions which would follow on the basis of the statements in the letter sent out by Mr. Vincent, being scrutinized by him.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister for Municipal Affairs.

**HON. DOUG GOURLAY (Swan River):** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question raised by the Member for Inkster, I would like to advise that just today I received some information from legal counsel and it is my decision not to refer the matter to committee. As a matter of fact, to add further, the local Government District of Alexander held a meeting on May 28th, passed a resolution requesting the Minister of Municipal Affairs to transfer the Administrator Richard Andries by August 1st at the latest, but at the same time they have asked that he return to work as soon as possible, and I'm hoping to fulfil those wishes of the counsel.

**MR. GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, has the Minister been able to ascertain whether the allegations made by Councillor Vincent are true, and if so, regardless of what the district says, since there's a new councillor been chosen, would the Minister re-assign that administrator to the district, with his knowledge as to that person's involvement in securing the elimination, in effect, of the local government district councillor.

**MR. GOURLAY:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to the allegations made by one Councillor Vincent, information that I've received, he has indicated to officials from my staff, that because of his situation with respect to his health, that he in no way accuses Mr. Andries of forcing him to resign. He doesn't feel that he wants to pursue that. As a matter of fact, now that his health is better, he doesn't feel that the statements he made are accurate.

**MR. GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that Mr. Vincent made these allegations in writing, does the Minister have a repudiation of these allegations from the same man who made them in writing?

**MR. GOURLAY:** No, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

**MRS. JUNE WESTBURY:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to repeat my question to the Minister responsible for Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, my question of Friday; since he didn't answer it, I presume he didn't understand it, and therefore I would like to explain that the question refers to two proposals which were made in August and September of 1979; one by a group of independent grocery retailers and one by a local developer relative to the provision of a grocery store on property which is controlled by the government at York and Garry. When can these people expect a reply from the Minister to these two proposals please, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Orders of the Day. The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

**HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek):**

Mr. Speaker, they have received a reply, but they haven't replied back to us.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Transcona.

**MR. WILSON PARASIUK:** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that when the Minister of Health sat on this side of the House he repeatedly used to ask the former Minister of Labour, Russ Pauley, to intervene and get involved in strikes when they took place, can the Minister of Labour inform us as to whether the Minister of Health has asked him to get involved in the Health Care dispute in order that it may be resolved through collective bargaining, rather than back-to-work legislation?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**MR. MacMASTER:** Mr. Speaker, I can't vouch for the words or the expressions or the terms that were allegedly used by the now Minister of Health a few years ago. He is on this side of the House, where he will be for many years, so I am dealing with him on this side of the House, not what he did in the past.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Obviously the Minister of Labour doesn't read. If he looks in Hansard he will find the comments of the Minister of Health with respect to those types of statements. My question is to the Minister of Labour: in view of the fact that in 1976 a hospital strike at the Health Sciences Centre was resolved through collective bargaining through the active involvement of the Minister of Labour at that time and it was publicly acknowledged by both sides that his intervention was a constructive one that led to a constructive resolution of that dispute through collective bargaining, will the Minister of Labour

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finally get off his posterior and get involved in this particular dispute which is in fact . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. Order please. It is incumbent upon all members of this Assembly to observe the rules of debate of this Chamber, and I would hope that the honourable member would use his language wisely. I don't think that questions that are antagonistic or develop a sense of antagonism are such that would tend to improve the level of debate in this Chamber. I would ask the member to use his language wisely.

Orders of the Day. The honourable member with a final supplementary.

**MR. PARASIUK:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. This is my second supplementary. I would like to rephrase the question in the light of your advice. I thought I was being genteel in using the term posterior. If that offended you I am sorry.

I would repeat my question to the Minister of Labour. Since there are precedents whereby the Minister of Labour in previous administrations, using The Labour Relations Act, involved himself in health care disputes and resulted in the constructive solution of that dispute through collective bargaining, will the Minister involve himself in this particular dispute with a view to ensuring that the collective bargaining processes have a fair chance of working without having this government do nothing and then bring in back-to-work legislation, because they will not involve themselves constructively in the collective bargaining process?

**MR. MacMASTER:** Mr. Speaker, I respectfully suggest that I probably know as much about the collective bargaining process as the entire group of opposition does put together. I think the collective bargaining process is taking place and I choose to let it take place the way it is right today.

**MR. PARASIUK:** In view of the fact that negotiations have been unilaterally broken off by the Manitoba Health Organization on Thursday — (Interjection)— I'll repeat my question to the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that negotiations were unilaterally broken off last Thursday by the Manitoba Health Organization and have not resumed, in view of the fact that the negotiations between the Health Sciences Centre and CUPE have broken off on Saturday, is the Minister who is responsible for The Labour Relations Act willing to use the provisions of that Act and call both parties back to the negotiation table, as is provided for in The Labour Relations Act, of which he is the Minister responsible?

**MR. MacMASTER:** Mr. Speaker, the longer the Member for Transcona speaks, the more he emphasizes to this House how little he knows about the negotiating process. —(Interjection)— If the Member for St. Johns has a question about something about which he knows nothing, and wishes to involve himself in negotiation, then he can stand up.

The negotiating process, Mr. Speaker, has periods within it where both sides decide to break off, and apparently that's what happened at this particular time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. May I point out to the Honourable Minister that the use of language by all members in this Chamber is as important on the government side as it is on the opposition side, and I would hope that the Minister would choose his words wisely when he is replying to questions.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. PETER FOX:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the Minister's ego in which he claims he knows so much about labour relations, can he tell us what he is doing to solve the problem?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The question is repetitive.

The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

**MR. HENRY J. EINARSON:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question that I would like to direct to either the Minister of Tourism or the Minister of Highways, but I think I'll try it on for size for the Minister of Highways. It relates to Americans coming into Manitoba as tourists, and I've been given to understand, Mr. Speaker, when they see the sign, either 90 or 100 km, they are not sure what it means. They think maybe it's 90 miles an hour in the French language, or 100 miles an hour in the French language. I'm wondering — and I direct this to the Minister of Highways — if he could give us any information as to whether or not it sounds reasonable or practical to put up a sign on the point of entry, explaining our metric system, something that none of us here in Manitoba, I don't think we're in favour of, so that the American tourists will be educated to the point of knowing how fast they can go without receiving a ticket for speeding.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

**HON. DON ORCHARD (Pembina):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to check with my department first off to find out the incidence of American tourists receiving speeding tickets for travelling at 90 miles per hour. I can appreciate their confusion upon entering the country, because as you and I well know, Mr. Speaker, the United States of America has not proceeded with metric as we have in Canada, and that no doubt to some people, particularly ones from further south States it will no doubt be somewhat confusing to come to Canada and see 90 and 100 posted when they are so used to miles per hour. They may well automatically translate that into being miles per hour in Canada as well. I will undertake to investigate the number of speeding tickets that are issued to Americans if it seems as if we are running into a problem with our American tourists. I will take the Member for Rock Lake's proposition to post signs at the border explaining our metric system in miles per hour, kilometers per hour, very seriously.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Churchill.

**MR. JAY COWAN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour. Earlier in the question period the Minister indicated that a

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conciliation officer was appointed some time ago. My question to the Minister is if he can elaborate upon that answer and tell as to approximately when that conciliation officer was appointed. Was it a week ago or two weeks or a month or two months ago, if he could elaborate it to that extent, I would appreciate that information?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**MR. MacMASTER:** I don't know the exact date, Mr. Speaker, but I can get that for the member.

**MR. COWAN:** Mr. Speaker, if this matter has proceeded as it has in the past, that conciliation officer would have been appointed some time ago. Is the Minister willing to confirm or willing to suggest that that conciliation officer was appointed in fact more than one month ago from the current time?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Orders of the Day. The honourable member with a final supplementary.

**MR. COWAN:** That is an important question, Mr. Speaker, as the conciliation officer must make a report to the Minister within one month unless it has been otherwise agreed to by the parties involved that that should not apply. I would ask the Minister to check into that and report back to the House to see if that process is unfolding as it should by legislation.

My final supplementary to the Minister is: Can the Minister inform the House as to whether or not he has assigned staff from his department, the Department of Labour, to monitor the dispute that is currently taking place between the Health Science Centre and the Manitoba Health Organization, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, and then can he elaborate on any reports he has received back from that staff in his own department?

**MR. MacMASTER:** No, I haven't, Mr. Speaker.

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

**MR. SAUL CHERNIACK:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Labour, who has rejected, apparently, the appointment of an Industrial Disputes Enquiry Commissioner, whether he has considered the appointment of a Conciliation Board.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**MR. MacMASTER:** No, I haven't, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact the Minister, who is not sure of how long ago his Conciliation Officer was appointed, has indicated that he has not received a report from the conciliator, nor has he considered the appointment of either an Industrial Relations Commission nor a Board of Conciliation; is that an indication then that the Minister is quite satisfied that the process of negotiation has not reached the stage where any precipitous action on the government's part is warranted?

**MR. MacMASTER:** I think, Mr. Speaker, that the negotiating process is going through, in this particular case, one of its most difficult stages and I am prepared to let it work its way through that stage.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Orders of the day. The Honourable Member for St. Johns with a final supplementary.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister, recognizing as he apparently does that the negotiations are now at a stage which is not uncommon and he is prepared to let it go at that, does he not feel that he would be better informed and better able to respond if he had had a report from his conciliation officer?

**MR. MacMASTER:** I think in my humble opinion, Mr. Speaker, I've answered the questions respectfully enough in this particular case.

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

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. Would the Honourable Minister inform us whether or not he has studied the public pronouncements of his colleague, the Minister of Health, to ascertain in his mind whether the negotiating process is being endangered in any way by the public statements about fair offers having been made, and in view of that would he not be prepared to get a report from his conciliation officer so we would know whether there has been any adverse effect on negotiations because of these public statements?

**MR. MacMASTER:** I am satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that the negotiating process is working to the best of its ability under the circumstances in this particularly trying time.

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

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health. Can the Minister of Health advise when he met with the Manitoba Health Organizations and how many times he has met with the Manitoba Health Organizations?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**HON. L. R. (BUD) SHERMAN (Fort Garry):** I last met with labour relations representatives of the Manitoba Health Organizations on Friday last, Mr. Speaker, and I have met with them frequently and regularly since becoming Minister in October of 1977.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Can the Minister advise when he's met last with the Health Sciences Centre?

**MR. SHERMAN:** I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, did the Honourable Leader of the Opposition say the management of the Health Sciences Centre?

Mr. Speaker, I have met frequently with the management of the Health Sciences Centre as I have with the management and administration of many other hospitals, but not in this particular connection.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, then in view of the fact the Minister has met with the Manitoba Health Organization pertaining to this particular dispute, can the Minister advise whether he's met with the Canadian Union of Public Employees pertaining to this dispute?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Not pertaining to this particular dispute, Mr. Speaker, but I have met with representatives of and spokesman for the Canadian Union of Public Employees during my term of office.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I take from the Minister's answer, though, he's confirming that although he has met with the Manitoba Health Organizations pertaining to this dispute, he's not met with the other party, the Canadian Union of Public Employees pertaining to this dispute. In accepting that that was his answer — he's shaking his head; I'll allow the Minister to respond if that's not so.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I am shaking my head to indicate that that is not what I believe I said. I have met with the Manitoba Health Organizations frequently and regularly, and I met with them as recently as last Friday, but that is an ongoing process that is conducted between the Minister's office and the management of the health facilities in this province.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a fifth question.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Can the Minister advise whether or not he discussed negotiations with the Manitoba Health Organizations in that meeting?

**MR. SHERMAN:** I think it would be safe and accurate to say, Mr. Speaker, that we did not discuss negotiations. We discussed the general climate in the health community.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a sixth question.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise why he has met with the Manitoba Health Organizations in order to discuss the general situation pertaining to the present impasse and has not met with the Health Sciences Centre representatives?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I have said that I do meet with Health Sciences Centre representatives regularly. The meetings with the Manitoba Health Organizations are briefing meetings to apprise, to keep the Minister informed of the situation in general among health facilities in the province.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister still advise, in view of the fact the Health Sciences Centre does not use the Manitoba Health Organizations as a bargaining group representing them, whether the Minister has received similar briefing from the Health Sciences Centre, not represented by the Manitoba Health Organization, as he has received from the Manitoba Health Organization pertaining to the other hospitals in the province?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, the Health Sciences Centre administration and management and board meet regularly with me on a variety of problems relative to the operations of the Health Sciences Centre, and I have met with the Health Sciences Centre in that capacity as recently as last Friday. There are a number of issues that confront us at the present time with respect to the Health Sciences Centre, not the least of which is the redevelopment program and not the least of which is the forthcoming legislation dealing with The Health Sciences Centre Act.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Health. In view of the fact that when he was on this side of the House and he used to ask the then Minister of Labour to involve himself in industrial disputes, could he indicate why he has not asked the Minister of Labour to involve himself in this health care dispute so that we may resolve this problem through collective bargaining and reinstate our level of health care to its past state of mediocrity that has existed under the Minister of Health?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I won't deal with the postscript to that question which is entirely incorrect in my view, but with respect to the basic question, I suggest to the Honourable Member for Transcona that one makes one's decisions in terms of the context of disputes. The context of this dispute is different from that of many other disputes. Further to that, there has been direct Ministerial intervention in a major labour dispute in this country in recent weeks and I think that there are assessments and evaluations of that intervention which give us all cause to consider whether that's a prudent course of action.

**MR. PARASIUK:** In view of the fact that the Minister of Health has intervened three times in this dispute, first by setting an arbitrary ceiling; second by saying that the management offer was fair; and third by threatening back to work legislation, is he not prepared to encourage his Minister of Labour to constructively pull the parties together to try and resolve this dispute through collective bargaining?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, the best information that I can obtain, and I don't say it's infallible but I seek the best that I can get, is that this dispute will be settled by the collective bargaining process and that the interests of all Manitobans will be best served by that procedure.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Highways.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday, the Member for Ste. Rose posed a question about PR 260 and, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to reply that as a result of requests since 1969 by the Member for Gladstone and as a result of having approved a survey and design some two years ago and approved acquisition of right-of-way last year, that that

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acquisition of right-of-way, Mr. Speaker, is now completed as of Saturday last. The grading contract has been let on PR 260, and this grading contract, Mr. Speaker, has been let as a result of, as I say, some two years of effort on behalf of the department, not as a result, Mr. Speaker, as was reported in the paper of the unfortunate incident last spring that one of the local residents undertook. It was because the road had been requested for a number of years by the Member for Gladstone, and needed in the area.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

**MR. BARROW:** My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Health and Community Services. As my colleague mentioned, in the former dispute with the former Minister of Labour, Russ Paulley, very similar to the one we're going through today, you suggested that he be stuffed and mounted in the Museum of Man and Nature. My question is, don't you think your colleague, the present Minister of Labour, would better substitute for that position?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

**MR. LEONARD S. EVANS:** Mr. Speaker, I know there have been questions along this line last week, but I know the Minister has been discussing, as he's indicated, with the Manitoba Health Organization representatives, discussing the matter of the strike, can the Minister advise now whether the Manitoba Health Organization, the MHO, has now approached the government, through the Minister, for more funding, to enable them to engage in more meaningful negotiations with CUPE?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. SHERMAN:** No, Mr. Speaker. And I want to say, just so that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition understands me, and that my position is clear, that the meetings that I have had regularly and have had with the administration of the Health Sciences Centre, as recently as last Friday, have to do with health status. They have not had to do with the negotiations. What I am concerned about is the maintenance of the security of the life and care of patients in the Manitoba Health care system. That is what the meetings that I have held have been intended to guarantee.

**MR. EVANS:** In view of the seriousness of the situation, and in view of the allegations made with regard to underfunding of health institutions, would the Minister be prepared at this time to re-examine in a very realistic way, to re-examine the funding level of the health care institutions in this province, to assure himself that they do have the funds to operate and to hopefully, pay the workers involved an adequate wage, a wage that they would be satisfied with.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I believe that the budgetary situations of the hospitals permit that kind of collective bargaining to take place. I believe that

that kind of collective bargaining is taking place. I'm not dismayed, and I'm sure that neither party is dismayed by the fact that there are temporary interruptions in the negotiations. I believe that this situation will be resolved soon by the collective bargaining process.

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

**MR. EVANS:** A supplementary then, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister inferring, or implying, in his reply to my last question, that the government, or at least, is he satisfied that the wage levels being offered to the health care workers, both in the Health Sciences Centre and indeed in the other health institutions, that these wage levels are adequate and are satisfactory in the government's view and in the Minister's view?

**MR. SHERMAN:** I don't have any further comment, Mr. Speaker, beyond that which I've already said in that respect.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

**MR. RUSSELL DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs as he reaches his desk, and ask him about the grandiose announcement by the federal government of some 50 to 60 million of funding for urban renewal. And I would like to ask him if he can indicate who is right here, whether it's Councillor Harold Piercy who said it was simply a rehash of federal programs with no new money, an attempt to save face by the Minister of Citizenship, or, according to the Honourable Mr. Axworthy that this was new money and that the councillor was misinformed, ill-advised and creating an utter distortion. Who is right?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Attorney-General.

**HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to intervene in the dispute between Councillor Piercy and Mr. Axworthy. What I would indicate to the Member for Elmwood, is that Mr. Axworthy and Mr. DeBane, on behalf of the federal government, indicated that they would make available up to 2 million for the development of a plan of action of initiatives to improve the core area of the city of Winnipeg. We expect officials are meeting immediately to put together an agreement in principle to proceed with that. We expect that to be completed relatively quickly, and Mr. Axworthy and Mr. DeBane indicated that the federal government would make available, under a DREE agreement, up to 32 million for projects in the city of Winnipeg.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the Minister if he could attempt to clarify whether the federal grant, whether it is an unconditional grant, or whether it is contingent upon provincial and city funding, because the impression created was that there was 2 million in new money, some 25 to 30 million in DREE money which has been previously announced and some sort of unexplained 10 to 20 million. I simply ask the Minister whether this so-called 50 to 60 million is an

outright grant, or conditional, and if so, what portion of it would be conditional?

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, the 32 million which would be available under a DREE funding is, according to the advice from Mr. DeBane, new DREE money for the city of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba. They did indicate that there would be a cost-sharing arrangement that they foresaw, and they suggested that it would be one-third provincial, one-third city, one-third federal government. That would be unique for a DREE agreement in my view, Mr. Speaker. Usually those are 60 percent federal, 40 percent provincial, and the Mayor indicated that would be a topic that they would want to negotiate with the federal government, and I expect that will be an item under discussion with us and with the federal government as the plan of action is developed.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS (cont'd)

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. If I could have the permission of the House at this time to introduce a very distinguished visitor, the Honourable First Minister of the province of Ontario, The Honourable William Davis.

### ORAL QUESTIONS (cont'd)

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Speaker, a figure was thrown around in the newspapers, and I think implied by the federal Minister of Citizenship that this could lead to a package of a 180 million, namely, 60 million federal, 60 million provincial and 60 million from the city. Is there any prospect whatsoever that the provincial government might match federal funding. I assume that there is no prospect that the city could come up with that kind of funding even over five years. Is there any possibility that this government will attempt to match that amount of funding?

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

**HON. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I've indicated advice from Mr. De Bane was that 32 million of DREE money, new money for Manitoba, would be available. That is usually cost-shared between the federal and provincial governments. Mr. Axworthy referred to UTAP moneys — that is usually not in any way cost-shared, that is money allocated under that program by the province.

Mr. Axworthy also referred to moneys that might become available through his department, Immigration and Employment, and also the possibility of moneys that might become available through the Department of Indian Affairs. Neither one of those areas is to my knowledge an area that has been cost-shared in the past, Mr. Speaker. I would think the cost-sharing will be solely with respect to the DREE monies. I'm saying that, Mr. Speaker, as the official meetings are started and the plan of action is under way and that will take some time to conclude.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please, time for question period having expired, we will proceed with Orders of the Day.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

### MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

**MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Transcona, that pursuant to Rule 27, Section (1), I move to set aside the ordinary business of the House to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, to wit:

WHEREAS the provincial government has consistently cut back government allocations of funds to health care facilities to levels below increases in the cost-of-living as part of its restraint program; and

WHEREAS most health care administrators publicly state that they cannot continue to provide past levels of health care at these reduced levels of government funding; and

WHEREAS the contract talks between health facilities and support staff have broken down without agreement, resulting in a strike of support staff affecting some 40 health care facilities; and

WHEREAS the health care facilities have no financial room to manoeuvre because of government funding ceilings; and

WHEREAS contract talks have broken off indefinitely; and

WHEREAS the review of estimates of the Department of Health and the Department of Labour have been concluded, preventing the House from having the opportunity to debate this important issue; and

WHEREAS the Minister of Health has made statements aligning himself with one side in the dispute, which has added to the impasse,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that this House advise the government to initiate procedures which would lead to a resumption of the collective bargaining process in good faith in order to pursue a resolution of this critical situation in health care in Manitoba.

### MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE (cont'd)

**MR. SPEAKER:** Pursuant to our Rule 27, under 27(2) a member making a motion under Sub-Rule 1 may explain his arguments in favour of his motion in not more than five minutes. One member from each of the other parties in the House may state the position of his party with respect to the motion in not more than five minutes. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Yes, Mr. Speaker, I submit that it is a question of urgency. The debate is a question of urgency; it's been going on for a while with apparently the government doing very little. The Minister of Labour said today that he is not ready to take some of the tools that he might have to resolve this. The estimate of the Department of Health and the Department of Labour has been dealt with. Many of us, I included, have exhausted my time in grievance and besides that, Mr. Chairman, I think

you introduce a doubt that this would be the proper place and time to discuss a question of urgency.

The question period doesn't lend itself to any kind of debate at all. First of all, I found it very difficult and at times impossible to be recognized so I certainly can't participate in asking the question and get the information that I want. It is not, as I said, a very difficult question and whenever the subject is brought about, as is their right, the members of the Government with well, we're getting, if we start getting somewhere, will introduce another question to change the subject. Or if we stray a little bit from the direct and straight question we are certainly brought back and reminded very soon by the members on the opposite side of the House that this is not quite right.

Mr. Chairman, it is an urgency because there can be no honest and sincere negotiation at the present time when the Minister, as he did again today, stated that there is no way that he will release the negotiator from being bound by this 8 percent increase in the budget of the different hospitals. The Minister has stated today that that in itself is enough to have a fair negotiation and Mr. Chairman, this is something that should be aired immediately, that should be discussed immediately, because the people of Manitoba are faced with the problem.

Mr. Chairman, besides that, in a very good and nice gesture, I hope it is more than a gesture, the Minister of Health has invited all the Members of this House to participate and help find a happy solution to the sad state of affairs. I for one, Mr. Chairman, have tried to do that during the question period last week and it has been very difficult because you . . . and I don't debate that you weren't right at the time, Mr. Chairman. You brought me back to, reminded me that I can only ask direct questions. So, Mr. Speaker, I submit that there is no other way—we've tried every way—there's no other way to have a meaningful debate, to get the proper information, to look at the demands, to look at the offers, the counter-offers, and to look at what is best for the patients, the workers and the people of Manitoba, Mr. Chairman.

The Minister left us quite concerned when he made a statement while discussing the situation where he said and he seemed to feel that the only way, that it was a time of people being underpaid and overworked. So, Mr. Speaker, I submit that my motion is in order and that you allow us to proceed at this time.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I must suggest to you, Sir, that in our view there is no urgency of debate in this particular situation. It's a serious situation, Sir, no one is disputing that, but it's in hand and the collective bargaining process has not broken down. The talks are at the moment suspended, but I suggest, Sir, that is not unusual and certainly all of us are optimistic and I believe have reason to be optimistic that discussions and negotiations at the bargaining table will resume very shortly.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface has suggested that the issue has been beyond address in the question period. I would challenge that position,

Mr. Speaker. I think that over the past several days the opposition has quite legitimately utilized the major proportion of successive question periods to deal with the subject and to elicit information from myself and others of my colleagues on the Treasury Benches and we have attempted, certainly I have attempted, to provide all the information that I have been able to attain and have been privy to, and provide assessments of the situation as they are delivered to me by those close to the field and by those who are attempting to assess and evaluate the present parameters of the dispute.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, a motion very similar to this, almost identical, was ruled out of order by the Chair last Tuesday and we are faced today with essentially the same motion. I suggest that a precedent in terms of decision has already been made on this subject.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that the safety and security of patient care in Winnipeg and in Manitoba has been guaranteed to me by the medical professionals in our system. The medical chiefs of staff in Winnipeg have assured my office that patient life and safety is secure. As a consequence, Mr. Speaker, I submit that there is no urgency to debate at this point in time; the urgency would arise from a threat to that patient life safety and security. If indeed the honourable member had a case for urgent debate, it was more valid — I don't believe it has been valid at any time — but it was more valid five or six days ago then it is today, because the situation has improved substantially in the past 36 hours at urban and at rural hospitals. Not only is patient life and safety guaranteed, but many interrupted services are being resumed because of the co-operation between medical professionals and other health workers and individual facilities.

For example, Mr. Speaker, a number of hospitals are giving serious consideration today to resumption as early as tomorrow or Wednesday of this week of elective surgery slates, so I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that there is no urgency in the context in which the Honourable Member for St. Boniface advances it, and I request that the motion be ruled out of order.

### **SPEAKER'S RULING**

**MR. SPEAKER:** I have listened to the argument put forward by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface and the counter-argument put forward by the Honourable Minister of Health, and I would have to again refer you to our own Rules, Rule 27(3), which states that once the Speaker has heard the arguments, at that time he makes his ruling.

I would ask members to look at that same Rule Sub (5) — 27, Sub (5)(c) The motion shall not revive discussion on a matter that has been decided in the same session.

I also refer you to Citation 31 of our own rules, No member shall revive a debate already concluded during the session or anticipate a matter appointed for consideration of which notice has been given.

I refer you also to Beauchesne, Citation 416, it is an old rule of Parliament and reads that a question being once made and carried in the affirmative or the negative cannot be questioned again, but must stand as the judgement of the House.

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I refer you to Speaker's Ruling on June 14th, 1977 by Speaker Fox, and it was Speaker Fox who also made a ruling on a Matter of Urgent Public Importance raised by the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell, which was decided in the negative, and later on a motion by the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie dealing with the subject matter, Urgent Public Importance, and stated the subject matter to be the mishandling of the Pilutik affair by the Attorney-General of Manitoba. Having heard the views of all parties relative to the Motion, Mr. Speaker Fox ruled as follows: The Chair has already indicated in respect to this matter, although the Honourable House Leader indicated it would have to be dealt with as a separate matter, I wish to include it, but since procedure was asked for to go the reverse route, I have no objection to using it twice on the floor, but it cannot be debated again once I have already ruled. Mr. Johnston, on a point of order, stated that he wished to have his motion dealt with separately. Speaker Fox then said, The motion was dealt and I dealt with the motion of the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell. The matter before the House that the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie placed is exactly substantially the same as the one that the Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell placed, and since I have a ruling on that I am giving the same ruling on your motion.

I consequently have to rule the motion out of order.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

**MR. FOX:** Respectfully, Mr. Speaker, I have to challenge your ruling.

**MEMBERS:** Your ruling.

**MR. FOX:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Kildonan on a point of order.

**MR. FOX:** I would like to indicate that, first of all, members should not interject and shout across the Chamber. Secondly, if they wish to get involved in the debate they are entitled to, but I would like to indicate on those interjections, the issues were totally different. This time we have a strike and we have had it for a number of days and there is no further negotiation taking place, so the situation is totally different.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The point of order the member raised was in fact not a point of order.

The ruling of the Chair has been challenged. Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained? All those in favour of the motion please say, Yea. Those opposed please say, Nay. In my opinion the Yeas have it.

**MR. FOX:** Yeas and Nays please.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Call in the members. Order please. The question before the House is: shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained? All those in favour please rise.

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

**YEAS**

ANDERSON BANMAN  
BLAKE BROWN  
COSENS DRIEDGER  
EINARSON ENNS  
FERGUSON FILMON  
GOURLAY HYDE  
JOHNSTON JORGENSON  
LYON MacMASTER  
McGILL McGREGOR  
McKENZIE MERCIER  
MINAKER ORCHARD  
PRICE RANSOM  
SHERMAN STEEN  
WILSON

#### **NAYS**

ADAM BARROW  
BOSTROM BOYCE  
CHERNIACK COWAN  
DESJARDINS DOERN  
EVANS FOX  
GREEN HANUSCHAK  
JENKINS MALINOWSKI  
MILLER PARASIUUK  
PAWLEY SCHROEDER  
USKIW WALDING  
WESTBURY

**MR. CLERK:** Yeas 27, Hays 21.

**MR. SPEAKER:** I declare the motion carried.

#### **COMMITTEE CHANGES**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

**MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON:** Mr. Speaker, before Orders of the Day, I'd like to move a replacement on Law Amendments, and substitute the name of Mr. Enns for Mr. Cosens. (Agreed)

#### **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services 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.**

#### **MATTER OF GRIEVANCE**

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

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of grievance pertaining to the mishandling of the present situation pertaining to health care and the present provincial-wide strike which exists in the province of Manitoba. I want to deal with this matter from the point of view of the failings of the government in dealing with the overall issue of health care in Manitoba; and secondly, dealing with the

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sloppy handling of this matter, or in fact, the omissions on the part of the Minister of Labour in the province, dealing with this particular situation.

In fact, at first, Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal with the involvement by the Minister of Labour in the present impasse which has occurred in the province. I think, Mr. Speaker, that most members of the House, and I'm sure many members in the government back benches were suprised at the admission of non-involvement and non-participation by the Minister of Labour in what is a critical strike situation in the province of Manitoba involving industrial peace in the province.

We noted, Mr. Speaker, how the Minister of Labour acknowledged that indeed, he had not called the parties into his office. And Mr. Speaker, I remember when the former Minister of Labour, Russ Paulley, sat in this House, how in the issue involving the Misericordia, and a strike then by the operating engineers, it was the leadership and initiative of the then Minister of Labour, by calling both parties into his office, that that situation was resolved due to the initiative of the then Minister of Labour. And Mr. Speaker, I am not just saying that this afternoon. Records will show that the union and management both were in accord that the leadership of the Minister of Labour in 1976, resolved that particular work stoppage at the Misericordia Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I remember another instance of leadership on the part of the then Minister of Labour. Leadership on the part of the Minister of Labour in preventing, within hours, within hours of the deadline, a strike at the Health Sciences Centre by the Minister of Labour, appointing one Stewart Martin to undertake efforts to undertake an inquiry into that dispute. Martin brought in a report, the dispute was resolved.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, we were taken back, and I am surprised that there is not one government backbencher that has the initiative, or the courage to say to the Minister of Labour, and to say to the Minister of Health, demonstrate some leadership on behalf of the government. All we hear, Mr. Speaker, is a chorus of heckling and jeering to the questions that are posed by members from the opposition, to attempt to resolve what is a difficult situation in the province of Manitoba. Is there leadership from the Member for Minnedosa? All we hear is constant words flowing from the Member for Minnedosa, but no words to the Minister of Labour, no words to the Minister of Health; the Member for Minnedosa, and his other colleagues in the back bench have abdicated any responsibility as members of this Chamber. And Manitobans, Mr. Speaker, will judge them accordingly.

Mr. Speaker, we noted during the question period, and we were surprised, very surprised, and I say this sincerely, Mr. Speaker, because we had assumed that the Minister of Labour in fact, was quite involved in the present work stoppage in the province. Mr. Speaker, we noted the sham that the Minister of Labour that the Minister of Labour participated in over the week-end. We were not deceived by the sham when he went on CBC television and pretended, through the reports from the television report, that there was some sort of cleavage existing between himself and the Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, there is no sham. The Minister

of Labour is in bed with the Minister of Health and the Minister of Health is in bed with his entire government. There is no schism, Mr. Speaker, and if I have embarrassed . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order, order please. The Honourable Minister has used words that have caused some embarrassment in this Chamber before and I would ask him to change them.

**MR. PAWLEY:** If I have embarrassed any member I — my reference is to being in political bed. They are all in political bed together, Mr. Speaker, and I withdraw any sexual implication to the remark.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Health on a point of order.

**MR. SHERMAN:** On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. On the same point of order, I want it clearly noted that the Minister of Labour and I acknowledge that as a political term and we do not ask for a withdrawal.

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

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, we were not deceived by the sham on the part of the Minister of Labour over the weekend. The Minister of Labour obviously is concerned about his image with labour in the province of Manitoba and wanted to appear to be putting some distance between himself and the Minister of Health; wanted to appear. But, Mr. Speaker, I have no doubt in my mind that Manitobans were not fooled by his effort over the weekend.

But, Mr. Speaker, what we were interested in, Mr. Speaker, is that the Minister of Labour didn't even know when questioned today in the House that negotiations were in fact broken off since last Thursday; that the Minister, leave aside an hour by hour report, Mr. Speaker, the Minister wasn't aware that negotiations weren't under way even this very morning and pertaining to this strike. We were surprised, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister had neither received nor had he appeared to have requested a report from the conciliation officer and, Mr. Speaker, the Act is very clear. Upon the appointment of a conciliation officer a report will be made to the Minister within 30 days after the appointment of the conciliation officer. If the conciliation officer was appointed within the past 30 days, then we ask the Minister why the conciliation officer was not appointed earlier; and if the conciliation officer was appointed more than 30 days from today, then we ask the Minister why he has not requested nor has he received a report from the conciliation officer.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we were further curious as to the admission on the part of the Minister that he hadn't even brought the parties together in his office for some discussions between the parties. And as I mentioned earlier, it was a former Minister of Labour that resolved a dispute at Misericordia Hospital by bringing the parties together for discussions in his office, using his good offices as Minister of Labour. This Minister of Labour has failed to do so, Mr.

Speaker. This Minister of Labour has not undertaken any initiatives in that respect.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we were also interested in the response by the Minister of Labour that indeed, no, he would not appoint a commission of inquiry which is provided for under The Labour Relations Act. And yet we have, Mr. Speaker, quotes in past days by the Minister of Health when the Minister of Health was the labour critic for the then opposition, quotes in which the Minister of Health in making reference to the former Minister of Labour in this House, March 29th, 1977, page 1380, said it was. I asked him what he was intending to do about it. I never asked him to settle the strike, never asked him to impose a settlement, but the then Member for Fort Garry said I asked the Minister to invoke the top expertise of his department, of his conciliation team, to try to get the two sides around the table so that the impasse could at least be met. We didn't ask him to go in there and impose a settlement on anybody. We asked him to try to end the impasse. Well, Mr. Speaker, pretty sound advice from the then Member for Fort Garry to the then Minister of Labour.

But, Mr. Speaker, why isn't that same Member for Fort Garry, the present Minister of Health, offering that same advice to his colleague, the Minister of Labour? If it was sound in 1977, it's even more sound to offer such advice to his present colleague in 1980 involving the present health care strike in the province of Manitoba.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we find that on March 8th, 1976, then Member for Fort Garry, offering further bits of wisdom to the then Minister of Labour, on page 720, involving another strike situation in the province of Manitoba. There are several, he said, options open to the Minister. He doesn't need me to tell him what they are. He's identified three of them but there are other options. There are other options open to him as he well knows. There probably is an option open to him in the area of mediation, provided the mediator is selected in agreement among the parties involved. There might even be an option open to him in the area of voluntary arbitration. I don't know whether he has sat down with the union officials recently and attempted to persuade them that voluntary arbitration is the best course of action in this situation, but the Minister knows those options far better than I do.

Then the then labour critic went on to say, We have told him that we want this strike ended. We want services restored. We're prepared to cooperate, he said. He'll find no impediment placed in his path from the Progressive Conservative Party regardless of the initiative that he undertakes, but he has to make that decision and take that initiative. He's the Minister. Let him act.

We say to the Minister of Health, let him say to his colleague the Minister of Labour, Mr. Minister of Labour would you undertake some initiative? Would you act? Would you undertake some effort to resolve this strike such as that which I offered by way of advice to a former government in the Chamber back in 1976? We say that it is timely for the Minister of Health to draw forth some of the words which he uttered four years ago in this Chamber, and offer that same advice to the Minister of Labour that he was offering as labour critic to the then Minister of

Labour in the New Democratic Party government of the day. It is now time.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we have an interesting situation where we are told by the Minister of Labour that he sees no need for an industrial commission. His answer was no, that he would not appoint a commission to enquire. The provisions are in the statute. They are there for the Minister to act upon. There are provisions in the statute for him to call for a report from his conciliation officer. The Minister of Labour has not requested a report from his conciliation officer. We don't even know at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Minister of Labour requested a report — requested a conciliation officer to become involved.

Mr. Speaker, we hope and we pray that the Minister of Labour at least could advise us as to when he appointed his conciliation officer, whether indeed he has appointed a conciliation officer. We hope that he can demonstrate a little bit more expertise in that sort of response than he was able to do a few moments ago by admitting he wasn't even aware whether or not negotiations were on. He didn't seem to be aware that negotiations had broken down as of Thursday of last week. But we do know the Minister of Labour had time this weekend to appear on TV and to become involved in a press conference that, oh, he was not in favour of legislation in this House. We say to the Minister of Labour, demonstrate some initiative now, demonstrate some initiative as Minister of Labour to resolve this dispute. We are not talking about legislation to compel workers to come back to work, but we are urging the Minister of Labour to exercise his responsibility as a Minister of Labour now and not abdicate that responsibility, which he appears to have done for the past number of weeks, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we note that the Minister of Labour had a great deal to say a few weeks ago about how he had brought about resolved matters pertaining to potential construction strikes in the province of Manitoba; how he had brought about workers and companies and trades, some sort of bargaining process, through his auspices; and oh, how the Minister of Transportation self-servingly said, what a great Minister of Labour we have in this province, how we should all get down and bow to the Minister of Labour. But the Minister of Transportation hasn't got the gumption to tell his colleague, the Minister of Labour, to exercise leadership in the dispute which is before us.

Then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a Minister of Labour — and we have listened — talk about shams, we have listened to sham questions from the Member for Rock Lake, question period after question period, about Churchill, when there wasn't even a strike involved, but where are the questions from the government back benches about a strike which is in existence now involving health care workers in the province of Manitoba? Where are those questions?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a deadly and eerie silence. There is an abdication of responsibility on the part of this government. We heard the Member for Rock Lake, it must have been a half-dozen times, about Churchill, and jeers from the Member for Rock Lake, and the Minister of Labour getting up at great

lengths to explain his concern for the situation at Churchill, justifiable concern, but let the Minister of Labour express equivalent concern involving the Health Care situation in the province of Manitoba and the present strike, which is in existence in Manitoba.

Then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have the role of the Minister of Health, and I must admit that we have given up on the Minister of Health providing any leadership, just as we have on the entire government. We have noted what they have done to Health Care in Manitoba during the past three years; we have noted that, and we know that there will not be any basic change insofar as the provision of Health Care in Manitoba until that crew across the way is thrown out of office. We know that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But all we can do is again bring to the government's attention, to the attention of the public, the fact that this government has neglected Health Care.

Over the weekend I had an opportunity, as I am sure most members of the House had, to read a further article in the Winnipeg Tribune which dealt with the Minister of Health and his nitpicking pertaining to a series of articles which had appeared in the Tribune. Without dealing with the basic issues that were involved in that series of articles, but I thought that one example demonstrated something pretty clearly as to the lack of leadership on the part of the Minister and the impact of restraint, reference to a nurse calling the Tribune medical reporter, and I quote from the article: One nurse called to tell how she was left to handle 26 patients, and how some patients' intravenous ran dry because she couldn't get there in time. She says she complained not only to MONA but also she complained directly to Mr. Sherman's office, yet Mr. Sherman claims he has received no complaints from nurses. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that Manitobans as a whole are just getting a little impatient, more than a little impatient, about the fact that we have a Minister of Health that has been telling us for three years that all is well and all is sunny in health care in Manitoba. He told us only a month or two ago that morale was great, the best among nurses in Manitoba. Then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know that it must be very very clear to him at this stage how misleading that statement was about two months ago when he made it in this Chamber. The morale is not good among the nurses of this province. He led us to believe that there were no extraordinary number of complaints that were forthcoming from the hospitals of this province. He led us to believe that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know that 79 beds have closed in the Health Sciences Centre, that nurses have left, and yet the Minister of Health said at the beginning that this was news to him, the bed closures. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it should not have been news to a Minister of Health that should have been aware if he had not been misled by the tinkering with statistics that takes place across the way on the government side, that people are leaving this province, that amongst those that are leaving this province in the largest net out-migration of people from Manitoba that has ever occurred in two years straight running, are many nurses as well. If there are bed closures and if there is a shortage of nurses, much of the reason for that, Mr. Deputy

Speaker, is the economic malaise which has been inflicted upon this province by the omissions on the part of the government across the way in developing economic strategy for the province of Manitoba.

The same Tribune only a week ago made reference to the sort of attitude that they found among nurses in Manitoba. One nurse, when interviewed, explained, I quote, You go home feeling that you haven't given good care because you are spread so thinly, and then you have to go back again the next day and try again. That is the unfortunate attitude that exists amongst nurses in this province, because of cutbacks in the hospitals and personal care homes in this province, cutbacks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that resulted in hospital budgets being increased by only 17 percentage points in three years, while consumer prices have increased by 28 percent, 10 percent difference, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yet we have a Minister of Health that said the other day in this Chamber that people would have to get accustomed to being overworked and underpaid. I wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the Minister of Health would like to forward his remarks to some others within our society in that regard.

The Financial Post had a column, which I found most interesting just last week, at Canadian Pacific, pay of the top four executives was up an average of 58.9 percent in 1979 over 1978. Overworked, underpaid, would the Minister of Health say? Dome Petroleum Limited raised the salaries of its top four by 53.8 percent; Genstar's top four men got a 69.6 percent boost in pay; at Bow Valley Industries Limited, up 66.2 percent; Norcen Energy Resources Limited paid 70.6 percent more in 1979 to its top four decision-makers, Bell Canada ahead 25 percent, they didn't do as well as the others; Imperial Oil up 37.7 percent for its top four, Imperial Oil — overworked, underpaid; West Coast Transmission Company Limited's top four people did 42.3 percent better; McMillan Bloudell Limited increased compensation for the top four by 37.3 percent. So, Mr. Speaker, I think the Health Care workers in Manitoba would feel a little happier if there was some consistency in the position that was undertaken by this government pertaining to those that this government suggests will have to get accustomed to being overworked and underpaid. Let that criteria apply to all in our society, not just to those at the lowest end of the economic rung, let it apply to all.

We have, of course, the Minister of Health in this House who only back last March 5th said that Manitoba is the fifth largest province, fifth wealthiest province in Canada, income earning opportunities for the medical profession should be fifth in Canada. That is what the Minister of Health said, that he wanted them to be placed in a fifth position, his position was made very very clear. Mr. Speaker, and yet he will not apply that same treatment, Mr. Speaker, to health care field workers in this province to ensure that they also enjoy a fifth position in Canada — one rule for one group, a different rule for other groups.

We say, Mr. Speaker, that it is time that this government cease its starvation of health care in Manitoba. We say, Mr. Speaker, that the present strike which exists in the province of Manitoba is not the fault of the health care workers, it is not the fault

of the hospitals or the administrators of the hospitals. The fault rests solely and totally and absolutely with the government across the way.

Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed on Saturday to see an advertisement in the Winnipeg Tribune and Free Press by the Manitoba Health Organization appealing to the public pertaining to the salary ranges that are being provided for the health care workers in those institutions. Mr. Speaker, they would have been getting more for their money if they had placed advertisements in the newspapers of this province pointing out how this government has treated the hospitals and personal care homes in this province. That would have more received for their money.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a situation in Manitoba where the Minister of Health is hiding behind the skirts of free collective bargaining. He refuses to lift the 8 percent ceiling which has been imposed upon the hospitals in this province. The Minister of Health is fully aware that medicines and supplies have increased by way of inflation at a rate higher than 10 percent. He is fully aware that 8 percent has placed the hospitals in this province in a straightjacket.

At the same time we have a Minister of Labour that is working in conjunction with the Minister of Health that is like Rip Van Winkle, he is asleep, he doesn't know what is going on, and he makes no proposals in order to try to resolve this dispute in the province of Manitoba; if there is any wonder then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why there is growing frustration, when we have a government that does have an opportunity to provide some of that leadership.

In 1977 when this government assumed office, we had the best Pharmacare Program in Canada. We had introduced nursing home care, per diem care that was amongst the best in Canada, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we had amongst the best hospitals and standard of care in Manitoba of all provinces in Canada. That was three years ago. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we now have a government, which unfortunately has dragged Manitoba from being a leader in provision of health care to one that is trailing far behind most other parts of Canada.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I make this speech and the request that a number of individual and specific items be undertaken by the government across the way. One is to lift the ceiling, a ceiling which has imposed a starvation amongst health care institutions in this province, that ceiling of 8 percent, so that those that are bargaining on the part of hospitals need not continue to bargain with one arm tied behind their back. Let them bargain freely, as all others do in the bargaining process in the province of Manitoba, remove that straightjacket from the hospitals, remove the 8 percent ceiling.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health should take a leading role in attempting to bring about the resolution of this dispute. Has the Minister of Health been involved in any direct or active negotiations pertaining to this dispute in Manitoba? He has continued to go along with the facade that there is a bargaining going on between the union and the hospitals, knowing full well that he has starved and has removed the opportunities for the hospitals and the unions to come to a free collective

bargaining conclusion. So the Minister should become directly involved.

Then on the part of the Minister of Labour, it's up to the Minister of Labour to make sure that he follows hour by hour, the negotiations which are under way in the province of Manitoba, so that he's updated on a constant and hourly basis and that he's not four days behind what is happening in the province. Let him keep up to date, not three, four, days behind insofar as what is happening in the province of Manitoba. Let the Minister of Labour request a report from his conciliation officer, so the conciliation officer can advise him as to what ought to be done in order to resolve the present dispute.

Then, Mr. Speaker, the Labour Minister should appoint a commission of inquiry, and that commissioner of inquiry should be given free reign — free reign to approach both the MHO, the Health Sciences Centre, and all the unions involved, obtain all the facts, all the information. It should be one without any prejudice or favour to either side, and that industrial commissioner should then return to the Minister within 48 hours, three days, whatever it be, and provide to the Minister a complete report. But in asking the commissioner to bring to him a report, that commissioner must bring in his report, not be straightjacketed by the fact that he is working under restrictions imposed by this government upon his activity. If he finds that the health care workers in this province ought to receive a better and fairer wage proposal than that which has been offered, then let him make that recommendation to the Minister of Labour so the Minister of Labour can report on that, despite the fact that the Minister of Health has imposed budgetary restrictions. Give the industrial commissioner full reign so we can obtain a comprehensive, a totally objective report, one that will not be prejudiced by actions on the part of the Minister of Health.

That would be a course of action, Mr. Speaker, that we would wish for from a progressive, aggressive Minister of Labour, and I would ask the Minister of Labour to undertake that form of action immediately, to not set up sham little battles and divisions and try to leave the impression amongst Manitobans that he and the Minister of Health are having some difficulty behind the Cabinet room. Nobody is fooled by that. We see the game that is under way. Get on with some constructive effort to resolve this strike. Forget the politics of the situation, get involved in attempting to resolve the strike which exists in the province of Manitoba. The provisions are in The Labour Act.

The Minister of Health requested a former Minister of Labour to undertake the very proceedings that I am proposing to you, and the Minister of Labour that performed his duties prior to 1977 had the initiative and the leadership in order to undertake efforts by the appointment of industrial commissioners from time to time in the province of Manitoba, and there was success in bringing about a resolution of those disputes. And again, I need only refer the Minister to the Steward Martin example with the Health Sciences Centre back in 1976.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are disappointed. It's what we expect. We have a government which has starved health services in Manitoba; a government which has imposed a straightjacket upon the free collective

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bargaining process; a government that's prepared to permit this present situation to continue for days and days if need be without any positive active involvement within the free collective bargaining process to undertake a resolution of the dispute. At the same time we witness and most Manitobans witness a decline in health care in Manitoba. We don't have to go very far, Mr. Speaker, and I would just invite the Minister of Health to speak to the nurses of this province; to speak to the hospital administrators in this province; to speak to the nurses' aides working in the hospitals and personal care homes; to speak to all those that are involved in health care in Manitoba, and tell them that he wants an honest report from them as to what has taken place in the past three years in our hospitals and personal care homes — an open and complete report.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Health knows what has happened in the past three years. I think this government knows what has happened in the past three years in health care in the province of Manitoba. Now they are being found out. They are being found out for the omissions which they have committed for the past three years. The chickens are coming home to roost, Mr. Speaker. This is the symptom of a greater problem. This is a symptom of their restraint policies over the past three years. This is proof evident of the complete and total callousness, soullessness of their restraint policies over the past three years. What has happened in Manitoba demonstrates that this government, Mr. Speaker, has not indeed eased the harshness of restraint in the province of Manitoba, and that the sham that we were witnesses to only two, three, weeks ago in the Budget that was presented in this House really was but as my colleague for Kildonan keeps referring to, a shell game. A shell game perpetrated by the government of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I think we speak for all Manitobans in asking that health care be given top priority, that if there are those within our society that are given — seen fit to easily give fair share of that which is being produced in our society, that health care workers ought not to be at the bottom of the ladder. We are asking the government to demonstrate that sort of leadership and we are saying, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Labour has failed; has failed all Manitobans badly; has failed not just the workers that are involved in the present impasse and the picket lines, but he has failed all Manitobans in not demonstrating gumption, initiative and leadership. This Minister of Labour, this Minister of Health, this government, Mr. Speaker, they have been exposed for what they are — inept, incompetent and callous. And, Mr. Speaker, to be quite frank with you, we are not surprised. The only surprise, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that the evidence has come through so loud and so clear in the past few days, for all Manitobans to witness. That is the only surprise that we have, that they have been exposed so totally and completely in their performance in the past few days.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Virden.

The House resolved itself into committees of Supply with the Honourable Member for Emerson in the Chair for the Department of Education, and the Honourable Member for Virden in the Chair for the Department of Northern Affairs.

## **CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY — NORTHERN AFFAIRS**

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor (Virden):** I call the committee to order. We're on Resolution 113, Northern Affairs. I'll call on the Honourable Minister.

**HON. DOUG GOURLAY (Swan River):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my pleasure to present the 1980-81 estimates for the Department of Northern Affairs. I'd like to acknowledge the effort of my staff that was required in the preparation of the estimates, and in addition, their excellent service during the past year in delivering the programs to those citizens in the Northern Affairs jurisdiction of Manitoba.

To avoid confusion, I would like to identify a particular feature of this year's presentation. As was the case last year, you will note a number of sub-appropriations refer to the Canada-Manitoba Northlands Agreement and the special ARDA program. In these sub-appropriations, only 85 percent of the dollars to be spent are shown in these estimates. The remaining 15 percent has been provided in the Canada enabling vote Resolution 26, which will be presented later in the session. This is the same process as last year.

The basic structure of the department remains the same as in the year past.

Assistance and service to the communities continues through the assigned co-ordinators. Technical assistance in the operation and maintenance of physical facilities such as safe drinking water, roads and public buildings, is provided by a small group with staff located through the northern affairs area. The department now recognize 50 communities, an increase over the previous 47. One measure of progress is the increase in the number of communities that are self-administering and this is expected to rise from 21 to 26 during 1980.

The northern fire protection program has been instituted with the support of the fire commissioner's office and the Department of Natural Resources. Community and volunteer fire departments are being formed and trained. Equipment needs are being assessed and will be provided. A major effort is being made to ensure that public buildings meet safety and construction codes. This will continue until standards are met in all areas.

The department utilizes the capability of the following departments for part of its delivery: Municipal Affairs in planning services, Agriculture for the water services board, Highways and Transportation in connection with roads, garbage dumps, Natural Resources in land management and Government Services in designed services. The Canada-Manitoba Northlands Agreement, funded through my department as it was last year, continues to be used by many departments to improve northern living conditions. The special ARDA program is being used to assist primary producers

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such as trappers and fishermen. Activities involving the Northern Flood Agreement include support of the Neyanun Development Corporation, the formation of the Community Liaison Committee and the Employment Task Force and The Wildlife Advisory Board occurred this past winter.

In its municipal role, the department has co-ordinated a meeting of northern communities with various businesses and agencies respecting emergencies that may arise. This proved timely with respect to the fire problems this spring, and the need to take fast and effective action. Mr. Chairman, my department is meeting its responsibilities in assisting in the development of local government and co-ordinating the three agreements.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** (1)(b) — the Member for Rupertsland.

**MR. HARVEY BOSTROM:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I start, I would like to ask the Minister if he has with him, or perhaps could get to us by this evening, if not this afternoon, a copy of the most recent Canada-Manitoba Northlands Review. I believe there is a Third Year Review out, and we'd like to have a copy of that to use in the estimates process.

**MR. GOURLAY:** We could provide you with the current year's funding proposals, if that's what you're referring to.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, is there not a Canada-Manitoba Northlands agreement Third Year Review which is available?

**MR. GOURLAY:** The information that I referred to earlier is the same as you received last year.

**MR. BOSTROM:** I have not seen the document, Mr. Chairman, but I understand it to be a green cover booklet, which is entitled Canada-Manitoba Northlands Agreement, Third Year Review. It covers the period for 1979 to the termination of the agreement in 1981, and it contains information on proposed programs to be implemented over that period of time.

**MR. GOURLAY:** I understand the Third Year Review is available and we will have it here for tonight.

**MR. BOSTROM:** Thank you. There was some information contained within that document, which we will refer to when we get into it this evening. However, I would like to make some comments on the Minister's opening statements and some general comments on the department.

The problems that have been outlined to us, and these are problems which I would like to get more detailed information on as we go through the items line by line, but I'll touch on them now as a way of general information so that the Minister can take these things as notice and perhaps respond more specifically to the issues as we come to them in the estimates.

It is my understanding, Mr. Chairman, as a result of changes in the Northlands Agreement, that there appears to be a great deal of the money which

formerly was available to build roads to provide access into remote communities, that this money is now almost completely transferred to areas which are not directly related to remote communities. In fact, a major portion of the Northlands money is apparently being spent now on Highway 391 which is leading into northern Manitoba, and the communities are complaining that this money, which they assumed would be used in a priority way to provide access to their communities, is now being used to upgrade major highways, rather than provide community access.

In the period up to 1978, there were 246 miles of road built or improved leading into remote communities, and from that period until the end of the agreement it appears that the money has been prioritized for areas that are not directly related to access to resources or access to remote communities. So that's a major concern we have that is expressed by the northern communities.

The other area which we have touched on previously in other departments, is that the money which is supposed to be available for economic development and resource development, and some of it appears to be still in the Budget, does not seem to be finding its way into the remote communities. At least there doesn't appear to be much activity of any kind related to resource development or economic development at the local level, and this is a crying need, Mr. Chairman, particularly when you consider that it is a documented fact that there are a number of communities suffering very high levels of unemployment. This was documented by the 3M Committee and presented to the government. It is a Manitoba Metis Federation, - I'm sorry the MMF, the MIB, and the Manitoba Federation of Labour pointed out in some communities the employment rate, even giving a conservative estimate would be in the order of 45 to 50 percent.

So this is an area which should be receiving priority concern by this government and appears to be not receiving any concern whatsoever. There appears to be a fair amount of money available for the kind of macro planning activities, such as mineral reconnaissance programs and so on, which don't immediately benefit the remote communities. The whole area of economic development and human resource development is one that we have a concern about, and we would like the Minister to elaborate on these and perhaps show us if we are wrong in our impression that these areas do not seem to be getting a very high priority by this government.

The other concern that has been raised by communities, is the budgeting process which is supervised by, I believe, the local government development section of his department, and that is that communities are complaining that they have little or no flexibility in that process; that the government officials appear to be rather highhanded and dictatorial in their attitude towards the communities in terms of their budgeting. The Minister claims that there are 21 to 26 communities that are self administered. I would like him to explain how he sees them being self administered in terms of their budgeting process, as many of the communities are complaining about that aspect of this department's administration.

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The other thing that appears to be a serious problem, and one which we pointed out to the government in their first year in office, it appeared as though they were moving in this direction; we warned them of the consequences of moving in this direction, and it appears that our fears are being born out, and that is that the Northern Affairs Department has been reduced to one of co-ordinating the efforts of other departments rather than being a delivery agent. This was a concept which was originally the mandate of Northern Affairs when it was originally established. It did not work at that time and it is not working now.

The communities are complaining that the co-ordinators is not available to assist the communities when they need their assistance. The co-ordinating system is not working in the sense that the co-ordinating staff do not appear to have the clout or the authority to direct the delivery through other departments, which they are expected to do, and that was the problem when this system was in operation previously.

The previous NDP government had changed the system to provide direct line deliveries through the Department of Northern Affairs, which was a much more efficient way of doing it than to attempt to have a middle level or a junior level co-ordinator attempting to direct the efforts of other departments. What happens in that process, is that departments like Highways, Government Services, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Municipal Affairs, that the Minister pointed to in his opening statement, have a particular role to play in terms of delivery to northern communities, but in their overall scheme of things they put the delivery of these services to northern communities as a very low priority in their performance of their function during the year, and the result is that the communities get the poorest service of all from those departments. They look after all their other client groups first; they look after Northern Affairs communities last. This is the experience that the previous government had; it appears that this government is also following that same line of attack. The co-ordination service, I believe, is not the way to go.

The programs and services that are delivered to the north, at least at this point in time, should be delivered directly through the Department of Northern Affairs and not depending on the performance of other government departments, which as I say, give these things their lowest priority in their scheme of delivery. I can refer to examples in roads and water systems and the fire program, where communities are complaining that they are not receiving the benefits from these programs because of the lack of performance. Where a road should be started in the spring or in the early part of the summer when the conditions are right for building, it's often put off until late, and it ends up with poor weather conditions and the job simply not being done in that building season.

The other problem is, to follow this line of thought, the co-ordinators are quite able to pass the buck. In other words, they are not directly responsible for delivering the service, so when the communities challenge them on something not having been done, they are able to say, well it's the Department of Agriculture or it's the Department of Highways, or

the Department of Municipal Affairs, or whatever department is responsible for delivering the service. They are able to say that these people are supposed to do it, but they're not doing it, there is nothing I can do. And this causes frustration and cynicism in the communities, and I think it's a serious situation, because there certainly is enough frustration and cynicism in the effort of every day living in attempting to eke out a livelihood in the remote communities, without having to face this kind of a runaround by the people that are supposed to be delivering services to the communities.

So in general, Mr. Chairman, I would say that the performance of the Department of Northern Affairs, in the view and the opinion of the northern communities, is that it's simply not satisfactory. It's not meeting the identified needs in the communities, even those that are identified in the budgets of the various communities and in the budget of Northern Affairs as projects that are supposed to be completed. They're not being done on time and there are unnecessary delays in the delivery of the existing services, and the existing services, even as budgeted, are not meeting the needs of the communities, particularly in the area of resource development and economic development at the local level. In fact, that function of this department is completely lost here now. As we look through the things that are now contained within Northern Affairs, we see that economic development, employment and the advocacy role of Northern Affairs appears to be completely gone. It appears to be simply a co-ordinating body which is concerned about local government development but not about the total community development, the total economic development of the remote communities that are the client group of this department.

The communities are also complaining — and I brought this up during the Department of Natural Resources' estimates — about access to resources. It appears that this government, in general, and this Minister, in particular, as an advocate of northern communities, is failing in making available resources for the communities' use. The community of Pelican Rapids, for example, was told by people representing the government of Manitoba that they couldn't get timber to harvest for resale. They were able to obtain timber for their own use in the community for their sawmill, but if they were going to use that timber to cut lumber to sell outside the community to create employment for the local residents, it was not available to them.

Access to resources is a key, an absolute bottom line key for development of employment opportunities in any community. That has to be a high priority of the government, or else the communities are going to be doomed to a welfare existence. If the Department of Northern Affairs is not going to take care of that role, that advocacy role in representing that department and the client group that they're supposed to be representing, and putting forward that case for them, that they must have access to resources, then I say that's a failure of this department and it's a failure of this Minister. They must have that access to resources, and if they don't have that access to resources because of a new policy on the part of the Department of Natural Resources, I would expect this Minister and this

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department to push for a change in that policy, to regain the communities' access to resources, which was one of the things that I think we made very clear as a government. The NDP government made access to resources a first priority for communities in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Chairman, with those few opening statements on this department, I expect we can go into the line by line — I expect other members of our caucus have more opening remarks to make.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. The Member for Rupertsland has summed up fairly accurately and fairly completely the situation that we see now in northern Manitoba, as northern members, in our travels through the constituency. I have just returned from a couple of communities in the constituency over the week-end, and they have experienced many of the difficulties there that are arising out of what seems to be a major shift in direction on the part of this government, and what has seemed to be a major shift in direction for the past number of years, and the details of course have been provided by the Member for Rupertsland. And we will be discussing those at great length, I imagine, during the estimates procedure.

But we have received complaints from the communities regarding services, regarding mismanagement of programs. There are some very vivid examples which we will be bringing forward from time to time, regarding the economic options that are being provided to the people of northern Manitoba, they're just not there. They see themselves falling farther and farther behind; they see themselves being put under more and more pressure and that's resulting in more and more frustration, and the government sits idly by and merrily rolls along the river of their own making that leads them down to what I believe to be total chaos in northern Manitoba when it comes to putting together appropriate programs, appropriate policies, and then putting them into the field.

I will not, at this point, talk about the general malaise that we see in the north, but I would like to talk, in the few remaining moments, about one specific problem, and that's one of very recent origin, and for which there can be no blame assessed in regard to the initial occurrence; only one can question what has been done since the occurrence has happened, and that is in regard to the low water levels at Cross Lake. I have talked, over the past number of days, numerous times, to people from the community and from the surrounding area in regard to what is happening there, and it is my understanding that they are quite concerned about the quality of their drinking water. The Minister, in his opening remarks, of course did mention that one of the priorities of his government is, in fact, providing safe drinking water and we will discuss that in detail.

But I would like to right now, just ask the Minister what action his department is taking in regard to the drinking water at Cross Lake, and also what action his department is taking in regard to the lack of access to the community that is resulting in higher prices within the community which is resulting in

other disadvantages to people wanting to travel to and from the community, and is overall, causing frustrations and a certain amount of concern within the community as to the lack of action on the part of the government. So I'd provide the Minister with an opportunity to explain just what he is doing in regard to these very serious concerns.

**MR. GOURLAY:** With respect to the situation at Cross Lake, we will be dealing with that at some length, I expect under 3.(b) Community Works.

**MR. COWAN:** I'd like to, Mr. Chairperson, be dealing with it now, because I think it's a matter of some urgency. It is a matter that is not improving. It is a matter that may, in fact, deteriorate, and I believe that it is one that is worthy of our immediate concern. Has the Minister done anything in regard to dealing with some very significant problems in that community that are caused by low levels of water that are as a result of Manitoba Hydro policies? Has the Minister sat down with Manitoba Hydro and discussed this with them? Has he set in motion any sort of process to deal with this situation?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Chair is rather at the mercy of the committee, but I believe that if the Minister would rather wait until the item, I'm not sure that the Chair could do anything else but wait. We are on (1)(b) as you realize, to the Member for Churchill. We left (1)(a) and we're on (1)(b).

The Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Then I will have to abide, of course, by the decision of the committee and will do so with as much graciousness as I can muster, although I do have to, Mr. Chairperson, suggest that I believe it is an issue that should be discussed at the earliest possible opportunity, and we have waited some time for these estimates to be able to discuss it.

The Minister also, in his opening remarks, mentioned that in 1980 the number of self-administering communities would increase from 21 to 26, and I would ask the Minister if he can indicate the numbers of self-administering communities over the past three to four years?

**MR. GOURLAY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That will come up a little later on as well, under 3.(a).

**MR. COWAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. As it is obvious that the Minister does not feel the inclination to discuss these items at this time, we will speak in more general terms, and that is in regard to the Minister's handling of this portfolio, which I believe has been, overall, one that is a record that is quite undistinguished in either new activity or in pursuit of old activities. It is a record that is cause for concern for people of northern Manitoba, and also for the province as a whole, because you can't isolate northern Manitoba in regard to programs and policies and ministerial actions. The north of our province is far too important to the province as a whole. The north of our province does not only occupy a great deal of geographical mass but it also plays a vital role in the economy of our province and it also plays a vital role in the socio-economic structure of our province.

Because of its isolation and because of its history, there are certain problems that are peculiar to northern Manitoba that are not problems that we would find in other jurisdictions; they're not problems that we would find in the city; they are not problems that we would find in the rural areas to speak of, except in the isolated incidents. I believe, for that reason, that these problems demand special attention. They demand special effort. It is a trying portfolio that the Minister is involved in. I'm not suggesting that the Minister himself is not doing as good a job as any of his colleagues could do, I'm not suggesting that the Minister himself is lacking in any ability or is lacking in any initiative, I am just suggesting that the Minister, trapped in the government in which he is, is finding it difficult to direct the kind of attention that is necessary for people living in northern Manitoba, that the Minister is falling victim to his own government's callous disregard and historical disregard for conditions in northern Manitoba.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** I'll have to call it 4:30. I'll be leaving the Chair for Private Members' Hour and will return at 8:00 o'clock (tonight).  
Committee rise.

### SUPPLY — EDUCATION

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Albert Driedger (Emerson):** I call the committee to order. I would like to direct the attention of the members of the committee to page 39, Resolution No. 50, 1.(d)(1) Field Services — the Honourable Minister.

**HON. KEITH A COSENS (Gimli):** Mr. Chairman, there were a number of questions that I had taken under advisement and said that I would bring the information back today, and I would like to go through those at this time. The Member for Elmwood had asked me a question regarding George V School and some building proposals there. I can report, and I believe I'm not reporting anything new to him, that the Public Schools Finance Board had provided a recommendation and proposal to the Winnipeg School Division in regards to the facilities there. At this time I understand the Winnipeg school division has those under consideration and I have not heard anything further in that regard.

The Member for St. Johns had asked me a question regarding the release of staff. I believe he used the term firing, and I reported that no one in this year had been fired, to use his term. He also asked me in regard to the dismissal of one particular individual, if I had had any personal correspondence with that individual. I can report, having checked my files, that I find no particular correspondence from me to that individual.

The Member for St. Vital had requested information — I believe it was the Member for St. Vital; it may have been the Member for Rossmere — on the number of contract staff in my department. For 1979-80 there were none in the school section of the department. In the community college section, of course, there are a large number of people who act as course writers, instructors of short courses in various locations throughout the country. They in total amount to some 174 contracts, but many of

these are very short term, covering a few weeks of an instructional course. I am told that they would average out to about 30.17 SMYs, these 174 short-term contracts.

The Member for St. Vital had also asked some questions in regard to the reconciliation statement and of course there are five items listed there; the 368,996,000 I think is reasonably straightforward, there was no problem there; the general salary increase is a figure that we find in the estimates each year. The transfer of the function from Labour and Manpower of some 60,000 is a transfer back to Education of a sum that did exist there in previous years covering the administration of the bursary to Metis high school students throughout the province. The allocation of funds to the Canada Manitoba Enabling Vote, to Northern Affairs re the Northlands Agreement, amounts to some 430.9 thousand. This was transferred out of 164N, Post Secondary Career Development, so as to make it possible to make use of federal cost sharing agreements under the Northlands agreement and it is broken down into two parts, 64,600 which is 15 percent that went into the Canada-Manitoba Enabling Vote, and the balance of that 430.9 thousand to Northern Affairs, some 366,300.00.

The Member for St. Vital had also asked for the amount of money that had lapsed in 1979-80 and that amount of money is some 2,633,837.00.

In the matter of field representatives we had had some debate there, to some extent, and I can perhaps clarify some matters in that regard at this time. The field representatives now carry out the function of recommending for permanent certification only those teachers seeking permanent certificates in those school districts which do not have superintendents, and there still are some in Manitoba, and the teacher's requests frequently come through the Teachers' Certification Branch.

I can also report that the field representatives recommend for teachers teaching the DIA and D Schools, the Federal Indian Schools, private and independent schools, and again upon request, and those are carry-over tasks of the function carried out some years ago by the school inspectors.

As I have mentioned before I have sought recommendations from the field staff on matters relating to curriculum implementation and the adequacy of grants relating to various programs. I can also report that my staff have investigated complaints and have assisted in finding solutions to problems at the division and local school levels. They, of course, have been of invaluable assistance to the Capital Facilities Review Committee in analyzing and substantiating data relating to building proposals. As I have also mentioned, during the period May 1979 to May 1980, numerous program assessments have been conducted in all parts of the province. I could go into great detail on those, if necessary.

In our discussion on this particular topic there was some debate regarding the title that we use and the powers that the field representatives have. I think that can be best explained by the fact that the title, technically, under the present Act is still school inspector. I choose to use the descriptive title of field representative for these people just as honourable members opposite, when they were the government

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of this province, had people employed in this function and they called them field officers. That was the descriptive term, however, they again were empowered under the title, the legal title, of school inspector.

The assigning of duties, of course, of the Minister falls under Section 61 of The Educational Department Act. I mentioned that there was a certain shift in emphasis as far as these field representatives are concerned. I pointed out that the old police role that members opposite like to refer to is certainly not seen as one of their functions, that it is a supportive liaison function and the idea is that they are out there to help and assist people. I think that is something that members opposite shouldn't have too much trouble understanding, at least I hope they wouldn't.

The suspension of teachers' certificates was one that was of some concern to members opposite under Section 82 of The Education Department Act. This gives power to suspend the field representative, then reports to the Minister, who refers the particular suspension to the Discipline Committee under Section 71 of The Education Department Act.

So really, Mr. Chairman, it is a matter of calling them field representatives, which is a descriptive term, or field officers as the government of the gentlemen opposite chose to call them, and having them operate under the technically legal title of school inspector in the Act.

The Member for Elmwood asked what the salary range was of the people who we call field officers, and I can report that it is a minimum of 23,911 to a maximum of 30,817.00.

The Member for St. Vital had asked me some questions relevant to the staffing of this particular department and I admit it is a bit confusing, but it is the confusion that arises from vacant SMYs and secondments. I can report that in the Field Services Branch that there were 3 vacant SMYs that have been filled, one with the new director and two of these SMYs are secondments of people from the education field, who are now acting as field representatives, and we have added one additional person. So, in fact, we have four additional staff, one additional SMY, because we had three vacant SMYs in that particular unit.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that covers the questions that I had been asked and the questions I said I would get the particular information for.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a few more questions with respect to the field representatives. First of all, how many field officers were there when this government came to power in 1977, and while we are at it, what are the qualifications for candidates to become field representatives? As well, in this particular field, in the teaching field, where there are a considerable number of women, how many of the field officers or field representatives, I am getting confused with the terminology, how many of them are women?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Minister.

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Chairman, I don't have all of those answers readily available. The qualifications I can provide to the honourable member by giving him a job description of that particular position, and if that would fulfill that requirement, I would be quite prepared to give him a job description.

I understand that as of October 1977, there were four field officers employed by the previous government, I believe they were called field officers, and we have no female field officers at this time, Mr. Chairman, however, we would be very pleased to have the addition of ladies to that particular branch at such time as we have openings, which they are interested in applying for.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** I am just wondering from whom the demand came for the additional 13 or so field representatives and whether the job description to day of the field representatives is identical to the job description of the field officers of 1977, and if not, what are the differences?

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Chairman, first of all, as far as the demand is concerned, it is a demand that we had certainly been hearing around the province from people in areas that did not have that type of communication with the department that existed in those particular areas that did have, at that time, field officers. There was a feeling of isolation, a feeling of detachment, a feeling that they really were not able to be in communication fully with the department, that they didn't have someone who was readily available, and we have responded to that by expanding that particular unit. I understand only a few years previous, of course, that there had been several other people in the unit and it did attempt to service all areas of the province.

The member's question as to whether the qualifications for that particular job are any different to what they were back in 1976 or 1977, I will have to take as notice, because I am not readily aware of what the qualifications were at that time. I imagine the previous government was as concerned as we are that we have very capable people out there representing the department, people who have had experience in the education field, have considerable amount of expertise and are able to communicate with people in all segments of the educational system. However, I would again endeavour to find out what the qualifications were prior to 1977 and provide that information to the Member for Rossmere as well.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just specifically on this demand for the field representatives, did it come from the teachers in these remote areas, did it come from the superintendents, the trustees, the parents? As well, the Minister has been indicating quite frequently that one of the purposes of the field representatives is to do things such as predict the space requirements of school divisions, and that always is a problem with increasing and decreasing enrolments in various districts. Last year during the Estimates, the Minister indicated and he gave one example as being George V School, and I had asked last week about George V. I would like to follow that up and ask specifically what has been done in order to solve the problems

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in that general area? I am sure the Minister as well is aware of a problem in the Valley Gardens area in terms of overcrowding in certain schools and then to the immediate east of that, in East Kildonan, there is some under-enrolment and there is talk of transporations of pupils and various other things. Are these people involved in attempting to solve those problems and if so, how?

**MR. COSENS:** The Building Committee of the Public Schools Finance Board, Mr. Chairman, consults with the field representatives, who represent the particular region that is under study, as far as the building proposal may be concerned, and they do this in all cases, again working on the theory, and I think it is a reasonable theory, that because these particular field representatives know the area, are quite familiar with it, that their input can be valuable in arriving at decisions.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** The Minister is aware as well of a move in southeastern Manitoba for a French Regional Secondary School. In fact, a school division Board of Trustees has requested such a school for Ile des Chenes. I am just wondering exactly what kind of involvement the field representatives would have had in any of the decision-making by the department up to this point?

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Chairman, their involvement in this particular instance, or the specific instance that the honourable member refers to, would be the same as in any other school division or school region, where they would be consulted as to programs that are offered in that particular region, the particular problems of geography that might exist in that area, the problems that can arise from particular transportation networks and, of course, the enrolment statistics and the enrolment picture for that particular school area.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** I would like to ask the Minister, has the field representative in that district made a specific recommendation as to whether or not to go ahead with the high school?

**MR. COSENS:** No, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MR. D. JAMES WALDING:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were a few other questions that we had asked the Minister hasn't yet answered that I am sure he will get to.

While we are still on this particular item, the Minister has said that he would provide a job description. I would like to ask whether that job description will also include guidelines for the position and whether it spells out the powers that the field representatives have? I would like to ask him whether these powers derive from the Act or from the regulations, or both, and is that clear from the job description or are these field representatives given a verbal briefing as to what they may or may not do?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Minister.

**MR. COSENS:** The job description doesn't include those particular powers, Mr. Chairman, their particular duties are assigned by the Minister.

**MR. WALDING:** In that case, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could tell us what powers of access these inspectors have to a school site, the building itself, what powers of access they have into the classrooms? Are they required to get approval from the principal before entering a school, or can they just walk in unannounced and go to any classroom that they wish? Are they required to advise any particular teacher that they will be in that particular location on a particular day and time? Or can it be that a teacher will come into his classroom before 9:00 o'clock and find a field representative sitting there with the statement that he intends to remain for a class or a day or half a day, whatever it is. I wonder if the Minister can answer that question of access onto the school site.

Can he also detail for the committee what the powers of access are of the field representatives to various files that might be kept, either by a school or by a school division? Does an inspector have the right to demand to see a teacher's file that is kept by a division? Does he have the right to demand information on particular students, can he look at a student's file, can he look at a teacher's file? What is the involvement of the inspector in evaluation? Does he, in fact, do an evaluation on teachers or on students?

Perhaps the Minister could answer those questions for us, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. COSENS:** Mr. Chairman, just in answering the Member for St. Vital, the powers of the school inspectors, because that's the legal title that still exists in the Act, would enable them to enter school buildings without local permission. However, as a matter of courtesy, the particular field representatives that are employed by our department to make sure that they contact the superintendent of the school division and the particular building principal before they would enter the building; and notify them of course that they would like to visit on a particular occasion. I think you would find a very rare occasion, indeed, that you would find the field representative sitting in the classroom, as the member from St. Vital describes it — I think he is harkening back some 20 or 30 years ago to a different function when the field representative was concerned with the direct certification of teachers.

As far as the files are concerned, Mr. Chairman, yes they have the right to look at files of teachers, students and these would be available to them, if not in the local school division, if they weren't readily available they would be available in the Department of Education in that particular section.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Member for St. Johns

**MR. CHERNIACK:** I would like to ask the Minister, is there and can he show us a precise document which clearly establishes that so and so, a person known as a field representative, is an inspector under the Act. Is there such an appointment, piece of paper, whatever to show that a field representative is an inspector under the Act?

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**MR. COSENS:** Again, Mr. Chairman, as I mentioned in my earlier remarks, just as under the previous administration when they called them field officers they used the legal description of school inspectors to apply to those field officers, we call these people performing particular functions I have outlined field representatives and they take their powers from the portion of the Act that specifies school inspectors.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** I'm not sure that the question was answered. The question was: Can the Minister show us some document, some appointment which indicates that a named person, who is known as field representative, is an inspector? It's a very simple question and maybe I did not quite get the nuances of the answer; I did not think I heard that answer. Is there a document showing that a person is an inspector?

**MR. COSENS:** I'm not aware, Mr. Chairman, that there is a particular document, that that document exists now or that, in fact, it existed four years ago when the gentleman opposite had the people called field officers who perform the same function and received their powers from the particular Act that is in vogue today.

**MR. CHERNIACK:** Mr. Chairman, I wonder if you two are getting sick and tired of references to the previous government, possibly you're not, possibly you enjoy it, but Mr. Chairman, it should give this Minister little solace to be breaking the law, if he is breaking the law, to say well somebody else did before me. So let's get something clear. As I understand it, and I may be wrong, but as I understand it if he wants to talk history, the field officers or whatever they were called under the previous administration, as I understand it, were not given the powers of an inspector to suspend teachers on whim, and I use that word precisely because I think that's my interpretation of the legislation. Now, Mr. Chairman, this Minister has said that his field representatives have the right to suspend and I don't think he's right. And if he says that in the previous administration they were not appointed inspectors then I don't think they had the power to suspend. I believe it was not intended that they should have the power to suspend in the past, but I don't care any more about the past. Mr. Chairman, this Minister cannot keep leaning back on previous administrations to justify his present position and what has been his position for almost three years. Either he follows the law or he doesn't and he cannot say they did it that way so I'm doing it that way. This administration prided itself on changing things, well let's find out from the Minister. Now I believe it is clear that there is no one in his employment in his Department who is named an inspector. I believe under the legislation that we have, that we are dealing with, only an inspector has the powers which this Minister has in this debate stated were powers of an inspector which he said field representatives have. Now let him be forthright about it, Mr. Chairman. Let him tell us, does he intend them to have the power — I don't mean intend, I know what he intends and we'll be debating that — does he contend that they have had the

power to suspend teachers in the past to exercise all those functions of inspector without them being named inspector. Does he contend that that is the case? I doubt very much, Mr. Chairman, that he has the right to do so but he has said that. He has said that both last Thursday and today that his field representatives have the same powers as an inspector. Where do they get these powers, Mr. Chairman? Under what umbrella? The Minister doesn't have the power, as I read it, to delegate to anyone, the power which he has — to suspend; I don't think he has that power. The only people, as I read it, who can suspend are superintendents of school divisions or people acting as superintendents of school divisions, where I think that power ought to be, if you talk about local autonomy, and I think it ought to be there. But this Minister apparently has been giving to his field representatives the powers of an inspector. I say, and I am quite prepared to be shown to be wrong, that no one has that authority unless he has been appointed inspector. The Minister has admitted, it took a little while, Mr. Chairman, I think the Minister will have to admit it, it took a little while for him to state openly and clearly that there is no person appointed as an inspector in his department. And if that is the case I want to know whether the Minister is now acting as if he had already passed the legislation which is now before the House. I'd like to know that. I really think that the Minister is confused in his mind, that he has been —(Intejection)— well, maybe he is jumping the gun, as has been suggested, but that he is either confused as to what their powers are or, if he is clear as to what he thinks they are, then he has been behaving in a manner, by appointing field representatives, to be playing with names but giving them powers of an inspector. Now I will find out, Mr. Chairman, from other Members of the Legislature who happen to be in opposition and who have occupied the position of Minister of Education, how they looked on that role; whether they wanted their field officers to have the powers of inspectors; whether they behaved as if they were inspectors under the Act. But, Mr. Chairman, may I use a term which applies, is quite applicable, all that is academic because this Minister hasn't the slightest justification to lean back and say well they did it wrong so I'm doing it wrongly. That's no excuse. This Minister has been around long enough; he surely can't pretend that he doesn't know the Act with which he is charged. It is the most important Act, the two Acts — The Public Schools Act and The Education Administration Act — are two of the very few Acts he's responsible for. He cannot pretend he doesn't know. Now he can say that his administration didn't keep him clear on it but I don't know that his administration should be blamed for his lack of knowledge, Mr. Chairman. This Minister has been Minister longer than his Deputy has been Deputy and therefore he cannot rely on anybody else to lean on, to support his lack of knowledge of what they do, or knowledge of what they have a right to do. Now let's make it clear, Mr. Chairman, last Thursday he didn't know; last Thursday he was confused; last Thursday he didn't know whether the field representatives had powers or whether they were indeed inspectors and, Mr. Chairman, I accuse this Minister — I've accused him of several things — and

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one is he has today admitted that the cavalier treatment I suggested that he use in regard to Dr. Blauer . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Order please. Order please. The hour being 4:30 I'm leaving the Chair for Private Members' Hour. Call in the Speaker.

### PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

**MR. SPEAKER:** We are now under Private Member's Hour. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

**MRS. WESTBURY:** On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, if I may. I asked a question in question period today of the Minister responsible for Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and I regret to say, Sir, that in his reply the Minister mislead the House. He stated that this was the second day in a row that I had asked the question and he stood today, after not replying on Friday at all, to say that in fact the chain of independent grocers and the developer had received replies from him on their proposals of last August and September. Mr. Speaker, the last communication that the chain of independent grocers received from the corporation was dated last September and they replied to that letter and they have had no communication since, Mr. Speaker, and that is why I asked the questions in the House.

Mr. Speaker, I understand this is a question of the privilege of the House, and how one deals with it after that — I know that I have to bring it to you at the earliest possible moment and that's what I'm doing, Sir.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Since the Honourable Minister is not present, I will take the matter under advisement.

The first order of business is resolutions. Resolution No. 19, the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

### RESOLUTION NO. 19 — INCREASE IN PROPERTY TAX CREDITS

**MR. SCHROEDER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Churchill:

WHEREAS the previous government introduced a property tax credit program in 1972 pursuant to which homeowners and tenants in this province were entitled to a minimum of 90.00 and a maximum of 140.00 tax credit in that year; and

WHEREAS that property tax credit program was enriched in each succeeding year through 1977 to the extent that, in 1977, the minimum amount homeowners and tenants were entitled to was 225.00 and the maximum amount was 375.00; and

WHEREAS that program has been frozen since the current government came to power; and

WHEREAS income taxes for low income earners have been sharply increased in the Province of Manitoba to the extent that tax payers with 2,300.00 taxable income are paying 294.70 in total federal and provincial income tax for the year 1979 as opposed to zero taxes in 1978; and

WHEREAS the cost of living has risen dramatically since 1977; and

WHEREAS people on average and lower incomes are having great difficulty in paying ever spiralling municipal and education taxes while municipal services and education are deteriorating as a direct result of the failure of this government to provide adequate municipal and education financing; and

WHEREAS federal interest policies are having a disastrous effect on homeowners' disposable incomes because of outrageous mortgage payments;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the government consider the advisability of increasing property tax credits forthwith by the same percentage amount that municipal and education costs have risen since 1977.

**MR. SPEAKER:** I have looked at the resolution put forward by the Honourable Member for Rossmere and I had hoped that the honourable member might indicate a portion of it he may want to withdraw. I want to refer to Beausheue, Citation 424, Subsection 5, which states, Any irregularity of any portion of a motion shall render the whole motion irregular. In the proposal put forward by the honourable member, he says, Whereas that program has been frozen since the current government came to power; I'm of the opinion that the recent budget has in fact changed that, and if that part of the resolution was removed, it would be possible then to proceed. I seek the advice of the House on this particular matter.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, if the member is agreeable, we would be agreeable if he wanted to substitute or delete the words been frozen and substitute increased dramatically.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure they would. I believe all the honourable members are aware of the fact that this resolution was initially on the Order Paper prior to any indications of those increases, and I certainly would be prepared to withdraw the paragraph dealing with the freezing of property tax credits if that would be satisfactory to the members.

**MR. SPEAKER:** It is also improper for a member to amend his own resolution, so with the permission of the House, I believe the Speaker does have the authority to amend it. So with the permission of the House, I would withdraw that one section if that's agreeable to all members.

Therefore the resolution as proposed by the Honourable Member for Rossmere would read:

WHEREAS the previous government introduced a property tax credit program in 1972 pursuant to which homeowners and tenants in this province were entitled to a minimum of 90.00 and a maximum of 140.00 tax credit in that year; and

WHEREAS that property tax credit program was enriched in each succeeding year through 1977 to the extent that, in 1977, the minimum amount homeowners and tenants were entitled to was 225.00 and the maximum was 375.00; — and the next portion we will omit.

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WHEREAS income taxes for — Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

**MR. SCHROEDER:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had originally not intended to speak on this matter today and I had made another appointment which I am unable break and therefore I will be very short on it.

The purpose for which the Property Tax Credit Program was originally implemented was, first of all, to assist homeowners during a time of inflation and increasing taxes and, secondly, to assist municipalities and school divisions to allow them to retain and improve services during such a time of inflation and, thirdly, to assist those who need it most, taking into account income, numbers of dependents, and tax payable.

The amount of these credits was increased every year until 1977. There was no indication that it would be increased until after this resolution was placed on the Order Paper in 1980. It had been frozen by this government since 1977 and, as a result of that, up until this point in time there has been a decline services in both the municipal and school board areas and certainly we are glad to see any increases, as proposed by the First Minister back in April. However, we are quite concerned about the numbers of people who will be removed from the rolls of those who are able to take advantage of this program. I intend to speak on that matter when closing debate on this resolution. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I didn't think the Member for Rossmere would be that brief but I'm not going to be that brief, Mr. Speaker, because I think this is a subject on which members on this side of the House can take some pride in with respect to the announcements that preceded the budget.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before the House refers to the cost of living increases since 1977, and asks the government to consider the advisability of increasing property tax credits by the same percentage amount that municipal and education costs have risen since 1977.

Mr. Speaker, first I believe it is fair to say that the increases in municipal and educational costs have not in any way approached the increases in the cost of living. The cost of living increases from 1977 until April of 1980, which is the most recent for which I was able to get Consumer Price Index' figures, during that period, Mr. Speaker, the Consumer Price Index for Winnipeg increased 25.4 percent. Improvements to the Property Tax Credit Program, which were announced in this House on April 9th, 1980, and in the 1980 Budget have insured, Mr. Speaker, that the property tax credits have not only kept pace with the rate of inflation over that same period but, by virtue of the an increase in the amount of 44 percent from 225 to 325, most people in average homes have in fact experienced a reduction in their municipal tax rates. Of course in the budget the general maximum property tax credit was increased by 26.7 percent from 375 to 475, so it's difficult, first of all, to understand why the Member for Rossmere even proceeded with this

resolution, Mr. Speaker, when it's clear that the tax credit program more than kept pace with the rate of inflation increase, a 44 percent increase in the tax credit program compared to a consumer price increase of 25.4 percent.

Mr. Speaker, at the time of that announcement, a number of tables were passed out in this Legislature, which showed how the 100 increase, the 44 percent increase in the general minimum, affected property tax home owners in the city of Winnipeg. Mr. Speaker, for homes assessed at 7,000, the highest benefit accrued to people in the Seine River School Division, whose taxes were reduced by 66.48, the lowest benefit was in Seven Oaks, where they have a very abnormal increase in school cost, where their taxes only went up 16.79. In Winnipeg School Division, there was a reduction of 4.91 in total net taxes payable on both school and municipal taxes. Those increases, Mr. Speaker, increased of course as the assessment of homes decreased and, Mr. Speaker, again a home assessed at 6,000, the maximum benefit was in the Seine River School Division, 71.44, and the least benefit was in Seven Oaks, where taxes were increased by 11 cents. In the Winnipeg School Division, taxes were decreased by 18.49. Homes assessed at 5,000, Mr. Speaker, again a maximum increase was 76.19 in Seine River, 16.57 in Seven Oaks, and 32.07 in Winnipeg School Division.

Mr. Speaker, I know from personal experience in my own constituency in Osborne, where homes are not generally of high assessment, I have had the experience particularly of senior citizens indicating to me that their taxes were reduced anywhere from 30, 40, 60, and I can assure members opposite that particularly senior citizens in my constituency greatly appreciate the increase in the minimum property tax credit program.

Mr. Speaker, this government also provided extra assistance to senior citizens. The previous administration did not provide additional assistance to senior citizens to help offset municipal and education cost. They did, Mr. Speaker, however, have a program in 1977 that they tried and they called it the Property Tax Deferral Program, under which a resident of a municipality could, by agreement with the municipality, defer payment of his taxes and he was to be charged interest. That, Mr. Speaker, wasn't a very successful program. In fact, in all of '77, while that program was in effect, only one municipal taxpayer in the whole province of Manitoba, applied for benefits. I believe he resided in Flin Flon. Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of ineffective program that was actually introduced by members opposite as a program to assist senior citizens in offsetting municipal and education taxes. Only one municipal taxpayer in the whole province of Manitoba applied for benefits under that program.

I'll contrast that, Mr. Speaker, with the program which our government introduced in 1978 which was called the Pensioners School Tax Assistance Program, to provide senior citizens up to 100 in benefits to pensioners residing in their own homes. In April of this year, concurrent with the announcement in the improvement of the Property Tax Credit Program, that increase of 100, the assistance to senior citizen tenants was increased from 100 to 175, in addition to the Property Tax

Credit Program. The 1980 budget, in addition, increased the maximum property tax credit available to senior citizens by 150 or 40 percent, from 375 to 525.00.

Mr. Speaker, that program revised the Pensioners School Tax Assistance Program in effect this year, in combination with the Property Tax Credit Program, will guarantee that all pensioners with homes assessed up to 5,900 in Winnipeg School Division No. 1, will not pay any school taxes. On a home assessed at 7,000, the enhanced assistance will cover about 85 percent of the total school levy.

Mr. Speaker, those increases, not only for the average homeowner in a home assessed at 7,000, provide a significant benefit to homeowners, as the Minister of Finance has said, are the people most in need. They have generally, in most cases, thereby incurred this year a reduction in property taxes throughout Manitoba, in particular, the assistance to pensioners allows for at least 80 percent of pensioners to be in a position where they are not paying any school taxes. Mr. Speaker, I think both of these programs have enhanced the position of municipal taxpayers and, in particular, the plight of senior citizens.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, it should not be forgotten, as I recall, in the fall of 1977, campaigning in that particular election, it was not only property tax increases which were of great concern to the average taxpayer, pensioner taxpayer, the cost of the Hydro rate increases of up to 150 percent were an additional burden on homeowners, Mr. Speaker. I think the freeze on those particular rates, in conjunction with the assistance that has been provided to municipal taxpayers, by virtue of the 44 percent increase in the tax credit program, as well as the enhanced assistance to pensioner homeowners, has put those people, Mr. Speaker, in a very good position and certainly is evidence directly contrary to the paragraphs contained in this resolution that suggest the government consider the advisability of increasing the property tax credits by the same percentage amount that municipal and education costs have risen since 1977.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the government has increased the credit program by a rate which is not only greater than the municipal and education costs increase, but it is much greater than the increase in the cost of living.

Mr. Speaker, what may be in order at some future time in the debate on this particular motion is probably an amendment that would delete the resolved portion of this Resolution and substitute some words to the effect, where the Member for Rossmere no doubt would congratulate the government for the increase in the minimum tax credit that is being brought in, Mr. Speaker, because surely his concern was that, up until that particular time, March 14th apparently, when this was introduced, he had a great concern that the property tax increases that were being discussed, no doubt in his area, but were being discussed throughout the city of Winnipeg, throughout the province of Manitoba, in a number of school divisions, he was no doubt concerned with the plight of the municipal taxpayer, as well he should be, and as well we are, Mr. Speaker. It is for those very reasons, Mr. Speaker, because of our concern for the municipal

taxpayer, that it was felt necessary to proceed with such a dramatic increase to give some benefits to the property taxpayer, to reduce his tax burden, which has been a consistent approach, Mr. Speaker, of the policies and programs that we have introduced since first forming government, when income tax was reduced, when mineral tax was reduced, when succession duties were eliminated, where in every Budget since we have formed government taxes have been reduced. This, Mr. Speaker, by increasing the Property Tax Credit Program by 100 provides a tax relief, particularly to the owners of average homes assessed at 7,000 or under, who have had the benefit of actual tax reductions. Mr. Speaker, you can look around these days and there is not very many things you can buy at a reduced cost, so it is with some pride, I think, the members on this side of the House, take credit for the dramatic increase in the Property Tax Credit Program by virtue of providing this relief to property tax owners.

Combined with that, of course, Mr. Speaker, is the recognition that was referred to in the Budget to provide some improvement in cash flows this year to school divisions throughout the province, which are estimated to save school divisions throughout the province some 4 million in interest costs which they would have otherwise had to incur for borrowing money which had not yet flowed to them from the provincial government. It is anticipated, as it was stated in the Budget, Mr. Speaker, that might allow a number of school divisions to certainly break even and perhaps even to accumulate some small surpluses which will be available next year when they formulate their budgets and establish their mill rates for 1981. As had been indicated by the Minister of Education, a study will be undertaken and in fact is under way with respect to the whole question of financing of school costs. I anticipate, Mr. Speaker, that results of that program, I am sure, will be of benefit to the municipal taxpayer.

At the same time, another factor that must always be kept under consideration with respect to property tax programs, Mr. Speaker, is assessment and our government faced up to that challenge, one that was virtually ignored by members opposite, by appointing a full review of assessment. I refer to that, Mr. Speaker, because it has an obvious effect on property taxes. —(Interjection)— May shuffle them, but probably more equitably, Mr. Speaker, because that is the whole intention of that review. Certainly the same number of dollars have to be raised, but the experience has indicated that assessments are badly out of date throughout the whole province of Manitoba and the review that is currently under way is proving, I think, to be quite a challenge for the Review Committee, because of the interest expressed by so many municipalities throughout the province, by so many groups throughout the province, by the number of public hearings that have been held and the number of briefs that have been held. I think it is fair to say, Mr. Speaker, that this government has exhibited a real concern for property taxpayers, not only by a dramatic and substantial increase in the minimum tax credit program this year, but in its announcements with respect to school financing costs and improvement in the cash flow to school boards in this year's Budget, by the

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announcement of the review of the whole question of school costs, by our concern with the assessment problem, Mr. Speaker. All of these things combined I am certain are going to benefit the taxpayers in this province.

Members opposite may not know, but I think the taxpayer who has had his tax bill reduced, Mr. Speaker, and that is one thing that taxpayers understand, that real property tax bill is the most visible tax bill that anyone receives. If all governments had to send a bill once a year for their services, Mr. Speaker, I think you would find a great deal more resistance to other levels of government that are involved in taxing them.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to speak about the increase in this particular tax program and I am sure the Member for Rossmere will want to, perhaps in concluding debate, congratulate the government for the very dramatic increase in this program and the benefit that is accrued to the real property taxpayer in Manitoba.

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

**MR. SAM USKIW:** Mr. Speaker, it was most interesting for me to listen to the comments of the Attorney-General who, I believe, was probably absent during the course of the budgetary debates that took place, because had he been here at the time, I am sure that he would not have felt qualified to make the kind of contribution to this Resolution that he has here this afternoon.

The Minister takes some pride because of his perception and obviously he hasn't been party to the making up of the Budget, but his perception is, from whatever information he has gleaned from his Finance Minister, his colleague, the Finance Minister, is that there is indeed an added benefit to property owners in Manitoba as a result of their adjustments in property tax credits.

Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the Attorney-General that he probably would do himself justice if he would peruse the documents that were tabled by the Minister of Finance, work a number of income tax returns out for his own benefit, including his own, and then he would be perhaps more qualified to make his contribution on that particular subject, because, Mr. Speaker, there is no increase in property tax credits in this Budget this year. That is, for the bulk of average Manitobans, there is no increase; there is in fact a reduction that is taking place. And what the government is doing is they are attempting to emasculate their program to the people of Manitoba, they are attempting to have the public believe that they have upped the tax credits and the Minister was doing that here this afternoon by reading what 100 more means to various school divisions in Manitoba on their tax bills.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that is true in its simple form, but after you take the new formula that was included as part of the budget package, the new method of calculating benefits and eligibility criteria that have been introduced by the Minister of Finance, and you work those through, Mr. Speaker, you find that in fact most middle and low income Manitobans are going to receive less than they received under the old system. And it's not a matter of perception with

me, Mr. Speaker, it's a matter of having worked it out on five different returns that I have worked out, various levels of income and various family sizes, ranging from 7,000 and some odd dollars in income up to 40,000.00. And Mr. Speaker, in my examples, the one that earned 40,000 received the most or the greatest advantage from this government's budget.

Any government that believes in a progressive tax system would know and would implement a system which would enhance or increase the benefits of maximum eligibility in any tax credit program, but perhaps would not tamper at all with minimum eligibilities. Because we know that anyone that is past a certain threshold figure with respect to maximum tax credits cannot get another penny more, no matter how many dollars the provincial government throws into the tax credit program.

But if there is a flat adjustment of 100 on the minimum side of the scale, that is on the minimum benefits, then the richest man in Manitoba, or woman, would receive 100 more, regardless of their income. So wherein lies the progressivity of this government in terms of tax policy, Mr. Speaker? There is no progressivity in this measure; there is no fairness; there is no equity. In fact, there is a transfer of wealth taking place from ordinary folk, yes, middle income people, low income people, in order for the government to finance its other welfare programs. That is what is taking place in this year's budget.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that if you examine it with a critical eye you will find that this is a gigantic con game. Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't expect you or members opposite to believe me. But Mr. Speaker, I'm not the only one that has done an analysis of these proposals. I notice in today's Tribune there is an article by Frances Russell that deals with it at some length, and Mr. Speaker, this reporter calls it a flim flam position on the part of the government. The provincial government is trying to correct its image, she says, image problems with flim flam. This is her description of this budget. She suggests, Mr. Speaker, that it is indeed a shell game approach, that the idea is to get across to the people of Manitoba that they should expect greater benefits from tax credits of one form or another, while at the same time they are actually reducing them.

Mr. Speaker, it's probably worthwhile to read a paragraph or two from her comments. This is Monday, June 2nd, that's today's paper, Mr. Speaker. And I want to quote. It says, The first item boasts about bigger property tax credits with extra help for those who need it most, and this is the key point in their advertisement, Mr. Speaker. They talk about helping those who need it most, and quite frankly, it works the opposite way; it helps those who need it least. She says, In fact, however, the biggest help has gone to those who need it least. Well, yes, she's saying exactly what I have said.

Homeowners get the full 100 increase provided in the minimum property tax credit because it comes off their municipal tax bill. However, tenants, who are generally poorer than homeowners, don't receive the full 100 increase because the government has changed the method to calculate tax credits on the income tax. The change from individual taxable income to family net income has reduced substantially the number of poorer Manitobans qualifying for maximum tax credits. These people will

not only not receive the 100 increase in their property credit, in some cases their total property and cost of living tax credits will decrease. The second item speaks of special assistance to reduce property taxes for pensioners. Again, the implication of more assistance to needy pensioners is an illusion. Under the property tax credit system, no one can receive more benefits than he actually pays in taxes. The increase in the maximum to 525 helps the well-to-do pensioner, because only he or she pays enough property taxes to qualify for that amount.

That's a quote out of today's Tribune, an article by Frances Russell.

Mr. Speaker, that is what is happening, and I thought the members opposite would have been impressed with my particular analysis of it during the course of the budget debate, where I gave them five actual illustrations based on their new proposals, and worked into the 1979 income tax return. And Mr. Speaker, I think it's worthwhile doing it again, because obviously the members opposite did not fully either understand or appreciate at the time just what is taking place.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to go through them quickly because I know I don't have sufficient time to deal with them in detail. I have here one of the examples, a wage earner earning 8.30 per hour, working a 40 hour work week. His total salary for the year is 17,282, and he claims as an exemption, a wife and three children. Now, Mr. Speaker, in terms of pre-reform benefits, he would have been entitled to 372.38. In terms of post-reform benefits, he is entitled to 355.88. Now, no one, Mr. Speaker, can convince me that a person who has a family of three children and a wife to support, that that person is so affluent that we should reduce his property tax credit, based on an income of 17,000 in these times. But that's what it works out to, an actual reduction of some 20, or just under 20 in terms of his tax credit benefits, when he files his income tax for the year 1980, after this government gets through with him, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have another example, in this particular example, this person earns 12,168, no children, and a wife who is not earning any income. In terms of pre-reform benefits, without any adjustments in the property tax credits, or the tax credit program, the pre-reform benefits were 397.74, the post-reform benefits are 396.34, roughly a dollar less, when this person files his income tax next year, for the year 1980. Now, there are two different examples, in which case both are going to receive less, neither of which are high income people, Mr. Speaker.

Now, we have another example here, a person earning 12,168, two children, and a wife who earns 6,000.00. Mr. Speaker, in terms of post-reform, their total entitlement is 325, and pre-reform, their combined credit was 380.67. So here you have a working couple, earning 17,000 between the two of them, but receiving substantially less in tax credit benefits as a result of this budget.

Now, let's get down to the people who need it most, Mr. Speaker, because that's what the government is saying that they are working for and that's what their advertisements are saying, the people who need it most. And I'd like to know who they are, because in this example we have here a

person earning 3.75 per hour working a 40 hour work week, which gives them an annual income of 7,760, and there are no children involved in this example. This is a couple with one person earning income. Pre-reform, their tax credits amounted to 480.30. Post-reform, they will get 478.90. Another reduction of a dollar or two, Mr. Speaker, but where is that 100 increase that the Attorney-General had just talked about? The 100 — this is a family that earns 7,760, and they are going to get a couple of dollars less out of this government's budget with respect to property tax credits than they would have under the old system.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that you are giving me the signal on time. I will try to wrap it up. In my last example, we have a person earning 40,500, and this person purchased tax shelters amounting to a 20,000 tax shelter credit, didn't purchase any RRSPs, and this person, pre-reform was entitled to 333.02 in credits, post-reform is entitled to 337.92. So the people with the big bucks are able to get around the system in any event, and yes, they get the full 100 on property tax benefits. That's why it comes out that way, Mr. Speaker. They couldn't do it if it was based on a progressive system where their taxable income had to play a role, although in this case, they've managed to reduce taxable income, too, because of tax sheltering their income.

Mr. Speaker, if we're going to do justice to the whole concept of tax credits, if we really mean that we want tax credits to be a benefit to those groups in society who need that form of assistance, then, Mr. Speaker, we have to do a number of things. But one of the things that we must do is we must meet with the government of Canada, or at a federal-provincial conference we must convince the government of Canada to change their tax forms in order to give proper meaning to progressive taxation systems and to progressive taxation credit programs, so that we take away from people the luxury of depleting their taxable income by getting into all sorts of tax shelter programming in order to not pay as much taxes and in order to benefit from government tax credit programs. That, Mr. Speaker, must be done if we are serious about equity in taxation and if we're serious about an equitable transfer of wealth through tax credit programs of one sort or another.

Mr. Speaker, I know that even if the Minister of Finance was completely sincere in his efforts with respect to helping the people that need it most — and I have to say again, that is not reflected in his budget, but if he was sincere — he is not quite able to do so by using the existing tax forms that we now have. There would have to be some substantial changes, and that would only come about by some federal-provincial conference, out of which would be an agreement, an agreement to bring about those changes.

Mr. Speaker, I suggest that yes, the Member for Rossmere was not incorrect in pursuing this resolution, notwithstanding the budget. I suggest to you, Sir, that I don't believe we needed the amendment that was made to his motion, because it is not true that there is 100 increase or any increase with respect to credit to Manitobans. There may be some to some Manitobans, and there is a decrease to many Manitobans, and the Minister of Finance in

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his own figures admitted that something in the order of, I believe he said 86,000 people would receive less benefits. Mr. Speaker, my guess is that it is going to be about 250,000 tax filers are going to get less benefits under this package.

So, Mr. Speaker, I wish to move an amendment. I wish to move, seconded by the Member for Kildonan, that the Resolution be amended by deleting the third and fourth Whereas clauses and substituting the following:

WHEREAS the program was frozen for two years; and

WHEREAS the 1980 Provincial Budget changed the calculation of tax credits in a regressive manner, so that most middle and lower income Manitobans will receive less tax credits than they would have under the previous method of calculation.

And add:

THAT the Resolution be amended by deleting the last clause and substituting the following:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the government consider the advisability of continuing to calculate tax credits on the basis of individual's taxable income pending

(a) public discussion of tax credit reform; and

(b) discussion with the federal government of changes in the income tax return to permit a more progressive tax credit system; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the government consider the advisability of an annual review of property tax credits in light of increases in municipal and education costs.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MOTION presented.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

**MR. WARREN STEEN:** Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I could have a few moments and say a few words on this Resolution that the Member for Rossmere has placed before us and has been amended by the Member for Lac du Bonnet, who was telling us that he has prepared five sets of income tax forms using five rather distinct income figures and that whether it be someone in the neighbourhood of 7,500 or someone right up to 40,000, in his calculations the parties are not receiving any new benefits from our recent Budget that was announced and the White Paper.

The Member for Lac du Bonnet may recall it was mentioned that with the White Paper tax credit reforms that were introduced in the recent Budget, that the total figure, Budget figure, is some 30 million of new moneys that are being shared with the Manitoba people in general. He used the example of the person on the 40,000 income and the person at, I believe, 7,500 or 7,800 — 7,700.00. Well, he will — because I have only a few moments — but he will recall some debates that have taken place in this Chamber in past years where it has been suggested to government that perhaps if they took the 30 million and spread it throughout the municipalities and the school divisions, on a per capita basis, or based on a formula that meets with their current budgeting, that it would stretch somewhat further and it would be a lot less red tape than mailing out

rebates to people that there is involved with giving tax credits to the individual homeowner. But, he as well as I know that there are a heck of a lot more political votes in the fact that if a homeowner receives something from the provincial government saying he's got a tax credit, than if the money went directly to the city of Winnipeg and the city of Winnipeg said we're going to use it in general funds. It was a system that was started by the former Premier Duff Roblin when he came out with this 50 school rebate back in the early '60s. It was enhanced upon by the Member for Lac du Bonnet's government during their years and I think it's being enhanced upon by this government and obviously that is the political method of giving persons tax rebates or giving persons their own money back. You overcharge them and then you give them some back so that you look like a good boy and this is basically what is being done and it's been done by governments of various political stripes and I would say, Mr. Speaker, that it will be the method that will continue to be used because it's the best vote catching idea, is give the person a return of the over tax dollars that you've taken away from them. But I disagree with the Member for Lac du Bonnet when he tries to downplay the amount of tax credits that we've given the people in our Budget that was announced back in mid-May. I think the 100 increase to the homeowner was a substantial one and — (Interjection)— Pardon? Yes, the one that gets it.

Also you may recall that last year we introduced the SAFER Program and if the Member for Lac du Bonnet would listen to me rather than the Member for Wolseley it might be better. Mr. Speaker, last fall the Minister responsible for Manitoba Housing introduced the SAFER Program. At the time he made the introduction he was of the opinion that some 11,000 renters in Manitoba would be eligible to qualify for some assistance under that program and the disappointing part that has come through is that somewhere in the neighbourhood of 3,500 or 4,000 persons have made application for some assistance under the program. For some reason or other greater than 50 percent of the people that appear to be eligible, through Stats Canada and other methods of accumulating figures, don't seem to want to apply for assistance. Now that might be because the assistance isn't enough to make it worthwhile applying or it may be a sense of pride that persons who can only qualify for a few dollars a month say that I'm not going to take it from the government, to heck with it, unless it's of substantial assistance towards my rental accommodation bill I'm not prepared to go after it.

But I believe that through our recent Budget, Mr. Speaker, that we came out with a number of tax credits in the White Paper that I think are very good for Manitobans and the Shelter Allowance Program for elderly persons, and particularly the area and I mentioned this in my speech concerning the Budget, was that widows or widowers, particularly widows, under 65 as low as 55, who's husband was retired, who may pass away or does pass away and leaves them as a widow and yet they're not 65 to receive old age assistance, will now qualify for assistance. I've got five senior citizens homes in my constituency and this is a factor that does come up from time to time where a woman is left as a widow and yet she

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doesn't qualify for old age assistance and so on. Then we've got our supplements for the pensioners, we've got our property cost of living tax credit program, we've got the SAFER Program, we've got a number of programs where we are assisting the lower income, the middle income and the elderly and we're not assisting, and I think the Member for Lac du Bonnet was trying to make it out that we were trying to assist people in the high income area and so on. I think that the bulk of the people that are being assisted are the low to middle income and the senior citizens and there's a lot, Mr. Speaker, of senior citizens in Manitoba who don't need this additional assistance. There's a lot of young couples that are trying to get established into homes in the city of Winnipeg, regardless of the area or the constituency, that certainly could use the assistance more than a lot of our elderly . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The hour is 5:30. The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services that the House do now adjourn and resume in Committee of Supply at 8:00 o'clock.

**MOTION presented and carried,** and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 o'clock tomorrow afternoon (Tuesday).