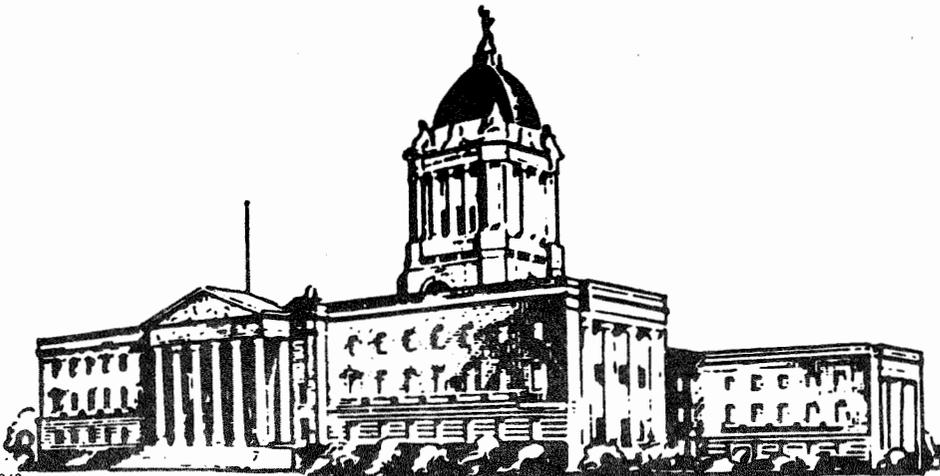




Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

31-32 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable D. James Walding
Speaker*



MG-8048

VOL. XXXI No. 32 - 2:00 p.m., WEDNESDAY, 23 MARCH, 1983.

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	NDP
DOLIN, Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virden	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, 23 March, 1983.

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Presenting Petitions
. . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River East.

MR. P. EYLER: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again. I move, seconded by the Member for St. Johns, that the Report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M. DOLIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table the Annual Report for the Manitoba Pension Commission for the period ending December 31, 1982.

I would also like to table the Annual Report of the Department of Labour and Manpower for the year 1982.

I regret that copies are not yet available for the House members. As soon as the Queen's Printer completes their assignment, I will ensure that copies are distributed.

Mr. Speaker, I also have a Ministerial Statement. I am pleased to announce to this House today . . .

MR. SPEAKER: One moment please.
The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M. DOLIN: I am pleased to announce, Mr. Speaker, to this House today an important new initiative from the Manitoba Jobs Fund - an initiative to provide jobs for this province's unemployed young people.

The new Jobs Fund Program will be called Careerstart. It is designed to create new summer job opportunities for students and unemployed youth, ages 16 to 24.

My department will receive \$3 million of Jobs Fund resources to assist employers, business, farms, non-profit community organizations, municipalities and local governments through wage and employee benefit subsidies to create new jobs providing skills, training, or career-related work that will give Manitoba young people valuable work experience for full-time participation in the labour force.

Careerstart will include some features of summer employment assistance this government has previously

offered to students. However, the current unemployment situation calls for special measures to address that situation as well.

I would just like to say that we are anticipating a strong response to the Careerstart Program and I am pleased that the Jobs Fund will give us the resources and the flexibility to respond fully to that demand.

I will be announcing further administrative details on Careerstart at a press conference later this afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, we thank the Minister for making the announcement in the House. We hope that this program will provide some jobs for the thousands of unemployed youth in this province.

There are, as the Minister is aware, over 54,000 unemployed persons in Manitoba; an increase, Mr. Speaker, of over 30,000 since this government took office.

Mr. Speaker, there is no indication in this announcement as to the number of young people that will be employed under this program. I remind the Minister, Mr. Speaker, that under our program some 5,000 jobs were created for this amount of money. There's no indication in this announcement as to how many jobs will be created.

Mr. Speaker, this announcement does not also indicate the type of restrictions on the program. Last year, the then Minister of Labour introduced a program which we objected to because there were undue restrictions on the private sector in limiting the program to private employers with less than - I believe the figure was five employees - and that kept out of the program a large number of private sector employers who had been eligible under our program and who provided jobs for young people in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, regretfully also this program is called Careerstart. Under this government, again there are 54,000 unemployed people, whereas under our government, graduates of universities, community colleges, and high schools obtained jobs in Manitoba. We created over 30,000 jobs all in the private sector. Under this government, Careerstart, the young people of this province must be wondering where their careers are going to be in the Province of Manitoba. The economic climate that has been created in this province under this government has rejected the private sector, Mr. Speaker. There are no jobs being created in the private sector and there are no careers, regrettably and unfortunately, for the young people of this province, Mr. Speaker. They are losing hope and despairing of their future in this province under this government and it is ironical that this government now has the nerve to call their program Careerstart.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to make a short statement to the House.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to make a statement with respect to the settlement of the strike of the operating engineers in the Winnipeg hospitals, namely - Health Sciences Centre, Grace and Misericordia Hospitals.

At the Health Sciences Centre, the union and the hospital have agreed to be bound by the Mediator's report, which is to be filed shortly. At the Grace and Misericordia Hospitals, a voluntary settlement has been reached between the union and the hospitals with the assistance of the Mediator.

Although we do not have complete details of the settlement, I understand that it will basically include -
a 4 percent increase January 1, 1983
a 4 percent increase July 1, 1983 and
a 5 percent increase January 1, 1984.

While this settlement provides for an end rate increase over the two years of some 13 percent, the actual cost increase in 1983 will amount to 6.08 percent and for the year 1984 a 5 percent increase.

There are some further adjustments for specific classifications within the schedule - in particular for the 2nd Class Power Engineer - the details of which I have not yet been provided with. I can report, however, that this settlement can be funded by the Manitoba Health Services Commission within the Estimates approved for 1983-84 and which I will be presenting to this House for debate shortly. I repeat that neither this settlement nor the recent settlement with the registered nurses will affect the amount of money that the Manitoba Health Services Commission requires from the government and will not increase the projected deficit for 1983-84.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We thank the Minister for his statement and also we welcome the news that the strike disrupting service at the three hospitals in question is now concluded and service will resume on a normal basis at all affected institutions.

Before commenting in depth on the details of the settlement, I would want time with my colleagues to explore the announced settlement that the Minister has just delivered to the House. The figures look all right on the surface but if you compound them out, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that they may exceed the kinds of guidelines that have been requested of Canadians in the national economic recovery drive and that various other groups and occupations in the health field in Manitoba had been asked to accept and had been willing to accept. For example, a news report today described the settlement with, I believe it was, Misericordia Hospital at 16 percent over two years, Mr. Speaker, so we'll have to look at the mathematics and work them out to our own satisfaction.

I am pleased, though, that the operating engineers have accepted the proposal that was worked out by the mediator and put forward by the government, because in the interest of health care and Manitobans in general, it is vital that our hospital services be maintained at a normal level of quality operation. Hopefully, that kind of service can now be restored.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I beg leave to table the Annual Report of the Election Commission for the year 1982.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. G. MERCIER introduced Bill No. 41, An Act to amend The Labour Relations Act.

HON. H. PAWLEY introduced Bill No. 42, The Jobs Fund Act. Loi sur le fonds de soutien à l'emploi. (Recommended by the Honourable Administrator of the Province of Manitoba)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we reach Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 25 visitors from Churchbridge High School in Saskatchewan, Grades 10 and 11. They are under the direction of Mr. Zuber.

There are 60 students of Grade 9 standing from the Charleswood Junior High School, under the direction of Mr. Crew and Ms. Smith. The school is in the constituency of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

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

Also, before Question Period, I have a ruling to read to the House.

SPEAKER'S RULING

MR. SPEAKER: On Tuesday, March 22nd, during Question Period, a disagreement arose between the Honourable Leader of the Opposition and the Honourable Government House Leader. I took the matter under advisement in order to check Hansard and Beauchesne.

Hansard reveals that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition said, in addressing a question to the Honourable Minister of Economic Development, "Mr. Speaker, may I first of all thank the Minister of Economic Development. Unlike most of her colleagues, she at least tries to answer a question. We may not agree with her answer, but she at least tries to answer."

"Would she agree with Mr. Bandeen in the same article then, Mr. Speaker, where he made the following statement . . ."

At this point, the Honourable Government House Leader raised a point of order concerning the admissibility of the question. Since I was unable to rule without hearing the complete question, the Honourable Leader of the Opposition went on to say, "Mr. Bandeen has said, 'Clearly a government competition in the life insurance field is a luxury Manitoba taxpayers do not need and cannot afford, given the size of that province's current Budget deficit and the massive funding requirements of job creating mega projects in the energy field. This is an example of a program which may be inflicted on the public in an arbitrary and unplanned manner.'"

He continued, "Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Economic Development mind explaining to the House

ORAL QUESTIONS

Flin Flon Hospital, Intensive Care Unit

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Health and arises out of an exchange of questions and answers between us yesterday. I want to just take 10 seconds of the House's time, if I may, Sir, to refer to the answer that the Honourable Minister gave me yesterday on Page 963 of Hansard, in respect to my initial question on this subject.

The Minister said at that time, "Mr. Speaker, I was informed of the situation and the incident in Flin Flon only yesterday." That would make it Monday, March 21st. "The Manitoba Health Services Commission knew nothing about it and I've asked for a complete report today, etc. etc." My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Minister is, how is it possible that a general hospital in a major Manitoba community like Flin Flon could close its intensive care unit, or critical care unit, as it is called there, for four days and the Manitoba Health Services Commission could know nothing about it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, it might be very difficult to understand but it's exactly the way it happened.

The first time that I was informed of that was when the bell was ringing, I don't remember, I guess it was Monday, on my way out. I was informed by the press. I immediately got in touch with - or as soon as I could, got in touch with the staff. Even at that time the commission knew nothing about it. My Deputy Minister, who's the Deputy Chairman of the Commission also, knew nothing about it at all.

I've been informed, and I can tell you that there has been a report as late as March 9th, we're talking about Monday, that was the 21st, the incident happened around the 14th or so, March 9th of this year, indicating that there were no unfilled positions in the hospital including the intensive care unit.

That is exactly why I stated yesterday, and I say again, that we've sent Mr. Roy Brown who, by the way, was very surprised, he's the former administrator, as you know, of Flin Flon Hospital to see exactly what's going on. I intended to send Dr. Johnson but he's not available, I'm told he's on holidays, because he's working in that field also.

Now, there's another question that I can answer today. My honourable friend asked when the Standing Committee on Nursing Manpower met last. Well, as he knows, but for the other members of the House, it was formed in May 1981 when it was responding to what appeared to be a Canada-wide shortage of nursing manpower. The committee met, I'm informed, on five occasions, the last meeting being held on November 18, 1981 because there was no need for that. In fact, the concern that I've had until this Flin Flon thing happened, that was exactly the case, that could we place all these nurses? I had the same thing when I talked about the closure of certain beds in certain hospitals. We've had that talk when we talked about Deer Lodge. So that hasn't been a real concern.

how, to use her words just spoken, the unemployed and the workers are going to benefit from government competition in the life insurance field, against this kind of comment from a leader in the life insurance field across Canada and against the kinds of perceptions that are being created by this kind of left-wing posturing by this government which is working a disservice to the unemployed and the workers of Manitoba?"

Neither Hansard nor the Honourable Leader of the Opposition make it clear whether two questions were asked, with the second being a rephrasing of the first, or whether it was all one question with an interruption.

Beauchesne's Citation 362 says, in part, "It is not good parliamentary practice to communicate written allegations to the House and then to ask Ministers either to confirm or deny them."

Thus when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition asked the Minister if she agreed with the article, the quoted part of the question is not good parliamentary practice. If the second remark of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was an extension of the first remark, then the extended question was also not good parliamentary practice.

On the other hand, if the Honourable Leader of the Opposition rephrased his question and asked the Minister to explain to the House, etc., the question was probably in order, despite the reference to an article in the preamble to the question.

I'd like to bring to the attention of the House another sentence from Citation 362 which says, "It is the Member's duty to ascertain the truth of any statement before he brings it to the attention of Parliament." The use of outside quotations and statements has been increasing in the Legislature. Beauchesne makes it clear that it is an abuse of the Rules of the House. Members should recognize and accept their duty to be responsible for their statements to the House.

Although it has been the practice of the House to permit considerable latitude during question period, I would recommend that members review Beauchesne's Citations 356 to 371, copies of which will be distributed shortly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, on the ruling that you have just given, if indeed it was a ruling or an opinion that you have just given, I'm quite happy to accept your interpretation of Beauchesne and the second part of the question, I would take it, still stands.

You seemed however, Sir, to raise an extraneous question having to do with the credibility of the statement which I read to the House. I don't recall anyone in question raising that, but I say with respect, Sir, that that really is not the concern of the Chair unless it's raised by somebody else. But to put your mind at rest, because yours seems to be the only one that is concerned about this, the article from which I was reading is contained in the magazine called "Chimo", Page 16. I will make a photocopy of the article by Robert A. Bandeen, Chairman and President of Crown Life Insurance Company, available for your reading and for your edification.

I think that the concern is we might have to develop people in certain areas. We've had certain courses here in the two teaching hospitals but unfortunately it's not an incentive if you bring people from the rural area, they have a tendency of wanting to stay in the city. So it might be that we should discuss, we have discussed with MARN who are, as you know, saying that the role of the nurse should change. There's some discussion of that going on, that will go on for awhile I would dare say.

It might be that the government might have to take a more active part than it has in the past to see that there's no shortage in certain areas or what training should be done after the nurse has received her diploma or her degree. This is something that we will have to look at very seriously.

But the important thing is it's exactly the way I said. We didn't know anything about it as far as, just the 9th of March we were told that every position was filled. The money was there and this is what I'm trying to find out now.

I might say that I've also been in touch with the staff, mind you we've actually been in touch with the College of Physicians and Surgeons. Depending on what Mr. Brown finds out, we might ask the College of Physicians and Surgeons to look into the matter.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that information but notwithstanding the fact that on March 9th apparently there was a report that said the hospital was staffed up to the necessary complement. There apparently were no nurses, or insufficient nurses, available to staff the critical care unit from March 10th to March 14th.

I therefore, I have to ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, as to the general situation whether he can comment in this House as to the condition that other hospitals in Northern Manitoba, and particularly in rural and remote parts of Northern Manitoba may find themselves in today.

What assurance do we have that hospitals in Churchill, in Thompson, in The Pas, in other northern communities are not suffering from the same partly crippled condition that apparently the Flin Flon General Hospital is suffering from?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, in a field such as this, Health, there is no way that one person could be responsible and know everything that's going on. We must rely on proper administration.

There's a Commission whose role it is to deal with the hospitals and the institutions. There's people that have a different responsibility in this field. They can be contacted quite easily. There are boards in different hospitals that should represent, and do, to a point represent, the communities. There is a medical director and an administrator.

Now, there is no way, the government, because we started the hospitalization program, there is no way, that the government has the responsibility for every single detail. Some of the people must be able to help themselves and we cannot guess, I have no assurance, it could be that I can tell you today that there's a full complement of nurses or doctors, or whatever in a certain hospital and the same thing can happen

tomorrow. That is not the case. We must rely on the information that we have. It is impossible to do anything else, Mr. Speaker.

I have no suggestion to improve that except that certainly we'll be discussing that and as I said we sent Mr. Brown there to discuss that with the hospital to see what's going on and I hope that I will get answers to these questions.

I might say also that this was brought to our attention because there was a death and it's very sad, it's unfortunate, but there is no way that we can guarantee that they'll have intensive care units in every single hospital either, or any of those other facilities. We can only do the best we can with the costs that we have.

The member was a Minister of Health and he should understand that, and I'll be asking for quite a bit more money than we had last year but we can't satisfy everybody, that's impossible.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary to the Minister. He can't be suggesting that this is a detail that the Minister of Health should not be concerned with . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I didn't say I wasn't concerned.

MR. L. SHERMAN: . . . when a critical care unit, or an intensive care unit in a major community general hospital is closed down and the Manitoba Health Services Commission and the Minister's office don't even know anything about it.

In the first place, Mr. Speaker, I have to repeat my question as to what assurance other Manitobans can have in other northern communities that their hospitals aren't similarly crippled, if the Commission and the Minister's office apparently didn't know anything about the fact that Flin Flon was somehow crippled? Now, what assurance have we got that other hospitals aren't crippled?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it quite clear that I'm just as concerned as any members of the House. I did not use the word concern, if I did it's certainly not what I meant. I said that I cannot accept the responsibility of every detail. There's a method, there's a way of doing things. There's other chosen people that are responsible people. I don't accept that I'm the only one that has to be responsible in Manitoba in this field. Of course, I'm concerned, but they will find out.

A MEMBER: The buck stops here.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There's no buck passing. I can just imagine, Mr. Speaker, if all of a sudden I decided that I would run the hospital what would be said about big government in everybody's business.

The thing is we do have confidence in other people. They will accept their responsibility and if we're made aware, and we have people that are going there, we have surveys, but we can't be at every single institution every day.

We had a report on March 9th telling us that all the, there was no position that was unfilled and this happened three or four days - what can we do? Station

somebody there on every ward of every hospital? This is not possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Health assure this House that other northern hospitals are not crippled in the way that Flin Flon was? What other reports has he had on March 9th or 10th or 11th from Thompson or Churchill or anywhere else that says everything is fine and that three days or four days later, unbeknownst to him and the Health Services Commission, may wind up closing their intensive care units? That's what I'm asking him. Surely that's not a detail. A closure for four days of an intensive care unit in a major urban community is not a detail.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, positions are pretty weak when you have to try to capitalize on things like this, an unfortunate incident, and things like that. I have just informed the House and I did yesterday . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I think they're ready for the answer now, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've just informed the House today and yesterday that I'm sending somebody to find out exactly that, so I can report, so I can tell the honourable member and the members of this House, yes, this was the reason and it won't happen again; this is what we've done, or this is what was done to see that it doesn't happen again. But, while you're dealing with human beings there's no guarantee that this thing will never happen again. I'm not going to give that guarantee.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Of course there is no guarantee, Mr. Speaker. There can be a guarantee that the Manitoba Health Services Commission is advised when an intensive care unit is closed or when any other major program is shut down. There can be that kind of a guarantee.

Mr. Speaker, my next question to the Minister has to do with the budget position of the Flin Flon General Hospital and I would like to ask him whether the Flin Flon General Hospital is in a deficit position in its Budget for 1982-83?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, the only way, as I say, that we could respond is if the people tell us that there is something going on. We review this with the hospital, there are visits - I've been at the Flin Flon Hospital and other people are going constantly, but if somebody tells us there is no unfilled position, we're not in a police state where we tell the people to give us their concerns. They know from way back that they are supposed to report any of these things and their concerns to the Commission. There are people that are paid to do exactly that. If they don't want to do it or if they send a statement to say there is no position that aren't filled, we're not going to shoot them. We're

going to try to get them to give us the information, and that's all we can do.

I don't think this is a question about the deficit. I don't think this is a question at this time. My Estimates apparently, I'm told, will follow those of the Minister of Agriculture and then I'll have the figures with me, I'll be able to tell you.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I sympathize with the position of the Minister insofar as the tragedy that is concerned; I don't sympathize with him insofar as evading responsibility for accidents . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, the Minister apparently is not going to answer any questions today on this . . .

POINT OF ORDER

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources on a point of order.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I and other members of this House have sat and heard the Honourable Member for Fort Garry abuse the Rules of this House for 15 or 20 minutes. He stands in his place, Mr. Speaker, and makes speeches and then adds a question to them. He, at the point in time when I stood up, Mr. Speaker, was not asking a question, he was arguing in respect to an issue that had already been answered and it's high time - you have read the Rules of the House to the members opposite - it's high time that you enforced the Rules.

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

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, on the alleged point of order of the Minister of Mines and Resources, I think, Sir, it's become apparent to the House and to the TV people who watch this and so on, that the Minister of Mines and Resources very seldom has a legitimate point of order. He is becoming a form of public nuisance in the House and I would suggest you call that posture to his attention.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry on the same point.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I concede that my questions have contained fairly long preambles. I concede that, but I would remind, if I may, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources who talks about having sat in this House for the last 15 minutes and listened to my use or abuse of the Rules, I would remind him that he did not sit in this House for the last four years and listen to the kinds of pillorying and harassment that was raised by that side when they were on this side of the House, by that party when they were in opposition, in the health care area and that

was without loss of life, Mr. Speaker. That was without loss of life.

Here we have a Manitoban who has died as a consequence of an unfortunate situation relative to a hospital in the North, and in order to get the information and reassurance for Manitobans, my questions have commanded and required a certain preamble. That's to the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health to the same point.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, not to a point of order. I was going . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources to the same point.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, the kind of carping that is going on when an honourable member rises in his place to deal with the Rules of this House is indicative of the lack of attention to rule in this House. I have called -- (Interjection) —

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, the babble underlines my argument. There is a lack of respect for the Rules of this House, Mr. Speaker. I have called upon you, Mr. Speaker, to restore to this House the decorum it deserves. It's a question of upholding the parliamentary system, an opportunity for questions to be fairly put and fairly answered. I have called upon you, Mr. Speaker, to read Rule 359 of Beauduchesne, not once, several times. It has been read by you, Mr. Speaker, but honourable members continue to stand up and abuse those Rules without being called upon to respect the Rules. I will continue to rise and question the abuse of the Rules by the honourable members opposite, but I think you should, Mr. Speaker, indicate to them that they must abide by these rules or be ruled out of order by you, without someone on this side having to get up and call it to your attention.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain to the same point.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. The Minister of Natural Resources seems to make much of wanting to restore integrity to the Legislative Chamber and accuses this side of abusing the privileges of the House and admonishes you, Sir, that you should be enforcing the Rules. It should be evident to anyone, Sir, that there may be abuses of the Rules on both sides of the House, but we never see the Minister of Natural Resources rising when there are abuses of the rules on the government side of the House. He is really not interested, Mr. Speaker, in restoring integrity to the House; he is simply interested in obstructing members on this House from asking questions.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood to the same point.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I want to comment on the remark by the Member for Fort Garry that there were similar types of questions asked from '77 to '81. I want to simply say, Mr. Speaker, that a lot of the questions that we hear in this House, since the 1981 election, have been prolonged, they have been rambling, there has been lengthy introductions. In fact, on many occasions, we have had speeches followed by questions and only after prodding from the government side has there been a question that came out of a rambling or a disguised speech.

Mr. Speaker, part of the problem, of course, is that previously there were two opposition parties, and so there was some pressure on the official opposition to ask questions properly and to only have two supplementaries. The problem, of course, this House has is that there is no third party putting pressure on the official opposition, therefore, that pressure has to come from the government. — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, I think that it is a fact that if you were to check the records that there have never been such long, lengthy, disguised, out of order questions in the history of this House.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: This is your day, Russ, rise and shine.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the members for their discussion of this point of order and remind them that the decorum of the House is really up to the members themselves. I do not impose it on the members, and if they wish to conduct their affairs in a decorous manner, it will so be done; if they decide otherwise, then it will simply be otherwise.

I would remind members that I did submit Beauduchesne's remarks on questions today, which runs to quite a number of Citations. I would suggest that members do give it a certain amount of study and consider what is there, consider whether they wish to move towards a more strict interpretation of what Beauduchesne says, compared with the previous practice in this House, which has seen some amount of latitude involved.

ORAL QUESTIONS Cont'd

Flin Flon Hospital, Intensive Care Unit

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Honourable Minister of Health wish to answer the question?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to get involved in that. I'm not touching that with a 10-foot pole at this time.

Mr. Speaker, I think what I am interested in, there is a concern by all the members of this House at what happened, and I think that we have to be reasonable on this. There are certain things - I like to be pretty well sure of my facts before I make a statement in this House. I can say to my honourable friend, because he's insisting, the Member for Fort Garry, that I have had reports from that area that I want to check.

For instance, there is a nurse that's saying that she applied for a job. She wasn't given the job. They thought

that maybe they were trying to hire an LPN at this time, that it was cheaper; I want to check into that. That same person said that she met with my honourable friend when he was Minister of Health and he promised that he would look into it; she never heard from him again. These are the things that I want to check because it's not fair at this time to make a statement if you don't know exactly what the score is.

The concern is that we all have concerns in this House, but we've got to do this in an orderly fashion. It is unfortunate that the thing happened. It has one effect, though, that the people are a little more careful and sometimes it brings action; we are going to look into it. I asked the people to be patient. We have somebody that's there now and I will report. I'm not going to try to duck this one at all. I'll report what happens and we will be discussing it in the Estimates of my department, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the Minister if he can give Manitobans and this House the reassurance that he is receiving monitoring of Northern and rural and remote hospitals on the same basis that he is receiving monitoring of urban hospitals - in other words, that the Health Services Commission is hearing regularly from hospitals which take action to close down programs.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, I can give this assurance, Mr. Speaker. I would say that every year there is improvement in that, as fundamentally the same system that we've had in place no matter who the government is since the advent of hospitalization, and it's improving constantly. The member knows that. I can give him the names of the people that are responsible, but we must rely, Sir, on some of the people doing their work also in bringing it to our attention. There is no way that we have the staff at the Health Sciences Centre to station somebody in every single hospital, every single personal care home or every doctor's office to find out.

The concern - it was said, and maybe we should set the record straight - I have heard about some of the questions we have asked before about the beds and that, and I said the other day that I felt the former Minister got involved in that and my term, if it wasn't too unparliamentary, was that he was sucked in. I said that I don't intend to operate like that. There are certain responsibilities; I am not going to count the strips of bacon. If he wanted to it, that's his business, and I am not going to go and see how many times they change the sheets. I'm going to rely on these people. We will get as much as we can out of the funds that we have, and I'll stand to any criticism and ready to debate it with any members of this House.

MR. D. ORCHARD: How about the tarpaulin for Ste. Rose?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: If you put it over your head, maybe it will stop the nonsense.

Hiring of Supervisor of Racing - Manitoba Racing Commission

MR. SPEAKER: The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Due to the fact that there are 54,000 Manitobans unemployed and jobs for Manitobans is presumably a priority of this government, does she support the hiring by the government-appointed Manitoba Racing Commission of an American on a temporary work visa for the position of Supervisor of Racing?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the chance to comment on this. The Horse Racing Commission did conduct a cross-Canada competition for this position. It is the most senior position in the racing and therefore requires the most technical knowledge and experience. They assure me that this gentleman does have an outstanding background. They are wanting to introduce some training programs to upgrade some of our local people in this rather technical area, and it's with the presence of such a skilled person that we will be able to do that. It is understood, however, that his appointment is conditional upon his receiving a renewal of his work permit.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that there were several qualified applicants for the position including a former Supervisor of Racing of this province who applied, does the Minister still think it's necessary to hire an American to take this position, an American who's on a temporary work visa?

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, this position is a new and enlarged responsibility position as a result of the Commission's desire and intent to get the regulation of racing on a much tighter and more effective basis than we've had in the past. As a result, Mr. Speaker, the selection process has been quite rigorous. I, myself, of course, am not present at going through those kinds of applications, nor would any person who was not directly involved in going through application cards making the selection, I think, presume to judge. I think we appoint people in whose judgment we have trust. We know they are conscientious and that they've approached the task with great carefulness.

We would have preferred of course to have a local person, had the relative skills and competencies come through, but I am sure that when the members opposite weigh the risks of having a person of less than the best we can get for this most responsible position, one that is really going to give us the key to operating a fair and really effective racing season out at the Assiniboia Downs, that they would not want a person to be recommended who was less than the best we could obtain.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I'm interested to hear the Minister defend the judgment of the Manitoba Racing Commission. My question is, is the former NDP bagman who last year wanted to change the dress code at the Turf Club so that he would wear blue jeans,

and last year wanted to have a private table reserved for him at the Turf Club every night during the racing meet, is he still the Chairman of this Manitoba Racing Commission who is making this decision?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I don't consider that kind of innuendo and character assassination worth responding to.

Protest letter to Hazen Argue re McDonald's

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that the Provincial Government is now going ahead and giving preferential treatment to U.S. citizens and giving them jobs here rather than employing one of the 54,000 people unemployed in Manitoba - to the Minister of Labour - I wonder if she could confirm that she sent a letter of protest to the Federal Government chastising the Minister in charge of the Wheat Board, Mr. Hazen Argue, for allowing a U.S. Company, McDonald's, to buy a product here in Manitoba for their Manitoba firm from the U.S., even though the price was a little cheaper. I wonder if she can confirm that she complained to the Federal Government that we were buying something from the U.S.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. M. DOLIN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I did contact Mr. Argue on this issue.

MR. R. BANMAN: In light of the events of the last couple of days with regard to the bus deal, and now with the government hiring an American to head up the senior position at the Race Track, I wonder if the Minister would table the letter in the House that she sent to Hazen Argue objecting to someone in Manitoba buying a product that was a little cheaper in the United States.

HON. M. DOLIN: Mr. Speaker, I certainly have no problem with tabling that letter. It was not a private communication.

Purchases outside of Manitoba

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the Premier's comments yesterday, a statement saying that Manitoba was a great place to do business, would he, because of the difficulties that people, particularly in Manitoba, are having under the New Democratic Party, now remove the regulations that prohibit Manitobans from going into their neighbouring provinces like Saskatchewan and buying products for their home consumption, regulations that he put in place some

time ago? Would he now revoke those regulations so that people won't be charged for doing business in Saskatchewan?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member would have to submit more detail so that there would be an appropriate response to his question.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, if my memory is correct, I think something like a month ago, his Minister of Finance introduced regulations that if individuals living in the central or western part of the province - it doesn't matter where they live in Manitoba - if they import certain commodities from Saskatchewan or buy it for their home use that in fact they could spend up to two years in jail. Is that not correct, and will he revoke them, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, it would probably be a good idea for me to bring the regulation in and probably read it to the member, so he understands it

HON. R. PENNER: Word-by-word.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: . . . but if it is his position that he would prefer to have western Manitobans purchase in Saskatchewan rather than from Manitoba businesses and not generate the tax revenue from western Manitoba that people have to pay and every part of the province in order to provide for good roads, good services, drainage and all those other things that those taxes pay for, then let him say that he wants people to go there and not pay the tax.

HON. R. PENNER: That's what he's saying.

Competition assistance grants - gasoline

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I now have a question for the Minister of Finance. Seeing that they now realize that there is a better place to do business - I do support the businesses in western Manitoba - I will ask the Minister of Finance directly if he will change the incentive grants that he provided for the fuel dealers and all those businesses along western Manitoba last year, after recognizing the fact that Saskatchewan was a better place to do business, I want to support those businesses, will he change that incentive grant so those people can maintain their businesses along the border without costing him lost business in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker?

MR. H. ENNS: Fair enough, Mr. Speaker, it seems fair enough.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the policy of the Member for Arthur is "purchase

Saskatchewan," rather than here in Manitoba. But I want to tell the member that the competition assistance grants we introduced last year were introduced very quickly after the changes in taxation in Saskatchewan, and they were somewhat similar to the kinds of regulations that Saskatchewan had in place when Alberta was the only tax haven in the country.

I have met just recently, in fact last week, with the Petroleum Producers Association and we've discussed various changes that may be coming about for this coming year with respect to the competition assistance grants. We hope to make them more equitable so that we are more likely to have those grants passed on to the customers, because some of those grants, unfortunately, were not passed on to the customers, and in some areas the grants caused some other inequities because of the zones, as I'm sure members for that area will know very well. If you're just outside of a zone, there were some difficulties for some stations and some advantages for others.

We are also looking at the area of a cap on assistance per station, that's something that's under review now.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary, the Minister referred to it. Will he remove the limitations that are placed on those businesses? Last year the grant applied to those people only on the same amount of gallonage that they poured the year before to their customers. Will he remove that cap so that businesses in the western region of the province can expand? Even though he doesn't want the rest of Manitoba to go ahead, there are areas of this province, because of the past government's policies that have developed and created economic incentives, will he remove that cap so people can expand their businesses and provide services and breaks to the consumers in western Manitoba?

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, the member's question, of course, had an incorrect assumption that there was no allowance for growth, No. 1. There was an allowance for growth. No. 2, throughout the province there was a decrease of about 4 or 5 percent in the sale of gasoline, and that was not something unusual to Manitoba alone. But I had indicated in the previous question that the matter of a cap is under review and there will be further announcements made, and certainly it will not be made in response to any assistance given by that member. It will be in response to discussions we have had with members of the petroleum industry who have told us that they thought it was a very good program in terms of the quickness with which this government responded to a problem that they had.

Crow Rate

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Highways and Transportation. In view of the fact that approximately 10 days ago we put aside all other House business to debate the Crow resolution as tabled by that Minister, and that Crow resolution assumed a great deal of urgency by the government, it is now eight days since

we passed that resolution. My question is, has the government's urgency on the Crow resolution all of a sudden dissolved like last year, or is the Minister able to announce when the agricultural committee hearings will be held throughout rural Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, that indeed is an appropriate question, and I don't fault the member for raising it. The intent, or the urgency, last week was, of course, to communicate with the Government of Canada and all other interested parties on that issue and that is in process. We are attempting to communicate with every group and every level of government and, indeed, all the parties in the House of Commons. So that urgency has been satisfied.

The next step, of course, is to interface with the farm groups in Manitoba, perhaps even if the committee makes a decision on public meetings or hearings or whatever, but that will be up to the committee to make that decision, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, then, since it is up to the Agricultural Committee to make that decision as the Minister says, when does he expect his Government House Leader to get about the business of the House and call that committee so we can make a decision?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I believe that in the next couple of days that decision will be made known to members opposite.

Hiring of Supervisor of Racing - Manitoba Racing Commission

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hope the Honourable Attorney-General doesn't rule me out of order.

Can I ask the Honourable Minister of Economic Development how many applications were laid on her desk for that position at the race-track?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the Horse Racing Commission is an arm's length commission and they deal with the applications. I understand that they did have a short list of 15 they finally looked at, but they had a much larger number of original applications.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Honourable Minister can get that information for the House.

HON. M. SMITH: I'll take that under advisement, Mr. Speaker.

MHRC Insurance Rights

MR. W. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Honourable Minister of Housing, who I would guess is in Flin Flon today looking after the health needs of that community, which the Minister of Health apparently can't handle, maybe I could ask this question of the First Minister. Regarding the economic statements on development which were made in this House yesterday by the Minister of Economic Development, she left me with the impression that the Pawley Government wants to encourage business growth in Manitoba, can I ask the First Minister why MHRC has turned their backs on the rural insurance agents in this province, on MHRC housing and their contents, and provided the insurance rights for MHRC to Marsh & McLennan Ltd.?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I have to take that question as notice.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And further, Mr. Speaker, in view of another statement that was put in the record yesterday by his Minister of Economic Development who said that we are not leaning to one side or the other, we're adopting a balanced report, I wonder, does the Province of Manitoba not need the rural insurance agents to survive in this province and have the privilege of tendering on these MHRC contracts, which apparently now they have been denied, as a result of a decision that has been made by this government. I can cite an example of checking with agents today, Mr. Speaker, if I may . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Roblin-Russell had a preamble, asked a question, and then went on to make an explanatory speech and that certainly is out of order. I think he should have allowed the member to answer the question he asked, not gone on to give his own predigested answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Since the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell has asked a question on the topic, which has been taken under advisement, would it not be better if he were to wait for the answer to ask any further questions on the same topic?

The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, seeing that the Honourable Attorney-General again has taken a strong issue of the fact, that I want to put in the record the rates that Marsh & McLennan offered on these insurance parcels and the rate that my rural agents which they refused to accept, can I ask the Minister of Economic Development how many were interviewed for that position?

Hiring of Supervisor of Racing - Manitoba Racing Commission

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, the member opposite must have insight or intuition, because when I stood up before, I had taken that under advisement, but since he's been chattering in-between, I now have acquired the information. There were 125 applications from across the country — (Interjection) — 125.

MR. H. ENNS: One hundred and twenty-four Canadians and one Yank.

HON. M. SMITH: About one-half — (Interjection) — I have the information if you want to hear it.

A MEMBER: They don't want to hear it Muriel, sit down.

HON. M. SMITH: Of these, about 15 were short-listed, a half of them came from near Winnipeg and the other half from out of province and it was the judgment of the Commission that Freeman was head and shoulders above the others in the breadth and depth of his experience. It was unfortunate that there were not a large number of equally qualified applicants but that, Mr. Speaker, was the case.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one or two announcements about House business. In accordance with the usual practice, and I've discussed this with the Opposition House Leader, the House will not meet next Wednesday, March 30th, because of the large number of members who wish to attend the world-famous Royal Manitoba Winter Fair at Brandon.

Again, in accordance with custom, because next Friday, a week Friday, is Good Friday, the House of course is not meeting. The House on Thursday will meet at 10:00 o'clock in the morning and at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, but will, by agreement, recess at or near 5:30 in the afternoon of Thursday, March 31st.

Thirdly, again after some discussion with the Opposition House Leader, by agreement, for another prestigious world-famous event, there will no question period today and we'll be asking for an adjournment on or about 4:30.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Private Members' period. We just finished question period.

HON. R. PENNER: Oh yes, Private Members. Well, sometimes it feels like question period.

Finally, I would like to note, because of the point that was made from their seats by one or two members, that I have furnished the Opposition House Leader with a proposed list of committee meeting dates, and I'm

advised that he will let me have his comments on that list today or tomorrow and we will then be able to make an informal announcement of committee meeting dates.

Mr. Speaker, having made those announcements, I would leave to make a non-political statement if I may.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the Honourable Minister have the leave of the House? (Agreed)

The Honourable Attorney-General.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

HON. R. PENNER: It's been brought to my attention that one of the most respected, revered and honoured members of this House, the Honourable Member for Niakwa, had a birthday yesterday, which went unobserved except by the Minister for Health and I think that was a shame. I would like to have all members of the House wish the Honourable Member for Niakwa a Happy Birthday one day late. Can I tell your age? Fifty-five yesterday and look, he looks about 56.

ORDERS OF THE DAY ADJOURNED DEBATES - SECOND READING

HON. R. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the adjourned debate on Bill No. 29, Page 3 of the Order Paper standing in the name of the Member for Lakeside.

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance, Second Reading of Bill No. 29, the Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I beg the indulgence of the House to have this matter stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Stand.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you please call the Debate on Second Readings as they appear on Pages 2 and 3 of the Order Paper in the order in which they appear.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 2, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would ask the Attorney-General whether or not it is his intention to table in the Legislature a significant number of amendments to this Act, which I'm led to believe he is negotiating and may very well be introducing. Before I decide whether or not to speak to the bill, it would be helpful to have an answer to that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General to the same point of order.

HON. R. PENNER: That's reasonable and what I would undertake to do in the next day or so is to provide the Member for St. Norbert with a precis of some proposed changes in the legislation. I can't give them to him in

the form of amendments, those that would of course be brought in at committee stage, but certainly the gist of any changes that are being contemplated. So that would better enable him to consider the criticisms he may still have.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I would, in view of the answer, ask that the matter stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Stand.

BILL NO. 3 - THE FARM LANDS OWNERSHIP ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 3, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am anxious to make some remarks on Bill No. 3, The Farm Lands Ownership Act, and I do so, Mr. Speaker, because I want to make it very clear to the Minister and to this government that if we repeat the obvious and keep repeating it, perhaps they will begin the understand the seriousness with which we in the opposition, take this bill. This bill will be opposed, Mr. Speaker, with all the vigour that we, in the opposition, can muster and it will be opposed for a long time unless the Minister, of course withdraws the bill or brings in substantive amendments.

Mr. Speaker, this bill and its companion bill, Bill No. 23, An Act to amend The Real Property Act, does nothing in its present form but add reams and reams of additional red tape and bureaucracy to something that most Manitobans and, particularly farm Manitobans, take so naturally for granted, the ownership of farm land. — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, so the Minister knows where I'm coming from, I really have very little support for this kind of legislation. Period.

Secondly and thirdly, Mr. Speaker, this bill is a divisive bill. It divides Canadians, divides Manitobans. We start classifying what kind of rights Canadians, Manitobans have. So I call it a divisive bill, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what worries me perhaps most about this government's insistence on dealing with this bill, and I read from the press release that the Honourable Minister sent out on December 14th, at the time of the introduction of this bill where, in the second paragraph, he says that the reason for this bill being before us and the reason why this bill is going to take up so much of our time is ". . . to strengthen the position of the owner-operated family farms and ensure the future viability of . . ." these same farms.

Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Minister doesn't know by now that this is not the burning issue out there that is facing the Manitoba farmers today, there is a real crisis out there in Manitoba. That's what gives birth to such organizations as the Farm Survivors' Group. There is a problem of credit; there is a problem of money out there, Mr. Speaker. There is a problem that farmers face with falling prices. While we, in government and particularly this government, guarantees 14,000, 15,000 fellow Manitobans a 27 percent increase over the next 30 months and full security and tenure of jobs, farmers are looking - and we heard the federal Minister

responsible for the Wheat Board says that the initial payments for wheat and cereal grains could be down by what? - 75 cents, 80 cents. I don't know what that is in percentage terms, but it looks pretty rough, Mr. Speaker.

So that is the issue out there, Mr. Speaker. That's why farmers are going bankrupt up there. That is why farmers don't know how they're going to put their crop in this year when they try to put together the pool of money necessary, the production costs that are required in modern agriculture, to put in the 1983 crop, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, instead of listening to what my colleagues were trying to do last night and charge this Minister with cranking up the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation to use all the tools and some new and innovative tools in its workshop to help out in this situation, that's what we should be doing. Those should be our priorities if we intend to do what the First Minister or what Minister of Agriculture says, we want to strengthen the position of owner-operated family farms. That's really what we should be spending our time about. I say that, Mr. Speaker, because I am going to regret, I am afraid, to some extent, and the farm community is going to be confused as to the amount of time this issue is going to take in this Chamber, because it's going to take a great deal of time.

Mr. Speaker, early on when it became known the government and this Minister was going to introduce — (Interjection) — for the second time, the Member for Arthur reminds me, a Farm Ownership Act, my leader, the Honourable Member for Charleswood, repeatedly asked both in this Chamber and by letter that this Minister provide us with the necessary current information with respect to ownership of farm lands in Manitoba so that we could all be operating from an equal and current data base. Mr. Speaker, you will recall, my leader had quite an exchange with the Minister of Agriculture about how long it took for him to get a response from the Minister and then, finally, the kind of response that we got from the Honourable Minister of Agriculture where he sent out this letter on November 19th, subsequent days, which gave a very cursory overview and painted, I must say, Mr. Speaker, a very exaggerated picture as to the justification and the requirements for this particular bill.

Mr. Speaker, what did that force the opposition to do? We had to - and there's nothing wrong with that - but we had to go and do our own homework. I simply remind you, Mr. Speaker, and the Minister through you, that we are not government. We don't have access to the full resource support of the Civil Service. We don't have that kind of supporting staff. We had to call upon the voluntary assistance of the municipalities in the Province of Manitoba and we wrote to each municipality in the Province of Manitoba, asking them if they would be so kind - and they didn't have to, it was voluntarily offered and I take this opportunity to express, through you, Mr. Speaker, our thanks to all those municipalities who responded to that request. They haven't all responded, some information is still coming in, but I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, we are going to be able to demonstrate that the opposition has a data bank that is current, that is up-to-date and tells the true story.

I want to refer to that, just briefly, Mr. Speaker, because what is the true story? I have to remind you,

Mr. Speaker, and put it on the public record, the kind of letter that we received from the Minister of Agriculture indicated that, for instance, in such municipalities like McDonald, the percentage of farm land owned by absentee landlords was 20 percent; in Franklin, 21 percent; in Portage la Prairie, 21 percent; in Eriksdale, 26 percent; in Reynolds, 37 percent. Those are concerning percentages and that would cause concern to all Manitobans I suppose, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, allow me to read you from our research that we have conducted, and these aren't our figures, these are figures provided by the secretary treasurers of the municipalities in the Province of Manitoba. They had no axe to grind, Mr. Speaker. We asked some simple straightforward questions as to the amount of acres in the municipalities, the amount of acres of farm land, the amount of non-resident foreign acres registered in their municipalities, the amount of non-resident Canadian acres in their municipalities, and then, finally, the percentage of resident Manitobans in acreage terms in their municipalities. I just want to read. You know, Mr. Speaker, other speakers will go through this more specifically, but for instance in the R.M. of McCreary, 96.7 percent of the land is owned by Manitobans - resident Manitobans; in the R.M. of Miniota, 98.37 percent; in the R.M. of Minitonas, 97 percent; in the R.M. of Minto, 97.5 percent; in the R.M. of Morris, 95.8 percent; in the R.M. of Morton, 97 percent. Well, now, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Order please. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources on a point of order.

HON. A. MACKLING: No, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask the honourable member whether or not he would answer a question? I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, if the honourable member would confirm that the documentation he has is the result of research by the Progressive Conservative Party on this matter or whether it is documentation prepared by the municipalities? In either event, will he be prepared to table the documentation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: We are more than prepared to table this information. In fact, Mr. Speaker, for latter stages of this bill, I understand that a full graphic map is being made up which will graphically portray these figures. But to answer the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources more directly, this basic research was not done by the Progressive Conservative Party. It was done by a host of, I would assume, independent secretary-treasurers in the municipalities who responded to the simple questions that we asked as to how many non-resident owners had land in their municipality, how many non-resident foreigners owned land in their municipality and how many of their acres of land were registered to resident Manitoba citizens.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the honourable member wants to suggest that, of course we collated that material together, but it's pretty basic, pretty simple data that does not lend itself to editorializing or to distorting.

Well, now, Mr. Speaker, let me be a little more specific. For instance, in the Minister's statement that he sent

out that called for the justification of this bill, he talks about the R.M. of Franklin with 21 percent of the land in foreign or non-resident ownership. Well, Mr. Speaker, our direct information from the R.M. of Franklin is that 90.7 percent of the land in the R.M. of Franklin is owned by Manitoba residents, in other words over half. Now, Mr. Speaker, that brings me to the very important point I'm trying to make . . .

POINT OF ORDER

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, Phil Eyler: Order please. Does the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources have a point of order?

HON. A. MACKLING: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I asked the Honourable Member for Lakeside two questions as to the preparation of the document he was referring to. I now have his answer. I asked him also whether he would be prepared to table at this time, but he didn't answer that question. I assumed that he will table the document then after he's finished his presentation.

A MEMBER: He doesn't have to.

HON. A. MACKLING: Yes, he does.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I now serve notice that my generosity only extends so far, I'm not going to accept another question from the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources until I conclude my remarks. — (Interjection) — Well, certainly he did have no point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he simply wanted to ask another question. He simply had no point of order.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my answer to him is, yes, this information will be made available, because we think it's vitally important that this information is made available to all members. Secondly, it will be made available when it is completed. It has not been totally completed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: On the point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a Rule of this House when an honourable member is referring to a document that, when called upon by another member of this House, he is obliged to table the document. I am asserting the Rule of this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I want the honourable member to table the document.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the alleged point of order that the Minister of Natural Resources raised, I refer to you, Sir, to Page 58 of our Rules which says, "If a point of order consists of putting a question to the member speaking, if it is a mere interruption, or if it is defective for other reasons, the Speaker will

sharply rule it out. A point of order cannot be raised on a point of order."

That is the complete paragraph, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and what we have here is an abuse of the Rules by the Minister of Natural Resources, who only within the hour was lecturing the House on the abuse of the Rules and on the decorum of the House. He knows full well that the information being used by my colleague, the Member for Lakeside, are speaking notes which he is using at the moment, and he has given his assurance that when the information is completed, when all the information is in from the municipalities, it will be made available. You can bet it will be made available, and in the meantime the Minister of Natural Resources is out of order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, speaking to the point of order. My point of order is genuine. I first of all rose in my place, asked the honourable member whether he would answer a question.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: You little twerp, sit down. You twerp, sit down! You've been up all damned afternoon yelling across the room.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: Let Hansard record that the Member for Sturgeon Creek is using abusive language from his Chair when I have been recognized by the Chair and am speaking on a point of order.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Not from my seat, I asked that little twerp to sit down . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Order!

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Honourable House Leader, of the opposition party, is questioning my rising on a point of order to interrupt and ask a question. I did not do that. Hansard will show that I rose in my place, was recognized by the Deputy Speaker, asked the Honourable Member for Lakeside whether he would submit to a question. He did, and in that question I asked him whether or not the documentation he was referring to was prepared by the Progressive Conservative Party, or by whom it was prepared. The Honourable Member for Lakeside said it was prepared by someone who collated this information and that I accepted and understood.

I then asked the honourable member whether he was going to table the information and he didn't answer that question. I then rose on a point of order, pursuant to our rules, on the point of order, pointing out that the honourable member, when referring to a document, has to be obliged, has to be prepared to table that document if requested to do so.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain is trying to cover up the fact that the Honourable Member for Lakeside alleged that this was researched material that he had made up of information that had been collated and prepared and now the

Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain is suggesting that these were merely speaking notes.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they can't have it both ways. The Honourable Member for Lakeside either has researched information in the way of a document that he's referring to and that's the way he was presenting his argument to the House or else they're merely his research notes in speaking note form. He can't have it both ways.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: On the same point of order.

The Minister of Natural Resources, in I suppose, his role as Acting Government House Leader, in the absence of the Government House Leader - oh sorry, the Government House Leader was here. I apologize, Sir.

The Minister has indicated that researched material should not be part of speaking notes. I want to assure the Acting Government House Leader that when we make speeches in this House there is research that goes into it. That research is documented contrary to the speeches and the baffle-gab we hear from that side of the House and research material is part of our speaking notes when we get up to make an address, address a bill in this House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: It is with considerable regret that I must disagree with the Deputy House Leader on the point of order that he is raising. I do so since I think everybody's now had an opportunity to get whatever it is on their chest, off their chest, and we ought to get on with the debate.

As I read Beauchesne - there's no obligation on a private member, there may be on a Minister - to table a document referred to. I would refer you to Beauchesne, the Fifth Edition, at Page 116, Citation 327, paragraph 6. "A private member has neither the right, nor the obligation, to table an official or any other document." He has undertaken at some point to table the paper he is referring to. He can do so if he wishes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank the Attorney-General for taking the time to research Beauchesne at this particular point.

I would only like to say, Sir, that if we have to table statistics that are gathered for us by government departments, or whoever, when we're speaking in this House it would be a drastic situation.

It only confirms, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the interruptions that we've have continuously this afternoon, and for the past two weeks, from the Minister of Resources. He has acted like a little twerp as I said before and I say it on my feet.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain, to the same point of order?

MR. B. RANSOM: On the same point of order. Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I would like to concur in part with what the Government House Leader has put on the record but I can inform him, Sir, and other members of the House, that the tradition of the House, the practice of the House, has been that if a member purports to quote from a letter received from an individual then they can be asked by any person to table that letter and that is — (Interjection) — of course that's a different question. Precisely, to the Member for Springfield that is a different question. But that is the point that the Minister of Natural Resources is trying to make.

He is confusing the practice of the House, with respect to the tabling of letters, with the tabling of research information which a member has.

I simply point out to you, Sir, before you make a ruling on this, the danger of ruling that a member would have to table research information because every Minister that would stand in his place to answer a question with information given to him by staff, would be subject to having to table that information in the House.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no question that the matter raised by the Minister of Natural Resources should be ruled out of order but I will also give the assurance, Sir, that when the information is complete, when we have all the responses in from the municipalities, and it has all been collated, then we will be happy to table that information. We will be more than happy to table that information because it shows that the information which the Minister of Agriculture has is simply not accurate.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have had an opportunity to look at Beauchesne and our Rules, and I stand corrected and I apologize to the Honourable Member for Lakeside for calling upon him to, pursuant to a point of order, table the document. It's my understanding that he was prepared to table the document and I will accept that.

ADJOURNED DEBATES - SECOND READING CONT'D BILL NO. 3 - THE FARM LANDS OWNERSHIP ACT

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: I think now I'd like to try and get on with my speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I'm not so sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether or not honourable members will like it any better because I come now to some very real problems, real hardball.

The Minister, in this document - and you've got to remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a Minister of the Crown that we're talking about. In a moment I'm going to talk about what really is the underlying reason for the acrimony in this House. It's not just a little bit of the name calling that's going on. There is a reason, there's always a reason for it.

The Minister sends out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, last November and states that in my municipality of Rosser,

which I'm well acquainted with, some 27 percent of the farm land is owned by absentee landlords.

My Secretary-Treasurer from the R.M. of Rosser states the following, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that of the 103,680 acres of farm land that's contained in the R.M. of Rosser some 96,200 is farm land. Of the acres that are owned by non-resident foreigners 500 acres, or .52 percent, and the number of non-resident Canadians owing farm land in the R.M. of Rosser, .73 percent.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the R.M. of Rosser, 98.8 percent of the agricultural farm land is owned by Manitobans. And the Minister says 27 percent of it is owned by absentee landlords.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to tell you something, again what the honourable members opposite didn't realize, how important what my leader was asking for. He said - let's work from the same data base. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not staking my opinion and my reputation on these figures. They are not my figures, let me make that very clear. These are figures as compiled by what I believe to be conscientious, certainly objective from a political point of view, Secretary-Treasurers of the different R.M.'s across the width and breadth of this province. There could well be an error of an acre or a percentage, too, in these figures. Let me put that on the record.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we had to search out this information and to find out that in the R.M. of Rosser, 98 percent of the land is owned by Manitoba residents, not the 27 percent that the Minister of Agriculture sent out in a letter to my leader on November 19th.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me simply put it on the record, I can't describe it any way - I come very close to being unparliamentary - but whether it's in big matters or small matters, on a daily basis, we have had that kind of information coming across the House. The Minister of Finance is no better. When he gets up and says, we are going to increase expenditures of the Province of Manitoba by some 14 percent and gets that political headline, when the truth of the matter is it's 18, closer to 19 percent.

Even in this year's Budget, the first acknowledgement by what extent the expenditures of the Province of Manitoba are going to rise, I believe the first figure was something like 11.5 or something like that and then it graduates up because he has learned that sooner or later he has to come closer to the truth.

Just the other night, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my colleague, the Member for Pembina, had to twig the same Minister for an obvious deliberate misleading of the farmers in Manitoba in trying to tell them that they were getting a 2.5 percent reduction on their crop insurance premiums when that wasn't the case.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fact of the matter is, that was the case, and we had the debate here last night and I presented the figures to the honourable member of the analysis made. In fact, the Honourable Member for Pembina in his assertion in terms of the way the press release was supposed to have been presented, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he presented only a portion of the press release to make his argument

clear and he didn't present the full statement in a press release.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the same point of order. I want to point out that once again the Minister of Agriculture is misleading the House and providing false information. The information that I put on the record yesterday afternoon, prior to 4:30 p.m. and last night at 8:00 p.m. in the Minister of Agriculture's Estimates, was true and factual. The Minister does not understand what he did in the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation when he raised everyone's premiums and the Minister furthermore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, undertook to answer some very pertinent questions that I posed to him last night. He took them as notice. When he reveals the answers to those questions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it will be truly revealed that once again the Minister of Agriculture has misled the House, the Committee of Agricultural Supply Estimates and the people of Manitoba. He misleads us constantly and he did it again this afternoon, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: I would like to continue and conclude my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We will do our best to conclude this research on what, in fact, the land acquisition is. I simply remind and put on the record once more, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we don't have the kind of resources that a government has. Honourable members opposite, and there are enough of them that have been around in opposition days, know how much more difficult it is for an opposition, to get what obviously has to be voluntary co-operation from other jurisdictions, in this case, municipalities. We can't order municipalities to provide us with that information and some haven't provided us with it, I suspect it's coming. But as I say, we are an opposition group, we are not government. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is the kind of valuable, the kind of current and the kind of appropriate information that one would have expected this government and this Minister particularly after introducing this bill the second time around, would have had, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can only surmise why that effort wasn't made because I suspect that would not have advanced the cause of the bill, and that is the difficulty.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the tragedy about this bill is, and it's happening right now, I know the Minister of Agriculture knows this, I know the Minister of Transportation knows it, the mere fact that this bill is in the House has caused farm bankruptcies and the passage of this bill will cause more farm bankruptcies. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then let me give you a little lesson about what's happening in farm economics out there.

Farmers right now are up to here with their credit obligations - \$150,000, \$200,000, \$300,000.00. That's why we've got fellows like Don Hallgrimson forming farm survivors' groups. You've read the stories in the paper. Well, now look at what happens to the credit holder and maybe even the Minister of Finance will appreciate and understand it. He's carrying a note,

he's carrying an operating loan from a farmer for \$150,000.00. What is that based on? In many cases up to 60 up to 80 percent of that base is on the appreciation of the assets of the land, plus his other assets that he has. The Minister of Transportation shakes his head and acknowledges that.

As that asset depreciates, the farmers' assets and the files are gone through every six months particularly in these nervous times, all of a sudden that land that stands there as an asset for \$150,000 or \$200,000 is all of a sudden reduced by 30 percent. The bank manager calls him in and says, hey we've got a problem here. We've got to tighten up your thing, and that's what we should be doing with the Manitoba Agriculture Credit Corporation, to help assist them.

I'm saying, ask any farm real estate owner, the bloom is off farm land prices since we started talking about this kind of legislation. Farm land acreage is going down, not up, and the passage of this bill will make sure it goes down further and that's why I make that statement. It happens all too often. Sometimes even the best intentions on the part of the government, they may even be well intentioned but they have a complete reverse effect in the real world.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I really suggest particularly because we accept the need for some controls, the need about some concerns on ownership of farm land. Our particular objection is well-known, that we do not want to cause a divisiveness within what constitutes a Canadian and what constitutes a Manitoban.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you think about the percentage of farm land that is really being jeopardized, is it really called for? To tell a farmer if he's farmed for a period of at least 10 years, he would be able to retain his holdings even if he takes up residency outside of Manitoba, my, what a magnanimous gesture. Individuals who have farmed for at least 10 years would be entitled to transfer land to close relatives, espoused son, a daughter. Now, some board is going to have to decide what constitutes a close relative - one generation, grandson, granddaughter - even if the latter are residents outside of Manitoba. Again, my how magnanimous of this government. All residents of Manitoba would be able to bequeath land to relatives and others, even if the latter lived outside the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government by passage of this bill is going to make it possible that I can leave some of my farm land to my son who is a good Canadian, working in Vancouver, likely is going to work there the better part of his life, but this government is going now to bequeath that great right, that great honour on me so that I can leave my son half of my farm. I have two sons and I would like to leave the land equitably to them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we look at the size of the problem - R.M. of McCreary, 96.7 percent owned by Manitobans. — (Interjection) — I'm just running through them at random. McDonald, one that there's been a lot of pressure on and a lot of talk about farm land sales, 93 percent owned by Manitobans. R.M. of Lorne, 99.59 owned by Manitobans; R.M. of Langford, 93.84 percent owned by Manitobans; R.M. of Lakeview, 98.13 owned by resident Manitobans; Hamiota, 99.18 percent, Mr. Speaker, the list goes on. I'm obviously not just fudging or looking at the favourable ones. R.M. of Gimli, 98 percent; the R.M. of Glenella, 94 percent; the R.M.

of Glenwood, 100 percent; the L.G.D. of Grahamdale, 98 percent; the R.M. of Grandview - your country, Wally - 99.98 percent. That's pretty close as being pure as "Ivory Snow" used to be, Mr. Speaker.

A MEMBER: It's even better.

MR. H. ENNS: It's even better. The R.M. of Gray, 91 percent.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the point that I'm trying to make with this very valuable research, and I repeat again for the record, the appreciation that members in the opposition have for the co-operation that we've been shown in the gathering of this information, the support of university students and others who have helped collate and put this information together, the question really has to be asked. One has to put the problem into its proper scale, into its proper perspective and then ask yourself, what are we doing here? Is it simply political window dressing? Is it political window dressing that we have to do to assuage the pain and the pride of a Minister of Agriculture that had to withdraw this bill last Session?

Mr. Deputy Speaker and honourable members opposite, I want to remind you of this, come late July, or early August, or the first weeks of September, when we're still talking about this bill, you're going to really ask yourself, what are we doing? What is the problem? Let's get on with the business that really concerns the farmers in this province. Let's get on and make sure that they can plant and get that crop in, in 1983, and not fudge around with issues that I think will be demonstrably shown to you by objective figures, that the scale and scope of the problem is not one that you've been led to believe by your Minister of Agriculture, is not one that needs this kind of massive draconian approach which sorts out, separates Canadians, makes fathers chose between sons in terms of land ownership, despite the exemption clauses that are in the bill. But nonetheless, they're still there. I can only do it and the farmer has to have farmed for 10 years. What if he's farmed eight years, nine years, nine-and-a-half years? What kind of nonsense are we talking about?

We're talking about Canadians. We're talking about so many people that came to this country to farm this land, let's keep it that way.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Member for Rhireland.

MR. A. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, if nobody want to speak on this bill at the present time, then I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa, that the debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 4 - THE MANITOBA OIL AND GAS CORPORATION ACT

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader,

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, Bill No. 4, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill No. 4, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Energy, The Manitoba Oil and Gas Corporation Act, standing in the name of the Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few comments to make with regard to the establishment of the oil and gas company that the Manitoba Government is proposing in this Bill No. 4.

One of the questions, I guess, that one has to ask themselves on the outset is why get into this particular field when you're not in it right now, and you do have the authority to tax and control the industry through the vehicle of taxation? I guess the problem that many of us have with this particular piece of legislation is the simple choice, which really is left open to this government and if it wasn't for some ideological blinkers, they'd probably opt for the simple way of dealing with this problem. I hope to today, Mr. Speaker, or in a small way, show that the government really is doing this for ideological reasons, not for reasons of necessity.

You know, if you would ask the average individual to make a decision on whether to invest, if he or she already had the authority to tax, without having to put up any money for risk capital, without having to worry about the day-to-day operations of an enterprise, I'm sure that if it was put in those simple terms, the average individual would opt out for the right to tax. Because through the taxation measures we can control how this industry is either thriving, or is not moving ahead with exploration, or is even for that matter paying dividends to shareholders or even reinvesting profits in other areas.

One of the biggest problems that we have in dealing with this particular subject matter is that over the years the members opposite and their federal colleagues have very successfully, Mr. Speaker, managed to develop the corporate rip-off campaign and have successfully blamed the oil companies in this country for the prices at the gas pumps.

It is, however, Mr. Speaker, becoming abundantly clear to all Manitobans that the majority of taxes right now, or the majority of cost of a gallon of gasoline, or a litre of gasoline at the pumps, is somewhere between 66 to 70 percent taxation, either from the producing provinces, the Federal Government, or the local provincial levies.

Mr. Speaker, I do not only blame the members opposite and their colleagues for instilling that type of myth with regard to the corporations being the culprits in this particular energy crunch, but the oil companies have done little to dispel that particular feeling of the public. The treatment very often of different agents, the treatment of their public relations images, has been such that they have added and fueled the type of image which they are now unfortunately backed into a corner on. So I say given this backdrop, Mr. Speaker, that the oil companies are the culprits, the average person on the street, a year ago I would say, a year and one-half ago, two years ago, before the realization that the taxation was the main cost of the fuel commodity, this government felt ideologically, as well as probably

philosophically, very confident that they could move ahead and form an oil company in the Province of Manitoba and, in the main, receive the support of many of the people because of the previous circumstances that I mentioned.

However, Mr. Speaker, people are beginning to realize and the evidence is beginning to show very clearly that the previous administration when they established the new taxation structures, and we see here before the Legislature right now, Bill No. 16, I believe it is, in which this particular government who chastised the previous administration for bringing that kind of foolhardy legislation in, they are now asking the Manitoba Legislature to pass that same Act and continue with the progressive type of royalties that were instituted, I believe sometime in 1980 — (Interjection) — 1979, I'm corrected.

Mr. Speaker, that particular legislation has seen a large increase in production, a large increase in exploration to the size that we have never seen in Manitoba. It's basically due to the changes that were made in that Act. This government is now asking us to proceed, again, along that same line and continue along that same path.

The problem that we have in dealing with this, as I mentioned, is that the people of Manitoba are now beginning to realize that governments at all levels are taking more than their fair share out of a barrel of oil and out of a gallon of gasoline at the pumps. It was pointed out here back, I believe, several days ago when I asked the Minister of Energy to confirm that a reduction in oil prices would mean a substantial cut for the Federal Government and the producing provinces.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is an interesting thing that is happening here. This government prided itself in the fact that they had frozen the volume metric tax which the previous administration had put in place. But upon looking at the figures, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you - and I will be pursuing this matter further with the Minister of Finance - that this particular government by freezing the volume metric tax has actually increased the taxation over the last year to Manitobans because, had they left the volume metric tax stay in place and float, the price of gasoline to the consumer would have been lower. In other words, they were making more than the 20 percent volume metric tax which they claimed was a big move to freeze the gas prices in Manitoba.

In essence, what will happen with the introduction of the 1.1 cent a litre increase, which is effective April 1st, we will be faced with taxation levels in Manitoba which will far exceed 25 percent, over 5 percent more than the volume metric tax would have done, coupled with the fact that the First Minister of this province has asked the Federal Government to reduce the price . . .

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: The Honourable Member for Inkster on a point of order.

MR. D. SCOTT: I am wondering if the honourable member would entertain a question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Speaker, what I'm wondering is whether or not the gas tax that the gentleman is referring to, if under the previous administration they ever reduced the price of gas during gas war at any time during their administration after they had established so that the price of gas was to be 20 percent of the retail value. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that when they did that, in other provinces where they did it, they made a mistake in that they gave the companies about a 30-day warning time and this province did not give the order time.

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that for the last six months in this particular province, the fixed rate that we were frozen at was 6.4 cents a litre. In other words, the Provincial Government got 6.4 cents out of every litre sold. That was based on a 40 cent a litre gas price. That's where the volume metric tax was frozen. The fact of the matter is that in Steinbach in the last six months, the average composite price of gasoline has been 38.28 cents a litre which means that this Provincial Government was charging a higher rate by freezing the volume metric tax than if they would have left the volume metric tax in place and would have made one change during that time.

What I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, is that by going ahead and increasing the tax April 1st, you are going to see that the Provincial Government is going to take an even higher percentage than the 20 percent which they chastised the previous administration for. They are going to be up higher, around 25 percent of taxation plus, Mr. Speaker, if the tax drops the way the First Minister wants the Federal Government to drop it, that means that the Province of Manitoba could be hitting 30 percent taxation on a gallon of gasoline if she dropped to about 35 percent.

So what I am saying to the members opposite is that the people out there are suddenly beginning to realize that while, on the one hand, Mr. Speaker, this particular government went ahead and said that they were against higher prices, and the Minister of Energy eloquently waxed here the other day of the terrible things that happen when energy costs went up because that it really went ahead and discouraged investment. It would decrease consumer spending and would put more pressure on the consumers in Manitoba as well as Canada.

Mr. Speaker, what we are faced with is a government who wants to get into the oil business when they're already into it - really, they're into it - by taxation to the tune of 25 percent, come April 1st. If they want a little more of that pie, all they have to do is change a figure in the Legislature here. They don't have to hire one person; they don't have to set up a board; they don't have to set up a corporation; they don't have to worry about the weather; they don't have to worry about labour-management disputes. Worst of all, Mr. Speaker, they don't have to worry about a big bureaucracy being established which later on becomes hard to control.

Mr. Speaker, what is motivating this government to getting into gasoline, into the exploration petroleum

business? Mr. Speaker, we were told a year-and-a-half ago, some 16 months ago, the reason they were going to get into the gas business was that, with ManOil and Manitoba Hydro, we can develop programs to guarantee that no Manitobans lose their homes or farms due to high interest rates. That, Mr. Speaker, is why they were going to get into ManOil.

So at a time of the highest deficit, when they have the tool of taxation already taking 25 percent of every dollar at the pump. What we're looking at is a government here who already has a tool in place to tax the people and then because they would like to control this particular industry even further, they want to spend taxpayers' money to get into a business that they already have virtual control of through taxation.

The other interesting thing that this Act brings forward is that one of the big campaign NDP slogans was that they didn't want to give away the resources and they were intimating in their brochure that the Conservatives in their taxation measures in the last couple of years had given away the resources. Well, Mr. Speaker, today we see in the Legislature here, Bill No. 16, an exact copy of the bill passed in 1979 that was called by the members opposite at that time, a give-away bill, and what are they doing? They're bringing exactly the same bill back into this particular Legislature.

So, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Energy is wonderful at saying, you can't have it both ways. Well, I suggest to him, he can't have it both ways either. You can't, on the one hand, having said a couple of years ago, it's a giveaway, the province is giving away its resources, and then a short while later come back and say, you know the program is successful, we've got all this exploration, we've got all this drilling going on. We've got record production and now all of a sudden, we're going to continue with the type of bill we had before.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have a situation here where the government, because of ideological hangups, they accuse this side of the House of having blinkers on sometimes, I just want to say to them now, that you have the vehicle to deal with any excess profits, with any exploration incentives that you want to bring in. You have the vehicle, it's called taxation, and there is no need in this particular field at this point in time to spend \$20 million worth of taxpayers' money at a time of record deficit to do what? - to speculate in the oil business - when you've got a sure thing, called taxation.

It's absolutely foolhardy and I suggest to the members opposite, had this been a couple of years ago when the majority of money that went for the energy and petroleum costs in this province as well as in Canada, had gone to the oil companies and there were exorbitant profits there, they would have had more public support for this particular thing because as I said, they had very skillfully got the corporate welfare bum scare going.

But based on the stats now, based on the projections that this particular government is going to be into the pockets of the consumer of Manitoba to an extent far greater than anticipated by the 20 percent volumetric tax, Mr. Speaker, it's ludicrous for them to feel they're going to spend another \$20 million on this.

I say to the Minister of Energy, who the other day put some very interesting things on the record, the fact of the matter is by freezing the volumetric tax in this province, you have cost the consumers more than if

you had left it alone. So, here you, through your propagand machine, said you froze the tax when in essence, Mr. Speaker, a freeze was an increase. I think that may be something that we should get out to the public. When an NDP Government puts a freeze on something, they're actually increasing it and it's hard for the average guy on the street to realize that. But I say to you that it will be our job to bring that message across and I know a lot of people, a lot of individuals, who did not realize that before are beginning to see what is really happening with this government.

They, on the one hand deplored the high price of gasoline, but on the other hand are doing everything to aid and abet the increases as they go along, and have got their hand caught in the same till that they accused the Federal Government and producing provinces of having.

So, I say to you, Mr. Speaker, there is no question in my mind, after having consulted quite extensively with my constituents, they feel very strongly that the Manitoba Government has the tool to deal with the resource industries in the province, namely taxation. They do not want to see this NDP Government get into another business, to set up another bureaucracy and spend \$20 million of their money on a risky venture.

So I say to you, Mr. Speaker, in speaking for my constituents on this particular matter, as I hope to do on most of the debates that I deal with in this Legislature, I have to say to the government opposite that my area, my constituents, do not support this move. I will be voting against this move because it is not, I believe, in the best interests of the taxpayers of Manitoba. Taxation is the tool, Mr. Speaker, and I believe it's the key, and it's been already demonstrated that when governments get involved in areas which they already have control of, all they do is develop bureaucracies and create more problems.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me just add a final note. In the last number of years, we have seen a few words creep into this Legislature which are being used by members opposite more and more. We used to have chairman, now we have chairpersons. The other day the Minister of Agriculture got up and instead of hog men, we have now hog persons. Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you instead of ManOil, we should neuter this one too, and call it PersonOil.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. H. HARAPIAK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Member for La Verendrye would permit a question?

I wonder if the Member for La Verendrye feels that the Conservative Government under the leadership of William Davis made a mistake by purchasing Suncor?

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Ontario Government bought some shares in Suncor. I have to say to the member opposite and I speak now of having been involved in the retailing end of it for many years, that any government that is foolhardy enough to get into the oil industry and especially into the retailing end of it is making a very very big mistake because one just has to look around at the different closures that are happening right now. It's not a lucrative

place to be in and what I'm telling the members opposite is that where the companies already have a hard time running their stations, that is no place for the government to get into. You have the tool, you have the means, you have the right to tax and why get involved in something when you can tax something and get your pound of flesh that way.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the same member. I'd like to ask him whether he, like other members in the Conservative Party is for the dismantling of Petro Canada, the PetroCan Oil Corporation?

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, this is going to be a very interesting exercise in the next couple of years to see what happens. I say to the member opposite, that having developed that particular approach, I think the Federal Government and the people of Manitoba, by PetroCan getting into the retail end and getting into the refinery end of it, where all the companies are now having trouble, whether it be co-op, everybody's having trouble in the refining area, because as the Minister of Energy told us the other day, volumes are dropping, we're seeing a reduction in the costs, I say to the member opposite that I predict it won't be in too many years that there's going to have to be some serious rationalization done with regard to PetroCan and I don't think that in the long term it'll prove out that was the best way to go.

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

MR. C. MANNESS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Gladstone that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 6.

BILL NO. 6 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZER CONTROL ACT

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, second reading, Bill No. 6, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, I adjourned this debate on behalf of the Minister of Agriculture.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister would be closing debate?

HON. B. URUSKI: Right.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mr. Speaker, some members have spoken on the bill, and especially the Member for Pembina made a number of allegations as to the Draconian measures of this legislation and the need for the protection to applicators and farmers under this legislation.

The member knows that this legislation has basically been in place since the late '70s. It's not new legislation and has basically been in place for a number of years and it's really to - I guess I don't want to even defend the original bill, because I'm not even sure that it wasn't your administration that may have brought it — (Interjection) — we brought it in around the late '70s and it was to protect the citizens of this province, including farmers, Mr. Speaker, and it was primarily to protect them from the risk of damage resulting from the misuse of pesticides and fertilizers.

The methods which are used within the Act to protect the public is through the licencing of dealers and commercial applicators and in the licencing process, the applicant for a licence, of course, must, by attending a course and passing the written test, satisfy the licencing authority, that he has the appropriate knowledge of the technology and understands the potential dangers which may result from the misuse of pesticides.

Mr. Speaker, as the regulations now indicate that any farmer is not considered a commercial applicator, when the total of pesticide and fertilizer application off his farm is less than 500 hectares and work is carried out for not more than three individuals in any year.

Mr. Speaker, these changes do not prevent any farmer from doing neighbourly work, as was suggested by the Member for Pembina, in terms of saying that he can't do work for his neighbour, that he can't carry that five-gallon pack on his back and go spray his neighbour's dandelions, as he tried to portray in this House. Mr. Speaker, he knew, when he was speaking that he was attempting to, I guess, as he has been doing over the past number of months, exaggerating and overstating his case, and that is putting it very mildly, in terms of the use of the expressions that the Member for Pembina has.

Mr. Speaker, the member referred to the questionnaire that the commercial applicator must complete for each job and hold - he indicated forward to the Minister - he has to hold that application form for three years. Mr. Speaker, I think the member knows what the reason for that is. It is a protection for both sides.

The fact of the matter is, farmers have experienced damage from pesticide misuse and, Mr. Speaker, complaints do come into the investigating authority, in terms of the staff within the department, to investigate those complaints and there are lawsuits, I'm sure. Maybe the honourable member is aware, maybe he's been involved in a lawsuit, if he's been a commercial applicator himself. I don't know. I really don't know, but he knows that if his records are clear and are accurate in terms of what he was applying at the time that he was doing that spraying, who he was spraying for, what kind of crop he was spraying for, Mr. Speaker, the cause for legal action against that individual would be far reduced and there is a protection for the applicator, by making sure that his or her records are clear, in the determination under this legislation and the regulations there.

So it really is a double protection, Mr. Speaker. Yes, it does assist the staff within the department in investigating complaints, because complaints do occur. There are a number of aerial applicators, where there have been and there are lawsuits, because of whether it be wind, drift of the chemical or pesticides, there have been losses of trees, of vegetables, of garden crops, all kind of experiences, and I think the members in their area probably can recite instances of this happening.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Ron McBryde couldn't pick the raspberries along the roadside, do you remember?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I remember the debate. Now I remember the debate. I was trying to get my mind . . . Mr. Speaker, when the spraying was done, I believe, by the weed district or the Department of Highways along the road allowances and sprayed the raspberries - there's no doubt that those kinds of complaints do come in. But, Mr. Speaker, there are and there have been very serious cases of severe damage and I think I can't even overstate the seriousness and the deliberation and the knowledge in the use of pesticides by commercial applicators, because of the hazards that they do pose when they are used, or used for their specific reason, or misused, as the case may be. So that in terms of protecting the applicators, Mr. Speaker, the licence ensures that the custom operator is trained and knowledgeable about the use of pesticides and that really is a protection for all of us. I don't think the honourable members opposite argue that point, although the Member for Pembina went on and on and on about how draconian the measures are. They've been in place, Mr. Speaker - he indicated '76, I thought it was '77, but it may have been '76 in the Act, and their administration of course agreed with it in terms of having those kinds of checks and balances to protect not only the applicators, but to protect the farmers who are using and applying those pesticides.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, if someone sues the commercial operator for damage, those records will help him or her in defending themselves against that lawsuit, because they will know what they have applied, where they've applied it, the time of day that they've applied it, to make sure those that those records are clear. But I can tell you from the complaints that the departments have received and there are annually numerous complaints and primarily, Mr. Speaker, because the application of pesticides is applied by the use of aircraft, primarily it is applied by the use of aircraft in this province, because of the dangers involved in the application of those pesticides and there's where the greatest danger can occur. We have the greatest examples in terms of the kinds of damages that do occur. We use Baygon, we were given advice to spray with Baygon to try and prevent the outbreak of equine encephalitis throughout the urban centres. Mr. Speaker, we did at least \$100,000 worth of damage to the beekeepers, bearing in mind the time of day and time that we sprayed. We caused that kind of damage. We lost over \$100,000 worth of damage to the beekeepers, primarily in and around the City of Winnipeg.

That just points out the kind of problems that applicators can get themselves involved in, although

on a smaller scale in terms of the spraying that they do in their own areas, and those are the protections that are being looked at within this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Morris objected to some of the requirements in the legislation. I guess what he is arguing about is maybe this legislation should have been dropped and not proceeded with initially. Would he have taken that position because those requirements, as the Member for Pembina confirmed, have been in place over the last seven years? This is the seventh year that they have been in place. It appeared from his remarks that he was basically objecting to the basic intent of the legislation and not to the changes, because the changes . . . — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, I didn't read it totally, I listened to the honourable member and I made my notes and that was the impression that I received from his remarks. No doubt, he will ask questions of staff and myself in committee when the bill comes to a committee, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that the honourable members and even the Member for Pembina will be less - or maybe he wasn't facetious, maybe that was his way of putting his remarks on the record. I thought he was speaking with tongue-in-cheek in some of the examples that he was giving, maybe he wasn't, but I hope that he fully appreciates and I think he does, because he was a Minister of the Crown when the bill was in place over a number of years. So the changes there will certainly, we hope, administratively, we have through regulation already exempted the applications and the applicators of farm to farm, made some exemptions there and I await to see this bill in committee and the questions that the members raise.

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

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would answer a question.

HON. B. URUSKI: I'll try.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, would the Minister acknowledge that with the change in definition and with the regulations in place which were published, I believe, March 7th, in the Manitoba Gazette which contained the restrictions as to whom the Act applied to, the regulations could be amended to apply to all of those people who are referred to in the new definition?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, the regulations, I presume, could always be either lessened or tightened

up as the case may be in terms of who will be allowed and the latitude that they will be allowed in terms of their spraying activities. The whole thrust of the legislation has been to try and make sure that people who are dealing with pesticides in commercial applications do have sufficient knowledge and backup so that those kind of lawsuits aren't there. I acknowledge that is the case, that those regulations could be changed and, no doubt, if those regulations are overly restrictive in terms of their application, we will know about it and we will want to look at how severe those regulations are in terms of the advice that we are receiving from our own staff. That's the normal process. If they are overly restrictive, we will have to look at them.

MR. G. MERCIER: A supplementary question to the Minister, just to clarify that answer. With the change in definition of a dealer, would he acknowledge that the exemption contained in the regulations could be completely done away with and the definition in the Act would apply?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure I understand fully the honourable member's question, because if I don't understand I don't want to be able to mislead him or lead him astray.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to have an answer to that question. I wonder if the Minister would undertake to, perhaps when Hansard is available, to have Legislative Counsel review the questions which I have just given so that they could be answered at committee.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, Legislative Counsel will be there.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The question before the House is the second reading of Bill No. 6.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: I move, seconded by the Minister of Transportation, that the House do now stand adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).