



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

37 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIBERAL
ANGUS, John	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BURRELL, Parker	Swan River	PC
CARR, James	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIBERAL
CHARLES, Gwen	Selkirk	LIBERAL
CHEEMA, Gulzar	Kildonan	LIBERAL
CHORNOPYSKI, William	Burrows	LIBERAL
CONNERY, Edward Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James Hon.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Emerson	PC
DRIEDGER, Herold, L.	Niakwa	LIBERAL
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIBERAL
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Laurie	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
EVANS, Leonard	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen Hon.	Virden	PC
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Ellice	LIBERAL
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupert Island	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HEMPHILL, Maureen	Logan	NDP
KOZAK, Richard, J.	Transcona	LIBERAL
LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.	Inkster	LIBERAL
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANDRAKE, Ed	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
McCRAE, James Hon.	Brandon West	PC
MINENKO, Mark	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
OLESON, Charlotte Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald Hon.	Pembina	PC
PANKRATZ, Helmut	La Verendrye	PC
PATTERSON, Allan	Radisson	LIBERAL
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	Rhineland	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
ROCH, Gilles	Springfield	LIBERAL
ROSE, Bob	St. Vital	LIBERAL
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
TAYLOR, Harold	Wolseley	LIBERAL
URUSKI, Bill	Interlake	NDP
WASYLCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
YEO, Iva	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, October 5, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Twenty-Third Annual Report of the Manitoba Hog Producers' Marketing Board for the year 1987.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to oral questions, I would like to direct Honourable Members' attention to the Speaker's gallery where we have with us this afternoon a trade delegation from the Ukraine including the Minister of Finance, Ivan O. Zabrodin, of the Ukraine Parliament and other prominent business leaders. On behalf of all Honourable Members, we welcome you here this afternoon, gentlemen.

We also have with us here this afternoon Mr. Vinkatesh Kaveath and Mr. Balakrishna T. These gentlemen are on an international tour which began in 1987 to create international friendship and bring to our attention drug abuse. So far, they have travelled to Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and the United States of America and hope to be back in their native country, which is India, by January 1989. On behalf of all Honourable Members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Rafferty-Alameda Project Land Irrigation

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner). The Rafferty-Alameda project as originally proposed was to have two reservoirs which will consume some 20,800 acres of land for that purpose, hopefully, water retention. The project also as originally proposed would have irrigated some 12,000 acres of farm land. Now we find in this last week that there are concerns being raised in Saskatchewan that there will be problems in filling those dams, there will be water quality problems in those dams, and that only 2,000 acres of farm land will be potentially the beneficiary of this massive project.

My question is, when is this Government going to come out of the closet on this project which will be detrimental to Manitoba and admit that it is only really a political boondoggle for the Premier and Deputy Premier of Saskatchewan, and that the province or the feds have gained their Grasslands National Park? Let

us have some clear statements from the Minister on this.

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): It is interesting that the Honourable Member from across the Chamber here indicates now that the irrigation of 2,000 acres of land instead of 12,000 acres will be again detrimental to Manitoba.

It appears to me that the questions raised before by the Honourable Members from the Liberal Party indicated that one of the main reasons why the scare tactics that they were using to indicate to Manitobans that the quality of water that they were so afraid of coming out of the dam could be as a result of the major irrigation project that was being initiated and run-offs from that irrigation system back into the Souris River. Now it appears to me that they have had a change of heart and they are now worried that we will have not have the economic benefit in Saskatchewan, that we should pay attention to and negotiate on behalf of Saskatchewan people to make sure that they will have the benefit of 12,000 irrigation acres. Is that what he is saying?

Souris River Management Plan

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): I wish we could call him the Minister of facts and knowledge, but unfortunately we cannot.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) says in today's newspaper that after the project is built a systems approach to Souris River management is essential, particularly to guarantee water quality. The question is, how does the Minister explain the incongruity, the inconsistency and the ignorance he displays when he refuses to support a systems approach to get sufficient level of knowledge complete with environmental impact assessment at this stage of the project? That is hypocrisy.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would ask the Honourable Member for Wolseley to withdraw the word "hypocrisy."

Mr. Taylor: I will remove that expression, Mr. Speaker,

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much.

Mr. Taylor: The facts speak for themselves.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley, complete withdrawal.

Mr. Taylor: Pardon me?

Mr. Speaker: Complete withdrawal.

Mr. Taylor: I withdraw the comment.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you very much.

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): As I have indicated before, there has been a three-party or a five-party approach basically to the whole project. That five-party group is going to meet towards the end of this month.

The Saskatchewan Government, the Manitoba Government and Ottawa met last week to discuss a further approach to the water quality and the water quantity. Out of those discussions came an agreement with Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ottawa that there would be a water quality monitoring board established. There would also be a management plan of the total Souris River Basin put in place once in operation, which would have the ability to flow waters and monitor quality.

I should indicate to the Member opposite that he in fact has indicated continually that, because of the warming effect of the Shand Power Station, there will be water deterioration when there will be no water pumped into the basin—

* (1340)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Wolseley, with a supplementary question.

Mr. Taylor: He was not listening. Mr. Speaker, the point was, there will be less water which means warmer water.

The Minister has preposterously talked of more water, better quality water, and yet Minot just put a half a million dollars extra into the project to partially mitigate against deterioration of water quality. The question is, when will this Minister come to grips with the fact that he has absolutely no assurances of water quality at this time because he cannot refer to the missing environmental impact assessment, because he cannot refer to the draft U.S. Agreement, which they will not give us, and because of the toothless—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, there will be a water quality monitoring board established which will have the authority to indicate to the management authority of the Souris River Basin that flows should be changed. There will be two or three outlets on the dam which will allow different qualities of water to be flowed out of the dam. There will be a total management system put in place which will allow for the very close monitoring and assurances of water quality down the Souris River. There will also be an increased flow of water during periods of time when we have no assurances at all now, which will be beneficial to the Souris Valley residents who are so dependent on a continual and average flow of water down that Souris River.

Some Honourable Members: Hear, hear!

Environment Ministers' Meeting PCBs Air Transportation

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley, with a new question.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, would that I were so assured.

A new question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), at this moment there is a meeting of all Canadian Environment and Natural Resources Ministers going on here in Winnipeg. One of the main items on their agenda is the problems with polychlorinated biphenyls, the infamous PCBs. The Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery) in a press statement the other day indicated a concern about air shipments of PCBs. My question to the First Minister, does he yet have any information on the question I raised last week in the House as to dangerous goods transportation permits, an export permit? Is he aware and would he like to make comment on the fact that the military can give no assurance whatsoever as to the additional and special training of their staff in the packaging, handling and transportation of those goods? They did not have it.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Clearly, the Member should recall that he did not ask that question of me. Had I taken it as notice, I would undoubtedly have had the information for today. That information was taken as notice by another Minister and I invite him to ask that other Minister for the information when he is here in the House.

PCB Disposal Government Policy

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): A supplemental question, is it now the policy of the Filmon Government that it is not concerned with the destruction of Manitoba's PCBs in that we only have 2 percent of the national total and, if not, will he refute the position, that very position taken by his Environment Minister (Mr. Connery) yesterday and clarify what is the position of the Filmon Government on the destruction of PCBs?

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, clearly our Government is very concerned to ensure that the PCBs that are here in Manitoba, that have been here in Manitoba for decades, are being properly handled and are being stored in an absolutely safe manner so that when there is a method of safe disposal available for them that method will be utilized to ensure that they are disposed of for the safety and benefit of all Manitobans.

There is no question that we are doing our part in obtaining the absolute assurance. We have ensured that the environmental officials of this province are checking and rechecking all of the storage spaces, all of the items on the list of the federal Government in their jurisdiction, all of the known sites for PCBs under

our jurisdiction, to ensure that they are being stored in an absolutely safe manner. When we have available to us—and I might indicate to him, as he should know, that there is not a known method of safe disposal yet for some of the high-level concentrated PCBs. When that is made available to us, we will be destroying those PCBs in an environmentally safe and sound manner.

Federal Assistance

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, given that thing about safe destruction method, there are safe destruction methods available and the question is, is the federal Minister of Environment, McMillan, offering Manitoba and the other provinces any assistance on the destruction of PCBs, as was repeatedly given as assurances that there would be assistance from the federal Government, or are we just going to live with the kiss-off that the Mulroney Government gave us on PCB destruction in recent weeks?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I recall sitting here in the House when the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery) responded to that same question to the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor). Perhaps he would like to read it again in Hansard.

What he said was that the federal Minister of Environment had initiated the purchase of portable PCB destruction facilities for the low-level concentrate PCBs. The reason that he was going to portable facilities was so that they could be moved from place to place, from province to province across the country. Ultimately, Manitoba would have the availability of that equipment so that it would come to Manitoba and the available PCBs that could be destroyed by that particular method, because not all of them—some of them are low-level concentrates, so they would be able to be destroyed by that portable machine. Others would not be able to be destroyed. We would be a part of that program because we want to handle them in a safe manner and ensure that we destroy them.

Rafferty-Alameda Project Technical Committee Report

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner). It follows upon the advice of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to read Hansard. I have reviewed Hansard over the last day in terms of the Rafferty-Alameda Dam, and it confirms my opinion in writing that the Minister of Natural Resources has stated on one day that he was going to have a Technical Committee Report and table it in this Legislature; on another day, he says he is going to have a negotiating committee working with the Americans and Saskatchewan authorities; and on the third day he stated, and his Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery) has stated, that indeed the Technical Committee will table a report—in fact, it was promised two weeks ago—and that would be the basis for having or not having an environmental impact study.

I would ask the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) to tell Manitobans, indeed this House, is the Technical Committee completed because he is obviously negotiating? If that report is completed, will he please table it this minute in this House, as his Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery) and he have promised the Members of this Legislature?

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): The Technical Committee Report will be tabled next Tuesday.

Negotiations

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I would ask the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) how he could be negotiating with the federal Government, the Saskatchewan Government, and the authorities in the United States, when he has stated before that his Technical Committee will not be a negotiating committee. It will indeed be a Technical Committee that will report to this House. How can he now acknowledge today in the newspaper that they are indeed negotiating an arrangement and an agreement? And would he not now agree that a federal environmental impact study that will tell all Manitobans the facts is appropriate before he goes and cuts a deal like the Province of Saskatchewan has obviously done with the federal Government?

* (1350)

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, negotiations have been ongoing since I took office and they will be ongoing until we have reached an agreement.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, this Minister is going and negotiating a backroom agreement when he said clearly that a Technical Committee would be formed in this House. He is breaking his word to the people of Manitoba. There is no question about it.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

The Honourable Acting Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you would call the Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) to attention. He is abusing the House Rules. He knows, when he provides a supplementary question, there is supposed to be no preamble.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Concordia, on the same point of order.

Mr. Doer: I think, if you will review Hansard, you will clearly see that what I stated was within the Rules. Secondly, the statements I have made are clearly within the statements that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) has made in this House over the last two-and-a-half weeks.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. May I remind all Honourable Members that a supplementary question does not require a preamble, and yet may I also remind Honourable Ministers that answers to questions should be as brief as possible and should not provoke debate.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated, the Technical Committee that has been established to review the documents that are in place to put together a report for this Legislature will report next Tuesday, and negotiations have been and will go on for an agreement. The report will be tabled that has been prepared by the Technical Committee.

Federal Impact Study

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Concordia, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I would ask the First Minister, is the Government reversing its position that he articulated in this House on September 23 that the Technical Committee would report to this Legislative Chamber first, and then a decision would be made on the federal environmental impact study? Clearly today, the Minister said, we are not proceeding to have a federal environmental impact study, which is the position they flip-flop back and forth on. Has the Government reversed its position and changed its mind on the Technical Committee leading into a federal environmental impact study? I would ask that from the First Minister.

Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I do not know how much more clearer we can indicate, as we have, that when the Technical Committee would have had their report that we would table it in this House. We have also indicated very clearly that if the Technical Committee will require or recommend an impact study, then we will recommend and ask the federal Government to do an environmental impact study. Until that report is tabled, that decision will have to be pending.

Tax Exemptions Punitive Measures

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): My question is for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Mr. Speaker, it is time our tax system reflected Manitobans' deep concern about the environment. I have in hand a Freon gas canister for boat horns. It is readily available at hardware stores, and its label states it contains a chlorofluoro-carbon that may harm the public health and environment by reducing ozone in the upper atmosphere.

Will this Government initiate discussions with the federal Government to bring in a complete ban on the production and importation of similar products? In the interim, will this Minister discourage the use of this sort of garbage by introducing punitive taxes on such products?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Firstly, with a specific answer to that question, I will defer to

my colleague, the Minister in charge of the Environment (Mr. Connery).

With respect to this Government bringing forward punitive measures, we do not do those sorts of actions on a whim. I might say also that those are budgetary moves. They are made on the basis of a budgetary thrust. When it is decided to, so-called, make a punitive move, as close as we have come over the last years is with respect to leaded gasoline. If the Member opposite is asking for a precise action with respect to one item within the field of taxation, I would have to say that we would have to look at that very carefully because that would be precedent setting in itself, when the Government of the Day started to hit specific items in a punitive tax sense.

Pollution Cleanup Fund

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), with a supplementary question.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): A supplementary for the Minister, Ontario, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are leading a push for a billion dollar national pollution cleanup fund financed by new federal taxes on polluting firms. Will this Government join the majority of provinces in urging the federal Government to tax polluters and make pollution a non-paying option?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): The other day when I was in conversation with the Honourable Member, who showed me the tax guides that I had distributed to all Members of this House, and where exemptions were shown for those firms who out of their own decisions, on the basis of their own decisions, were providing for a cleaner environment, where some tax exemptions were allowed, I believe this is the genesis of the question.

I would say in general we are prepared to see what other jurisdictions are doing. My officials are constantly looking across all taxation jurisdictions in Canada and indeed, if it is meritorious in that sense after we have had a full review, we will consider it.

* (1355)

Tax Exemptions Pollution Control Equipment

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): A final supplementary for the Minister, yesterday the Minister expressed some concern about the cost of joining the five other provinces that exempt pollution control equipment from sales tax. I believe today the Minister has softened his approach somewhat. Is the Minister prepared now to acknowledge that the cost of not using the tax system to protect our environment, the health of our people and the future of our province is indeed prohibitive?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Let us be abundantly clear. My answer yesterday was in response to a specific question dealing with bringing in immediate tax measures. I prefer that the Member

not twist the question to make it appear that we had a hard position. The Member yesterday asked that this Government bring in a measure tomorrow in a taxation sense. I said that is not the way things are done.

I never ever indicated this Government would not be prepared to look at the precise area that he was suggesting. Indeed it has on its own, so I am not in disagreement with the Member opposite. What we are discussing is the time frame, specifically to take a precipitous action in one specific area in 24 hours notice is not the way tax measures are brought on by this Government and, I dare say, by all Governments in the land.

Constitutional Accord Public Hearings

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is to the Acting Minister responsible for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Manness). We have had a growing number of individuals and groups calling our offices asking questions about public hearings on the 1987 Constitutional Accord. I am wondering if it is the Government's intention to introduce the resolution within the next seven days.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): I am sure that matter will be a topic of discussion by the House Leader (Mr. McCrae) with the other House Leaders when and if such a decision is made.

Mr. Carr: There have been no discussions among House Leaders to date. So if indeed the question is to be put to the House within seven days, they better talk pretty quick.

My supplementary to the Acting Minister of Constitutional Affairs is that we have had many inquiries from groups and individuals outside the Province of Manitoba who have indicated an interest to express their opinion on this very important matter. Is it the Premier's view that submissions should be accepted from all interested Canadians, regardless of where they live?

Mr. Filmon: I have been accused of being autocratic with respect to imposing my will on matters that should more properly be the domain of the Cabinet or the caucus of the Government of Manitoba. In this particular case, I have said very clearly, and again I refer the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) to Hansard when he asked that same question in the past or a very similar question, that will be a judgment and a decision made by the committee of this Legislature, the All-Party Committee with representation from the Liberals, from the New Democrats, from the Progressive Conservatives, who will judge what are the rules and the terms of reference of that committee vis-a-vis allowing people from within the province, people from outside the province.

I have said, and I have expressed this view over and over again, that I want this to be the most open and complete public hearings possible, so that those who have a role to play in providing information to the

Members of this Legislature, to the public of Manitoba vis-a-vis the Meech Lake Accord and all of its potential ramifications, in effect, that those people should be heard. That is my position, but the ultimate decision on that matter will be made by the committee made up of all-Party representation in this House.

* (1400)

Public Hearings Advertising

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): With a final supplementary to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), the Premier knows that the Clerk's Office has already taken the names of groups and individuals who would like to make presentations in front of the committee. It seems a bit unfair though that the Government has made no public announcement that the Clerk's Office is doing this right now. It has been traditional that the sooner you get your name into the Clerk's Office the sooner you will be able to speak once the committee actually meets.

I wonder if the First Minister will commit today to buying advertising space in all of the media outlets in Manitoba so that all Manitobans, all Manitobans—

An Honourable Member: Including ethnic papers.

Mr. Carr: —including ethnic papers, so that Manitobans who are interested in making presentations can have the opportunity to do so.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): What the Member is asking is for us to say to people that the Government of Manitoba and the Legislature of Manitoba will be holding public hearings at some point in time in the future, on some dates, in some unknown locations. We would encourage everybody to put their names in so that they should appear perhaps somewhere, sometime, somehow before this committee. I suppose that he is asking for us to put those ads in the paper every day from now until the time that the committee sits. The Liberals have been absurd in the past, but this is the ultimate in absurdity to suggest that every day, day after day, day after day—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Filmon: —we put these ads in all the papers throughout the province and beyond because he wants representation. How about the Globe and Mail? Would you like La Presse?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Clean Environment Hearings Ministerial Interference

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): My question is for the Premier. Can the Premier tell this House if it is the policy of the Conservative Government that Ministers not discuss or intervene themselves in any case before

a quasi-judicial body while that matter is before that body?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Given that I know there is a punch line to this question, I would ask the Member to tell me what his allegation is and what involvement he has, what he calls a quasi-judicial body, and what is the nature of the matter behind it, and I will be happy to answer the question.

Mr. Harapiak: My supplementary question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). What action would the First Minister take if he found that one of his Ministers was interfering with a quasi-judicial body while it was before—and the body is the Clean Environment Commission. What action would the Premier take if he found a Minister was interfering with a body while it was holding hearings?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. It seems to me the Honourable Member is asking an opinion of the Honourable First Minister, a hypothetical question, it seems to me.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Would the Honourable Member for The Pas kindly rephrase his question?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I do not think the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) can hear me. Would the Honourable Member for The Pas kindly rephrase his question?

Mr. Harapiak: What action would the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) take if one of his Ministers was interfering with a quasi-judicial body while the hearing was being held?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. For the Honourable Member for the Pas (Mr. Harapiak), his question is hypothetical. He is asking the Honourable First Minister "if."

Order, please; order, please.

Mr. Harapiak: Since the Minister would not tell us what the policy was, I was asking what action would he take against the Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery), who had discussed the case involving the Clean Environment Commission a day after the Clean Environment Commission had held hearings with McCain Foods in Portage la Prairie. It was a case that comes under his jurisdiction and in his constituency. When will the Premier (Mr. Filmon) take the Minister of Environment into the woodshed and deal with him so that he will not be having this political interference and intimidation of areas that come under his jurisdiction?

Mr. Filmon: I recall when this Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) was a Minister in the former Government that he intervened with the CEDF to ensure that they

gave loans to friends of the New Democratic Party, a former New Democratic Party Member of this Legislature and a person who had provided the office space for the Member for Rupertsland's (Mr. Harper) election campaign. He intervened personally to overrule the judgment of the CEDF board and to allow them and to impose upon them a loan to be given to these people. That is the kind of interference that I would not tolerate, Mr. Speaker, as Premier.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for The Pas.

Order. I have recognized the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Harapiak: Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear to me the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) does not know the difference between a quasi-judicial body and other bodies that are involved with the running—what action is this Minister going to take so we get a Minister of Environment (Mr. Connery) who will quit intimidating people and quit interfering with bodies that are charged with the environment in the province?

Mr. Filmon: I take that as a serious allegation and I am going to investigate it. But I want to tell you, I took it as a serious allegation too when the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) and the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) raised the issue of two members of staff in the Department of Labour who were presumably—and I want to tell you that no grievance was laid by either of those staff members. They did not pursue that matter and they have not pursued that matter despite the fact it was raised in this Legislature by two separate Members of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please.

Before I recognize the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), I would like to remind all Honourable Members that the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) did raise a very serious question. The Honourable First Minister (Mr. Filmon) was attempting to answer it.

Order, please. The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), on a point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) was not dealing with an answer to the Member's question. He raised allegations regarding myself and the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer). If the First Minister would care to check the facts, he would find that the allegations I made were confirmed in signed affidavits and that action is still ongoing, negotiations still ongoing between the union and the employees and the—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Filmon: I have indicated that I am quite prepared to investigate the allegation put forth by the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak). If he will provide me with

the incident, with the people who have been contacted and were talked to by the Minister, I will investigate it and report back.- (Interjection)- No. He has made the allegation.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Manitoba Hydro Rate Increase

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): I will try to keep my questions free of argumentative debate like this.

An Honourable Member: And we wish you well.

* (1410)

Mr. Herold Driedger: I will try. My question is for the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). All Manitobans are assured today, now that the Minister has reinforced the concept of greater Crown corporation accountability as it was announced in the Throne Speech. It is good now to know that the future Hydro rate increases will be brought before the Public Utilities Board. The past practices where Manitoba Hydro appeared before the PUB only once every eight to 10 years can hardly be called adequate. Therefore, I applaud the actions of the Government.

However, I must ask and through you, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister responsible for Hydro (Mr. Neufeld), is this sufficient. We are told that rate increases will be necessary to build up reserves due to the drought. We do not know how much of such a rate increase may be attributable to the hasty construction of Limestone, that of building Limestone before it was actually needed by the Manitoba ratepayer. Will the Minister, in addition to the proposed rate increases, also authorize public hearings into Limestone as recommended by the Public Utilities Board?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): I think that is a question, Mr. Speaker, that might well be asked of the committee when it sits next Tuesday.

Mr. Herold Driedger: I am trying to determine what that answer actually meant, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps a policy decision on the part of the Minister with respect to suggesting very strongly that the Hydro Corporation present itself to the Public Utilities Board in order to have the total Limestone story brought out into public, because Manitobans need to know whether the predictions of Hydro losses as reported in the media these past few months are correct or whether the predictions of the huge profits are correct. Obviously, the setting of rates is very dependent upon this kind of information.

Mr. Neufeld: Mr. Speaker, those questions again might well be asked when the committee sits. Any question you have can be asked at that time and I encourage the Member to come and ask them.

Hudson Bay Mining & Smelting Upgrading

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): I am a little reluctant, Mr. Speaker, to try and get this Minister to answer a question. Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting has been waiting for some months now for approval for a modernization project. Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting employs 2,300 people directly in three northern communities that has an impact on hundreds of other jobs across the province. In fact, a week ago Monday, Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting held a meeting in Winnipeg with its suppliers to indicate how serious the situation was with respect to the need for that upgrading and the need for the federal Government and the provincial Government to make a commitment to this project.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): How much are they committing?

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the Premier from his chair says, "How much are they committing." It is a sad fact that the Premier does not know. That commitment is in the hundreds of millions of dollars to Manitoba.

My question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Will the Minister follow through on the commitment of the previous Government to support this project, to put in the money? Will the Minister follow the election commitment of the Premier to support this project? Will they announce today that they will support the modernization project so that we can get rid of the insecurity that is being felt by the hundreds of workers in the communities affected by HBMS activities?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, we as the Government are well aware of the cost involvement of the upgrading of the smelter at Flin Flon. We are aware that the people in Flin Flon and the workers indeed of the entire northern part of the province are very interested in the outcome of these negotiations. We are also aware, and the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) should be aware, that the company is presently negotiating with the federal Government which we are incidentally monitoring. When they make their announcement, we will make ours.

Hudson Bay Mining & Smelting Pollution

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I want the Minister to know that the public in Flin Flon is concerned about the need for modernization. In fact, there have been two public meetings now. There will be a third public meeting this Thursday where hundreds of people will come out to express their concern over the pollution which is resulting from the lack of modernization.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister indicate whether he has contacted the federal Ministers responsible, whether he has indicated that the problem is twofold, the need for modernization for the productivity of the plant, and to keep the environment to protect the health

of hundreds and hundreds of people who live in the immediate area?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):

The pollution did not start on April 26. We, as I have indicated, are very much aware of the problem in Flin Flon. We are also aware of the cost. The cost of \$130 million cannot be negotiated in this House. Those negotiations are ongoing and we are monitoring them and, yes, we have been in contact with federal officials both at the political and the bureaucracy level. We will continue to monitor and we will report back to the House as soon as we come to a conclusion.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon, with a final supplementary question.

Mr. Storie: The Minister of Energy and Mines is dead wrong when he says the pollution problems have not been worsening in the last six months. They certainly have because modernization is needed.

Upgrading

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my final question is to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Will the Minister of Energy and Mines contact Mr. Epp who has been ruminating in public about this deal and indicate that he should stop playing petty politics with this particular issue, an issue that affects hundreds and hundreds of lives, the security of working people in the Flin Flon area, in the Snow Lake, in the Leaf Rapids area? Will he contact Mr. Epp and ask him to ensure that this project receive the serious consideration that it deserves and that we will get an announcement that the federal—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines):

Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Epp hardly needs me to defend him in public. What he has done for this province speaks for itself. We, as a Government, and I personally have spoken to Mr. Epp, some of the Ministers, the Minister of Industry (Mr. Ernst) has spoken to Mr. Epp—and yes, we have, and we are monitoring it, and we are encouraging the federal Government to come to a conclusion on it.

Ambulance Services Funding

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, every person serving the public receives from time to time calls which tug at the heart strings. Yesterday, a rural senior citizen called my office. Her husband is ill and requires hospital treatment which in just one week required three trips into the city for hospital care. But because it was not necessary to admit him overnight, the bill becomes the responsibility of these senior citizens, a bill of well over \$1,000 in just one week. I have been told by ambulance operators that this is not unique, that they are aware of senior citizens who go without food in order to pay such bills.

My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) who, in Opposition, asked this question and who, as Minister, has avoided the answer. My question is, when will the ambulance service in Manitoba be adequately funded?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the ambulance service funding has been a subject of discussion in this House. Currently, it is a subject of some extensive review and I hope to be able to make favourable announcements in due course.

An Honourable Member: It seems fair.

Mr. Speaker: The time for oral questions has expired.

NON-POLITICAL STATEMENT

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): May I have leave to make a non-political statement?

Mr. Speaker: Does the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) have leave to make a non-political statement? (Agreed)

Mrs. Charles: Earlier this week, Members of this Legislature had the privilege of attending the opening of National Family Week. I certainly support, as I am sure every Member here supports, the unity of every family. But there are many areas that we are responsible for in this House and as members of society. The family is seen as a romantic structure, but in realism it is not as strong as it behaves in the pictures, in the advertisements and in the storybooks. The family is not a dream world, but it is a dream concept.

I urge all Members today to take all care in all the deliberations that we pay attention to the family unit and that we do everything to support the family. I urge the Members to support Family Week and recommend and commend to the federal Government their support of the family and to this Government for proclaiming National Family Week.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering if you might call the Bills, debate on second readings, in the order that they are shown on the Order Paper, beginning with Bill Nos. 6 through No. 27.

* (1420)

HOUSE BUSINESS

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, on a question related to House Business to the Acting House Leader (Mr. Manness), it is the normal practice over the years to have Ministers present, and I am speaking in the generic sense so as not to offend the Rules with respect to the presence of any particular Minister or Member, but to have Ministers present when their Bills are being spoken to.

The reason for that practice is we believe that all Members of this House, whether they be in Opposition

or in Government, when speaking to Bills, are making substantive points and are providing good advice and asking important questions. For that reason, over a long number of years there has been an established pattern that Ministers do make every effort to be here when their Bills are being spoken to.

We have been very patient on this side with respect to the absence of Ministers during discussion on their Bills. We have brought the matter up peripherally in the past, but I think now it is time to ask the question directly. Is it anticipated that the Ministers for whom those Bills are brought forward will be in the House to hear our comments?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as can be seen as we look at the Order Paper, the presenters of the Bills, the Minister for Environment (Mr. Connery), as is well known, is at the conference today. I am the Acting Attorney-General and I will certainly be here to listen to all the comments by Members opposite, and I will relay them in significant detail to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

This is not a new practice. I can remember on several occasions in the past where Ministers have, through some set of circumstances, not been able to be in their place during the discussion on second reading on their Bills. I know it is less than favourable; I fully understand that. We find ourselves in a situation which does not allow the Attorney-General and the Minister of Environment to be in their places today. The Acting Ministers are here and certainly we are prepared to listen to the detail with some considerable consciousness. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The point is well taken.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, on the same point, I certainly agree with the Acting House Leader that there are circumstances that arise from time to time where it not possible for a Minister to be in the House when his or her Bill is being spoken to by either Members of his or her Government or by Members of the Opposition. In the past, it has been standard practice for the House Leader when that is the occasion to speak to the critics or to the Opposition House Leaders to express the concern that the Minister may not be able to be there and to work out as much as possible, on a consensus basis, whether or not that Bill would be spoken to at that time.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that we are prepared to speak to the Bills today in the absence of the Ministers, but this is one of the last times that we are going to be doing so. We are prepared to do so because the Acting House Leader has been cooperative with us in the past, but that individual cooperation between him and, I assume, the Liberal House Leader does not in any way excuse the fact that on far too many occasions, not just occasionally, but as a matter of practice, Ministers have not been here when their Bills were being spoken to. That is a situation that we believe as responsible Opposition, and I think I speak for the Liberal caucus because -(Interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Cowan: I regret that the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) in his typical partisan, parochial and nonsensical way has to interject himself into the debate. I will ignore those comments as—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has made his point. I understand you were not up on a point of order. The Honourable Member for Churchill was not up on a point of order.

Mr. Cowan: I think if you will review Hansard, Mr. Speaker, you will see that, when I stood up, I stood up with the exact comment on the same point.

Mr. Speaker: On the same point is right, but I did not recognize the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) on a point of order. I thank the Honourable Member for Churchill for helping the House Leaders work out some kind of arrangement to get us through the Bills today. I understand that the Acting Government House Leader (Mr. Manness) has said that the Acting Ministers will be here today so the Honourable Member for Churchill's point has been very well taken, and I think it appears that the Government is going to cooperate.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

BILL NO. 6—THE FIRES PREVENTION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of the Environment (Mr. Connery), Bill No. 6, The Fires Prevention Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prévention des incendies, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan).

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): Mr. Speaker, continuing on the point which I was making previous to your interruption, I was trying to indicate—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Cowan: I think you will find nothing offensive in that statement, Mr. Speaker.

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): He accused the Speaker of interrupting him.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): No, I did not, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Health, on a point of order.

Mr. Orchard: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that from time to time Members in this House make comments

that they regret and I am certain that if the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) reflects, as House Leader for the New Democratic Party, that he would not want the record to remain showing that he indicated that he wanted to continue with the same point he was making prior to you interrupting him, because I do not recall that anyone in this House has the ability to cast such reflections on you, Sir, in your office.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill, on the same point of order.

Mr. Cowan: On the point of order, if the Member had listened carefully, he would have heard me say—and Hansard will in fact indicate that such was the case—that I indicated that I would be continuing on the same point before your interruption, not that you had interrupted me but that there was an interruption with respect to what I was saying. That, Mr. Speaker, is factual. That has never been considered a reflection on any individual in this House previously but, if we are going to start to consider interruptions to be reflections on individuals, then I would be prepared to restate that. But I would also be prepared to stand in my place on every occasion when those Members interrupt Members on this side who are trying to make a point, to point out that it is a breach of Parliamentary Rules and Procedures. I do not believe that to be the case.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Let me thank both Honourable Members. I will review Hansard. I will be very honest with you, I did not hear the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) so I will review Hansard and I will report back to the House.

The Honourable Member for Churchill will kindly carry on with his remarks on Bill No. 6.

Mr. Cowan: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Carrying on with the points that I was making before, and I think it is relevant to the principle of this Bill and that is the fact that, without suggesting that an individual Minister is not present, there have been on too many occasions in the past in this House, during the tenure, the short tenure, the brief tenure of this Government, numerous occasions when Ministers who are responsible for Bills were not present when those Bills were being spoken to.

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Housing): I have been here for most of the Bills.

Mr. Cowan: Well, the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) suggested he has been here for most of the Bills.

Mr. Ducharme: All my Bills.

* (1430)

Mr. Cowan: All his Bills, and all his Bills are, as he indicates graphically across the Chamber by holding his fingers in a circle form, zip. He has had no Bills and that is one of the problems, Mr. Speaker, you see

because only a couple of the Ministers have gotten their act together enough to bring Bills into this Legislature. We have heard all sorts of promises of Bills, we have heard all sorts of threats of Bills. But all we have seen are a couple of Ministers who have been able to bring Bills forward. Mr. Speaker, what is also somewhat ironic is, when they have brought those Bills forward, those are almost exactly word for word the same Bills which the previous administration had brought forward or had prepared as part of their legislative package.

It is interesting that this Government went so far out of its way to defeat the previous Government, only to bring forward essentially the same Budget, except they had given some money back to their corporate friends and imposed some other hardships on seniors and others as a result of that Budget, and bring forward almost exactly the same legislative package. The fact is that we were doing things well enough and could have continued on with that Budget and gotten the money from Inco, who could afford to provide the money to the Provincial Treasury, and gotten the money from CPR who can afford to provide the money to Treasury, and not imposed an additional deductible on seniors with respect to Pharmacare who cannot afford the money.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

We could have brought forward the same legislative package which would have included this Bill. It is quite ironic and unusual and sad, in a way, that the Government has chosen to follow pretty much to date what our legislative package would have been, and at the same time has used their power, their new-found power, to give money back to the large corporations like Inco and CPR and to businesses across the province through the phasing-out of the health and education levy.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fact is that the Bill we have before us is one of those Bills that was being prepared by the previous administration. It is an important Bill. It was one that had not received a full airing at the time of the defeat of the Government. The present administration has chosen to bring it in, I can assume, because (1) they think it is an important Bill, and (2) because they have not been able to get their other pieces of their legislative package together.

The Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) from his seat talks about there will be other Bills coming forward—and he shakes his head, yes.

Mr. Ducharme: He knows the procedure.

Mr. Cowan: He says I know the procedure. Let me deal with those three things. I know that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is asking the Minister of Housing not to intervene because, No. 1, he finds that the Minister of Housing is moving him over on to thin ice, and No. 2, he also knows that as the Minister of Housing injects himself into the debate, he is going to identify some other areas that need be discussed.

Mr. Ducharme: He knows that, yes.

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Housing now says “I know that” and smiles, as does the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the Deputy Premier (Mr. Cummings).

The Bill before us provides for the charging of tuition fees for fire training at the fire colleges. I want to, just before addressing that specific backup to what the Minister of Housing did say. I do not want to lose sight of the importance of his comments. He said that I knew the practice in this House with respect to the introduction of legislation—indeed I do. The practice of this House with respect to the introduction of legislation is that there be some identification of the legislation in the Throne Speech if at all possible.

We found that the Throne Speech was very bereft of any identification of specific pieces of legislation this last time around. So I can assume from that there is not a lot of legislation, yet the Minister of Housing is telling me that there is much more yet to come.

Mr. Ducharme: Oh, sure.

Mr. Cowan: He says, oh, sure, as he walks from his seat. The rest of the process is that there be some consultation between the House Leaders with respect to legislation. I look to my colleague, the House Leader for the Liberal Party, because perhaps there has been consultation there of which I am not aware, but he shakes his head not. I know that there has not been a lot of consultation on legislation with myself by the Government House Leader. So I can only assume that there has been very little, if any, consultation on legislation that is going to be brought forward this Session.

Now I find that particularly surprising because it does run contrary and counter to practices that were established before. It is important to note that those practices that were established before were established under majority Government scenarios and not minority Government scenarios. I remember the Liberal House Leader (Mr. Alcock) with, I think, some very good insights into the process when he first assumed that responsibility, said to me on numerous occasions, when is it going to be that the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) is going to sit down and start to talk about their legislative package, because one would assume that in a minority Government situation, they would want to consult. They would want to consult more than they would in a majority Government situation. The fact is that there was a lot of consultation in a majority Government situation.

So we were somewhat surprised that there had been extremely little consultation on the rest of the legislative package. That is why I find it particularly surprising that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) today would sit in his seat and yell across the floor that there is a lot more legislation coming forward.

Now I have to tell you, perhaps I had been somewhat naive in assuming that the Liberal House Leader (Mr. Alcock) was correct and that a minority Government would want to consult more about legislation than would a majority Government and assuming that, because there had not been that consultation, there was not

much legislation coming forward because quite frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you bring forward The Fires Prevention Act, although we would like to be consulted on it, it does not require a great deal of consultation.

It does not require a great deal of consultation because it is not a major Act, although it has major implications. It can be amended quite easily if there are any concerns in the committee. So we would not expect a lot of consultation in this particular Act, given that it was also an Act that we had looked at very seriously. One would not expect a lot of consultation on The Statute Law Amendment Acts and The Regulations Acts and The Re-enactment Acts because those are Acts that are fairly comprehensive, but at the same time the thrust behind those Acts is one that has been well established. The principle of how they proceed through the House is well established. The Government, as did the Government previous to them, made the Legislative Counsel available to the caucuses, if they wanted to discuss the details of those particular Acts.

So one would not expect a lot of consultation in regard to that as well. That is mostly what is on the legislative agenda. But now I hear that I was naive in expecting that it was going to be a very small legislative package, that there is going to be much more legislation.

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): Heavy duty stuff as well.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), who is still within the caucus, knows things that perhaps the rest of us do not, and he indicates that there is a heavy legislative package coming forward. I do not know what that could be then. The Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) says he has legislation coming forward.

Mr. Ducharme: Tons.

Mr. Cowan: He says “tons” and I think that should be put clearly on the record. Perhaps he can take an opportunity some time in the near future, either in this House, by way of a formal declaration or speech or comment, or informally by way of consultations which have been so sorely lacking in the past, inform us as to what that legislation might be.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Finance, on a point of order.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member chooses not to speak to the Bill directly, I would hope he would signify such so I could get on with some other work, as I am intently trying to listen to him as I had pledged I would. But if he is not going to address the principle of the Bill, I then will begin some of my other work in my place.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill, directly to the point of order.

Mr. Cowan: Directly to the point of order, yes. I was addressing my remarks to the process of developing

legislation which did include this particular Bill and you will note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I also mentioned that I was concerned about the consultative process on this. But just for the edification of the Acting House Leader (Mr. Manness), I was also addressing my remarks to him as the Acting House Leader in hopes that he would carry them to the House Leader about the process generally.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I thank all Honourable Members for their advice. I believe that it will be helpful to the House if I were to remind all Honourable Members that on second reading it is the principle of the Bill under consideration which is debatable. I thank all Honourable Members for their advice.

Mr. Cowan: I guess perhaps I am at a bit of a quandary here and I would seek some advice from you, because I have always assumed that when talking to the principle of the Bill—and as a matter of fact, it has been an established practice in the House on precedent that one also talks to the principles that shape the development of that Bill. How has that Bill, in fact, been brought forward, because in large part the effect of that Bill, more specifically, the attention given to that Bill by this House will be shaped by the process of development of that Bill.

If a Bill is developed in isolation without any consultation with affected groups out there, then you will find quite often that in second reading in this House Members talked about the fact that the Bill has been developed in isolation without consultation, and if the Government has not taken unto itself the opportunity to discuss that Bill with other individuals and to gain their insights and their input and hopefully to make a better Bill for that reason. The same goes through for consultation with the Opposition. I do want to get directly to the point. I would hope that the Acting House Leader (Mr. Manness) would stop trying to distract me and deflect me from addressing the principle of the point, by points of order, the principles of the Bill. What we have before us is the Bill that deals with volunteer fire departments.

On a very serious and direct note, that is an extremely important issue in my own constituency. Far too often in northern Manitoba, we have seen too many tragic occurrences. Residents of numerous communities in my constituency, particularly the ones who are not serviced by a road or in close proximity to an industrial operation, residents of those communities have seen too many friends and too many families suffer the tragic consequences that come with an inability to fight fires once they start in those communities. I know of many individuals personally who have suffered those sorts of consequences and therefore can speak with some personal experience, although not direct experience. I too shared their bereavement in a way over the loss of good community residents, leaders within the community, friends and families. I am certain that every member here has had that experience in one form or another in their own constituency.

* (1440)

Mr. Cowan: All his Bills, and all his Bills are, as he indicates graphically across the Chamber by holding his fingers in a circle form, zip. He has had no Bills and that is one of the problems, Mr. Speaker, you see because only a couple of the Ministers have gotten their act together enough to bring Bills into this Legislature. We have heard all sorts of promises of Bills, we have heard all sorts of threats of Bills. But all we have seen are a couple of Ministers who have been able to bring Bills forward. Mr. Speaker, what is also somewhat ironic is, when they have brought those Bills forward, those are almost exactly word for word the same Bills which the previous administration had brought forward or had prepared as part of their legislative package.

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Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Member for Churchill, directly to the point of order.

Mr. Cowan: Directly to the point of order, yes. I was addressing my remarks to the process of developing legislation which did include this particular Bill and you will note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I also mentioned that I was concerned about the consultative process on this. But just for the edification of the Acting House Leader (Mr. Manness), I was also addressing my remarks to him as the Acting House Leader in hopes that he would carry them to the House Leader about the process generally.

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brought forward, because in large part the effect of that Bill, more specifically, the attention given to that Bill by this House will be shaped by the process of development of that Bill.

If a Bill is developed in isolation without any consultation with affected groups out there, then you will find quite often that in second reading in this House Members talked about the fact that the Bill has been developed in isolation without consultation, and if the Government has not taken unto itself the opportunity to discuss that Bill with other individuals and to gain their insights and their input and hopefully to make a better Bill for that reason. The same goes through for consultation with the Opposition. I do want to get directly to the point. I would hope that the Acting House Leader (Mr. Manness) would stop trying to distract me and deflect me from addressing the principle of the point, by points of order, the principles of the Bill. What we have before us is the Bill that deals with volunteer fire departments.

On a very serious and direct note, that is an extremely important issue in my own constituency. Far too often in northern Manitoba, we have seen too many tragic occurrences. Residents of numerous communities in my constituency, particularly the ones who are not serviced by a road or in close proximity to an industrial operation, residents of those communities have seen too many friends and too many families suffer the tragic consequences that come with an inability to fight fires once they start in those communities. I know of many individuals personally who have suffered those sorts of consequences and therefore can speak with some personal experience, although not direct experience. I too shared their bereavement in a way over the loss of good community residents, leaders within the community, friends and families. I am certain that every member here has had that experience in one form or another in their own constituency.

* (1440)

But it is a particularly difficult problem in northern remote communities and in rural remote communities, more so in the North, and I will come directly to why I believe that to be the case in a few moments. But we have seen those communities suffer the loss of life. We have seen them suffer the loss of property. We have seen them suffer the loss of opportunity because of fires that were unable to be fought in their own communities because there was not appropriate equipment, there was not proper training, there was not the ongoing type of skill development that would enable those fires to be fought effectively.

It was not because the people in the community did not try very hard to fight the fires, and it was not because they did not want to fight the fires. It was not because they were not very brave individuals because they did want to fight the fires and they were brave individuals. They just did not have the tools available to them to do the type of job that was necessary to save, most importantly, life and to save, secondly, most importantly, property. For that reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they live in constant fear of fire in many of those communities.

There is also another problem in northern communities, particularly again the ones that are more

remote, and that is the type of construction that went on over the years. You have a large number of wood-frame houses that were not constructed with all the same types of safety features that houses in other parts of the province are constructed, and they are much more vulnerable to fire for that reason. Once they do catch fire, they are much more prone to burn very quickly. I see the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) shaking his head because I know he has exactly the same type of problem in many areas in his constituency where you have the older wood-frame housing not perhaps built to the same standards because it is older, as we have housing built today and it is much more vulnerable to fire.

He also has the same problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with distance, distance from a fire hall or distance from a water source that they have in northern communities. That is a problem that we tried to address when we were in Government. I believe the previous administration, the Lyon administration, tried to address it as well, and I know that this administration will continue to try to address it through the upgrading of fire equipment, the building of fire halls and the training of fire volunteers in those communities on an ongoing basis. I hope they are able to carry forward the momentum that we were able to create over the last number of years. The fact is that the circumstances there are not what they should be at the present time.

This piece of legislation gives us an opportunity to deal with that. I am not certain that it goes far enough, but it does give us an opportunity to deal with at least one part of the problem. Let me address all of the parts before coming to that specific part.

As I indicated earlier, there are many individuals in those communities who are prepared to fight fires. They are prepared to risk their lives in fighting fires although they should not have to do so. One would hope that they would be able to fight fires safely and that is why this Bill is so important in the longer run, but they need training. They need training on basic firefighting techniques. They need training on new equipment which hopefully will be brought into their communities. They need constant training and upgrading on newer techniques as they become available. In that respect, they are no different from the professional firefighter in Winnipeg or Brandon or Thompson, nor are they any different from the volunteer firefighter in so many other communities throughout the province and northern communities such as Gillam, Churchill, Lynn Lake and Leaf Rapids, where they have volunteer fire brigades that not only deal with the needs, say, with respect to firefighting but also assist in many other community activities.

In the smaller communities because of size, inherent with that situation—it is not a problem—but inherent with the situation of small size, they are going to have fewer people to call upon for volunteer activities. Because they have fewer people to call upon for volunteer activities, they are going to have to make the most effective use of those who are prepared to volunteer. It is also a problem that is—and the problem is not the size of the community but the lack of sufficient numbers to volunteer—also synergistic in the sense

that not only are those volunteer firefighters volunteering firefighting duty, but they are also volunteering for all sorts of other community activities.

I spoke to someone from a rural community just the other day who had come into the city from Virden to attend a meeting. She told me that you know, Jay, she said, it is becoming a real problem in our communities because a lot of the younger people are leaving, and we know that to be case, and a lot of us more established residents, the ones who have been there longer—you note I do not say, older residents—but the ones who have lived in the community longer and are more likely to stay in the community are finding that a lot of the activities that were once done on a volunteer basis by the younger people are not being done anymore because there are fewer younger people and they are going to have to take on more of the responsibility. They say, we are just getting tired. How much more can we volunteer for? It is a problem that is experienced all throughout the province where you have small populations or decreasing populations. It is not one that is particular to the North, but it is one that is a particular concern in the North because it is such a long-standing problem for those communities.

While we understand that people do give up freely of their time and they do try to perform a community service through volunteer firefighting, they are also being asked to perform a whole lot of other volunteer services and there is only so much time and so much energy that any one individual has. We have to make the most effective use of their time. I will come back to that if I have a bit more time at the conclusion of my remarks.

The second area that is of major concern as a northern resident, and one which is not identified directly in this Bill but I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is relevant to the Bill itself is that of equipment for those communities. A lot of the problems in those more remote communities that do not have a strong tax base, in some instances have a very meager tax base and are dependent upon Government for a large part of the revenue, is that they cannot purchase firefighting equipment that is modern, up to date and of a nature that is sufficient to fulfill all the needs of the communities.

You do not have fire hydrants in a lot of the communities, primarily because you do not have running water. If you do not have running water, you are not going to be able to set up a fire hydrant system because you do not have the lines to serve that fire hydrant system.—(Interjection)—The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), whom I am finding myself agreeing with much too much today but I find it a pleasant experience, is saying that I am absolutely right. He knows in his own area that there are communities that do not have water lines and, for that reason, they do not have things which we take for granted in other parts of the province such as fire hydrants every so many blocks.

What you need is trucks that can carry water. So the communities have to have specially-built trucks that go beyond the type of fire truck you have for normal firefighting in the city and are designed so that they can pump water into them quickly and take the water

right to the site of the fire and fight the fire in that way. So you need those trucks.

When you have those trucks in an environment where quite often it goes down to 30 and 40 below during the winter months, you need somewhere to house those trucks. You need a heated facility to house those trucks, so you need a fire hall. Up until a couple of years ago, as a matter of fact up until the past decade, we did not see many fire halls in those northern communities. As a matter of fact, it would be a rarity if you saw a fire hall in a small community such as Brochet, Shamattawa -(Interjection)- The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) says Woodlands. I do not have personal experience there but it may in fact be the case, I agree with him.

Many of the problems are exactly the same, and I am interested in hearing what he has to say when it is his opportunity to speak to this Bill. I think we will find that we are in far more areas of agreement than we are able to put on the record during my short comments to the Bill. I hope that I can provide him the same sort of support in improving fire conditions in his constituency as he is providing and showing for the needs of firefighting systems and personnel in northern Manitoba. So you need those fire halls.

We do think we have a large number of fire halls now that have been constructed under different federal-provincial agreements and different provincial programs over the past number of years. As a matter of fact, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of those fire halls have been constructed under Jobs Fund Programs and under the Community Places Program. That is why Northerners, and particularly Members of the New Democratic Party, were so concerned to see the Jobs Fund eliminated because it did provide that sort of assistance to communities that required some very basic needs.

* (1450)

I understand that the Conservatives have a philosophical disagreement with the concept of the Jobs Fund, and I also appreciate the fact that the Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) during the campaign, and I assume she spoke for the present caucus, came out and said that the Jobs Fund was not an effective use of provincial monies. I have to tell you that when it comes to the needs of a community that had a fire hall built under the Jobs Fund, they do not understand how you developed that philosophical approach that said that money was not required or how you developed, to the Liberal Party, that political approach that said that the Jobs Fund was not required, because they know full well the advantages that it brought to their community.

The fire halls are only a part of the equipment needs of the community though. They also need the basic equipment that is used in firefighting. They also need pumps that enable them to pump water from their water source to the truck so that the truck can be made ready for fires on numerous occasions. That is the type of equipment that is required, and this Bill does not address that but perhaps, when debating the Bill, we can take this opportunity to make known our collective

concern as individuals within this Chamber that those sorts of programs that provide that equipment not be discontinued but be unhanced until every community, whether it is Woodlands or Brochet or Shamattawa or Winnipeg or Thompson or Lynn Lake or Gillam, have the type of equipment that they require to ensure the safety of their residents and the protection of their community.

In northern communities, however, we have to go one step further. I had talked a bit earlier about the problems with the Hydro housing construction. We have wood-frame houses built a long time ago. The electrical systems were not as sophisticated as the electrical systems we have here, and they are not as well maintained. Now, when I say they are not as well maintained, I do not want anyone to misconstrue that as a reflection on the individuals who live in the houses, because I will tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know how to fool around a bit with some housekeeping needs and some home maintenance needs in my own house but I do not like to work on the electrical system. You are shaking your head no, and you are probably shaking your head no for exactly the same reason as I do not like to work on the electrical system. Talk about very, very scary. That is very, very scary, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If the National Citizens' Coalition wanted to put their money in, I think, a much more productive endeavour, they should talk about how scary people should be with respect to untrained people working on electrical systems, rather than trying to generate fear where fear does not exist, nor should it exist.

I do not know if you would permit me a brief aside, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I find that campaign amusing and somewhat contradictory, because what the coalition is saying is that one Leader is very, very scary because he actually means what he says and he is going to do what he says, and he is going to, when elected—and he is going to be elected—make good on his promises, and they find that very, very scary. I think what the general population finds very, very scary is the fact that politicians are far too often elected, saying they are going to do things that they do not have any intention of doing, and that they are not going to do and that they never do.

So, I think that the coalition has focused its energies in the wrong way but I know that from what I hear, as I talk to people throughout the province, that campaign is having exactly the type of effect that we would like it to have and that is people say, thank goodness there is one politician that is going to do what he says he is going to do. We do not find that very, very scary. We find that very, very refreshing, and very, very illuminating, and very, very positive, and something we want to support.

But I do not want to stray too far from the principle of the Bill. I just thought that you would indulge me in a brief aside, considering how important the issue was.

In northern communities, again with the older type of housing, the wood-frame housing, the different standards under which that housing was constructed and the fact that the electrical maintenance in those communities is not what it would be in another community because there are not skilled tradespeople

in those communities who can work on the houses at a reasonable fee. They have to be flown in, in many instances, and there is a real cost factor to that, a factor which many of the residents cannot afford. We have more chance of fire and, when the fire does start, we have more chance of that fire burning very quickly. We have a more difficult circumstance in fighting that fire because of the other issues which I have addressed earlier.

The second factor with respect to individual houses that should be addressed is the fact that a lot of those houses are heated by wood stoves. Notwithstanding the fact that wood provides a very good heat source and is a very inexpensive heat source in those communities and is traditional and one which many of the residents enjoy, as do many of the Members in this House when they have an opportunity to have either a wood stove or a fireplace in their own house, they do cause fires.

We all get warnings here about, if we have fireplaces, about having our chimneys kept free of soot and the buildup of wood-combustion products.-(Interjection)-The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) asks if I have a chimney in my own house. Yes, I do, and we keep it cleaned on a regular basis and we -(Interjection)-well, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) asks if we burn elm-diseased wood. I can tell him, no, that we do not have diseased elms in our locale and we would not buy it if it was available, but it is not available. We burn primarily birch wood, which I find to be a very good wood if it has been properly seasoned to burn. It is not a bad wood to burn in the city, because it burns very hot and you do not get a buildup of wood-combustion products in the chimney which can cause chimney fires later on.

However, in the northern communities, you do not have that birch supply readily available. There is a lot more burning of softer woods and those -(Interjection)-well, if I could say that the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) was leaving, which I cannot, I will not. I would say that I regret that he was leaving because I enjoyed his assistance in shaping this speech. But the point I am trying to make is an important point.

* (1500)

In the North, you do burn different types of wood, softer woods because you do not have the harder wood readily available to the community. For that reason, you do have more chimney fires because you have more wood-combustion products getting trapped in the chimney because it is a cooler fire and not quite as hot. I do not want to make light of that because that is one of the reasons for many fires in the North.

The point I was starting to make before I was somewhat distracted was that there is a further need for equipment in northern communities, and that is for equipment that is right in the house, for example, fire extinguishers that are in the house in close proximity to the wood-burning stove or the wood-burning furnace which some houses have now so that in case there is a fire in the house one can respond very quickly and not have to rely on the fire department.

The other piece of equipment that is required in the houses themselves are smoke detectors. The fire extinguisher is not going to do you a lot of good if you are asleep and the fire starts and you do not know it has started. The smoke detector, which we take for granted in the city again, is a valuable way of protecting residents in those communities where the houses are more prone to fire and more susceptible to fire damage once a fire has started. There has to be a program that is ongoing to provide fire extinguishers and to provide smoke detectors to equip houses in northern Manitoba.

Going one step beyond that and then coming back full circle, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is training. We started out talking about training for firefighters, men and women across the province who are volunteering their time or who are working at a job to protect the citizenry with respect to the loss of life and the loss of property. We think that is very important, but it is also important in northern communities that we have training for homeowners and residents of houses that will enable them to ensure that the house is maintained in a fire-safe manner, to ensure that the smoke detectors are working and maintained, and to fight fires if they should occur in their house as a first response to that fire.

Some people would say, why do you need that in the North if you do not need that in other areas of the province? The fact is you do have that in other areas of the province. You have it on TV, you have it in publications, you have it in the fire departments coming around and checking houses occasionally and going on campaigns about making your house fireproof and making it more safe from fire. That is exactly the type of program that you need in the North.

This Bill enables the Government to charge tuition, and there have been some concerns expressed earlier about the open-endedness of this Bill. Others have addressed that and I think it would be sufficient for me to say I share those concerns without going into any detail on them.

But the Bill should also be used as a way to discuss the overall approach to preventing fires and to fighting fires when they do occur. That is what I have tried to do in my comments on second reading with respect to the principle of the Bill, which is the principle of protecting our communities and our residents from the tragic consequences of fires. If this Bill can do that and if we can, by our active involvement in the debate, provide encouragement and support for those sorts of activities to be undertaken, then I think the Bill has accomplished much more than it was intended to accomplish.

By being in effective Opposition and taking the opportunity to participate in the Bill, we have made it a better Bill. We have helped the Government become a better Government, and they need all the help that they can get in that respect. For that reason, we have spent our time productively and well and in the finest tradition of this House.

I note that my time has nearly expired, Mr. Speaker. There were a couple of other points that I had hoped to be able to make, but I am certain there will be more

opportunities on this Bill when it proceeds to committee and when it comes back for third reading to make my specific comments. I know that some of my colleagues will want to speak to the Bill as well. With that in mind, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I conclude my remarks.

Mr. Gilles Roch: I move, seconded by the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 8—THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH SMALL CLAIMS PRACTICES AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 8, The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cour du Banc de la Reine, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Brandon East (Mr. Evans), the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk for a few minutes about the Bill and join—unless I am goaded into further words by my friend, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), who might inspire me to great thoughts and great debating points in the process.—(Interjection)—That happens, that happens, I have seen it happen in this House on both sides. In fact, I just watched the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) add another 10 minutes to the speech of the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) in making a point.

I would commend the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) for bringing this legislation forward. It is a good piece of legislation, The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Act and, from the speeches that I have read that have been made on this subject previously, it seems that there is unanimity on it, although there have been a few suggestions made.

My research shows also this is something that was under consideration by the previous administration and obviously it is something that has come forward because its time has come. Its time has come and I think the people of Manitoba will congratulate the Government, the Legislature, for bringing this forward and seeing it passed.

As I understand, fundamentally, it raises the monetary jurisdiction to \$5,000.00. I think there are some nuances there but basically it substantially increases the level. It allows the introduction of a default judgment procedure so that if a defendant does not appear, the plaintiff has it settled in his favour. So in effect you cannot simply adjourn the case, as I understand it.

Thirdly, it ensures that small claims are heard in the Small Claims Court, and indeed it ensures that it acts as a people's court to the extent that you can have a people's court.

There are a number of benefits from this, but my experience in dealing with a lot of constituents over

the years, many do become very leery about going to court. Most people have not had any experience in going to court and, if this legislation somehow or other alleviates the necessity for many Manitobans to go to court, it will be welcomed. It certainly makes it easier for the average citizen to have his or her problem dealt with.

It lessens the need for lawyers. It would be interesting to see whether the Law Society of Manitoba or some organization representing the lawyers may oppose this because it may take away some work from them. That is a possibility. I do not have the statistics on the number of cases that are now dealt with in the Court of Queen's Bench that could be dealt with in Small Claims Court to know what the impact will be quantitatively but, generally speaking, it should lessen the need for lawyers. In fact, it could perhaps cut the costs of Legal Aid in Manitoba substantially because a lot of people in low-income brackets do refer to Legal Aid for assistance. This costs the taxpayers money. If we could save some Legal Aid costs, this would be great as well.

* (1510)

On the other hand, by raising the level there will be more cases coming to Small Claims Court. It might encourage, it might open up this area for people. There may be more demand of the court simply because it looks that it is more accessible, leading to more cases being heard. It has been suggested that some of the major creditors may use it more frequently than they have in the past.

There is no question that it would reduce the amount of time in Small Claims Court. It would certainly make it more efficient. More than the majority of the claims go undisputed, therefore, you would have judgments rendered in less time than present and certainly with a lot of less formality. For those cases that are disputed, more court time would be allowed for the hearing officer to have to listen to the case and would allow for more effective decisions to be rendered at the time of hearing. Generally speaking, we should have a more efficient situation. Certainly, it could reduce the costs of the higher courts, the Court of Queen's Bench, simply because the cases do not have to go there. Hopefully, it could reduce some of the logjam that appears today in the higher courts. So there are a lot of good reasons for the Legislature to pass this particular piece of legislation.

In a more humorous vein, I have never had the need to go to a Small Claims Court myself. I have not paid too much attention, although I do recall a rather humorous incident three or four years ago when someone who did not, for whatever reason, like the decision of the court, was about to accost—in fact he did take a punch at the court officer. I do not know whether he was the deputy registrar or who. The reason I remember it is because this is the same person who was contending for the Liberal Party of Manitoba leadership. Obviously, he did not win the leadership but he was one of the contenders at that time. I think he was staying at the Holiday Inn. There was some dispute about a hotel bill, whatever. At any rate, it appeared before the Small Claims Court and, for some

reason or other, he became a little upset about it and decided to take a poke at the registrar of the court.

An Honourable Member: Who did that, Len?

Mr. Leonard Evans: A Liberal Party Leader contestant. I found that to be rather humorous because the same person was making a lot of scurrilous allegations about myself a year or two before that the press seemed to want to take seriously. The only question I have, therefore, is whether we need more police protection for the officers of the court in case you have some people who get a little angry about the decisions being laid down.

There is one suggestion I would like to make and that is with regard to the problem of inflation. We have experienced inflation of the order of about 4 percent to 5 percent per year, more or less, for the last several years. If you go back five, six, seven years, the inflation rate was much more rapid than that. It was much higher and we know what inflation does. It certainly devalues the dollar. For every point of inflation in a year, it means that the value of our dollar, the estimated value, drops.

In terms, therefore, of this particular limit, I would suggest that even with the modest 5 percent inflation, in a matter of a few years, the limit in today's dollars will be much lower. If you would make a simple calculation at 5 percent inflation after this legislation is passed, in a year from now, assuming we continue to have 5 percent inflation, and that is not an unrealistic assumption, it could even be higher but I hope that is not the case. I would like to see it a bit lower, but I think 5 percent, 4 percent, 5 percent, 6 percent is not an unreasonable guesstimate of what might happen in the future.

But if we took 5 percent, by Year 2, the value in today's dollars, 1988 dollars, would be \$4,760; if we go to Year 3, it would be down to \$4,530; Year 4, it would only be \$4,320; by Year 5, it would be \$4,114 or nearly a reduction of \$900 of value in five years.

You could look at it in a different way and say, what would you need to have in order to keep up with this rate of inflation. You just make a reverse calculation so by Year 2, instead of \$5,000, if you wanted to give the person the same amount of leeway and limit as we have in the legislation, you would have to arrange to raise it to \$5,250.00. It is on a simple calculation. The third year, it would be roughly \$5,500; in the fourth year, it would be nearly \$5,800; and the fifth year, it would be nearly \$6,100.00. In other words, five years from now, what the amount of limit should read would be \$6,100 to give you the same \$5,000 that we are talking about today if you have 5 percent inflation per annum.

What I am suggesting is that we look at—the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) may wish to consider this by way of an amendment perhaps, and that is to build into the legislation some kind of an indexing factor. We have legislation before this House. This House has passed legislation in the past with an indexing factor, one referring to MLAs' expense allowances, the per diem allowances, and certainly with regard to salaries.

So there is a precedent where we have passed legislation with a formula that seems to work fairly reasonably. It is not overly complicated, can be written into the legislation if we really mean what we say here, that we want to raise the level to \$5,000.00. If it is good enough in the year 1988, why do we not assure that level, that limit, for the years ahead? The simplest way of doing that is to build in, bring an amendment to allow for some kind of an indexing formula. It need not be—and it could be rounded off. Then the formula sometimes may end up with \$5,500.32 or something like that. I am not suggesting you go to the ridiculous. You can round it off. You can come up with some sort of a reasonable approach.

So, having made those remarks, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, we are quite pleased that it is here. I am not a lawyer. I do not know all the ramifications of what is being done but, on the surface and from what I have read, it is the right move. It will be a move supported and welcomed by the people of Manitoba, and I trust that it will be passed in due course by this Legislature.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), that debate on Bill No. 8 be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 9—STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT (RE-ENACTED STATUTES) ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 9, The Statute Law Amendment (Re-enacted Statutes) Act; Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives (Lois réadoptées) standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). (Stand)

BILL NO. 11—THE CHILD CUSTODY ENFORCEMENT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 11, The Child Custody Enforcement Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la loi sur l'exécution des ordonnances de garde, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I would take an adjournment on this particular Bill in place of the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks, if he will take my spot, thank you.

Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks): I would like to certainly begin and thank the Honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) for encouraging me in my comments this afternoon.

Being a member of the practising Bar of the Province of Manitoba, I certainly have an interest in developments in this area of law, the family law of the Province of Manitoba. That interest comes from not only indeed

my concern with respect to matters relating to the family, but also born from some experience practising in this area of the law.

* (1520)

It was indeed a pleasure for me several years ago, in 1984, to participate in a People's Law Conference where there were participants from across Canada at an event held in Ottawa. These participants came from varied backgrounds, varied experiences, and provided all participants of that conference with their own unique perspective on the state of family law throughout the provinces in our Dominion of Canada. It was indeed a pleasure and honour to listen to many of them.

From Manitoba, there were a number of representatives from the Family Law section of the Attorney-General's Department. There were persons attending from the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba and general practitioners who certainly came with their own perspective and were prepared to advise the legislators who were there, the practitioners of family law and others who have an impact on the direction of family law, not just in our Province of Manitoba but the other jurisdictions in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I would certainly be the first to attest to the evolution of the laws relating to matters relating to families in the Province of Manitoba over the last several years. As a student at the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba, we are provided with a perspective on the history of law generally through the lectures taught and prepared by Professor Edwards, who had at one time served as the Dean of the Manitoba Law School, and more specifically in the area of family law with the able and capable professors there.

(The Acting Speaker, Mr. Edward Helwer, in the Chair.)

We covered many cases where there were certain inequities in the past that legislators, both here in the Province of Manitoba and other jurisdictions, have attempted to address. May I add, Mr. Acting Speaker, that it is important for us to consider the impact of laws in other jurisdictions and other provinces throughout Canada as these laws are often used in arguments by lawyers here in our province. They were often considered by the various courts, the Court of Queen's Bench Family Division here in Winnipeg, the Provincial Court performing the same function outside the City of Winnipeg, as well as the Manitoba Court of Appeal.

Although laws of other jurisdictions do not force a court here in the Province of Manitoba to act on their advice, on their decisions, they are certainly persuasive in showing the general direction of where the law in the other jurisdictions are going. I believe that the decisions and the laws in the Province of Manitoba are leading the way in Canada to ensure that rights of various parties are indeed protected, protected in a way that was at times unfamiliar to lawyers and the courts and legislators in the past 100 or so years which has led to the evolution of the Province of Manitoba.

That is an important aspect of the development, is that we certainly need to look to our society, to reflect

on the direction of our society of the general waves and flows that we see to enact laws that impact positively on people. It is sometimes too easy for Legislatures at various levels to become somewhat insulated from the day-to-day activities of our constituents, from the day-to-day activities and the impact of the laws which are considered in this Chamber and how they affect the daily lives of Manitobans.

It is indeed an honour for me to participate in this afternoon's debate on the amendments before us in this Bill. I hope that through my participation as a lawyer in various proceedings before the courts and, as a final resort I may add, participation in many of these family disputes that I would be able to at least suggest a little bit of the impact that the laws that are made here have on these people. Over the last several years, the legal profession has seen the expansion and refinement of the various laws of the Province of Manitoba, The Maintenance Enforcement Act, Acts dealing with property and federally, of course, the changes to the Divorce Act.

Along with these acts, what we must consider is the rules that are set out by the Court of Queen's Bench in order to assist all Manitobans to better use the court system that we have in place to attain the objectives that they have set for themselves. These rules are not a secret. They are not set in some corner of some dusty library collecting dust, and I might add that in fact the regulations and the rules relating to family law can be easily obtained and easily read by any Manitoban who wishes to come into the great library presently in the facilities of the Law Courts Building, who can ask direction of the librarians and the researchers there to show them where they are and how these regulations and rules can be found. In fact, I would like to add that what is included in these rules and regulations are the forms that are required to be used by anyone wishing to become part of the court system. This is indeed, I think, an important aspect and certainly people have available to them these forms and so on. They themselves can work through the plethora of different forms and regulations that are required in order to deal in the area of family law.

* (1530)

There have been many recent developments in these rules, for example, the development of a pre-trial conference. One of the objectives of this pre-trial conference is to allow the petitioner, the respondent in any particular family matter, to bring their matter before a judge who will then sit down with the attorneys, if the petitioner or respondent have chosen to seek the assistance of counsel, and those five people, along with a member of the court staff, will sit down and review the facts and circumstances of that particular action.

This is indeed, I believe, in some quarters to be held a very valuable tool because—and I am sure the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) of the Province of Manitoba will be interested in perhaps at some time providing us with information dealing on the success of people attending these pre-trial conferences and not going on to a trial. I would certainly ask the Attorney-General that he perhaps ask his staff to consider and

perhaps table at some time in the future these statistics, if they are available, to see whether this pre-trial conference is cutting down the number of trials in the Family Court system in the Province of Manitoba. I am sure we would all be interested in taking a look at those statistics.

However, Mr. Acting Speaker, although these developments have led to a well-structured system, a system that, I may add, is certainly under constant review, there have been recommendations as to how to make it more efficient than otherwise. One of the unfortunate aspects in the increase in the different types of proceedings that are made available to litigants is the increasing legal costs. These increasing legal costs are of concern to everyone. They are of concern not only to the litigants who are involved and are faced with legal bills that they may not have originally anticipated, but they are of concern to lawyers as well. Lawyers, I believe, Mr. Acting Speaker, are concerned because sometimes these fees are such that people may not wish to pursue their rights, the rights that have been made available to them through changes to laws relating to families. This is indeed of concern.

Certainly a concern that I have is that those people who do not fit within the parameters, within the guidelines as set out by Legal Aid, and those who indeed earn a very good dollar at whatever they do, it is those people in between those two extremes who are hurt most. They are hurt most because of the most recent increases in taxes. They are hurt because they sometimes may not be able to enforce the rights that are available to them.

Another thing that I have certainly learned and has been reinforced is that matters relating to family law should not be a woman versus man's issue. It is unfortunate when legislators take one side or the other. I believe, as all Members of the Legislature believe, that we are all equal and we should be equal before the law and before the courts.

The enforcement of access has become one of the most difficult and frustrating areas of family law. It is difficult for a number of reasons. It is difficult for it is not like cash or dollars or awards of maintenance which are awarded to one party or the other in a family law dispute for, if one party or the other against whom an order for maintenance has been made is unable or chooses not to pay that maintenance, the person to whom the maintenance award has been made may then, through the Maintenance Enforcement Branch of the Attorney-General's Office, enforce those rights.

I would add for the knowledge of all Members of the House that it is an almost standard item to be included in any order of the Family Court of Winnipeg that the maintenance to be paid from one party to the other is to be made through the Maintenance Enforcement Branch. That branch has evolved into a very efficient and effective system where it is but a matter of a few months of arrears that this matter is brought to the attention of the courts in the Province of Manitoba.

If, for example, a particular party to an action has not paid maintenance, Maintenance Enforcement would issue a summons for that person to appear before the

Court of Queen's Bench. This appearance is to be made within a reasonably short period of time in order for that particular individual, a defaulter, to advise the court as to why they are in arrears, and to ensure that particular defaulter is complying with an order of the Court of Queen's Bench in the Province of Manitoba.

* (1540)

Sometimes the person appearing before this Maintenance Enforcement Court has a valid reason for being in arrears. I have indeed represented many an individual before this court because that individual has perhaps lost their job, has become ill or other changes in circumstances varying from those circumstances which were present at the time of the court order. Again, the individual brought before the Maintenance Enforcement Court is often advised, whether he is represented by counsel or not, that if there indeed has been a change in circumstances that individual should be applying to the court in which the order was originally made for a variation of that order. Now that variation application is an important instrument in ensuring that the court is made aware of the circumstances of the parties to any particular action.

However, I have discovered that there are perhaps two reasons why many people do not use the court application to vary the original order before they are actually summoned. May I just interject at this point that a summons has potential serious consequences for the person who is commanded to appear before the court. Those consequences may lead to that individual being imprisoned. Those are serious consequences. As I was mentioning earlier, that variation application has not been made perhaps for the reason that the individual was not quite sure of the procedures but perhaps more importantly, because of the expense involved, they have chosen not to seek counsel. I have indeed been involved in situations where the dollar amount owed in arrears was not very small. So again, that is another example of how our family law in the Province of Manitoba has evolved.

As I mentioned earlier, maintenance enforcement is indeed perhaps easier to deal with than something like access. Certainly the Government in this Bill is trying to address that particular problem.

We have most recently seen that the frustration of people relating to their access to their children in many situations has led them to organize because of the increased expense of attempting to enforce those access orders. Certainly, trying to enforce access is a much more difficult thing than enforcing that maintenance order. It is indeed easy enough to have a garnishee order issued garnisheeing the defaulter's bank account, the defaulter's employment income.

I might add that there are indeed individuals or litigants who sometimes even prefer to have a garnishee order against their employment income so that it automatically is deducted from their pay cheque and directed to the Maintenance Enforcement Branch so they themselves do not necessarily have to go through the sometimes painful experience of preparing the necessary disbursement.

This, I believe, is certainly the first step towards attempting to develop a system to enforce that access that has been ordered. I certainly would add, as I am sure all Members would agree, that someone not complying with this particular provision of an order of the court is certainly in as serious a breach as someone not complying with the maintenance order.

With respect to Conciliation Services, this operation of the Government of the Province of Manitoba is indeed a capable one and is often used by counsel and by judges and does provide a valuable service if both sides are indeed ready and able to cooperate. I am certainly prepared to admit, Mr. Acting Speaker, that I have referred many matters to Conciliation Services as one of the procedures available to me as counsel, to one party or the other, to try to reach some sort of agreement between parties. I am sure many lawyers in the Province of Manitoba look to this as a first step, look to attempting to reach a settlement between parties. By attempting to reach that settlement, we are attempting to ensure the smooth transition of the family. We are attempting to ensure that there is as little effect as possible on the children, that there is as little effect as possible on really what had been a family unit.

May I also add that it certainly has an effect on legal costs. If an agreement can be reached, if a separation agreement can be prepared and executed, then it certainly saves you the additional costs of preparing various court applications, motions, the appearances necessary, the cross-examinations of affidavits, the preparation and consideration of court orders, the argument relating to those court orders, the preparation of Examinations for Discovery, the attendances on Examinations for Discovery, and these indeed add incredibly to the cost of any type of litigation. I sincerely believe that counsel across Manitoba would sooner reach a settlement than to go on to these extra steps.

Conciliation Services will indeed perform a valuable function, as I mentioned, if both parties are prepared to cooperate. If both parties are not prepared to cooperate, then unfortunately I have found that it is a step, perhaps even a valuable step to be taken, but unfortunately sometimes does not yield the results that we would like to see. It is for this reason that I think, when this Bill is referred to committee, that the committee should look to the community—look to Winnipeggers, look to Manitobans—to provide their input into this Bill, because it begs for some certain creative means of changing to ensure that it is accomplishing that which it is intended to accomplish.

Unfortunately, in many situations that I have certainly been involved in, it indeed is a sad day when two people who have shared many years, their lives, together—some shorter than others, who have had children who have shared those experiences, have felt that enough is enough and yet, in these last stages of being together, they fight bitterly. This is a circumstance that needs to be addressed by the Manitoba Legislature.

If people are prepared to work together, are prepared to cooperate, then any type of pilot project will indeed work its magic and come up with solutions, come up with sometimes creative solutions; but if people are not prepared to cooperate, if people are not prepared

to consider in those circumstances where there are children the best interests of those children, then no number of counselling sessions will successfully deal with that marital situation and, unfortunately, we will have to once again resort to court proceedings.

* (1550)

This brings me, Mr. Acting Speaker, to the point which I would certainly ask all Members of this Legislature to consider when they speak on this Bill, when they listen to Manitobans who will undoubtedly wish to appear before them during the committee stage, that we have to consider those circumstances where there have been children. We certainly, in the Liberal Party, do not look lightly to this circumstance.

This is where perhaps I can just advise Members of the Legislature of some of the circumstances that I have encountered where indeed as the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) has set out earlier in his comments that we need to consider the interests of the children and that it is found that those children who develop to the best of their abilities are those who have access to both their parents. I think this cloak that must surround these discussions and these debates on this particular Bill is that the bitterness sometimes that I have seen that other lawyers in the Province of Manitoba and perhaps in this one situation—it would be of assistance if there were maybe a few more lawyers who dealt with matters relating to family law in the Legislature who could then pass on their experiences to their Members in caucus.

It is a troubling circumstance where one sees the effect on the children of a family situation, a situation where a young boy wishes to have access and to enjoy his father's company who does not necessarily have custody of him but who, for whatever reason, chooses not to exercise that access or in some circumstances where the mother unfortunately chooses not to allow the father of that child to exercise that access.

In some situations, Mr. Acting Speaker, and it is an unfortunate circumstance, and certainly weighs on this humble servant of the Province of Manitoba, that access is denied or sometimes even suggested consciously or subconsciously as a trade-off for maintenance. Unfortunately this is the circumstance in some situations. I certainly look forward to participating and listening to the comments of Manitobans who are prepared to offer their suggestions on this Bill when this committee does reach committee stage.

Relating directly to the pilot project that is suggested as part of this particular area in family law, I think again it is important, as with many pilot projects, as with many new initiatives, that Government as part of that initiative develop a review system so that we can have updates as to how the system is progressing, that we can have the input as to how it perhaps can be improved so that we do not wait until the end of a particular period of time for the evaluation. Because certainly in areas of family law, the impact that decisions of Government have on Manitobans, on people, can sometimes be grave.

In conclusion, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would certainly say that this area of family law, the enforcement of

access, is one that has proven to be difficult and a frustrating area of family law. We certainly agree that this enforcement cannot be as easy as garnisheeing someone's salary. I would certainly encourage the Members of the committee who will consider this Bill to look to the community of Manitobans for their input.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): I move, seconded by the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 15—THE COOPERATIVE PROMOTION TRUST ACT

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Edward Helwer): On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 15, The Cooperative Promotion Trust Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns).

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Harry Enns (Lakeside): I do not have a great deal to add to this Bill. We recognize, I think, from comments made that it is generally supported by all groups within the Legislature.

I was prompted to add a few words to the record, however, because of the speech made when last this Bill was before the House by the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). Nobody has appointed me to this task. It is one of those self-appointed tasks that I readily assume in this House. I think it is appropriate that on occasion when positions or statements are attributed to one group within this House coming from another group that belie the historical record that it is incumbent upon somebody to make sure that does not stay on the record unchallenged and that some appropriate redress is made. That is essentially what I would like to accomplish in a few moments this afternoon in discussing Bill 15.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko, in the Chair.)

The co-op movement has a long proud history in the Province of Manitoba. From time to time it has received different styles of attention by the Governments of the Day. This particular trust fund that we are talking about that is specifically set up to promote the co-op movement in Manitoba, it should be kept in mind, originated by the wheat growers of this province, who, I think with a great deal of foresight, gave the then Government—and I do not have the exact date in mind, but it was many, many years ago, and I can inform you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that at the time I had some specific responsibility for it and I believe likely, for many years of its existence, the responsibility for reporting to this House about the activities of that trust fund. It was housed in the Department of Agriculture. The Minister of Agriculture was responsible for the appointments to the board and to the general direction of that fund, of the very legislation that we are now dealing with.

As I might say, the whole cooperative legislative program, and responsibility for that in terms again to

the required legislation that was required from time to time, for many years was housed in the Department of Agriculture. It was there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I had the privilege of being the Minister of Agriculture for this province in the years 1966-67.

* (1600)

So when the Honourable Member places on the record, as he did Friday last, that the co-op movement had been downgraded in the years between 1977 and 1981 and then it was only after the election of 1981 that we saw the election of a new Government with a new attitude towards cooperative development and the installation of a new Minister of Cooperative Development into the portfolio, who believed fundamentally in the cooperative movement, that the cooperative movement received, in his judgment, the kind of attention that the cooperative movement deserves by Government of whatever political stripe.

He goes on to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I just want to put these few comments on the record because they form the basis on which I wish to refute what the Honourable Member said, because while there is unanimity in the House as to the passage of Bill No. 15, it seems to me that most Honourable Members speaking to the Bill took the opportunity, and not incorrectly, of letting their views be known on the cooperative movement, their hopes for the cooperative movement, and indeed the past performance of the cooperative movement in the Province of Manitoba seems to have taken up a greater part of anybody's contribution in speaking to this Bill, because the Bill itself is not being contended. It is, as I have said before, receiving the support of I believe all Members of this House.

So when the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) goes on to put on the record and states it as a fact, and I quote him from page 1761 of Friday last Hansard—"The fact is that northern Manitoba is perhaps the most extensive user of co-ops in the province."—that simply is not the fact; that simply is not true.

I would have to say or venture a guess that there are some who would like to challenge me when I use statistics because I tend to have them available to me immediately; but I would have to say that possibly if you were to do an assessment of the co-op movement in Manitoba, you would find that 99 percent of the members, of the assets, of the activity of the co-op movement is in southern Manitoba. That is not to reflect in any derogatory manner on the cooperative movement and the cooperative endeavours that are taking place in northern Manitoba but simply setting the record straight.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the cooperative movement in Manitoba, indeed across the Prairies, saw its development long before any of us came into this Chamber. It generally springs and has its fountain well of development when existing institutions fail to meet the needs of a particular community of people, when existing institutions are deemed to be not meeting the specific need.

That certainly was the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the grain trade and the unsatisfactory marketing

practices that were taking place in the grain trades in the Twenties and leading up into the early Thirties, followed by the very traumatic and difficult climatic periods, as well as with the world market conditions, that saw the development on the Prairies—not just in Manitoba but in Saskatchewan and Alberta as well—of perhaps the single biggest movement towards a cooperative form of self-management that we have ever witnessed in this country of Canada.

That is, of course, the creation of hundreds, indeed of thousands, of individual grain cooperatives that dotted the Prairies and then came together to form the big pools that are today still functioning well and are the major handler and marketer of one of our most important industries, namely the grain trade. I refer to the Manitoba Pool organization, the Saskatchewan Pool organization, the Alberta Pool organization, grain pool organizations, along with such other organizations as the United Grain Growers also organized on a co-op basis.

Coincidentally to that, because there was a feeling that our major financial institutions were not sensitive to prairie needs, to farm needs, to rural needs, you saw the development of the credit union system and the caisses populaires right across this country, but again notably on the Prairies.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill): St. Malo.

Mr. Enns: Yes, I do not question the information provided by the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan)—St. Malo—but the point that I think the Honourable Member for Churchill will also take, he will take the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) aside and say that it is not correct to put on the record that the greatest users of the co-op system of management are to be found in northern Manitoba. That simply is not true.

The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) goes on to make the case—and this is really the only point that I wish to elaborate on and put on the record. He makes a statement that, in my judgment, really epitomizes the difference between a Conservative administration—I would like to believe a Liberal administration as well for that matter—and our friends the Socialists. The gist of his opposition to the present Government's activity in the co-op field is that we are disbanding the department as such and he sees that as a diminution of the Government's intention or the Government's commitment to the cooperative movement.

He goes on to say on page 1762 of the same Hansard, Friday, September 30:

"To the extent that there are fewer people rather than more who are involved in co-op development at the Government level, you have more or less problems in developing co-ops. To the extent that you have people, a Minister, a Government, who is supportive of co-ops, who is prepared to designate administrative responsibilities within a departmental context for cooperative development, you have more co-ops being developed."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I simply take issue with that entire concept, because as I have already laid on the record, the greatest growth, the greatest development of the co-op movement in Manitoba, in Saskatchewan, in Alberta, took place when there was no department of co-ops as such and there was no specific Minister assigned as such. In most instances, as it was certainly up until the mid-Sixties, it was adjunct to the Department of Agriculture in Manitoba. I do not know what the situation was in Saskatchewan or Alberta, but certainly my recollection is that it likely was adjunct to some other ministerial responsibility.

That is beyond the point because it flies against the whole concept of what constitutes the development of a successful co-op. Certainly not the hand holding, not the heavy patronizing hand of Government that is leading or pushing or suggesting to people that they ought to form a co-op, which was the practice of my friends opposite—no, it is the realization of individuals, whether they are farmers or whether they are a group of people who have a shelter problem, a housing problem, and decide they wish to jointly and cooperatively do something about it in that way. It is only that way that those cooperatives have a chance of succeeding. There has to be the individual commitment by the individual members of a group, whether it is a credit union or whether it is a grain co-op or whether it is a fishing co-op.

* (1610)

My friends opposite seem not to have learned that lesson because, if anything, we have seen the failure rate of those kinds of forced-fed cooperatives at a far higher rate than those who have maintained as their basic building blocks the concept of what constitutes a cooperative.

I can well recall, with some pride I might say, the development of the numerous fishing cooperatives throughout the North. I had occasion to visit most of them shortly after they were developed under the auspices then of the cooperative director working out of the Department of Agriculture. It coincided with the establishment of the Fresh Water Fish Marketing Corporation. At that time, in the late Sixties and the early Seventies, there were some 21, 22 viable fishing co-ops throughout northern Manitoba. I wish that they were there today. My belief, which I hold firmly, is that they were interfered with too much, they were hand fed too much and they were not allowed to make those hard business decisions by themselves, which is an extremely important ingredient with respect to trying to keep a co-op viable.

The Member goes on to suggest that a Conservative administration, for some reasons known only to himself, is less than friendly or not as cooperative towards the cooperative movement. Again the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) simply is not accurately reflecting the record.

In the late Seventies, even some of the most sophisticated co-ops that we have in this province, namely, the credit unions—and I call them cooperatives, and quite correctly; they come under the Act—found themselves in a great deal of financial difficulty partly

because of some of the less-than-adequate management decisions that they had made, partly because of not recognizing—and I point out to Honourable Members, some of you that will recall '77-81, we saw one of the harsher recessions in the last 20 or 30 years. It was our misfortune to have formed Government at that time. But cooperatives that one thought were on solid financial ground, like the Red River Co-op, that had several retail marketing outlets here in the City of Winnipeg, a number of them in rural Manitoba, one in the Community of Stonewall that I am pleased to represent.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, whether or not there was a Department of Cooperatives or whether or not there was a Minister solely responsible for cooperatives had nothing to do with their failure. The question of interest ought to be is how did the Government of the Day respond to it, to that very serious financial crisis that the credit union system faced in the late '70s?

A Conservative Government, without hesitation, a Conservative Minister, Mr. Bob Banman, without hesitation guaranteed the cooperative movement some \$21 million to see them over that difficult period. I am pleased to say that they are over that difficult period—or the interest of that amount. No matter, and I accept the correction from the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz) who is only too well aware of what is happening in the credit union systems in Manitoba. I might say I would suspect there are as many, if not more, members of a cooperative on this side of the House than there are on that side of the House. But that is neither here nor there. The point that I simply want to say in speaking in support of this Bill is that it is not appropriate. It is not historically accurate for the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), for a representative of the New Democratic Party to suggest that a Conservative Party, a Conservative Government does not have the interests of fostering, promoting, furthering development of cooperatives in this province at heart. I think the very passage and the presentation of this Bill indicates otherwise. It is no secret. I think the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) made that plain at the start of this Session, that this particular Session the priorities were to get our Budget back on track, get our finances back on track, get our Estimates approved, and that we would be having a relatively light legislative load in terms of new legislation coming forward at this Session.

But the fact that even under those circumstances the Government chose to put forward this piece of legislation, indicates very clearly our ongoing commitment to the cooperative movement and our willingness to do what is necessary, legislatively speaking, to facilitate better and improved legislative conditions for the cooperative movement to flourish in Manitoba. I say legislative conditions, these kind of words, because you cannot do it for them. The commitment to run a co-op, whether it is a financial co-op, a credit union, whether it is a grain co-op like the Pools or whether it is a fishing co-op or a housing co-op, its strength will only be as strong as the individual Members choose to make it. Our job, our responsibility, is to ensure that, legislatively speaking, we have not made it more difficult for them. In fact, when problems

are pointed out to us, that we make the necessary amendments to the overall enabling the legislation that governs the development of the formation of cooperatives in this province, let those amendments come forward with due dispatch and are supported in this House.

I would suggest to you that, history again answered, Votes and Proceedings will show that while many, many issues are hotly contested in this Chamber over the years that I have been in this Chamber. I have found that in most instances changes to the cooperative legislation, legislation of the kind that we have before us, Bill 15, not without exception but in the main, legislation of this kind has found non-partisan wide support in this Chamber.

Mr. Cowan: . . . We do not do a debate . . . and the Liberal Leader wanting to have an investigation . . .

Mr. Enns: If the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) wants to digress from my otherwise statesmanlike comments and to submerge myself into the fetter of Party politics for a moment, I am always prepared to do that. The fact that under the leadership of the former Government all too often there was direct personal political interference in various cooperatives and cooperative programs that then led to the kind of partisan attack on them in the Chamber that did the cooperative movement no assistance. That was no help to them.

Mr. Cowan: Can you name one? Just one, quick, name one.

Mr. Enns: I will resist the temptation. I am suffering by the way from a—I am in the grip of a bad cold. That is what is the matter with my normal . . .

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Honourable Minister for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), on a point of order.

Mr. Cowan: I would ask the Member if he would entertain a question?

Mr. Enns: I would be delighted to entertain a question.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) has suggested that there were numerous occasions, under the previous administration as a part of, there was an active involvement, and he suggests there was manipulation of the cooperative sector by the Government. I would ask him if he can name any specific instances where he knows that to be the case?

Mr. Enns: In the sense that the cooperative movement is set up to do and provide an economically viable organization, to provide either a certain service or to provide a manufacturer a certain product or do whatever we do in our society, only doing it cooperatively in this instance. Because it suited the politics of the day we established two cooperatives to cut timber, to cut wood in the north, who to this day have never been viable, have cost the Province of Manitoba and the

taxpayers of Manitoba hundreds of thousands of dollars. But it suited the political agenda of the Government of the Day to set them up and to push them into cooperatives. I have no objection. I happen to think that is possibly the only way that can be done. But if the Honourable Member wishes to ask me a specific question, I have answered him, I have cited two specific co-ops. I think that was the purport of his question.

* (1620)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Cowan: I appreciate the question, to the Member. I appreciate the fact that he cited two examples, but is he referring to Moose Lake Loggers and to Channel Area Loggers when he makes those references?

Mr. Enns: Yes.

Mr. Cowan: He indicates that yes, he is referring to them. Am I correct in that? I just like to take this moment to advise him that they are not cooperatives, never have been cooperatives and, therefore, he is entirely off base in his analysis of conditions in northern Manitoba, and I am glad to be able to help him in this regard.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am always quick to accept the knowledgeable advice from somebody who obviously has the facts at hand.—(Interjection)— Well, maybe I want to talk about Crown corporations. The impression left, let me put it this way, was that they were developed on the basis of as a co-op and I suppose the Honourable Member is correct when he says there is a fundamental difference between a Crown corporation and a —(Interjection)— suffice, suffice.

Bill No. 15 I predict will be one of those measures that will receive unanimous support in this Chamber. I believe it ought to receive it. I think it is simply a matter of historical accuracy that we do not take the opportunity of Bill No. 15 to try to paint thicker groups within the Chamber as being less than openly supportive to the cooperative movement which I think all Parties in this Legislature are. Thank you.

Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk): I am very pleased to be able to speak on this Bill and it is one of the ironies of life that—I guess it was about 17 years ago, my husband and I founded a cooperative in the City of Winnipeg, along with many others. I certainly cannot take sole credit for it, nor do I wish to, because indeed the cooperative movement is not one of an individual but a series of individuals.

Having been a student at the University of Manitoba and having been newly married and, gee, whatever year it was, '69 or '70, so long ago, I forget —(Interjection)— yes, it does, does it not? Time does go by fast. We were quite aware of the fact that married students attending the University of Manitoba, and particularly married students with young children, did not have housing available to them that was affordable or that understood the needs of married students with

children because their hours are varied. Their responsibilities are varied and the willingness to be able to need as friends and neighbours beyond the idea of an apartment building-like structure where you may be confused and put together with a series of different backgrounds, not necessarily joining the University atmosphere and we have felt that, because of all these needs, it was necessary to put together an apartment building or an apartment complex that would house the needs of married students.

From that and over the series of about eight months, I suppose, and into many months after, we put together a cooperative system, which indeed grew up to be the building on Dalhousie Drive and still a married cooperative housing complex. At the time, I had one young child and another on the way. I was very involved with keeping this building on track and being built. The best aspect of the building of that cooperative that appeared in my life was the influence it had on my young child. My son who is now 18 was as I said about two years old at the time. He worked with me day in and day out at the cooperative. Once it got built, as students came in from all over the world—we had students from Brazil, Israel, India, all of Europe, Mexico, the States, pretty well anywhere you can name, we had married students coming in and I had every request up to and including, "How do you wash a floor, I have only ever had a dirt floor?" It was a varied background that I had to deal with.

From this cooperative movement, and it was perhaps the best example of cooperation, because it did not only include the neighbourhood but it included the world neighbourhood, so we got to know each other very closely. From this United Nations aspect of this cooperative, my eldest son is one of the unique people in the world who can not judge and will not judge and definitely can not see people other than their character and the quality they have.

I remember very much, when he was about eight years old and having been to school for several years, I kept hearing of a friend of his who was called Ian Innis. Coming from a very Scottish community in southern Ontario, Ian Innis to me would have red hair and freckles. Somehow I did not really think of it but it was obviously in my mind's eye what Ian would appear to be. For many, many reasons, although Ian came and went from our house, Ian and I never crossed paths until a birthday party and Ian came in and it was quite obvious to me with his curly black hair and his dark skin that he was not Scottish in this essence that I believed him to be. Sean came into the kitchen and I said Sean there is something you have not told me about Ian. Sean looked at me up and down as sons will at their dumb mothers and said, "oh, yes, he is short." That was his full belief of what the person was. He could not see anything wrong with Ian or anything different with Ian. Indeed there is nothing wrong with Ian and there is nothing different with Ian. I saw it from my background and he saw it from a background that I believe the cooperative movement is about.

The cooperative movement not only is a cooperative in the business sense but the sense of cooperation that we must get along with people. The cooperative

movement in the Dalhousie apartment complex was very necessary, and I would like to also note that one of the tenants when we began it was the Honourable Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). It is unfortunate that he was not on the board with me, but I was glad to see that this wonderful experience, which I am sure it was, spurred him on to his full support of the cooperative movement.

I, from the building and working on the Dalhousie apartment complex, which I might add my husband is again on the board of, or again on the board of, to be more correct, moved to St. Norbert and was a member of that Red River Co-op and enjoyed being a member of it because I felt I was part of all the decisions. I was part of the movement, the growth, but I would like to point out, of course, I was not part of the failure.

It was very much an attraction to me. If prices were lower somewhere else, it did not really attract me as much, because this was my membership that I was buying on and I got something back from that membership.

I would also like to add my feelings and agreement with the Member for Lakeside and being my neighbour constituency that we have to keep cooperativism away from being a political structure. Even if it is not in actuality a political support structure, it cannot appear to be in any means, ways or any other item. It has to be purely a development that is initiated by the people, served by the people and served for the people.

* (1630)

Again, as I mentioned, I came from a very small community in southern Ontario that I grew up in, and I think, as the rural Members across the House understand, that cooperation is much the life of a small town and a rural community. When the great wind came through our community and blew down 26 barns one year, we did not ask for Government assistance, but we went out as neighbours and helped each other build up the barns again. Although that was not a registered cooperative, that indeed was a cooperative in a community.

The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) says that perhaps their side has more members of the cooperative association in structure than this side, and that may be the case, but I think our backgrounds have to attest to the fact that we believe in cooperation, and the cooperative structure that we have to deal with in this House should only be the bookwork part of the cooperative and not the pressure part of the cooperative, and we must keep our arm's length away from any interference in the structure as to the political backing for any cooperative.

I must say as well, being a mother and having been a forced student of Sesame Street for 17-some-odd years, cooperation has been drilled into my mind as being one of the main things we try to teach our children, and unfortunately, when we become adults, that seems to be one of our last things we want to do is to cooperate. We are all out for the mighty dollar, we are all out for our self-interests, and I think it would be

much better for us go back to our rural beliefs and our pioneer beliefs that we must help each other and that the group is stronger than the individual but the group is made up of individuals, and without the individual strength we will not make up the strong group.

Mr. Enns: I think she should carry it out and come over here.

Mrs. Charles: The Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) is talking about me coming across the House. It is enough that my father is Conservative. I certainly would not want to ruin the rest of the family.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Churchill said when you get older, you get smarter and you become a Conservative.

Mrs. Charles: Yes, Churchill also smoked and drank a lot, too.

I am being harassed here by the Members of the opposite trying to convince me, but I think that is exactly what I am speaking to and, as the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) spoke to, is that we cannot make cooperativism into a political backing. A belief in a cooperative support network is not a political belief but a belief in the neighbourhood and a belief in the people that can make it stronger.

Going back to the housing unit on Dalhousie Drive that we built, like many other cooperatives, it was not built without many difficulties. We had architectural problems, we had construction problems, and I often think that surviving those days as business manager running the cooperative at the time prepared me for anything else in life and I find the irony of being here today speaking on cooperative movement perhaps fulfills the circle.

When the housing unit was being built, we ran into the problem of not having the windows in place. They were on strike in British Columbia, I believe it was. So when people would come off their planes at the airport, I would meet them and say I am sorry, the housing unit you were promised is not available. Here they were, often with small children, often prepared to go to university, but with few belongings, and we had to move them throughout the Pembina Highway strip from motel to motel, booking them up and making sure they had safe housing and good housing while we completed the housing complex. In the true cooperative sense, we had very few complaints from all those people. There were many days, particularly at the first of the month, when I would have people literally hopscotching over each other until they got into the apartment that they had registered for.

People are very willing to cooperate and I think we have to believe that the best of people will come out in the cooperative movement. The western farming groups are certainly a good example of that. Their strength of the western agricultural business perhaps has come from the cooperative movement and the fact that they have found their common goals, their common needs override any business sense of personal gain, because when the community gains, each member gains.

I am very pleased to stand here today to speak on this Bill. Of course, as the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) mentioned, it is probably going to be a unanimous decision. It is a housekeeping Bill but I think it is important—as I do not always agree in this House when we are standing up speaking on various issues and it seems to often be just to fill in the time. I think it is important that we do have a chance to say we believe in the people, to believe that the people can be stronger when they are helping themselves rather than being helped through grants and silly little structures of Government that we put in place to make political gains. Let us let the people serve themselves. Let us support the cooperative movement to the fullest extent and let us keep it away from being a politicized agenda and make it the free-standing structure that, indeed, should grow and will grow if we allow it to.

Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 23—THE REGULATIONS VALIDATION STATUTES AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 23, The Regulations Validation Statutes Amendment Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), is it agreed to leave—the House to allow the Bill to stand in the name of the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards)? (Agreed)

BILL NO. 27—THE PRIVATE ACTS REPEAL ACT

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), Bill No. 27, The Private Acts Repeal Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). Is it agreed to allow the Bill to stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster? (Agreed)

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wonder if there was leave. We discussed this matter between the House Leaders.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: No.

Mr. Cowan: There is not? Okay.

* (1640)

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): Perhaps while there is a bit of a lull in the activity of the House, I could move, seconded by the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Statutory Regulations and Orders be amended as follows: the Member for The

Pas (Mr. Harapiak) taking the place of the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe Honourable Members would agree to call it five o'clock?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it so agreed? (Agreed)

The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Hour.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RES. NO. 19—ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTHERN UNIVERSITY

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Private Members' Hour, proposed Resolution No. 19.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): The Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) is not here but he wanted this resolution to proceed. I wonder if there might be leave of the House so that I can introduce it and then we can carry on with the Private Members' Hour.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Does the Honourable Member have leave? (Agreed)

Mr. Cowan: Perhaps I could have a copy of the resolution. I have one here, but I need the official copy so there will be no mistake.

An Honourable Member: You do not want to get the words wrong.

Mr. Cowan: Indeed. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), on behalf of the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper):

WHEREAS all residents of Manitoba should have equitable access to educational opportunities regardless of their geographic location; and

WHEREAS there are many successful examples of higher education programs being delivered in the North; and

WHEREAS many of these existing programs have shared objectives, but are not coordinated in and connected under one umbrella; and

WHEREAS there are many new innovative ways of delivering educational programs to the North which require development, demonstration and evaluation; and

WHEREAS northern residents have consistently expressed a desire to exercise more control over programs delivered in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the previous NDP administration had committed itself to the establishment of a northern university or northern polytechnic institute; and

WHEREAS the Northern Development Agreement Human Resources Component, along with the Limestone Training and Employment Agency, already commits more than \$15 million to post-secondary and adult education.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call upon the present Government to immediately initiate discussions with northern residents and organizations with a view toward establishing a northern university, which would provide higher education opportunities to northern residents under control of a democratically structured governing body, the majority of which would be northern residents.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Cowan: This resolution is about fairness. It is a call by the New Democratic Party caucus, through the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper), who has great experience in this area, with the support of his northern colleagues as well as the entire caucus, for the establishment of a northern university so that northern Manitobans will have the same access to educational opportunities that so many other Manitobans enjoy.

In bringing this resolution forward, the Member for Rupertsland, on behalf of the NDP Opposition, is asking the present Government to carry on with the development of a northern university that was started under the Pawley administration. This is not an entirely new issue. The previous Government had already started discussions with northern and Native organizations regarding the establishment of a new and an innovative educational process and the development of an institution to deliver those programs that would be located in northern Manitoba.

I remember quite well some of the discussions that were taking place with representatives particularly of Native northern organizations just previous to the election, which dealt with this particular issue. There has long been a call by those representatives and by other northerners for the establishment of a higher educational body and system within the North so that northerners would not have to be uprooted from their home communities in many instances, and in a lot of other instances entirely from the North, to pursue their education. We were in the midst of that consultation when the election was called.

I have to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that consultation was going quite well and was proceeding to the point where a number of papers had been developed that outlined the process for the development of a northern university and also started the deal with some of the main issues involving a northern institution. I kept a lot of those papers because I took a particular interest in this concept at the time it was being discussed.

Unfortunately, for a number of reasons, not only for this particular reason, from my perspective—a number of other reasons also were negatively impacted—there was an election. During that election and the ensuing

campaign, the New Democratic Party clearly committed itself to the establishment of a northern university as part of its overall plan of action if it were to be re-elected. Now we all know that election resulted in a change of Government and a new role for the New Democratic Party. That is why we now have continued with our work to develop new educational opportunities for northern Manitobans through this private member's resolution.

The resolution calls upon the present Government to continue with our previous efforts and our ongoing consultations by immediately initiating their own discussions with northern residents with the purpose of establishing a northern university that would provide higher educational opportunities to northern residents.

In the resolution, the NDP further calls upon the Government to ensure that any such northern university would be controlled by a democratically structured governing body with the majority of northern residents on that governing structure so that northern needs are fully considered and so that the experience of northerners with educational programs of this sort can be effectively used to develop appropriate solutions to long-standing problems.

It is also important to point out that when the New Democratic Party uses the term "northern university," or as we sometimes affectionately call it, a "northern polytechnic institute," we are not talking about one building in one community alone. We are not talking about the development of a large amount of infrastructure and a campus surrounding it that will be located in one particular community. No doubt the finished product will involve infrastructure like buildings and institutions and perhaps even campuses. They are not the reasons for the development of a northern university. Rather they will be a by-product of the overall approach. That overall approach is one that includes creating a democratically-controlled process that is centred in and takes place in northern Manitoba so that the discussions will revolve around the needs of Northerners as stated by Northerners and will address their concerns directly in their own area.

* (1650)

The concept of a northern university includes both existing and innovative programs that would be spread out in many different communities. These programs will build upon existing educational programs and, more importantly, establish entirely new programs and new opportunities for Northerners. It includes university level courses in communities like Pukatawagon, Split Lake, Garden Hill, Shamattawa, Lynn Lake, Gillam, The Pas, Thompson, Moose Lake, throughout the entire North. The list goes on and on and on.

What we are really talking about is not bricks and mortar that is confined to one particular geographic locale but a whole new way of approaching the higher educational needs of northern Manitobans that will enable them to participate in educational programs on the university level that take full advantage of existing buildings, existing programs and expands those programs and buildings so that new opportunities can

be created. It will include the continuation of successful programs like the community-based and the community college and university-based programs that come under the Limestone Training and Employment Agency. It means that organizations like the Keewatin Tribal Council or the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okemakanac or the MKO will have an opportunity to participate, not only in the development of the concept and the implementation of the concept, but in the running of the organization. It means that organizations such as NorMan and the unions and the Chambers of Commerce in northern Manitoba will have an opportunity to participate as well in that process. It means that existing educational institutions such as the community college in The Pas and the Limestone Training and Employment Agency in Thompson and the different schools in every community will have an opportunity to help develop this new and innovative approach. It means that Manitoba will be a leading edge in the development of educational opportunities that meet the needs of northern residents on their home turf and with their specific concerns in mind and working off of their experiences to build programs that work.

The resolution makes a number of points. I believe it is important to reinforce them. It says that all residents of Manitoba should have equitable access to educational opportunities. That is what we are calling upon the Government to develop. We are calling upon them to continue the work that we had started that unfortunately we are not able to finalize. It means that a northern student in Gillam will not have to leave that community to attend university in Winnipeg for a period of four or more years. They have to go intermittently out of the community to other communities, both in the North and in the South, to tend to their educational needs. It will also mean that they can complete a lot of their university level courses right in their home community. Think of the disadvantage for Northerners now who have to uproot themselves from their families and their friends and all their supports in order to attend university and also the additional cost that it imposes on them and their families. Think how that acts as a barrier to education for those individuals. That is true whether that individual is from Gillam, as I used one example, or from Shamattawa or from Brochet or Lac Brochet, or Tadoule Lake or South Indian Lake. The same barriers exist. This establishment of a northern university would help knock down those barriers which have prevented so many young Manitobans from fulfilling their full potential. So it will provide for equitable access.

The resolution also points out that there are many successful examples of higher education programs being delivered in the North and there a lot of them. They have been extremely successful. The Minister of Education, and I know the Minister of Native and Northern Affairs has attended a number of graduation ceremonies—some of them in the North where they have been able to see first hand that these programs are working and they are working quite well. They are producing graduates that are among the best in the province, that are committed to their own education and even more importantly committed to going back into their home communities to use that education for the betterment of their friends, families and neighbours.

We talked about the lack of doctors for rural and northern areas. The previous administration started a program which provided some assistance to Northerners who wanted to become doctors. It was a pre-med program that helped them through the initial stages. It has been quite successful in putting into place a couple of doctors in a very short period of time who have graduated from the program. What did those doctors say they wanted to do upon graduation? They want to go back to their home communities. There have been social workers that have been graduated under similar programs. They are going back to their home communities. There have been nurses that have been graduated under similar programs. They are going back to their own communities. So there are many successful examples that show that if we develop an approach which works, we cannot only provide more access for Northerners to higher educational opportunities but we can also deal with some of the more global problems we have, such as the recruitment and retention of professionals such as doctors, nurses and social workers in northern communities.

Another example is the apprenticeship program under the Limestone Training and Employment Agency. I had the pleasure during the early days of the campaign of speaking to a group in Thompson—seven graduates of the carpentry apprenticeship program that had taken that program under the Limestone Training and Employment Agency overall approach. They had graduated with very high marks. For the most part they were Native. They were some of the first Native carpentry journeymen to graduate under the program. They have found jobs at Limestone and, as well, in their home communities. One of them happened to be a close personal friend of mine for a number of years. The pride that he showed on that day and his family—at least his wife was there with him, the pride that both of them showed in that accomplishment is something that makes one as a politician feel that in fact we do some very productive things, that we are able to use our power as a Government to make for a better condition of life for individuals and for society in general. I shared that pride for that individual. His name is Ed Guiboche and his wife, Audrey Guiboche. I know that he is back working in his community now using those skills to build a better community.

That is the type of result that a northern university can have. Perhaps he would not have been able to have attained that goal and that personal objective if he had to leave the North in order to do it. We do not know. Perhaps he would have. We do know that because he was able to stay in the North to take those courses, he is now a journeyman carpentry person and he is providing skills and benefits to his community and society in general.

The resolution also calls for the coordination of existing programs. There is another ceremony which the Minister of Native Affairs and I had the opportunity to participate in jointly that took place a couple of months ago and that was the opening of the Churchill Northern Studies Centre in Churchill. I think the Minister of Native Affairs was as impressed with what was happening there as was I. What is happening there is research of a university calibre that is taking place right

in the tundra area in one of the most northern most communities in the province. That study centre could be folded in and be an intricate part of a northern university. It would develop a synergy that would help that study centre be a better research organization and educational operation and would also help the northern university expand its programs throughout the North and could possibly bring in federal dollars and dollars from other provinces who would want to use that unique area as a way to research the tundra ecosystem.

There are many other programs like that—nursing programs that could be put together by Native organizations, other educational programs that could be put together by other organizations.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish I had a bit more time, but I recognize the constraints. I do hope that all Members in this Legislature will join with the New Democratic Party caucus in supporting this resolution and we can continue on with that important work. Thank you.

* (1700)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Member's time has expired.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on this resolution and I am pleased to see it on the Order Paper, but I just want to remind the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) that he did make some comments earlier about my partisan and my—a reflection of my political activities in today's House. Let this remind him of one thing, how quick the worm turns to come back and face him.

He introduced a resolution for his colleague, his colleague who I wish were here to hear our speeches. He did say that he did it on behalf of his Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) who was unable to be here, and I am not making a reflection.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Churchill, on a point of order.

Mr. Jay Cowan (Second Opposition House Leader): The Minister of Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) knows full well that it is not parliamentary to refer to the presence or absence of a Member in the House. The Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) is in his constituency. That is part of our work as elected representatives, and I would hope that he would not try to distort the situation to the extent where there is some sort of aspersion cast upon a Member who is in his own constituency. He did want this resolution to proceed so that it would not drop to the bottom of the Order Paper and would not be dealt with for several weeks.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Point well taken. The Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey), we do not refer to Members—

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): Mr. Deputy Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: On a point of order?

Mr. Downey: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) in his opening comments made reference to the fact that his colleague was not in the Chamber and he was doing it on behalf of the Member. He as well made it very clear and defeated his argument—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order.

Mr. Downey: —that his Member had to be in his constituency. All I am saying is that the knife cuts both ways for the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), and he should appreciate that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister does not have a point of order and as I made reference to, to the Honourable Minister, we do not make reference to Members either being present and/or away.

The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs, to carry on with his comments.

Mr. Downey: I certainly appreciate the fact that the Rules are that we should not make reference to it, and I do apologize to the Member.

However, I want to say that it is important for anyone to be in this House to hear an important speech dealing with Northern Affairs and the educational system in the North, and I would hope that all Members would come to hear the kinds of words that are going to be delivered by the Members of this House. It is equally important for Ministers to be busy in other activities during the day, and it is sometimes absolutely impossible for them to be here in the listening of some of the speeches of the Members opposite. The knife cuts both ways, and I hope the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) would start to look at it in a little more fair and equitable balance in his comments that he makes in this Chamber.

Let us deal with the resolution, because I am pleased to see it on the Order Paper. I am pleased to be able to stand here today and put my comments on the record as the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs, which I am extremely proud of carrying that portfolio and that responsibility. Let us deal with it.

“WHEREAS all residents of Manitoba should have equitable access to educational opportunities, regardless of their geographic location”—absolutely. I am not so sure that has taken place over the past—how many years have the New Democrats been in office in Manitoba? About 14 out of the last 19? Here we have 14 out of the last 19 years of New Democratic Government in the province, and we have a resolution come forward for the establishment of this kind of activity. It shows, it is very obvious, that there has been no action as far as the northern communities are concerned and the educational programs. This resolution makes the point that the New Democratic Party have totally and absolutely ignored the North when it comes to educational programs and equity.

My colleague, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), and I have had several discussions on the kind of

activities and work that we want to carry out for northern opportunities. I can assure you that it was evidenced recently by my colleague, the Minister of Education, meeting with the Northern Association of Community Councils and Frontier School Division to make some changes so that the children could get their education—yes, most importantly—but as well participate in the activities in the spring when it comes to family fishing and hunting activities.

Our Government and our record speaks very clearly of our commitment to education in northern Manitoba and the flexibility and consultation that takes place.

Let us carry on to the other whereas, “WHEREAS there are many successful examples of higher education programs being delivered in the north.” Again—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It appears the Honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) and the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) are carrying on a private conversation.

An Honourable Member: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I apologize for that conversation. We were talking about the services provided—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. Let us make it easier for other Honourable Members to listen to remarks spoken by the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs.

Mr. Downey: We talk of examples of where it has already taken place. I have to say, I was extremely pleased to participate, as the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) has indicated and acknowledged—and I appreciate that acknowledgement—that I was in Thompson, Manitoba four days after being appointed Minister of Northern Affairs to the graduation of the social workers out of the Thompson region, Thompson city.

It was a very emotional event and the pride of those young people, those young men and women going out into their communities to carry out their training and to be able to share with those people who have traditionally lacked services and lacked support, was something that I think touched everyone. The pride of those individuals was truly demonstrated at that event.

I am somewhat of an emotional person and I was very much touched by that activity and to participate in it, and very proud indeed of those graduates, and I want to again congratulate them for their efforts and their persistence in getting their degrees and their education. I can assure you that it was not easy for them, and that was demonstrated in the comments that were made by some of the professional people who were speaking there and by the students themselves. So I commend anyone who wants to take on the furtherance of their education under today's circumstances, the difficult times, financing and whatever there is as obstacles. I commend them for

that. I was extremely pleased to participate, and have tried to participate in as many graduations as possible.

Coordination of activities, I think, is extremely important because there is not an endless amount of funds to go towards the education of people, whether it be in the North, whether it be in the South or anywhere. We have to be coordinated and we have to make maximum use of the limited amount of funds that are available. So, yes, there needs to be coordination. I think more coordination will do it more efficiently, provide that education more efficiently, and may well negate the need for bricks and mortar.

The fact that we can coordinate programs in the use of our telecommunications system through television, the satellite system again, I think can access to those people in the North, to those Native and northern students a tremendous opportunity which has not been available to them. Coordination, the whole activity of using modern technology is extremely important, again making reference to the fact that there are not limitless numbers of dollars.

In fact, and I do have to get a little partisan at this particular time, if so much of the taxpayers' money in Manitoba today was not going to service the debt which was incurred on the people of Manitoba by the incompetent management of the New Democrats, it would be far easier to provide educational systems for those students in the North. But when you are sending your money to bankers in New York, bankers in Zurich and Japan to pay off debt that was incurred because of their mismanagement, that is money that cannot go to help the students in northern Manitoba.

So let us keep it in the total perspective. It would be a lot easier if we had not had so much NDP mismanagement in the Province of Manitoba, which I think we have seen the end of for a long, long time. Mind you, we have not seen the end of the debt, but we have seen the end of the incompetent mismanagement which is now led by the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer).

I talked about new and innovative ways in supporting the WHEREAS, WHEREAS there are many new innovative ways of delivering educational programs to the North which require development, demonstration and evaluation—absolutely. I made reference to the technology, to the telecommunication systems, the educational use of those which are of tremendous support to the delivery of the educational programs.

* (1710)

Northern residents have consistently expressed a desire to exercise more control over programs delivered in northern Manitoba. I have no difficulty with that. The City of Winnipeg has a Board of Governors. The City of Brandon have Boards of Governors looking after their university. I believe it is extremely important to have northern and Native input into the programming and the program development for those students in the North. I have absolutely no difficulty with supporting that portion of the resolution, because I believe if you are truly going to have people who are going to carry out their livelihoods, to support their communities, and

you need, as it has been demonstrated throughout the North, you need professional people to provide professional services to humans in those regions, they have to have input from those people who lived the experience of those northern communities.

I say this, that living in northern Manitoba as in any part of northern Canada, I am sure is not easy. When one looks at the difficulties or the remoteness of some of the communities, the trouble with travel or the restrictions of travel, the restrictions of weather, the difficulties that are incurred, one has to have a real appreciation for the hardness and for the determination of those individuals.

Again, I have been able to experience that in the short time that I have been Minister of Northern and Native Affairs. It is an appreciation which comes over one very quickly. Again if an individual, to fulfill their aspirations and their educational anxieties has to come to the city, has to come to another area of the province, there is a disruptive factor. They somewhat have to become orientated. Their removal from their family and their community is not always conducive to the ease of learning, and can create some emotional and personal difficulties which are not there for individuals who live immediately or adjacent to the provision of an educational program.

One has to have an appreciation for the disruptiveness when moving out of that particular area, again remembering that it does cost considerable amounts of money for those students to travel from North to South, for the residential costs, for the cost of living and those personal support needs living in big centres. When one calculates the savings that comes into that particular part of the equation, I think we are sometimes overestimating what it may cost to deliver some of the services in northern Manitoba.

The resolution makes reference to the previous NDP administration had committed itself to the establishment of a northern university community. Let me say, again they have been in office for so many years out of the last 20 that it is surprising that it finally came to this during an election campaign. Why had it not been advanced sooner?

Again, they continue to pride themselves, the New Democratic continue to pride themselves as the great saviours of the North. Again, this is an admission by the New Democratic Party that they have not carried out their responsibilities to the maximum, and have been somewhat negligent or we may have seen more advancement. There has been some, I will give credit. There have been some developments which are supportable and we have supported and will continue to support.

I, as a Northern Affairs Minister, responsible for Native Affairs will be supportive of expanding programs as we can do so with the limited amount of funds available. Again, the limitation comes on us from the mismanagement of the former New Democratic Government and the amounts of millions of dollars we are sending to the foreign banks to pay for the debt, the money borrowed in that irresponsible era of administration in Manitoba by the New Democrats.

That is one of the inhibiting factors for many developments in Manitoba which could be carried out under a new administration. WHEREAS the Northern Development Agreement, the Human Resources Component, along with Limestone Training and Employment Agency, already commits more than \$15 million to post-secondary and adult education.

The Limestone Program was one which—(Interjection)—yes, was to create and to make individuals available and equip them to work on the Limestone Project. Expanded, yes. I think that it was expanded in areas which were helpful to some people, but again needs to be reassessed because we are now seeing the ending of the Limestone Program. I do not think it is fair to put the connotation on a training program that looks at one specific objective and that is, of course, the development of Limestone and the Limestone Generating Station.

I think we have to broaden our views. I am sure that the Minister of Education in his comments will deal with it as well. We have to broaden our views to equip the people of northern Manitoba to become more than just people who are going to be involved in hydro-electric energy promotion or development and the use of heavy equipment.

There are a tremendous number of areas for opportunities. Let us look at some of the older traditional ways of making a livelihood with resource development and opportunities in northern Manitoba. We do not have to reinvent the wheel, but let us enhance some of those individuals, let us relook at some of the traditional opportunities that were in northern Manitoba, and I believe supporting them in those endeavours would be extremely helpful as well.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba call upon the present Government to immediately initiate discussions with northern residents and organizations with a view towards establishing a northern university. I do not see that as being unfair. I would say what we are doing—that is talking about consultation—we have been doing a lot of it. I can assure you we will be doing a lot more of it. We have an excellent relationship.

An Honourable Member: He has?

Mr. Downey: Yes, with the people from Thompson, from Churchill. We have had in the four to five months an excellent relationship, and will continue to consult with the ambition to further develop the educational opportunities for northern residents, particularly the young northern Natives.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be able to speak to this resolution as well.

I have some concerns with it. Basically I believe my concerns revolve around the tremendous cost factor that I can see with the first part of the resolution. No one can argue with the fact that all Manitobans should have equitable access to educational opportunities. I

think it is very difficult, however, when you talk about the capital costs, the building costs, let alone the operational costs, the equipment, and where would this northern university be situated, I am not sure. The Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) did not indicate in his resolution where he perceives this university to be located.

I cannot give you the total figures about how well-utilized Keewatin Community College is, but I do not think it is operating at its full capacity. I have spoken with many people who work in and out of Keewatin Community College and they have grave concerns that perhaps there could be a better utilization factor of that particular facility. I think it would be a more cost-effective means to beef up some of the operation from KCC.

* (1720)

There are many successful examples of higher educational programs being delivered in the North. There are many access programs that are delivered out of Thompson, Manitoba. I think some of these ACCESS Programs, again with better management perhaps, could function at a higher level and provide better services to some of the young and the not so young people in the North because I think that a lot of us are feeling that education is a life-long process, that it is sort of a womb-to-tomb sort of thing. I think that when we think about education, we do not necessarily think about the younger children. We think about people of all ages, people who want to be reeducated into various levels of the work force for the job market.

However, I think there could be programs that are offered out of places such as Brandon, such as The Pas, such as Thompson, and certainly out of the large facilities in urban Manitoba, in Winnipeg, whereby these students who come to Winnipeg are educated and then hopefully will return to their northern communities. I know for a fact that this does not always happen. I know for a fact that there are some of the students who come from the North down to Winnipeg or down to the University of Brandon and then meet friends down in their new university or community college communities and in fact end up staying here.

I think back to my some 12, 15 years of teaching in St. Boniface and I think of all of the Indian, the Eskimo, the northern students that we had. I can only think of one Julie Maksemuk (phonetic) who was a tremendous young lady who ended up completing her nursing course and then going back up to serve the people up in the North. Almost without a doubt, the rest of the students who I can recall came from the North ended up staying in or around the urban setting, which is unfortunate. Perhaps that is what this resolution is trying to address, that if there was a facility up in the northern area that perhaps the students from the North would stay up in the North.

I still feel, and without causing jest from the other side of the House, that the cost factor would possibly be prohibitive. The per-pupil cost to start a facility up in the North, if you are looking at some place other

than Keewatin Community College, I think would be a tremendous cost.

“Northern residents have consistently expressed a desire to exercise more control over programs.” I do not know whether I like the term “control over programs.” I think perhaps input into the programs, input into the needs of the North. I think just as the recommendation was presented that perhaps the Electoral Boundaries Committee should be representative of all of Manitoba instead of having three members from the Winnipeg area serve as the commission. There should be representation from the North on that particular commission. There should also be more representation from the North on some of the decision-making committees to do with the universities and with the community colleges because I think there are real and distinctive needs of the people of the North. I do not know whether they have as much say in what kind of programming they want to have presented to and for them.

Like my friend on the other side of the House, the portion of the resolution that deals with the NDP administration having committed itself to the establishment of a northern university, when I read this for the first time a few weeks ago, when this resolution first was presented to us, I wondered why in fact, if the NDP had wanted to do this, why did they not do it when they were in power? Why did they wait and present a resolution right now?

There is no doubt that educational opportunities for northern people are to a much lesser degree than for the people down in the southern portion of Manitoba. Are there not other ways that we can address this factor? Are there not other administrative angles that could be utilized? I know that there have been Native medical students for instance. I believe the first group graduated not too long ago—a tremendous thing to test, to assess, to get the students to the level whereby they could appreciate and understand the classes that were being conducted to put them through the program and then hopefully, as I said before, have them go back up North to work with their people. Again the findings are that they often come down to Winnipeg and unfortunately they do not all return.

The converse is true. There are a lot of students who have grown up in the urban area, who have grown up in the surrounding communities in the southern part of Manitoba, who in fact are now working up in Churchill in Norway House, Baffin Island, some of the northern areas. I had two brothers who worked up at Tuktoyaktuk for a fair length of time. One brother ended up in Churchill and in Norway House for a long period of time. I have some young friends who have spent a significant period of time working up in the North. Perhaps there are some northern incentive ideas that could be prepared and be presented and students from the communities down South could be encouraged to go up North.

I would like to ask the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) if perhaps he could table with the House some of the research that he has done, some of the documentation that he has obviously prepared in looking at this particular resolution and proposing this

resolution and drafting it as he did. He must have done some research into the need for northern universities. He must have some idea as to how many potential students that it would serve. He must have some ideas about what kind of facilities he had in mind when he drafted this resolution. He must have given some thought to the cost per student that such a facility might cost to the taxpayers in Manitoba.

I certainly would like to look at that. I know we have had some discussions with some of the people from up North to do with some of the specific programs. In many cases it sounds like there are just a very few who will be served and the cost per pupil is a tremendous amount. One in this particular House has to judge whether or not we can justify that kind of expenditure. I think the idea of a northern university has merit perhaps, but I think even more merit would be devised from proper utilization of Keewatin Community College and perhaps some better administration, better management of some of the ACCESS programs that are already available in the North. Thank you.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have some committee changes on Standing Committees of Statutory Regulations and Orders.

Mr. Speaker: Okay.

Mr. Lamoureux: To be amended as follows: the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) for the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr); and the Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), and it is seconded by the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock).

RES. 19—ESTABLISHMENT OF A NORTHERN UNIVERSITY (Cont'd)

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): In answering the debate on this resolution, I will make it very clear that I wholeheartedly support both the resolution and the intent of the resolution. It is an issue that I have been raising in this House at every opportunity. I have raised it in Estimates. I know the Member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns) recalls my comments in the Department of Education on a number of occasions. I want to give notice to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) I will be speaking on it again in terms of his Estimates when they come before the House, because I think it is clear that we have to offer training and education to Northerners in northern Manitoba.

An Honourable Member: Hear, hear!

Mr. Ashton: I say that because, yes, for the Liberal Member who spoke previously, the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), there is a demand. I think all one has to do is talk to young people, talk to the many potential mature students in northern Manitoba. There is definitely a need for more access to post-

secondary education. Let us start from that very basic premise, Mr. Speaker, and make no doubt that there is a need in northern Manitoba.

What I want to do is outline today in my comments not only the fact that there is the need, but there is the base currently in place to very easily accomplish what is outlined in this resolution. It is a base that is there, in large part, because of the efforts of the New Democratic Party over these last seven years. It is because of the commitment by the New Democratic Party to education in northern Manitoba that base does exist.

What am I talking about, Mr. Speaker, when I talk about the base that is there? Let us talk about some of the programs that already exist in northern Manitoba in the area of post-secondary education. There is the social work program offered in northern Manitoba, located in Thompson, BUNTEP which has offered a number of centres throughout northern Manitoba, that was introduced in Thompson under the NDP, the Northern Nursing Program, a very successful program which is offered in conjunction with the Red River Community College, the Civil Technology Program, which is being offered right in northern Manitoba.

* (1730)

Let us look at Limestone training, once again another initiative of the NDP Government. Let us look at the record of the Limestone training. There was an interesting statistic recently in the report from the Department of Labour. It showed that amongst apprentices in Manitoba at the current time, that 30 percent of apprentices are Native people. That is the largest percentage that we have ever seen in Manitoba. Why is that? It is because of the Limestone training programs that have been put in place, the success of those programs, because now we are seeing people from the North being able to take an apprenticeship and become fully qualified tradespeople. In fact, I had the pleasure only a few months ago of attending the first graduating class of journeymen carpenters who have gone through that program. I know the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) was there. So we have a base that has been put in place by the New Democratic Party. We also have other components to the base. The Keewatin Community College is there. It is offering satellite programs throughout the North. That is another part of the base.

Inter-Universities North has been in place for a number of years. I know we had to fight under the Lyon Government to keep IUN because the Lyon Government attempted to cut it entirely. They did cut it although we were able to have some of that reinstated, and under the New Democratic Party that was expanded. There was a great expansion in the number of courses and options available to students in northern Manitoba.

So that is the base that is there. In fact, the resolution itself points to the fact that we are already committing more than \$50 million to post-secondary and adult education in northern Manitoba, so there is a significant financial base there. It is funding from the Northern Development Agreement and the Limestone Training

Agreement that I am talking about in this particular case, along with the funding from the community college system and for Inter-Universities North.

So the programs are there, some of the component programs, and in addition some of the financing is available as well. What we have reached, I think, is a situation where we know that we can deliver education to northerners in northern Manitoba, and for the Liberal Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) it is cost effective. It is cost effective, not to offer courses only at the community college, but is cost effective to offer them in the communities themselves, whether it be Thompson, whether it be in other communities.

I can indicate I have personal experience from that because I taught for Inter-Universities North, both in Thompson and in Cross Lake, and I can tell you that it is a very cost effective way of delivering programs. You do not need a fancy structure, a fancy institution. In the case of Thompson, we have turned a former men's residence for Inco workers which would have been sitting empty, we have turned it into a fully functioning educational facility. I taught in the school system in the new school building in Cross Lake that already existed and did not cost Inter-Universities a cent. We have available instructors in place. We have instructors already in place in northern Manitoba. People who are qualified to instruct, who will work, who will be more than happy to volunteer their time and effort to provide education to Northerners in northern Manitoba. So it is cost effective. But what we need is a broadening of the number of opportunities available.

We need, I feel, what is often called the "Junior College System." Right now there are some opportunities in a degree sense, but if you want to take first year Arts and Science, which is often a prerequisite for professional faculties for further studies, you have to go South. You have to go to one of the three major universities. I feel that there is every opportunity for us to offer that right in northern Manitoba. Offer a first year course, and yes, even a second year course so that people can go into professional faculties at a later date. It allows people to stay in the North while they are continuing their studies, which has a couple of impacts.

First of all, I have seen from my own personal experience, having had to go to university, having had to leave home at the age of 16, how tough it is at that stage and how many of my classmates did not last the first year because of homesickness. That may be a factor that is often overlooked, but it is a significant factor. There is also the cost factor. Winnipeg students are able to stay at home and often only have to pay their tuition costs. If you are from the North and, yes, if you are from rural Manitoba, you have got to pay living costs. You have to pay three or four or five times the amount for your education than the person from Winnipeg. That is not just in the North; that is rural Manitoba as well.

I have been through that and I have seen people going through that day in and day out. I think if you had that opportunity for even those two years of study, you would provide much greater opportunities for the outlying communities that would be able to take

opportunity of that program, perhaps even having some courses in their own community, whether it be in the community that is offering it. You would have many more students from the high school systems in northern Manitoba continuing their education. That is just one area.

In terms of the ACCESS programs, I feel we need to have them in place. We already have the staff; the funding is in place; the facilities are there. I think we have to have them in place. We have to keep them as permanent programs because right now they could be terminated if there was a change in the Northern Development Agreement or if the Northern Development Agreement was not renegotiated. We need to make them permanent or we need to have that base there, so that we can share resources, as is presently the case. You have people who are not in the program itself but are taking the courses on a part-time basis— or external students. We need to have that in place.

We also need to have community college programs, Mr. Speaker. We do have Keewatin Community College in place, but if you look, it is only in recent years they have expanded beyond their base in The Pas. What I think really needs to be done is to get the courses out of the major communities even and get them into the rural communities, because we have proven through Limestone Training, for example, that you can offer community-based training. It works and it is cost effective. It also gets more students into part of the system, because they do not have to relocate. They can stay in their own community. So I think we have to expand community college programs.

We also need certificate programs as well. This is something that the Limestone Training Program has pioneered in and I would hope that Limestone Training would be continued as a northern agency dealing with certificate training in terms of ongoing needs in northern Manitoba because I think there is a place for that type of training. It can once again be part of this northern university, this northern polytechnic, whatever institutional name you want to attach to it.

There were questions about the cost and I was quite disappointed actually at the tone from the Liberal Member, because I think if she had researched the subject, she would have found it is cost effective.

I would throw it out another way. I would say what about the alternate costs? What about the costs of having people who could have received the training, who could be part of the work force continuing not to have the opportunity to gain that training? What is the possible lost opportunity for a young person in northern Manitoba who could have received the training but does not?

Let us not talk like accountants here. Let us recognize that this is a human resource that we have to invest in. Quite frankly, I was disappointed because I would have thought the Liberal Party would have supported this resolution whole-heartedly, and I am very disappointed in their approach. Quite frankly, I am also disappointed with the Conservative approach, too.

I notice the Northern Affairs Minister (Mr. Downey) talked about how he wants people in northern Manitoba

to be doing more than just working on Hydro-related developments. Well, I agree with him. But I suspect that his real agenda is that he knows that the Conservative Party has put Limestone and further development for Conawapa on the back burner; they put Hydro development on the back burner. That has been stated very clearly by them politically, by their appointee, as the chairperson of the Manitoba Hydro. So obviously they are looking for other things besides Limestone and Hydro development because their plans do not include emphasizing Hydro development the way the New Democratic Party does. That is fair enough, that is their policy.

I know it is also the policy of the Liberals. The Liberal Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) has stated that we should not have Conawapa built for, I believe, decades, 10, 20, 30 years.-(Interjection)- To the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), she said 10, 20, 30 years. I think that is unacceptable for Northerners. We are going to suffer as a result of what I think is an improper analysis of the potential for Hydro development. Quite frankly, I am not surprised that the Minister for Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) is attempting to talk about getting other opportunities when he knows that his Government is not committed to further Hydro development. So, yes, many Northerners are going to have to look in other areas for job opportunities.

An Honourable Member: He is leading the charge.

Mr. Ashton: The Minister is leading the charge. What, the charge to cut back the Community Places Program, which he has already done? The charge to cut back the Jobs Fund programs which have benefitted Northerners in terms of job creation?

Some Honourable Members: No, No, no.

Mr. Ashton: I worry, Mr. Speaker, with the kind of charge that we are getting from the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey).

* (1740)

The bottom line of this issue is that we are talking about opportunities and we are talking about resources that are there. We are also talking about new

possibilities, of innovative programs that can be used. Let us talk about distance education. Because of new technology we have greater opportunity today to have educational opportunities in every community in Manitoba. We have opportunities in rural communities as well as northern communities. We can offer courses by having one central instructor whose lecture is sent by teleconferencing to people throughout the province. That can be done. In fact, I have often argued that what we need is not an Inter-Universities North but an Inter-Universities Manitoba.

Because I had the interesting experience to know with my own brother-in-law a few years ago who was resident in McCreary. At one time he was thinking of moving to Thompson for educational opportunities because he could take more courses in Thompson than he could in McCreary. It does not sound right at first analysis. McCreary is how far from Brandon? A couple of hours. If he had been in Thompson he would have been able to take courses right in the community itself. I am sure the Member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) may wish to reflect on that. It is in his constituency. That is the bottom line, better opportunities for northern Manitobans and rural Manitobans. That is what this resolution is about.

Mr. Speaker: When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have three minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

ERRATUM

On Monday, October 3, 1988, Vol. XXXVII No. 49A, page 1804, second column, Mr. Rose was misquoted as saying: "I am sorry that my Leader was usurped by somebody who is a real character in Canada."

His speech should read: "I guess I can understand the Member-for Churchill's (Mr. Cowan) feelings. I would probably experience if I had the same feelings after he accepted it that his Party is now at 22 percent at the polls. . . .-(Inaudible due to mike failure)- . . . that my Leader was usurped by somebody who is a real character in Canada."