

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, February 8, 1990.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the gallery, where we have from the Prince Edward School forty-five Grade 6 students. They are under the direction of Gerald Curle. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

On behalf of all Honourable Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Deer Lodge Hospital Extended Care Beds

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, all Manitobans are shocked that the patients at the Concordia Hospital are forced to lie in the corridors because of overcrowding.

When the Member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) was the Health Critic, on November 5 of 1987, and I quote, he said, for many people, especially the seniors, the winter is the season where illness catches up. With them, Mr. Speaker, they will slip on an icy street. Will they be lying in a hospital corridor with broken hips?

Now that the Minister of Health has been a Minister for 20 months, he has the power to rectify this situation. Can he tell us and answer his own questions today?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I certainly can. I have said this time and time again to my honourable friend, and I simply indicate it bears repeating. On May 9 of 1988, when I was sworn in as Minister of Health, we had no capital construction approvals made for the past eight months, because the budget was frozen on construction of personal care home beds and health care facilities. We removed the freeze, and in the last two capital budgets we have committed to construction a program which will add nearly 300 personal care home beds to the system.

In addition to that there are 88 beds ready for service at Deer Lodge hospital as a result of federal funding for the capital redevelopment of Deer Lodge Centre. Those issues have been addressed in a very serious way and we have the relief at hand for some of the difficulties currently being experienced at a number of hospitals in the Province of Manitoba.

* (1335)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Speaker, blaming the previous administration, the problem is not going to go away.

For the last 20 months this problem has been occurring at all hospitals, not only the Misericordia, at Seven Oaks, Concordia, Victoria Hospitals. They are suffering because of one action, that this Minister does not act when he has the report.

Can the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) tell us, he had just said that he had 88 beds at Deer Lodge hospital, when will he finally open those beds so that patients can go where they belong and where they should be, not in the corridors of the hospitals?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, as soon as I receive the advice as to—and I have waited patiently for this—the most appropriate use of those 88 beds at Deer Lodge hospital, because they are available for service, the budget is there and in place to staff and to have them available for patient service.

I realize my honourable friend, the Liberal Health Critic (Mr. Cheema), and his Leader would have us move patients in there, and then if it is inappropriate use of the beds move those same patients out along with the staff that is hired. I choose with patience to wait.

I would like to have had that report and the recommendations on the most appropriate use of those beds at Deer Lodge two or three months ago, because we have had the budget and we are ready to act upon the proper advice.

Health Care Facilities Overcrowding

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, on April 22, 1985, this Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) raised the issue, the single issue in this House because there was one patient waiting at Misericordia Hospital. How many patients have to wait—30, 40, 50 or a loss of life before he acts? This is totally unacceptable. He is not only wasting taxpayers' dollars, he is putting at risk the life of a number of patients.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I can understand the weak applause over there for that question because as the Health Critic for the Liberal Party, presumably speaking on behalf of his Party, he might want to clarify with his Leader whether in fact 40 percent of the people, according to his Leader, are inappropriately in personal care homes today and should be removed.

If we followed her policy, we would instantly be able to find a bed for every single person in an acute care hospital, including the corridors, but what would be do with those 40 percent Manitobans that she says do not need to be there and do not need the care they are receiving?

Health Care Funding Mismanagement

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I have a new question to the same Minister. Manitoba is spending \$1.5 billion, and that is about \$1,500 per person in Manitoba. Twenty-five percent of the Winnipeg hospitals are occupied by the chronic care patients, and they do not belong there. That is a very costly and very inefficient way of providing health care. Can the Minister of Health tell us today precisely how much he and his administration is wasting taxpayers' dollars? It is a complete mismanagement of very scarce tax dollars.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the applause is getting weaker over there. Surely my honourable friend, the Liberal Health Critic and a physician practising medicine in this province, is not wanting to tell us that should those panelled patients in acute care beds for which provision has been made for at least a decade and beds have been used for that purpose for at least a decade, is not suggesting that if you had those patients in personal care homes that the beds would be empty in those acute care hospitals, hence not incurring costs. If my honourable friend believes that, then he is living in a never-never land. There is no money being wasted by having those patients in those hospitals. That is an appropriate place to have them in the interim period before placement in a personal care home. Does my honourable friend want to have them live on the streets?

Out-Patient Services

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, to keep the patients waiting in corridors and in the emergency room is a very poor way of providing health care. It is very risky and very expensive. Will the Minister of Health today outline his plans for out-patient surgical clinics which will provide quality care at low cost so that we can ease the shortage of these beds?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I can understand the applause for that because obviously the Liberal Party is applauding the Capital Program wherein \$18 million were committed for ambulatory care at the Health Sciences Centre, an initiative undertaken by this Government to provide that very kind of service. I appreciate the support for it from the Liberal back bench, who understand the direction of this Government on ambulatory care.

In addition, a number of hospitals in this province, both in and outside of the City of Winnipeg, are daily taking on outpatient surgical procedures instead of committing the patient to in-hospital care. That has been very positive, and that is why today we are doing more procedures rather than less under the increased funding of this Government.

* (1340)

Health Care Extended Care Bed Report

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan): Finally, for the Minister who only reads the headlines, last week he said that he did not read the report on extended care facilities. Can he tell us today whether he has read the report so that he can make at least one intelligent decision in this House?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, that is exactly why I am hoping the Steering Committee of the Health Advisory Network will provide to me, in the final version, an intelligent report.

I am not sure it was so intelligent that my honourable friends in the Liberal Party adopted an interim report without any consideration of cost, by cutting out Concordia Hospital from construction. We certainly do not accept that interim report until we receive a final report to provide those kind of recommendations. My honourable friends, the Liberals, might want to reconsider their wholesale acceptance of an interim report without any analysis of cost benefit to the system.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Kildonan, on a point of order.

Mr. Cheema: The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has put something on the record which is not right. We never said that Concordia—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

Health Care Facilities Overcrowding

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): I was in Arborg and saw it on television, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). We have just received confirmation today, in answer to the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that he had hoped to receive this report two or three months ago in terms of the Health Advisory Task Force. Given the fact that the Minister took some seven months to establish that task force, he is now accepting the responsibility that we believe he has had all along for these hospital beds that are open, not being filled, and the hospital halls being full of patients.

My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Has he met with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)? Has he reviewed the fact that we have a state of chaos and crisis in our health care system now, where patients are in the hallways of Misericordia, Concordia? I was at the hospital of Concordia last week, there were patients again in the hallway. At the same time there

are 85 empty beds in Deer Lodge hospital. Has he met with his Minister of Health to go over that obvious void in our health care system?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I might indicate that there is ample evidence of the fact that people were on stretchers in hallways when the New Democrats were in Government. For six and one-half years there were people backed up on stretchers in hallways. What did they do? They froze the capital budget so that no beds could be constructed, no hospitals or personal care homes could be expanded, and nothing would be done about the situation for a period of at least eight months while they were in Government.

That kind of irresponsible action has led to the problems that we face today. There is no question that we have to overcome those problems. That is why we appointed the Health Care Advisory Network, Mr. Speaker. That is why that network is coming up with a plan and a proposal to overcome the problems, those chaotic problems that were left to us as a result of six and one-half years of neglect by the New Democrats.

Deer Lodge Hospital Extended Care Beds

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have discussed this situation with nurses today, last week and the week before. The people on the front lines of the health care system say the situation has continued to deteriorate. There are task forces, there are committees, there are advisory councils, there is a so-called major group in terms of the health care system. The bottom line is, there are 85 empty beds. There are people with similar problems in hallways and observation rooms in hospitals.

My question to the Premier is: will he now overrule his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and meet the immediate need of filling those beds at Deer Lodge hospital with the patients who are now in the hallways who need extended care? The beds are there, the facilities are built and the patients are in the hallways. Will he overrule his Minister of Health and take some action?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, there are indeed problems in health care. There is indeed a major, major need to fulfill the needs that grew as a result of the New Democrats' decision to freeze capital spending in health care.

As a result, this administration this year has tabled what has been termed the most ambitious capital health care expenditure program in the province's history to address those problems that were created and left to back up and build up under the New Democrats. That is the answer to the problem, to spend the money on capital works to fill the need that is there, and that is what we are doing.

* (1345)

Mr. Doer: The Premier keeps mentioning the old first envelope, and of course in the first envelope there are 85 beds that are built, left to his Government.

My question to the Premier is: in light of the fact now that we have, for the first time ever, hallway nurses now assigned because of the numbers of people in the hallway, and it is much higher than before, Mr. Speaker—that is what the people on the front lines are saying—will he overrule his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and take direct action now with our 85 empty beds that are built?

Secondly, will he put members of the nurses' union on the Health Advisory Task Force? They are meeting with emergency nurses every day now, and they say the situation has deteriorated beyond belief and action is necessary today, not when some subcommittee of a subcommittee of a major committee reports eventually to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the Health Advisory Network is a broadly based (interjection)- the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) continues to chirp away. If he wants to answer the question for his Leader, let him answer the question directly.

Deer Lodge Hospital Extended Care Beds

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Thank you, I would ask the Premier again to do a number of things. One is to overrule his Health Minister (Mr. Orchard) and immediately move on the beds. The Health Minister took seven months to establish the Health Advisory Task Force. While he fumbled around with this thing, the whole health care situation deteriorated. I would ask him to overrule his health care Minister.

I would ask him in terms of opening those beds that are obviously needed—the patients are in the hall. Secondly, would he put a member of the nurses union on the Health Advisory Task Force? Thirdly, would he directly look at the Thompson situation, a situation which we tabled in this House in September? Again we have a situation where people in intensive care may be sent down to the City of Winnipeg. Will he take that action over and above his Minister of Health who is fumbling around in this portfolio?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, with all the respect I can muster for my honourable friend, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer), if my honourable friend wants to talk about fumbling in health care, he ought to have taken more time examining the record of the Government he sat in. That was a fumbled record in health care that led us to challenges that not even the wisdom of the Liberal Party can solve.

My honourable friend has instant solutions today in Opposition, but he was part of a Cabinet that deliberately and maliciously froze the capital construction budget by denying access of Manitobans to new constructed beds, not only in acute care hospitals but indeed in the personal care home field.

Mr. Speaker, in the last two capital budgets we have committed to the citizens of Manitoba the addition of nearly 300 personal care home beds for the service of

Manitobans, in addition to those presently ready for service at Deer Lodge Centre. That will add considerably to the relief of the system—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Red River Community College Racism Complaint

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, - (interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

Mrs. Yeo: As a result of the questions asked last week regarding allegations at Red River Community College, my office has been besieged with phone calls and letters expressing a variety of concerns. These comments, generated from the questions asked last week, demonstrate that the malaise at the Red River Community College is even greater than we had anticipated.

I know the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has received copies of some of this correspondence. Has he instructed Members of his staff to evaluate and review all of the concerns that have been in front of him regarding Red River Community College?

Hon. Len Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, any concern that comes to my attention regarding Red River Community College, or any of the community colleges, or indeed any of the areas that we have responsibility over, are investigated immediately as thoroughly as we possibly can.

* (1350)

Governance Committee

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Will the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) tell the House that the advisory committee established to study governance of the Manitoba Community College, established on June 26, 1989 and instructed to report in early fall, be involved with the reviewing not only of the formal complaint but also of the motivating factors behind the accusation?

Hon. Len Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the college governance committee that was struck to look at the community college governance issue has nothing to do with complaints that come in with regard to specific situations from any of the colleges. That committee was struck to look at the best possible model that could be developed for college governance in this province. That was their mandate and they have reported to me as Minister.

Racism Complaint Procedure

Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek): Is it not through the Civil Service Commission that the responsibility lies to investigate allegations against senior management? Is

this going to be the commission that will ultimately be responsible to evaluate the formal complaint that was issued in December at Red River Community College?

Hon. Len Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the Member opposite that when a complaint is received by my office, that is certainly checked through the Civil Service Commission and through the system. Indeed, proper procedure is followed once those kinds of checks are in place. We proceed according to the rules and regulations that have been set down.

Simplot Plant Competition

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst). It relates today to the confirmation that finally Cargill and the Saskatchewan Government have finalized the agreement to build a fertilizer plant at Belle Plaine, Saskatchewan. Now that plant will have approximately five times the capacity of the Simplot plant in Brandon.

Can the Minister indicate whether any impact studies have been done to determine how much of an impact this will have on the operation of Simplot when that plant at Belle Plaine comes into operation?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the impact of a new plant in Saskatchewan jointly funded by Cargill and the Saskatchewan Government is indeed a serious matter. Simplot has recognized that for some time. We have had a number of ongoing discussions with Simplot over what impact that will have on their plant and what they need to do to become competitive in the situation that will exist once that new plant is completed.

Production Statistics

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, the Simplot plant, depending on how you calculate it, has something like 435 people that are involved either directly in the plant or in the distribution and so on.

Can the Minister indicate what percentage of the production from Simplot actually is shipped into the western provinces at the present time?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I do not have the specific details of the individual question that the Member has asked. However, I think he is quite correct in saying that there are about 200-plus employees working directly in the plant, and I believe another number, perhaps it is 200, operating in the shipping and transportation of the product to its various markets.

Upgrading

Mr. Laurie Evans (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, the Minister has confirmed that there has been some discussion going on with Simplot. We have confirmed

this morning with the spokesperson from Simplot that it will be essential that there be at least upgrading of their facilities in order to permit them to remain competitive. It may be necessary to expand in order to be able to compete effectively with Cargill.

Can the Minister tell us how far the negotiations have gone? Has there been any date set as to when this improvement and upgrading of that plant in Brandon will commence?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I believe Simplot some time ago announced their intention to carry out an upgrade and modernization of their plant. I cannot, in front of the House, at this point outline sensitive negotiations that are going on with respect to Simplot, other than to say that we are in negotiations with them.

Goods and Services Tax Application

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Yesterday the Minister of Finance, in response to a question in this House, indicated that his staff were meeting with federal officials to discuss the collection of the GST.

Now Metropol Security, a national central alarm monitoring company, has been precollecting the 7 percent GST on contracts that expire in 1991 and for the portion of the contract that applies to 1991. Why is the tax being collected before the Bill is passed in the House of Commons? Has the Finance Minister changed his mind about helping to collect the GST?

* (1355)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I had almost asked you to rule that question out of order because indeed I am not responsible for the GST and not responsible for the implementation of that tax.

I too read with some interest today the article in the paper. I too watched last night with some interest the coverage given to this issue. I will look into it to try and find out the legalities by which the federal Government seems to be providing to some business people the belief that they can apply that tax for 1991 at this point in time.

Interest Payments

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Since the tax will not be remitted to the Government until January of 1991 and could add up to a large sum in some cases, what guarantees do individuals and small businesses have that the tax collected will be paid back with interest if the GST Bill does not pass, or has been delayed?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member's question is dealing with a hypothetical matter and, therefore, is out of order. The Honourable Member for Elmwood. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, with a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme). Yesterday—

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson, on a point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): I believe the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) only asked two questions, and there was a fair amount of noise over there. I believe the Member for Elmwood was trying to make out your ruling on his question and would still normally have one more supplementary. I would like to ask if there is leave on the part of the House to ask his third question.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I had recognized the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) for his two questions, and the Honourable Member for Elmwood did not respond for a third question. I did not see the Honourable Member stand.

An Honourable Member: Yes, he did.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member—okay, we will recognize the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, I have to be careful not to listen to the Health Minister, the advice that he gives me.

Manitoba Collection Statistics

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): My final supplementary to the same Minister is, given that the Winnipeg Jets will be charging the GST on season's tickets which must be paid by August 1 of this year, the GST will apply to the 22 games in 1991, how many Manitoba firms are already collecting the GST?

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): I think the Honourable Member might have done well to listen to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Honourable Member has to learn that some questions are beyond the administrative capacity of Ministers of this place, and he ought to put his questions to the appropriate place.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Government House Leader. The Honourable Member is quite correct. The Honourable Member's question deals with a matter which is not within the responsibility

of the Government and, therefore, is out of order. The Honourable Member, would you like to rephrase your question? The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: I will rephrase the question then. It was very clear that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was able to answer questions yesterday that related to the GST, and they seemed to be very sensitive on the issue here trying to avoid the whole question. The fact of the matter is that we would like to know whether the Minister of Finance or his officials—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader.

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, this Honourable Member has no interest in obeying the Rules of this House when it comes to putting questions. He has shown us throughout this Session that he has nothing but disdain for the Rules. I suggest he not be seen for any further questions.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Thompson, on the same point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, it is highly improper for a Member, especially the Government House Leader, to rise on a point of order and make accusations which in and of themselves are unparliamentary. Not only would I ask you rule that point of order out of order, I would ask that the Government House Leader withdraw those unfair comments about the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised by the Honourable Member for Thompson, he does not have a point of order.

On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader, he is quite correct.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Elmwood, would you kindly put your question now, please.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Come on, yo-yo.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance, I—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I would ask the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to withdraw those remarks. The Honourable Minister is quite aware—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. He is quite aware that we refer to all Honourable Members as

Honourable Members. The Honourable Minister of Health.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, in view of the confusion over whether the Honourable Member should stand up or sit down and was bouncing up and down, I withdraw calling him yo-yo.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the Honourable Minister of Health. The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

* (1400)

Joint Collection System

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my question was to the Minister of Finance. I wanted to know whether he or his officials have worked out a plan with the federal Department of Finance to devise a method to collect the GST in this province, because it seems to me that we have a very confusing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put. The Honourable Minister of Finance.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the answer categorically is no.

Standing Committees Forks Renewal Corporation

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme). At a meeting yesterday in front of Executive Policy Committee, representatives of The Forks Renewal Corporation told city politicians that they were out of money and that they were about to borrow \$2.5 million. This seems like an opportune time to invite the president and chief executive officer of The Forks Renewal Corporation to appear in front of a legislative committee of this House to talk about their future plans and their past activities. Will the Minister of Urban Affairs invite them?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): First of all, Mr. Speaker, I do not have that authority. To the Member across the way, there was a meeting of the EPC to gather information. It was a very, very thorough type of meeting. I would like this time though to invite the Member maybe to participate on April 17 at the open meetings. They have carried these meetings annually. I wish him to attend that meeting and maybe he could ask his questions at that particular meeting on April 17.

Forks Renewal Corporation Hotel Parking Arrangements

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, The Forks Renewal Corporation has signed a letter of intent with the developer to convert a heritage building into a hotel. Will the Minister of Urban Affairs tell us what provisions have been made to provide parking for the residents or tenants or guests of the 80-room hotel?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as the Member should be quite aware, it is a letter of intent only. The Forks is carrying out the mandate which was set aside to them, and he knows very well of this particular project. As a matter of fact, I think I have some correspondence from the individual in regard to projects pertaining to those types of buildings. So they are within their mandate. I will get that information for the Member in regard to where that particular parking lot will be. There are many parking facilities around the project. I will make sure I get that site for him on the ongoing results of that particular project.

Mr. Carr: I thank the Minister for his answer.

Place Promenade Vacancy Rate

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): I have one final supplementary question. Yesterday we asked the Minister a number of questions about the vacancy rate of Place Promenade. Can the Minister table in the House today any information which contradicts that information in a sworn affidavit that we presented yesterday?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): First of all, as the Member knows, the shareholders met over the weekend. I think the main concern was to protect the public interest and that money made to date. Mr. Speaker, not to have acted over the weekend would probably have meant a public auction. That would have triggered off many, many millions of public monies going down the drain.

To the Member across the way, we have called in the Auditor to thoroughly investigate whatever has gone on at North of Portage. I am sure the Member from across the way will fully co-operate with the interview I know he either has had or will have with the Auditor. He can bring those questions forward then.

Trapping Industry Forest Fire Compensation

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): My question is for the Minister responsible for the Disaster Assistance Board. The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) on Tuesday, in answer to questions on trappers' compensation, said that the damaged equipment in cabins is already replaced for those trappers affected by the forest fire last summer.

In view of the statement today by MKO that not one nickel has been paid out, would the Minister now tell us why he put out a news release in November claiming \$1.7 million had gone out?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all indicate my appreciation to the staff of the Manitoba Disaster Assistance Boards in the expeditious way in which they have dealt with the unfortunate situation in the North. They have made great efforts to try and deal with the situation.

We are basically looking at compensation in three factors. One was the equipment, which is being paid out at the present time; the rebuilding of the trappers' cabins; and the compensation for clearing of trails is something we are developing right now. We have an understanding with the trappers, and we have had many compliments in terms of the way it has been dealt to date.

Forest Fires Public Inquiry

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): My supplementary question is to the Minister of Natural Resources. In a news release, the Government has scheduled meetings in various communities to meet with 60 community councils and organizations in 10 days. Would the Minister tell us why he has scheduled less than four hours for Oxford House, Cross Lake, Norway House and God's Narrows to review the forest fire that caused the evacuation of those communities and millions of dollars that were spent? I believe the Minister indicated that we spent over \$60 million. I believe the communities want to have a full consultation on those causes.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice and check with staff. If indeed additional time is required, I am sure that is possible. I would assume the times allotted for the meetings are reasonably flexible.

Public Inquiry Boycott

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupert's Land): I have a supplementary to the same Minister. The communities have expected the full inquiry into the forest fires, and they are being allocated in 10 days to have a full conduct of those inquiries. Will the Minister now cancel those meetings in light of the boycott that MKO is having with those meetings and launch a full-scale inquiry into the forest fires last summer as promised and also funding for programs and also for bands to investigate models for community based—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, in response to the Honourable Member, the simple answer is, no. What we are doing, because we are concerned that despite the fact that we, I believe, came through the fire situation reasonably well, we want to learn, and we want to talk to people who experienced the fires.

I believe that we are keeping a commitment that we made to a number of individuals and communities during the course of the fires, that we would find time to sit down and meet with them, talk to their officials. That is precisely what we are doing. It is not a situation of launching any inquiry into anything.

Library Closures Government Position

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): . . . from this Government's first throne speech, and it goes, my Government will take action on the pressing problem of illiteracy. A task force will be established to develop long-range strategies to address illiteracy needs of Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, talk is very cheap. While the city is looking at closing two inner city libraries—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. Kindly put your question now, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: My question is, the city is closing two city libraries and this Government has been completely silent on the issue. If the Government is serious about fighting—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Inkster put his question now, please.

Mr. Lamoureux: My question is: why is the Government not sending a strong message to the City of Winnipeg if they are serious about fighting illiteracy in the Province of Manitoba?

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Order. The Honourable Minister.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): Mr. Speaker, we as a Government have a definite commitment to improving literacy throughout the Province of Manitoba.

The people within the City of Winnipeg have elected a City Council to represent their interests, their needs, and to set the budgets and the priorities for the City of Winnipeg. We contribute in a very positive way to libraries within the City of Winnipeg. The City Council has to make that decision on what their priorities are.

* (1410)

Library Closures Government Position

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

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I asked the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) a question regarding Education. He does not want to be responsible. I asked a question about libraries, closing down libraries. This Minister does not want to be responsible—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Inkster, with his supplementary question. Kindly put it now, please, because the time is scarce.

Mr. Lamoureux: The Premier (Mr. Filmon) wants the answer to this question, so I will direct the question to the Premier. Can the Premier tell us today what Ministers are going to be responsible for the departments that they represent? I ask a question regarding illiteracy—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The question has been put.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, this Government has made a firm commitment to stamping out illiteracy in our society in Manitoba. This Government established a task force on illiteracy that gave us a number of initiatives that we are implementing.

We fund the library system of the City of Winnipeg through grants from Culture, Heritage and Recreation. We encourage the City of Winnipeg to work with us co-operatively, but all our best efforts are subverted by all of those Liberal members of City Council who insist on making decisions to close libraries at a time when literacy is important. Why does—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Inkster has time for a very short question. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I have talked to Ernie Gilroy. Ernie Gilroy wants those libraries to remain open.

The question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon)—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Inkster, with his question.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, the Liberals want the library open. The Conservatives obviously do not want the libraries open. My question to the Premier is: does this Government support the closing of inner city libraries, yes or no?

Mr. Filmon: Now we see the Liberal understanding of responsible Government. Here is a city councillor, chairman of a standing committee of City Council, who is making the decision to close the councils and he says, I am powerless to do anything about it. He says, Kevin, come and help me, Kevin, I cannot do a thing about it.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I would like to advise all Honourable Members that our viewing public is watching and that I have said in the past, decorum is of great importance.- (interjection)-

Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY
HOUSE BUSINESS**

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call the Bills in the following order: Bill 31, and if Bill 31 should be passed today, Bills 35, 19, 84, 70, 47 to 52 inclusive, 57, 59 and 60.- (interjection)-

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

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): I have a question for the House Leader on House business relating to—

Mr. Speaker: Relating to committees, the Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Ashton: We currently have at least 11 Bills which have been passed through second reading, including Bills 42, 63, 64, 71, 73, 74, 77, 81, 82, 83 and 89. Currently only three of those Bills are before a committee which has not been scheduled for another hearing.

What I would like to ask the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) is, if he intends to call the committees. We understand the presentations on 63 and 64 might take a day of committee hearings. That would probably move us into consideration clause by clause. I would also like to ask whether the Government has considered, as we indicated earlier, calling 19, 35 and 84 today so we can get those Bills, which we have agreed to pass, before committee this afternoon.

Mr. McCrae: I am sure, Mr. Speaker, if Bill 31 is dealt with expeditiously this afternoon—as I understand it the Honourable Member's colleagues might spend up to an hour or so on the three Bills the Honourable Member is asking for. If Bill 31 is dealt with expeditiously, we will have time available for those other Bills.

With regard to the committees, Mr. Speaker, if the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) would ask the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) to control himself during committee, we might make some progress.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, this is on a point of order. The Government House Leader just made accusations, once again, involving the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), which are highly improper and are unparliamentary.

Currently, what is happening at committee is that there are 18 members of the public who have yet to make presentations on Bills 63 and 64. I do not think it is appropriate for this Minister to make imputations of motive against the Member for Elmwood. I think what he is doing when he does that is he insults members of the public who want to make presentations on—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. On the point of order raised, the Honourable Member is aware that it is a dispute over the facts and is not a point of order.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS

**BILL NO. 31—THE LABOUR
RELATIONS AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), Bill No. 31, The Labour Relations Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les relations du travail. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, I would like to speak on this Bill.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The House has made a decision yesterday that the Honourable Member for Rupertsland has lost his right to speak on second reading on Bill No. 31.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Harper: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland, on a point of order.

Mr. Harper: Mr. Speaker, I have been here long enough to realize that I may be given the opportunity to speak if it is the will of the House. I realize that I adjourned debate yesterday, but they do not realize—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. On the point of order raised by the Honourable Member for Rupertsland, does the House wish to reverse its previous decision that it made yesterday to allow the Honourable Member to speak today?

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson, on a point of order.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the House made a decision yesterday, and we contested that decision. We are not saying that decision would not rest. We are asking for a sense of fairness here. All we are asking for is leave from Members of the Legislature to allow the Member for Rupertsland—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. I have asked the House whether or not there was leave. There has not been leave granted.

Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to participate in this debate dealing with the repeal of a very progressive piece of labour legislation.

I must say that we all regret the inability of my colleague to have an opportunity to speak on such an important issue. As he said, it could have done with good will and leave of the House. We are very disappointed that they did not respect the fact that he represents a northern constituency and that he was there doing his job and that he would have liked to have had the opportunity to speak on this important Bill.

Mr. Speaker, as I said, this Bill is dealing with a very progressive and important piece of legislation, one that is a part of a number of labour legislative Acts that have been passed that have given Manitobans some of the most progressive—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Logan has the floor. I am having great difficulty in hearing the remarks of the Honourable Member for Logan. The Honourable Member for Logan.

Ms. Hemphill: Mr. Speaker, I could not even hear myself think. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill deals with a piece of legislation that has added to many of the cornerstones and pillars of labour legislation that have been brought forward in this province, that are giving us some of the I think best labour legislation, most progressive labour legislation and the best labour legislative environment in our country, I think recognized by all people, that Manitoba enjoys some of the best labour relations environment in the whole country. That is not by accident. That is because we have worked over a long period of time to bring together both labour and management to find ways to deal in a very constructive and positive manner with a very difficult job of resolving labour disputes and dealing with the very sensitive negotiations.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Over the years we have developed a number of tools to help both labour and management that have led toward the very good climate that we enjoy. There are a number of tools that we have to assist with difficult negotiations. We have collective bargaining, we have mediation, conciliation, arbitration, strikes and lockouts. All of those are tools we that presently enjoy. We know that it is the wish of everybody in this Chamber and everybody involved in negotiations to not have to move toward the extreme positions of resolving these issues through strikes and lockouts unless it is absolutely necessary. Those tools are there if needed. Nobody wants to use them unless they absolutely have to. They are costly, they can cause difficulties, and if you can resolve these issues with a constructive resolution we want to do that.

FOS, final offer selection, is just another tool. It is just another choice. It gives them a choice to work out

these differences or get agreement without having to resort to strikes and lockouts.

In fact this Bill as it exists now even allows them to get resolution of the negotiations after they have called a strike. There is no point in time when this cannot be used to bring the two parties together to get constructive, co-operative resolution, even if they are in the middle of a strike. It is not a perfect solution and it is not the only solution, but it is one solution. It has worked in other jurisdictions. This is something that has been tried, even before we have had our last two years of personal direct experience in Manitoba. It has worked in other jurisdictions and it is working here.

We believe that as we get more and more experience and people become more aware of the benefits of it that it will be used more and more to the benefit and the advantage that has been gained from those settlements and agreements that have been successfully and co-operatively completed because they used the tool of final offer selection and did not have to go to either arbitration or strike or a lockout.

It is disappointing to see this Government's unwillingness to look at the facts you know and to look at the experience of the last two years. If they do not want to accept what has happened in other jurisdictions then they say they are not sure that will apply to Manitoba. They do not have to do that anymore, because we have a year and a half, a little more experience and many, many cases that have been brought forward and successfully resolved under final offer selection.

* (1420)

Why will they not look at that experience when they are dealing with their position on this Bill? Why do they not look at the success stories? Why do they not look at the individual cases?

This seems to be one of those cases when they have an election promise that they feel bound to deliver on even in the face of information and statistics that demonstrates that it is not a good thing to do, that this Bill should be left, that this Bill is working and that letting it finish the period of time until it reaches the sunset clause that was built in for very good reason, that is to make sure the legislation would work, why they do not allow that to continue is really very, very difficult to understand.

It looks very much like an ideological position where they are sticking to their rhetoric and their position and most of all I think sticking to inaccurate assumptions that they have about final offer selection, that they had before it was brought in, that they had while it was being brought in and that they have now when they are looking at the repeal. They have not changed their minds about how they feel about final offer selection even though there is now a lot of statistics and information that should be causing them to think twice before they make the decision to repeal this Bill.

We believe that if they looked at that, at what really is happening, not what they are afraid is going to

happen, but what really is happening, if they looked at the statistics and information, I believe they would not be able to make the decision to repeal this piece of legislation. It is helping resolve differences, it is improving the reasonableness of the positions that are being put on the table by both sides and therefore making it possible to achieve a co-operative resolution. It is helping avoid strikes and lockouts.

In the face of that information, and I will be pointing out the very specific statistical information that, although all Members of the Government are not in here to get the benefit of hearing these statistics and this information, I hope that they are going to really take this seriously and that they will read it and consider it. I am not sure they have seen this information. I am not sure they have been told what the statistics are telling us because I think if they had they would have a very difficult time continuing with the decision to repeal.

One of the statistics of course that is the most interesting to us looking at the issue of how well is final offer selection working, and is there any noticeable effect of the final offer selection option to negotiated settlements in the year and a half since it has been in place, the answer is a resounding yes. If we look at the annual work stoppages in Manitoba from 1973 to 1989 and you go back for a period of 17 years and you start with 1973, you will see that the number of person days lost in 1973 to work stoppages in Manitoba was 122,160 person days lost in 1973. That is a lot of person days lost.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

If you look at other years as we go down, if you look at 1974 it was 143,000; 1975 it was 161,000. In 1981 it was 185,000. If we go on now to 1987, we find that the number of person days lost were 76,268. In the year 1988, there were 54,178.

The final offer selection was brought in, in 1988, and we had some experience. We had a partial year to reap some of the benefits of this piece of legislation. There was a drop from 76,000 to 54,000 in that period of time, just having final offer selection in for a portion of the year.

Mr. Speaker, if we look at 1989, which gives us statistics which is the first full year when final offer selection was in operation, the results are so staggering that one wonders if the Government, Members opposite, have heard this information. We have dropped, the number of person days lost, from 54,178 to 2,156. I mean, that is a staggering difference.

In other words, in 1989 the number of person days lost was only just a little over 2,000 compared to many other years when the person days lost were in the hundreds of thousands. It is a drop of 96 percent in the one year which is the first full year of our experience when final offer selection was in place. There were only seven work stoppages in that period of time. That is a figure that the Government should be paying a lot of attention to, because I think never before and certainly not in the last 17 years, in the history of Manitoba perhaps, has there been a figure like this

2,156 person days lost that is in existence one and a half years after final offer selection has been an option for people to choose.

If we look, Mr. Speaker, at the person days lost to work stoppages by province in the same period of time from January to May 1989, you will see that Manitoba is doing far better than every other province except Prince Edward Island which does not have very many person days lost because they have no employment.

If you look at Newfoundland, they have 212,000 person days lost; Nova Scotia, 8,000; New Brunswick, 14,000; Quebec, 293,000; Ontario, 365,000; Saskatchewan, 10,000; Alberta, 40,000; British Columbia, 150,000; and the figure for Manitoba during this period of time is 700. Seven hundred person days lost in Manitoba during this period of time when final offer selection is one of the tools that is allowing people to move toward a co-operative resolution and avoiding them being forced into settling their grievances through strikes and lockouts, and is clearly indicating that final offer selection is being used, that final offer selection is an option that many groups are choosing, and that it is working very, very well.

To demonstrate how well it is working, I want to point out a study that was made by Hugh Grant, of the Economics Department of the University of Winnipeg, who studied final offer selection when it had been in place for 20 months. I want to relate the experience after the 20-month period and then to look at the changing experience at the end of January 1990. During this period of time there were 42 applications requesting a vote of the union membership, and 36 of these 42 applications occurred during the first window. That is, 30 to 60 days prior to the expiration of a collective agreement. Of the six applications made with a strike in progress, four have been made by employers. I think that is a very important point and I am going to repeat it, of the six applications made when a strike was in progress, four have been made by employers. I think there is a fair amount of information that demonstrates this is working, not just for unions, but this is working for employers too.

It is not just the unions that win these agreements when they have to go to a final settlement, but the employers are also winning. It is something that is not just working for one side and is not tipping the balance of power, but something that is working collectively for the system where both sides benefit and both sides may win the award in a particular time.

* (1430)

One of the other really important things to realize with this experience of final offer selection activity is that a lot of the settlements are taking place after they have applied for final offer selection and prior to the ruling, sometimes even prior to the vote. In this case, out of the 42 applications, 10 negotiated settlements were reached prior to a vote even being conducted by the labour board. Twenty-four of the 29 instances, where the membership opted to use FOS, they got settlements prior to the selector rendering a decision.

It appears that just the act of applying for final offer selection has an effect on the bargaining process, has

an effect on how they bargain, has an effect on what they put on the table and the reasonableness of what they are putting on the table, and clearly has an effect on their ability to reach a resolution themselves. Even though they have applied for final offer selection they continue to negotiate, and may negotiate right up to and even in the middle of a strike, so that there is never a time when the opportunity is ruled out or never a time when it is not possible for them to get a co-operative, joint agreement during this process which we think is a very, very valuable point.

In only five cases, was the complete FOS procedure utilized. You have 42 applications and 24 of them were successfully resolved before they even went to a vote, and only five out of those 29 cases required going to the selector completing his decision between the two options on the table. So I think it is very, very important to see the value of the process itself and the attitude by those who are bargaining at the bargaining table once they have applied for final offer selection.

The studies, and looking at the specific cases, seem to be clearly showing that they approached the bargaining in a very serious way. They put information on the table that is backed up by statistics and information. They do not take the extreme positions that they may take outside of final offer selection, because they know that their last option may be the one that the selector has to give consideration to. They want it to be a fair offer that is on the table so when they are judging between the two of them they have a chance of winning the case.

In the five selector awards today, it is also interesting to see that three were in favour of the union's final offer and two in favour of the employers. So the fear mongering and the worry that this was going to be just for unions—and this was a tool that had the balance of power going on the one side and that the employer or the management were going to be at a distinct disadvantage—has not proven to be the case. Out of the five cases, three were in favour of the union's final offer and two in favour of the employers.

It is really interesting to look at the issues in dispute and to look at the reason that these selectors gave for giving the awards either to the union or to the employer. I am going to read into the record a few of these examples so that the Government and the people in the Chamber can see that they are very, very fair and reasonable.

One of the cases where the employer won was with DOM Group, and it was over severance pay. This dispute centered on one of the last two Dominion grocery stores in operation, the Dominion grocery store in Kildonan Place, which would be financially disastrous for Dom Group to close during a long-term lease running to 2010.

The employer offered a 5 percent wage increase and severance pay of 10 weeks. The union submitted seven proposals including a succession clause in the case of the sale of store, enhanced benefits, 20 weeks severance pay, a retroactive 65 cents increase and a further 65 cents increase or roughly a 10 percent wage increase. In this case, the wage issue was secondary

to the severance issue since both parties believed that the sale of the store was going to take place in the near future.

Freedman went for the employer's claim. He accepted the employer's claim that it was losing money, \$200,000 per quarter since 1986, and that the union had accepted wage concessions of \$3 an hour over the last five years. That was evidence of the union's weak bargaining position and that an arbitral settlement should reflect this reality. Does that sound like it is biased on the side of the union? Does that sound like that decision was unfair to that employer? That was a very reasonable, very fair decision, and it was on behalf of the employer.

Now, if you look at one where the union won, Vista Park Lodge is a very good example. They were bargaining. All issues were resolved except the type of pension plan to be employed. Chapman ended up opting for the union's desire for a well established Canadian commercial workers industry pension plan rather than the employer's yet established money purchase pension plan. So that was a case where the union won, because Chapman said the plan that was in place, that was already demonstrated to be successfully working, was one they should be able to opt for other than one that did not even exist.

There is another example where the employer won. It was the Town of St. Clements' IUOE, where the issue was paid vacations and all issues were resolved except for vacation with pay. He found in favour of the employer once again, arguing that the union requested shorter qualifying periods and more generous benefits well in excess of prevailing standards in surrounding jurisdictions.

Does that sound like it was just biased on the side of the union or that when the decision was made fair consideration was not given to the position of the employer? Of course not. It shows that final offer selection is working and it is working for both parties. The party that wins is going to be determined by the reasonableness and the fairness of the position that is put on the table and that is up for consideration.

That is why final offer selection is actually influencing the reasonableness of both parties at the table, because they know they are going to be judged by the offer that is on the table. They want to be seen to be reasonable and fair. They want their position to have a fair chance to win. They do not want to lose everything by being forced into arbitration. So this is really working.

While at this point he said it was impossible to draw any definitive conclusions and that inferences could be made, particularly in light of the issues raised during the hearings of the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations during the legislation's introduction, he was looking at what was said about what was going to happen with final offer selection and said, we have some experience that suggests to us that it is not happening. First of all it was flexible in permitting ongoing negotiations and most of the applications for majoring the first window. That suggests that they are applying for final offer selection as an additional option in the event of a breakdown in negotiations. So they

are applying early in case negotiations breaks down so they have another option and another tool to try and get a co-operative agreement prior to going on to the other extreme options that face them.

Now, even where the dispute was finally decided by the selector we have said that even where it goes to the selector—and that was just in five cases where they did not resolve it themselves—it is clear that the number of issues are reduced significantly. Even out of the 72 cases to date only five of them have been determined by a selector and 49 have resolved themselves totally successfully by themselves. Where they have gone to the selector there have been fewer issues that required resolution.

So the number of outstanding issues has been reduced significantly even in those cases that go on to be determined by the selector.

It was also interesting to see that the employer that appealed for FOS was in four of the six instances where an application was made with a strike in progress. That means when there was a strike in progress, four out of six times it was the employer that appealed for FOS as a resolution to the difficulties they were having, and as an option, and as a way out of getting out of the strike. It was the employers, not the union.

So this is working once again for all sides. Both can apply, both are winning. It is just as often the employer that is wanting to use FOS where a strike is in progress and it clearly is not unbalancing or causing an imbalance to the existing balance that we have enjoyed for a number of years in Manitoba between labour and management that gives us such a positive labour relations environment that we enjoy here in Manitoba.

The other interesting thing is that one of the things that concerned people about FOS was the possibility that things that had been given, large benefits, may be lost going through the FOS procedure. It is clear, for instance, in the decision rendered in the DOM Group. It reinforces the fact that the arbitrated settlement reflects rather than pre-empt the relative bargaining power of the two parties.

It is interesting that Martin Freedman cited Joseph M. Weiler in making his decision. He said about interest arbitration awards that they should as far as possible duplicate the results of free collective bargaining. An arbitrator should award something similar to what the parties would likely have agreed to in the normal bargaining context where work stoppages are available weapons to relieve a bargaining impasse.

So they have said there that the decisions that are made should be those that would have been made had they continued the bargaining themselves, and should be reflective of agreements that would have been reached had they made the arbitration or the decision themselves and not had somebody outside doing it. So I think it is clear that concern that was raised has not turned out to be the case.

Since the union in this case—and they are so worried about the unions benefitting overly from this—had been forced to accept wage concessions of over \$3 per hour in two previous agreements. They argued with the

selector that the selector should restore a sense of equity.

In other words, that he should be giving them more money because they had received a small amount in the two previous collective agreements. For the selector, the wage roll backs were prima facie evidence of the weak bargaining position of the union. He decided that his decision should correspond to the results, which collective bargaining would have been expected to generate once again accepting the employer's argument that he was not to act as a labour relation Santa Claus, they found in favour of the employer's final offer. Does that sound like a biased and unfair system to employers, or one that is biased on the side of the unions? It does not, and it is not.

Finally, he indicated that FOS, although it was argued that it would, does not interfere with the collective bargaining process and has not led to any unreasonable wage gains. This is a very important factor—in at least one instance, and it only needs one to make it valuable, it proved beneficial to a small bargaining unit facing an employer attempting to break the union.

Now in a case like that, if this small bargaining unit has an attempt by the employer to break their union—and this is a tool that they can use—then this is a tool that they should continue to have the right to use, Mr. Speaker.

* (1440)

I just want to quickly touch on the new statistics. I just want to touch on the statistics now up until January 30. I will just summarize them very quickly, because I think the point has already been made in the previous study. In 1972, there were 72 applications, still only five selector decisions out of the 72; three in favour of the union and two in favour of the employer. The important figure is that now there are 49 cases where they reached an agreement before either the vote or before the selector made his decision. Although 49 of them applied for final offer selection, during the process they came to an agreement themselves and did not have to get to the point where the selector ruled.

In other words, it is clear that final offer selection encourages the collective bargaining process and does not impede it. It lets them get an agreement in place that they both are in agreement with. At no stage in this process are they precluded from coming to an agreement, even when they have a strike in process.

The suggestion that this is not democratic does not really fly. The unions can apply, the companies can apply, members can reject a union application and they have. Members have rejected a union application and they have also rejected an employee application. It shows that really there is I think a lot of fairness on both sides.

When you look at the reasons the Government is giving for wanting to repeal this legislation, and it was in a news release with the then Labour Minister, Ed Connerly, he was talking about that they had considered various options and that they had decided this was the best way to restore fairness to the collective bargaining process. These are the concerns that they have.

It says it is an all or nothing proposition that creates a winner and a loser. The studies that have taken place show that it does not create winners and losers. Somebody wins and somebody loses, but it is both sides that sometimes win and lose. It will eliminate unnecessary interference with the process of free collective bargaining. This is not interfering with free collective bargaining; it is enhancing it. That is very clear. It helps to avoid creating any divisions between the union and its membership.

In all, out of 29 cases I think in all but two cases the membership endorsed the request by the union for final offer selection. They may decide not to, but almost overwhelmingly they agree. The membership agrees with the union that they want to use final offer selection. It is not causing divisions between the union and its membership.

To the last point, the role of Government is to make sure there is fairness and balance in the rules set out for the labour relations community. All we are asking is that they allow this as an option to be chosen when it is seen to be appropriate.

Of all the bargaining contracts that were bargained in that year-and-a-half period, only 72 chose to use final offer selection, but those 72 that chose it found that it was a very successful option. The bulk of them found, 49 out of the 72, they were able to get a resolution themselves. It clearly I think is helping the process.

The mere fact that they have time lines in the bargaining, the people at the bargaining table say, has a serious effect on how they approach the bargaining. The fact that they are going to be measured on the last offer that is on the table means that they are not going to the extremes and taking the extreme positions that they do when they are not in final offer selection.

It is a tool that many want to use. One of the groups that want to use this is the Manitoba Medical Association, who wrote to the Government and indicated their very deep concern when they found out that they were planning to repeal this Bill. They have said that they considered the arguments in the news release as a support of Bill No. 31, and they can only conclude the Government has not adequately considered what is in the public interest. They say that the suggestion that it is an all-or-nothing proposition that creates a winner and a loser, their question to the Government is, what do they think strikes do?

Bitter strikes create winners and losers. Worst of all, it is the public who loses the most. Moreover, bitter strikes breed hostility as well as animosity between the parties and destroys relationship as well as mutual commitment to civilized negotiation.

One of the other pieces of information that came out in studying the present cases is to show that even although one side wins and one side loses, there is not animosity either at the time of negotiations or for future relationship and activities between the union and the employer when they go through the final offer selection process.

There is no indication at all that going through the process of final offer selection breeds hostility or

animosity and destroys relationships. The opposite is true. The opposite seems to suggest that it increases their ability to collectively and jointly resolve their difficulties.

Can Mr. Speaker tell me how much time I have?

Mr. Speaker: About five minutes.

Ms. Hemphill: Five. Okay. Mr. Speaker, actually I wish I had more time to talk about the benefits of this Bill because the criticisms that have been undertaken are clearly being shown not to be the reality.

In another study by Mr. S.A. Bellam written up in the Osgoode Hall Law Journal, he came up with four conclusions. These were: the pressure to appear reasonable in the eyes of the selection officer had a big effect on how they negotiated. They wanted to appear to be reasonable. Both sides said they were strongly motivated to settle the agreement themselves because of personal satisfaction and to avoid the complete loss of arbitration. The time frames set out in advance prevented a stalemate. Both parties felt the necessity to justify their position with concrete financial data instead of just taking extreme positions and posturing.

A lot of the concerns that were raised before we had this personal experience have now been demonstrated not to be accurate. Mr. Speaker, final offer selection is working. Manitoba has by far the lowest number of days lost to work stoppages of any province except Prince Edward Island. Manitoba has reduced its own number of days lost by 94 percent from 54,000 to 2,000 in the first full year of operation of final offer selection. It is working because employers and employees are winning. It is working because it clearly provides another option for negotiations prior to utilizing the extreme strike and lockout option. It encourages and facilitates settlements because the final offer that is put on the table, both sides want to put a reasonable position for the selector to judge. Even if they do not get an agreement it is clear that they are narrowing the number of issues that have to be considered. Even when there is not agreement, the final offer selection process is very helpful. Most agreements, and this is the most important point I think, are concluded prior to the vote or the selector's decision. Forty-nine out of 72 make the decision themselves with no outside interference.

It is working because the employers appealed for FOS in four out of the six instances where the application was made with a strike in progress. It is working because it helps small bargaining units facing an employer who is attempting to break the union and it is working because it has not lead to unreasonable wage gains. Mr. Speaker, I want to appeal to the Government first of all to make a very responsible decision and not repeal this legislation, but leave it for the period of time until the sunset clause rides out at which time we will be able to clearly demonstrate its value. In the absence of that I ask the Liberals to reconsider their position in light of all the information that demonstrates that this is an option that should be available to people who are negotiating contracts. If they care about the workers, if they care about good,

healthy negotiating processes, if they care about trying to have options to avoid strikes and lockouts, they will support us in saying no to the Government's intention to repeal this legislation.

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

* (1450)

Mr. Speaker: It has been moved by the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), seconded by the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that debate be adjourned. Agreed? No? No agreement. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, was there a recorded voice vote on that, because if there is I—

Mr. Speaker: All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion the Nays have it. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I would call for Yeas and Nays.

Mr. Speaker: Call in the Members. Order, please. The question before the House, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), that debate be adjourned on the motion for second reading of Bill No. 31. All those in favour of the motion will please rise.

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

YEAS

Ashton, Cowan, Doer, Evans (Brandon East), Harapiak, Harper, Hemphill, Maloway, Storie, Wasylycia-Leis.

NAYS

Angus, Burrell, Carr, Cheema, Chornopyski, Connery, Cummings, Derkach, Downey, Driedger (Emerson), Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Evans (Fort Garry), Filmon, Findlay, Gilleshammer, Hammond, Helwer, Kozak, Lamoureux, McCrae, Mitchelson, Neufeld, Oleson, Orchard, Pankratz, Patterson, Penner, Praznik, Yeo.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Yeas, 10; Nays, 31.

Mr. Speaker: The motion has been defeated.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, as I have informed you previous to my entering into the debate, I have my Leader's designation for unlimited time on this Bill.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I believe if you consider the matter you would probably agree with me that the designation about which the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) speaks is a designation that needs to be made before the Leader of the Party speaks.

I see you shaking your head, Mr. Speaker, but I think that the Rules and the precedence and the way we do things have it that a Party Leader having spoken cannot then designate somebody else to speak for an unlimited time.

In any event, I think it should be recognized just what it is that Honourable Members in the New Democratic Party are attempting to do, and that is to create obstruction in this House. It makes it very difficult for the business of the people of Manitoba properly to be done -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader, our Rule

"33.(2) The Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition or a leader of a recognized opposition party may each designate one member to speak in a debate for such time as he desires and that member may speak in that debate for such period as he desires if

- (a) the Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition or the leader of the recognized opposition party or that member on his behalf has given prior notice of the designation to the Speaker;" which I have received, "and
- (b) the Leader of the Government, the Leader of the Opposition or the leader of the recognized opposition party on whose behalf that member is to speak, whoever has given the notice, has not previously spoken in the debate for more than 40 minutes;"

The Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) has not spoken for more than 40 minutes. The Honourable Member for Concordia spoke on second reading of this Bill for 39 minutes. On November 1 he spoke for 30 minutes and on November 2 he spoke for nine minutes. Therefore, he has not spoken for 40 minutes.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Speaker, how many different ways will the Conservatives now, with their Liberal friends, try to silence the Opposition in this House when they attempt to speak for working people in this province? We have heard a litany of complaints from the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) with respect to what he calls obstructionism in this House, over the past few days, when all it is that we have tried to do is put on the record in this Legislature, as we are elected to do, the facts and the figures about final offer selection and other issues of importance to Manitobans to ensure that the debate that takes place, is an enlightened and an informed debate.

I find it somewhat surprising that my Conservative friends to the left have so eagerly joined hands with my Liberal friends to the right to deny elected representatives of this Legislature their opportunity to speak to Bills of importance to the people of this province.

I have, Mr. Speaker, entered into this debate because I believe final offer selection is a unique labour relations tool which will encourage labour peace in this province, which will provide for a fairer balance of power in this province, and which will ensure that both employers and employees are able to satisfactorily resolve their contractual disputes without having to resort to strikes and circumstances where it can be avoided.

That is not to say that strikes will be outlawed or even banished or even foregone because of final offer selection, but it is to say that this legislation, which was passed by the New Democratic Party so many years ago, does provide another opportunity for the peaceful resolution of contractual disputes, labour-management disputes, before a strike must be resorted to.

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Speaker, before going into the detail on final offer selection, I want to tell you that we have heard a lot over the years in this Chamber about final offer selection. I expect that we will hear a lot more over the next few days on final offer selection, and I want to tell you the primary reason that I feel it is necessary to seek unlimited time in this debate. I do so because I believe there are facts and figures that need yet to be put on the table and reinforced.

I believe that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) does not understand final offer selection. I believe that the Minister of Labour does not understand what it has done for this province. I believe that the Minister of Labour has not been as accurate as she should have been in her analysis and in her statistical review of what has happened in this province under final offer selection. I believe that because of the Minister of Labour's ignorance the working people in this province are going to be done a disservice at the hands of a combined Party of Liberals and Conservatives, and big business in Manitoba, as they repeal final offer selection. We will not let it happen.

Mr. Acting Speaker, they may have numbers on their side temporarily, but they do not have facts and figures

on their side with respect to final offer selection. The truth will be out throughout this debate. There will be a time when I sit down, having concluded my remarks, perhaps not today, in days to come, but I can tell you that when I sit down at the conclusion of this portion of debate it will not be the end of the fight by the New Democratic Party with respect to saving final offer selection. I can tell you that the public will line up to come into the committee to carry on the battle for truth, to carry on the battle for information, to carry on the task of educating the Conservatives and their Liberal friends as to what it is they are doing when they repeal final offer selection.

* (1500)

Mr. Acting Speaker, when I said earlier that I believe that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) was incorrect in her analysis and was acting out of ignorance, I did not stand alone in those comments. I want to read into the record an excerpt from a news release today from the Manitoba Federation of Labour. I ask the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) to listen carefully, because he is operating again out of ignorance and under an assumption that the Manitoba Federation of Labour does not support final offer selection.

Let me quote into the record just a part of what Susan Hart-Kulbaba had to say, president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, today in her press conference. I will be quoting the rest of it into the record at a later time, but I think it is important to start off my comments to tell you why I believe it is necessary for a fairly lengthy debate. Ms. Hart-Kulbaba said, and I quote, I would urge Mrs. Hammond to educate herself about final offer selection and the positive impact it has had on the labour relations climate in Manitoba. It works and it works well.

It is not only I and my colleagues who believe that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) is acting out of ignorance and needs some education with respect to the matter, but it is the strongest labour body in the Province of Manitoba. They want to see the Minister of Labour educated because they believe she is acting out of ignorance, she does not know the facts and her analysis is wrong, as do we. I am not certain that I will be able to convince her of that throughout my remarks, but I am going to spend a fair amount of my time addressing the issues that she has brought forward and the analysis that she has brought forward.

I think I may well spend a bit more time addressing the ignorance of the Liberal Party with respect to this particular issue and the way in which they have approached final offer selection. As my Leader just said from his seat, it is too bad that we have to do that and indeed it is too bad that we have to take the time of this Legislature to try to undo some of the misinformation that they are propagating through their speeches, to try to take the time to ensure that the debate is informed and knowledgeable about this particular issue and to try to convince them that final offer selection, as the president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour has said, is working well in the Province of Manitoba. As sad as that is, we will undertake to do so.

Thursday, February 8, 1990

I will be addressing later on in my comments the remarks of the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) directly, and I will be addressing some of the remarks of the present Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) and the previous Minister of Labour when he brought forward a Bill to repeal final offer selection in the last Session. Just as the Conservatives and the Liberals combined failed to repeal final offer selection last Session, they will fail to repeal final offer selection this Session. Take our word on it.

It is not all that often that an issue so clearly delineates the different approaches of the political Parties in this Chamber as has happened with respect to final offer selection.- (interjection)- Well, as the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) says, one group thinks to the future and two groups think to the past. I believe that the Liberals and Conservatives, back together in blissful harmony, are the two that cast back their thoughts on the good old days. As a matter of fact, I think that the perception of the good old days may differ somewhat.

I think the perception of the Conservatives with respect to the good old days is when there were no unions whatsoever, when there was no labour movement whatsoever, when business had an unfettered hand over the marketplace, over the workplace, and were able to do entirely what they wanted to do, when they wanted to do it and how they wanted to do it, without the nasty business of having to negotiate with labour with respect to safety and health, with respect to fair wages for a fair days work, with respect to all the types of progressive programs that have come throughout the history of the labour movement to the unions, to the workplaces and finally into Chambers such as this at both the provincial and federal level and into legislation. That is how far back they think when they sit back in their chairs, put their feet up on their desks and think of the good old days.

I do not think the Liberals are quite so antiquated. I do not think that they have come far enough yet with respect to understanding the positive role that labour unions play in our marketplace, in the economy, in the province, in the country, accepting that there has to be a fairer balance of power if they are to continue to play that role and to build upon the very impressive progress that has been made throughout the years. A lot has been done through labour, working with progressive groups to make this world a better place to live and to work and to raise a family.

Much more needs yet to be done. Final offer selection, while in essence by comparison a relatively minor innovation or improvement in the labour relations field, has become a symbolic battle in this province. The symbolism is one of a group of politicians: the New Democratic Party who think to the future, who wish to see a fairer, more balanced labour relations climate in this province, and a coalition, a tripartite coalition of business, because while they sit not in this Chamber, their voice is heard in this Chamber through the mouth of the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) and the mouth of the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

Big business speaks out in many different ways throughout our society, but it speaks no more clearly than it speaks into a microphone standing in front of

the Minister of Labour for the Conservative Party, or the Labour Critic or the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) for the Liberal Party. That coalition of those three, big business, Liberals and Conservatives, have banded together to try to take away from working people a new innovative approach that is providing for a fairer workplace, fairer contractual agreements, and a fairer system of resolving disputes.

The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), the Labour Critic says, why? I sense it is a rhetorical question, because we know why. We know why it is they want to see this particular legislation repealed. It was interesting because when we were having a little discussion before the vote the Member for Fort Garry (Mr. Laurie Evans) said from his seat to one of my colleagues, you will never get business in here with this type of legislation. I think I am paraphrasing him correctly. It is not an exact quote. He shakes his head, yes. As the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) says, this legislation is already available to professors.

I will talk a bit about how it has worked. It is not available to working people in this province, to the secretaries of those professors at the universities. I think what he misses when he makes a statement like that, and it is a rather simplistic statement that would be easy to believe unless challenged, is the fact that the labour relations climate in this province under this legislation, because of this legislation in a small way, not a large way but in a small way, is better than it is in any other province in this country.

I can tell him that one of the things that big business think about when they think about locating or relocating is the labour relations climate in the area in which they are going to start up their business. If they look at Manitoba and if they saw in Manitoba that we had the worst record of strikes and lockouts due to days lost, if we had the worst record of labour disputes, that would bear far more heavily on their decision as to whether or not to relocate in this province than would final offer selection or all the progressive legislation that has been brought forward under a New Democratic Party Government in this province. Believe me, almost all the progressive legislation in the past number of years has been brought forward under a New Democratic Party.

* (1510)

To carry the Member for Fort Garry's (Mr. Laurie Evans) argument a bit further, because if that is the way he thinks and if he is speaking for the Liberals, we have gained some insight into why it is they are so vehemently supporting the Conservatives in taking away the rights of working people and employers in this province with respect to final offer selection.

They are doing so because they believe that we as a society must kowtow to business in order to entice them into our province by ensuring that workers do not have the rights that they should have and if that is the case, what next? Does he feel perhaps, as the Conservatives felt, that the Workplace Safety and Health regulations with respect to cancer-causing agents was too harsh? Does he feel—well, he shakes his head, no,

he does not feel that way, but then comes in the inconsistency in his argument because business says that it is difficult to operate under those sorts of conditions. Why else would the Conservatives, who are the best friends of big business, repeal the regulations, change the regulation? Where does he draw the line with respect to giving in to big business at the expense of working people because when final offer selection is repealed, if it is repealed, what will have happened is we will have collectively given in to big business at the expense of working people, and more so, more importantly at the expense of the province generally.

Mr. Acting Speaker, before going into some of the specifics of the arguments of the different Members who have spoken on this I want to speak a bit about the process that has unfolded over the last couple of days. I think what is worse than the Liberals' agreement and joining with the Conservatives to repeal final offer selection is the way that the two of them have extended that harmonious relationship to deny Members in this House their right to speak.

Let me note from the beginning, I am not reflecting on any ruling nor any vote that has been taken in this House, but merely going over, for the benefit of those who may have missed what has happened over the last couple of days, the way in which events have transpired and why I believe that not only is it wrong in this particular instance but it has set a dangerous precedent which will come to haunt the Liberals and will come to haunt the Conservatives because what they have done together is deny an individual, specifically in this instance, the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) the right to speak on a Bill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), on a point of order.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Acting Speaker, on a point of order. The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) acknowledged himself that he was not here yesterday. He will find that if he checks and maybe asks around from some of his colleagues, the official Opposition did not deny leave for the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper). I understand you need unanimous consent. It was the Conservatives that had denied leave. We just voted that they should be debating on the issue of the ruling of the Chair. It is different, a big difference.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for Inkster does not have a point of order.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): On a new point of order, the Honourable Member for Thompson.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Acting Speaker, we have had these kinds of points of order before. I would suggest to the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) that if he has any comments he wishes to make in regard to what has transpired,

that he have the courage to stand up and debate the Bill which he has not chosen to do in the entire time this is here, and not interfere with the speech of the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan).

So I would ask you, Mr. Acting Speaker, to not only rule that it was not in order but warn Members against what I consider a very frivolous point of order. If the Member for Inkster wants to talk on this Bill, let him have the guts to stand up and debate it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Member for Thompson does not have a point of order.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Acting Speaker, I know that the Liberals are sensitive. I understand why they are sensitive. I read back to them, not from the written word in front of me, but from memory, what the Member for St. James said at the conclusion of his remarks when he spoke to this Bill not that long ago, and that was he encouraged and said that the Liberals wanted "speedy passage" of this Bill through this House.

Now speedy passage is certainly something that they may want, but I do not believe that they have to take that desire to the extreme of denying Members the right to speak in this House, nor to the extreme of voting against Members of this House when they asked for this debate to be adjourned after a Member has already spoken. Speedy passage, in their mind, has turned into railroading this Bill along with the Conservatives through this House because they do not want to hear the facts. They do not want to know what is happening; they do not want to be informed. They do not want us to have the opportunity to challenge their remarks to, I believe, show them where they are wrong.

In doing so they have shown, not only do they have a closed mind themselves and they do not want to learn, but they want to slam shut the minds of the public of Manitoba because they do not want them to hear what happens in this House when this issue is debated in the normal practice. It is very unusual, very unusual for leave to be denied a Member of this House to have a Bill stand in his or her name when another Member has agreed to speak at that time.

Let me tell you what happened as a result of that action of which they were a part. Let me tell you what happened. The Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) has been put in a dilemma that none of us should have to go through, especially those who represent areas outside of this city, because there is now a fear that if you were not here on every single day of the Session that you will lose your opportunity to express yourself in a manner which is helpful to the legislative process.

You have denied the Member for Rupertsland the right to put his comments on the record with respect to final offer selection. He is the only Member of the New Democratic Party who will not have had the opportunity on second reading to put his words on the record, because the Conservatives and the Liberals denied him the right to do so. What does that tell me?

That tells me firstly that the Liberals do not have an understanding of the rural needs of constituents and the northern needs of constituents by those who are elected in constituencies outside of this province.

I do not doubt -(interjection)- I am sorry, Mr. Acting Speaker, if the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has something to say, I would be glad to allow him the floor on a point of order.- (interjection)- Now the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) says heckling is part of the tradition of the House. So is allowing a Bill to stand when someone else wants to speak on it a part of the tradition of the House.

Which traditions are you going to support? Which traditions are you not going to support? Are you going to support the ones that allow your Member to interrupt another speaker, or are you going to support the ones that deny the rights of individuals in this House an opportunity to speak? -(interjection)-

* (1520)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please.

Mr. Cowan: There goes the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) again with respect to interrupting speeches.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have heckled from time to time, but I have also had the courage to take to my feet when requested to do so to put on the record those comments. I believe those comments are important to part of the process. If I can get them on the record in any way possible, I will do so. I believe we have a right to be heard.

As we speak, Mr. Acting Speaker, an event transpires around us. The Deputy Leader has taken aside the Whip. It is a matter of whether the Leader is whipping the Whip or the Whip is whipping the Leader. He is a Deputy Leader. It seems to me that the Whip has won the tug of war. However, it will remain to be seen.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as Members who represent areas outside of the city in the province, we have a dilemma from time to time. We are asked by our constituents to travel into the constituency -(interjection)- I am sorry, perhaps the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) would like to make a point? Well it shows that the—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs, on a point of order.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): On a point of order, the question was one of relevancy for the Bill which is before this House.

Mr. Cowan: I think the question is a matter of relevancy. The relevant factor is whether or not we have an opportunity to speak to the Bills. The way in which a Bill progresses through this House tells us a lot about the agenda, not only of the Party that brought the Bill forward because they outline their philosophy, but also the agenda of the different Parties in how they respond to the Bill.

If a Party stands up and says we want speedy passage of a Bill, it tells us that they are in favour of that Bill and they are not interested in debate. If a Party stands up and says, we deny the right of an individual to speak, as did the Conservatives by not granting leave, it tells me that they do not want to hear the facts about that Bill. That is a relevant factor in my mind.

If the combined Liberals and Conservatives vote together to deny the traditional opportunity of Members to adjourn debate on a Bill, then that tells me that neither one of them want to learn or want to at least hear the facts or want to consider what is being said to determine if in fact it is not valid.

Let me tell you what happens, however, when it becomes necessary for a Member who has a constituency outside of this city to choose between sitting in his or her seat all day long every day of the Session or talking to their constituents, as I had indicated before I was interrupted.

We are called from time to time to speak to our constituents. We all have recognized that that is a very important function of Members of this House whether they reside in a constituency within the city or outside the city.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Acting Speaker, when we had a debate about the Electoral Boundaries Commission, we all agreed that a great disservice was being done to Northerners because they were removing one of the northern seats, and that meant that four MLAs would have to do the work where five MLAs had done the work before. The reason that it was a disservice to constituents was because it reduced the opportunity for those MLAs to meet with their constituents in the constituents' home communities. We agreed that was a disservice and should not be the case. Yet, the other day, when we had an opportunity to put those fine sentiments into some action, The Conservatives denied leave to allow a Member who was meeting with his constituents outside of this House the opportunity to be away from this House in order to do so on the basis that if he was they would not allow him to speak when he returned.

It was not as if we were asking for an adjournment of the debate and have no speakers. We were prepared to put speakers forward, but they said no. Business would have gone on. There would have been no loss of time. As a matter of fact, Mr. Acting Speaker, there would have been less of a loss of House time had they done that than what actually transpired.

If they want to talk about obstructionism, it is not obstructionism that is slowing down this House, it is incompetence. It is not obstructionism that is slowing down this House, it is a Government that does not know how to manage the business of this Legislature in such a way as to allow for the traditional methods of debate to take place so that we can conclude the business of this House in the way in which the business of this House has been concluded ever since I have been a Member of it, and I am certain far previous to that.

What happened yesterday was unusual. What happened today was unusual, but not only that it was

wrong. So now I have to think, Mr. Acting Speaker, as an MLA who represents a northern area, and I was in my constituency yesterday as well, it could have just as easily been me had I taken the adjournment. I have to think, how can I best serve my constituents now? They want me to be in the constituency for certain functions, and at the same time I have to be here because a Conservative Government is going to take away my right to speak if I am not sitting in my seat at the time they choose to call a particular Bill without consultation and without notice.

Now how is that going to affect the ability of MLAs and elected officials to represent areas outside of the province? Oh, I heard all the fine sentiments with respect to the elimination of the Churchill constituency and other constituencies in the province. I listened carefully, and you know, Mr. Acting Speaker, I believed them. I believed them until yesterday, and yesterday I learned differently. I learned that for expediency's sake and in order to protect themselves from their own mismanagement and incompetence, the Conservatives indeed were prepared to limit our ability to speak in this House just because, only because, the only reason was being in our constituencies to meet with our constituents.

I look directly at the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) when I make these comments, because the Minister of Northern Affairs should know better. I do not know who did not grant leave yesterday, but certainly the Minister of Northern Affairs was a part of the caucus that did not grant leave. That much I do know. He should know what it is like for northern communities to try to maintain contact and communication with their constituents.—(interjection)—

Well, now the Minister of Northern Affairs is pointing his finger at the Liberal Opposition. I can tell him that finger points both ways and sort of joins together, and they clasp hands, and they seek to limit the debate, because that is what happened today and that is what happened yesterday. It is not a matter of finger pointing; they are in this together. They have got their hands in each other's pockets on this one, Mr. Acting Speaker. They have colluded together to stop debate in this House to bring it to an unnecessarily early conclusion, because they do not like what they are hearing. They want to ramrod, railroad through their legislation.

What is going to happen now in the future? The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) knows, because he has to quite often leave this Chamber, and leave the Legislature in order to meet with his broader constituency, which is the communities under Northern Affairs jurisdiction. When he does so, and he asks for a pair, we so grant the pair, because we believe it is important for him to be able to speak to Northerners in their communities, rather than force Northerners to come here to speak to them in his office. We believe that and he believes that because he requests the pair to do so. If he did not think it was a legitimate function of his office and a legitimate role for him to play as a legislator, he would not request pair to do so.

* (1530)

Why is it so convenient for him to leave and know that the business of the House will proceed in a fashion that it has always proceeded, and it is not convenient for the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) to leave? What is it that they have against the Member for Rupertsland? What is it they want him not to say in this House, or what is it they want him not to say in his constituency, because that is the dilemma that they have put him in.

The Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) says from his seat that he lost his right to speak yesterday. He also says that the tragedy of the history of his people is that they have lost rights before, but the fact is that this loss of this right will not go unnoticed. The loss of this right will not go unnoticed in the constituency. The loss of this right will not go unnoticed in the labour movement, in the progressive movements across this province. The loss of this right will not pass by silently in the night as if it had never happened, because it is a right that is fundamental to us as legislators and it is one that we must strive to protect each and every day that we are here, in each and every speech that we make, with each and every breath that we draw, and it is one that we will.

I am, quite frankly, not surprised that the Liberals do not understand the demands of rural Members, because outside of one, they have none. I would hope that at least they would listen. I hope they would at least understand that we have to treat the northern parts and the rural parts of this province somewhat differently because of distance and isolation. I am not surprised, and I am not shocked that they voted with the Conservatives to railroad the Bill through, but I am disappointed, not the first time that I have been disappointed by Liberals, nor the last time certainly. Each time it happens it is a significant event nonetheless.

Let me talk about some of the things that the Liberal Critic, the Member for St. Johns, put on the record during his speech—St. James, excuse me. My apologies to the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis).

I want to go through 11 points that he made during his speech, and over the course of my contribution to this debate I will be addressing each of those 11 points in minute detail. However, for the time being I would like to just outline then, to give a context as to why I think it is necessary that this debate not only be directed at the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), who is acting out of ignorance, but also be directed equally so at the Liberal Opposition.

What the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) said in the first point, and I am quoting as best I can from his comments, was that final offer selection is, and I quote, an unwarranted intrusion into the labour relations environment. Now I leave that on the record. We will come back to it.

The second point he says in defence of their joining hands with the Conservatives to repeal final offer selection and to take away rights of working people is that, and I quote again, one side has a gun which is loaded; the other side does not have a loaded gun, it has no bullet.

Mr. Acting Speaker, that gives you some insight into how he perceives labour relations negotiations—

gunfight at OK Corral, let us each take our guns out and shoot at each other. That is hardly a very progressive analysis of labour relations. It certainly is not in keeping with the trends in labour relations across the country and in other countries, but it is illustrative of how when they think back to the good old days, while they may not think back as far as the Conservatives, who would only in fact want one side to have a gun fully loaded, they think that it is still a gunfight, it is still a confrontation, it is still a battle.

It need not be, although there are times when it does in fact become a battle, and those are important times for the labour movement generally and important times for individual unions and individual employers, because there are certain rights which must be gained by fighting for them. There are certain rights which must be fought for strongly. There are certain rights that must be gained through confrontation but that does not apply to every contract, and that does not apply to every set of negotiations, and that does not apply to every labour relations dispute.

When that fight must be taken on, even with final offer selection in place there is that opportunity, and believe me there have been fights since final offer selection has been in place in the Province of Manitoba, and there will be more fights. This legislation does nothing to take away from the right or the responsibility or the ability of parties to fight the good fight when it must be fought. To say that every question must be dealt with on a confrontational basis is wrong and it denies the reality of the workplace. As the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) says, it is a complete misunderstanding of what is happening out there in the workplaces and at the negotiating table.

What else did the Member for St. James say? I quote the Member again. The Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) says that final offer selection subverts the underlying principle behind our labour relations system as it stands today. That is, it says no, the Parties do not know what is best for the workplace. A third person, someone who may have no knowledge of the workplace both from the the employee's side or the management's side, is the person best able to decide how this workplace is run.

Well that betrays not only a total lack of understanding of what actually happens in the workplace in contract negotiations, but it is as if he has not read final offer selection. He does not know final offer selection and the process that is incorporated in the legislation because it is the Parties that put forward the proposals. It is the Parties that say what they think is best for the workplace, and it is the arbitrator that must choose one or the other, not as in the case of arbitration otherwise, where the arbitrator can mix and match and can shake his or her own package without regard to what actually happens in the workplace or even without regard to the proposals that are put forward. That is not the case at all.

In fact, what happens in final offer selection is that it is the employer or the employees who decide and not the arbitrator, and yet I bet if you tested him on how he feels about arbitration, he would think that it can play a useful role in the labour relations climate.

Yet, to take his own argument and to throw it back at him, he would be proven wrong with respect to how an agreement under final offer selection is shaped. I will come back to that in more detail as well.

He also says, point No. 4, that the majority of unions that presented at the committee told the Government not to go ahead with final offer selection. He said that and that is a quote. I want to read to him the first couple of comments from the committee hearing by Mr. Wilf Hudson, who was then president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour when final offer selection was being debated, and I want to read them into the record because I think they are important from the context of the comments that the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) made.

* (1540)

This is the Standing Committee on discussing final offer selection when it was first introduced after having been passed through second reading in this Legislature by the New Democratic Party Government.

Mr. Hudson says: "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to introduce the people who are here with us tonight from the labour movement, from the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

"The vice-president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, John E. Pullen is here. The treasurer of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, Dennis Atkinson is here. Also, we have Peter Olfert, the president of the Manitoba Government Employees' Association; Al Cerilli of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway and Transport and General Workers, the regional vice-president; Wayne Cutting from the United Steelworkers of America, vice-president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour; Bob Imrie, from the United Steelworkers from Fliin Flon, also vice-president of the Manitoba Federation of Labour; Horst Sommerfeld, from the United Steelworkers Southeast Manitoba, Labour Council; more steelworkers, but also as the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) says, representing the Labour Council; also Bernard Christophe, the president of the Manitoba Food and Commercial Workers, Local 832; Bruce Prozyk, from the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Union; and Sandy Trowski from the International Association of Machinists. Also, we have Barrie Farrow, from the Canadian Autoworkers; and Bruno Zimmer, the president of Local 111 of the United Food and Commercial Workers. Bill Haiko, another . . . "he says at that time there would have been another vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers, but he was away at an international convention.

So in introducing those Members, he has introduced probably the representatives of the largest component and cross-sections of labour organizations in the Province of Manitoba, labour organizations that are local, labour organizations that are national, labour organizations that are international, labour organizations that in this province have a proud history of fighting not only for their own members to improve working conditions for unionists, but also fighting for the general population; labour organizations that have

involved themselves in the battles of the day, which have brought about a progressive social movement in this province that has seen change take place, that has helped make our workplaces safer, helped make our workplaces healthier, helped make our workplaces more fair, helped make the system more equitable and have extended beyond the workplace to help make our society a better society for those who need and those who want, and those who must look to society for help and, at the same time, a society that rewards people in a fair way for a fair day's work.

Those labour organizations have throughout the history of the province played a significant role in helping shape labour legislation, in responding to labour legislation that was brought forward, in fighting the good fight when the fights must be fought and in trying to maintain a stable labour relations climate because they know that is in the best interests of their members as well as in the best interests of the society as a whole because trade unionists are not just trade unionists alone. They are the people we are sent here to represent. They are individuals who live in their communities. They are individuals who work in their communities. They are individuals who provide a productive role in shaping their communities. They are the volunteers for the different organizations. They exhibit their desire for a better world not only in their workplace but throughout society as a whole.

Now the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has also said in his speech that we all want to see a strong MFL. Those are his comments. We all want to see a strong Manitoba Federation of Labour. I take from those comments that he supports the Manitoba Federation of Labour, because if he did not, why would he want to see them strengthened? Why would he want to see them by implication grow? Why would he want to see them more powerful if he did not support their very basic tenets in the way in which they seek to protect workers rights in this province? Well if he wants a stronger Manitoba Federation of Labour then he should not fight the Manitoba Federation of Labour by using false assumptions such as has been done in speech. He should not try to—well I am sorry, I am not going to imply motives. He should not whether—no, I am not even going to say that.

Even if it was done out of ignorance, he has a responsibility not to misrepresent their position and not to misrepresent the position of unions in this province. When he says that the majority of unions represented at the committee told the Government not to go ahead with final offer selection, that is indeed a misrepresentation.

What did Mr. Wilf Hudson say in his comments before the Standing Committee of the Legislature when that Bill was being discussed? He went through the introductions, and I am reading directly from the transcript of that day: "First of all, we congratulate the Government of Manitoba"—and as an aside, Mr. Acting Speaker, it was an NDP Government at the time—"for the innovative spirit which underlies the introduction of Bill 61. It is a time when new solutions must be found to old problems and old remedies must

be applied in new and creative ways." Mr. Wilf Hudson was not opposed to final offer selection, nor were the vice-presidents of the Manitoba Federation of Labour who presented at that committee hearing that evening.

Mr. Hudson addresses a point. Let us take a look at how much attention we should pay to their comments based on their influence within the labour movement if we are going to use the argument that the labour movement is either for or against final offer selection. I am reading directly again from Mr. Hudson. I quote: "The Manitoba Federation of Labour represents approximately 80,000 union members and their families in this province, and is the largest labour organization in Manitoba."

Well if we give weight to words based on the number of people who are represented by a group that is speaking those words, and that is not always the best thing to do, but if we do in this instance, we would have to give the most weight to the words of the Manitoba Federation of Labour because they represent the largest labour organization in the Province of Manitoba and directly represent approximately 80,000 members and their families. Let us assume that they have families. We are talking about a very significant proportion of the Province of Manitoba represented in that meeting by not only Mr. Hudson, but by John E. Pullen, by Dennis Atkinson, by Peter Olfert, by Al Cerilli, by Wayne Cutting, by Bob Imrie, by Horst Sommerfeld, by Bernard Christophe, by Bruce Prozyk, by Sandy Trowski, by Barrie Farrow, by Bruno Zimmer, by Bill Haiko and by the—

An Honourable Member: You might say, your normal Conservative crowd.

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) from his seat has made some passing comment with respect to the type of crowd that was there. I can tell the Minister of Northern Affairs that there are Conservatives among the trade union movement. There are Liberals among the trade union movement. There are New Democrats among the trade union movement. There are other representatives or other parties represented within the trade union movement.

When they speak to a standing committee or to the Minister or to a caucus, and I know they have done so in all these instances, they speak not as New Democrats, not as Conservatives, not as Liberals, certainly not as Liberals, not as representatives of other political Parties, but they speak as representatives of the trade union movement in the Province of Manitoba.

* (1550)

They speak on behalf of the 80,000 members who have elected them to their position, whether those members back in the shops or the plants or the workplaces or the schools or the hospitals or the construction sites be New Democrats, whether those members be Liberals, whether those members be Conservatives, whether those members be unaligned or whether those members be members of other political parties, they speak for them on the basis of trade union principles.

Let me tell the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) that when I was a Minister in a New Democratic Party Government, I from time to time had my arguments with representatives of the trade union movement in this province. I had more agreements than arguments, but there were times -(interjection)-

Well, the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) would like me to elaborate a bit upon what some of those disagreements might have been over the past. I can tell him that there may be an opportunity for me to do so a bit later on in my comments, and I will appreciate his attention at the time that takes place, if in fact it does take place.

What I would like to speak about before that are some of the things upon which we agree, but I would not want to be distracted from the point I was attempting to make when I was addressing my comments directly to the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) based on his earlier comment with respect to the political ideology of the group, which represented the Manitoba Federation of Labour before the standing committee when it reviewed final offer selection.

The point that I was making was that labour indeed represents labour when it comes forward, and if they think that something that is being done by a New Democratic Party Government is wrong, they will speak out, and they did. They have just as if business thinks that something a Conservative Government is doing is wrong, they will speak out. While the other day I was at a standing committee hearing and business came forth in a very forthright way, in a very aggressive way, condemning the Conservative Government for a Bill that was bringing forward with respect to consumer protection.

Now, I do not know what the political affiliation of the member from the Chamber of Commerce, who was making that representation, was at that time, has been in the past, or maybe in the future, but I do know that when he was speaking there he was speaking on behalf of his membership, the businesses who belong to the Chamber of Commerce.

I gave him the due that should be accorded to him by reason of that position, as did the Government give him his due, by reason of that position, and they may know what his political affiliation is, I do not know, but if they did know what his political affiliation was, they did not let it dissuade them or distract them from listening intently and questioning him as to the comments he put before the House, or the standing committee, even though they were in opposition to something they wanted to do.

If it is good enough for the Chamber of Commerce to come forward and be critical of a Conservative Government and if it is good enough for a Chamber of Commerce to come forward and be supportive of a Conservative Government without regard to their own political affiliation, either the people making representation or their general membership, then it should be good enough for the Manitoba Federation of Labour to do the same.

Perhaps it was not a largely partisan, Conservative crowd that was in that group speaking on behalf of

the Manitoba Federation of Labour, but it was a strong group of trade unionists who had a right to speak out, a responsibility to speak out and a right to be heard.

Mr. Acting Speaker, they were heard that evening. They were heard to the extent where it is in Hansard, and I would like to read on with the transcript. Unfortunately I only have the first page, actually the first half page of what Mr. Hudson said that evening, but I have a feeling I will have an opportunity to locate the rest of it before concluding my remarks.

He talks a bit about the process of the Manitoba Federation of Labour coming to support final offer selection. I can tell you there was a debate within the Manitoba Federation of Labour with respect to final offer selection. I can tell you because it was a very public debate, because that is the way the trade unions operate, that is one of the strengths of trade unions in this province. That is one of the strengths of the labour movement across the country, is that they have their opinions, but they are open to discuss them among themselves. They are democratic in the process and are willing to hear others, not like what has transpired between the Liberals and the Conservatives in this House to try to deny people the opportunity to debate. They operate on the basis of democratic principles.

The Liberals have said and the Conservatives have said, as have NDP Members in the past said, that Labour does have some questions with respect to final offer selection and the impact it will have on them. The impact it will have on them in the workplace, the impact it will have on them in negotiations, the impact it will have on them in trying to create a better society. Those questions are legitimate questions. I am certain that Labour had those questions when first contract legislation came forward and there was a debate internally. I am certain that labour had those questions when other legislative came forward.

As a matter of fact, I can remember reading about the debate on the Rand formula. I can remember the debate within the movement. It is one where the questions have not yet been totally answered, although I think in large it is a system that is working very well. With respect to the Rand system, it was a matter of the collection of dues. Before the system was in place, when a union organized a particular shop, the stewards or union members had to go around month by month and collect dues from individual members. There was no such thing as a compulsory checkoff, or—let me put it this way—there was no legislative compulsory checkoff. That took up a lot of time of the union members themselves who collected dues.

The Rand formula, which provided for a compulsory checkoff by legislation, was thought of as a process that might be innovative and might be a way of ensuring that the dues of a democratically elected organization were collected. It was put in place. At the time the argument was, well, that will reduce our exposure to our members. Some of the members said that will reduce our ability to have an audience with our stewards and other elected union officials on an ongoing basis, because they will not have to come to collect the dues anymore and that is a chance when we have to talk to them.

There was a very heated debate that went on for some time, but the Rand formula was legislated. It was put in place and over time those questions were answered. Do you know what the answer was? Nothing is perfect. That is the answer. It did some of the negative things that people thought it might do, but there was compensation for that in other ways, because the organizations are democratic and they pride themselves on being democratic. They value the democracy of their organization.

They value the contact between their members. So they are going to seek ways to build that in if in fact they do not have to do it through the collection of dues. It provided for the collection of dues in a reasonable fashion which gave the union organization some stability. Do you know what it did? When the union steward came to talk to the member now or vice versa, when the member went to talk to the union steward, that you talked about something else than the dues. They talk about safety, talk about health, they could talk about the upcoming contract, they could talk about the way in which they wanted to build a better workplace, a better society.

Those types of questions have always been a part of the process of developing innovative change in the trade union movement. The trade union movement is in fact democratic and open. It will always remain so as long as it values and cherishes those sorts of values that it has fought for over the years and supported over the years.

* (1600)

There was the internal debate. What was said in the internal debate is important to this debate here, because I think it is a bit of a microcosm of the debate that we are having. The decision was a bit different than the decision of the Government and the Liberals combined to repeal final offer selection, because the decision by the Manitoba Federation of Labour was to support final offer selection.

Let me read from the transcript again. I am continuing on from where I left off after my last comments. I am quoting Mr. Hudson. At our last constitutional convention, that is the Manitoba Federation of Labour constitutional convention in 1985, four years ago, or over four years ago, we debated the issue of final offer selection, commonly known as FOS, at great length.

Why did they debate it at great length? They wanted to understand it fully and they wanted to ask all the questions. They wanted to hear each other out and they wanted to hear the answers that others had to speak. Perhaps we in this Chamber can take a lesson from the Manitoba Federation of Labour with respect to their debate on final offer selection versus our debate on final offer selection. They did not ask for a speedy passage through their convention. They did not try to railroad it through their convention. They debated it at great length because it is an important issue and there are questions that must be addressed and there are answers that must be given.

If they, who have much less time, much less time to debate issues, debated it at great length through their

constitutional convention, why is it that we have to rush it through this House? Why is it that we cannot adjourn debate on one day? -(interjection)- Now the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) in an insightful way gives us a bit of a clue, although it is not the total picture. It is because the Chamber of Commerce is becoming impatient with the Government that cannot live up to its election promises, not because of the length of debate in this House, but because of their own incompetence and mismanagement. In order to gloss over, to hide over, to distract away from, to diffuse the issue away from their incompetence and their mismanagement, they create side issues by refusing to allow the normal practices of this Chamber to unfold in the way in which they have always unfolded.

What did Mr. Hudson say? I am quoting again: "In the end the delegates voted to support final offer selection by a two to one majority. We are making this presentation as a united group representing the Manitoba Federation of Labour. Many of our affiliates are present in this hall this evening, as I have already mentioned."

They operate on the same base as we do. If this Chamber voted two to one to keep final offer selection in place, just because we did not have the agreement of everybody, just because we did not have the unanimous consent, the Bill would pass. That is majority rules. That is a democratic process. It must be cherished, valued and supported.

I believe, also, the process of coming to that vote. The debate of whatever length is required, is something that should be cherished. I am surprised at the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), that he would have voted today to deny me the ability to adjourn the debate. I would have been less concerned, less surprised and less disappointed had he come to me and said: Jay, why is it you are trying to adjourn the debate today? Is there a reason? Are you not feeling well today? Do you have another appointment with a constituent that is important? Are you attempting to delay the process? Is this a tactic? Is there something that we should know before making a decision with respect to denying you the right to adjourn the debate? How can we be helpful in ensuring that this debate is as full and productive and as informative as possible?

I would have expected him to do that as someone that I have come to respect in this House for his sensitivity to a number of issues. Like all of us, he is not a perfect Member and he has some warts and faults and difficulties, but I think he genuinely cares about this House and the traditions of this House. I think he genuinely wants to be a participant in a process that is fair, equitable, and provides full opportunity for all Members to make their concerns known. I was disappointed in that respect, that he never came to me and asked me.

I was shocked by the fact that my own MLA, the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), would not consult with a constituent to find why it was he wanted to adjourn the debate on a given day.-(interjection)- Well, as the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says, shame on the Member for St. Norbert. Oh, I am sorry, the Member for Inkster did not say, shame on the Member

for St. Norbert. Well, and had -(interjection)- the Member for St. Norbert says he has constituents over there and he points to the Conservative benches as well. I would have expected that he would have extended them the same courtesies and the same rights that I would have expected, that he would have extended to me if they had said: I would like to adjourn the debate.

It was not just a whim that I stood up and said: I want to adjourn the debate. We had a vote on it. We gave them time to ask the questions. We gave them time to think out their position on that vote, and they did not even ask me why it was. Not one Liberal nor one Conservative Member of this Legislature said: why is it you want to adjourn the debate today? -(interjection)- Well, the Member for Inkster says, why did we not tell them why. Indeed, if there was an opportunity to do so, I could have stood to my feet and said, this is why I want to adjourn the debate, but the Rules of this House provide, Mr. Acting Speaker, only for me to stand up and say: I move, seconded by, in this instance, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

I chose the Member for Thompson very carefully. It was not a whim on my part either, because I thought that the critic for Labour, for the New Democratic Party, should be involved in seeking that adjournment. It was not as if by chance I picked out any Member. I chose the Member who has a very vested interest due to his responsibilities as a critic in the area that this Bill affects to be my seconder.

I wanted to give a sign by that choosing of the Member for Thompson, the Labour Critic for the New Democratic Party. I wanted to, for those who were sensitive and perceptive, say to them, this is an important issue to us. Not that all my colleagues are not important colleagues, but in this particular instance I wanted to reference it directly to labour, the labour relations climate, contractual agreements, negotiations, because the Member for Thompson has been a very outspoken, a very aggressive and a very strong speaker with respect to fighting off the efforts of the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party to take away the rights of working people in this province.

They did not ask, and the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), my MLA, did not ask, and the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), who I am certain prides himself in being sensitive because he is generally—in this instance, I think he may have lapsed a bit—a sensitive person. I expect next time he will ask me why it is—or other Members, not just me, I am not speaking only on my behalf. Just as when I spoke about the difficulties and the dilemmas facing northern and rural MLAs, I was not just speaking on behalf of the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper). I speak on behalf of all of us who represent areas outside of the city.

In fact, I was also speaking for Members who represent areas within the city, because I have just betrayed some of my own insensitivity to the needs of city people from time to time. I am certain that they have to leave this building to go to attend functions, that they have to go to meetings outside of the building, that they have to go to conferences outside of the building, that sometimes constituents call them to their

homes because they cannot make it out of their homes, or call them to their offices because they cannot make outside of their offices.

* (1610)

My goodness, now the shock, anger and disappointment have gone even beyond that to one of almost disbelief. How is it they could set themselves up with a precedent that is going to restrict their own ability? Although they will need it less often, they may need it nonetheless to serve their own constituents. Mr. Acting Speaker, they voted against themselves. They voted against their own ability to serve their constituents. That would come back to haunt them.

I have become somewhat distracted and digressed from my critique, my brief preliminary critique, of the comments of the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). I was on point four, the majority of unions that presented at the committee told the Government not to go ahead with final offer selection. Well, that is just not true. That is just not an accurate reflection of what happened at that committee.

An Honourable Member: Wait until we get to committee

Mr. Cowan: Well, as the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) says, wait until we get to committee, and they see what happens there. I believe him because the Member for Flin Flon represents the constituency that has a strong labour base, that has a strong labour history. As he says, the unions in the constituency of Flin Flon are onside with final offer selection, that they support final offer selection, that they believe it is beneficial to working people in this province.

When he says that the committee is going to be an area where representatives of unions can come forward and tell the Liberals and the Conservatives just how wrong they are, he is right and that is exactly what is going to happen. We will be there listening, and do not you or you or any of you combine together to try to stop those trade unionists from speaking before the committee as you have tried to stop legislators representing those trade unionists from speaking in this Legislature.

Do not ever for one moment think that you can get away with treating the public the way you have treated the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) or the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) or myself in denying us leave to speak or to stand the item or denying us adjournment.-(interjection)- Perhaps maybe the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) would like to put some comments on the record, because I hear him chirping away from his seat.

Mr. Acting Speaker, when I invite from my feet someone to interrupt my speech and make some comments, I do it with some trepidation because they can sometimes throw me off my comments momentarily, break my train of thought and perhaps make me digress. When I do so with the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, I have no such fear. I have no

such trepidation because I know no matter what he says when he opens his mouth, it is going to be at the very least interesting. More often than not, it is going to be something that we find very productive in the sense that he is almost an unfettered expression of the Conservative sentiment and the Conservative view and the Conservative mentality. It is as if when he speaks it is a Conservative stream of consciousness.

An Honourable Member: As limited as that is.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) said something I would not, but I will paraphrase what he said. He said, as limited as that might be. Perhaps even in the case of the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), it is a Conservative stream of unconsciousness, I do not know. However, I do not mean to take away anything from what the Member for Portage la Prairie has said in the past, because I also have a couple of sheets on the Minister of Labour's comments with respect to final offer selection when he was the Minister of Labour. I want to go over a detailed review of that when we have an opportunity to do so.

What else did the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) say? The Member for St. James said, and I quote on his fifth point in his speech, he said he believed that final offer selection weakens unions. Now if final offer selection weakens unions, why is it the Manitoba Federation of Labour would support final offer selection? That is a question that he is going to have to answer. Is he saying that he knows more about labour relations in the workplace itself, the operation of unions and the way in which they strengthen themselves than does the Manitoba Federation of Labour that represents 80,000 trade unionists in this province? Does he know something that they do not know, because if he does he should tell them. If he knows how it is going to weaken the unions he should share that information with the trade union movement because they are asking for final offer selection to be continued. I do not believe that they would ask it to be continued if in fact they believed it would weaken their own position in the workplace, if they felt that it hurt them in any way whatsoever, if they felt it was to their disadvantage. So the inconsistency here is not so much within the Member for St. James' (Mr. Edwards) comments, but the inconsistency is in what he says based on what others who are much more well versed with workplace matters at the workplace say, and he says. I am going to come back to that point a bit later on in a bit more detail.

His sixth point, the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) says, and I quote, he believes that strong unions that do not fear that accountability do not like final offer selection for that very reason. What is he saying when he says that? Is he saying that unions that are not strong fear that accountability and that they are, in a deceptive way, looking to final offer selection to allow them to avoid the responsibility and the accountability for their actions? Is he casting aspersions on all those who support final offer selection by that comment? I believe he is. I believe he is saying to the Manitoba Federation of Labour, who like final offer selection, that they fear accountability. If he is saying that he is wrong. He knows not what he speaks if that

is what he believes. I want to come back to that point a bit later on in some more detail.

* (1620)

Before doing so, I would like to run through all the points that the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has outlined in his speech as I interpreted them. I will be quite frank. This, while they are direct quotations for the most part, 90 percent direct quotations of the actual words of the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) as written in Hansard, which is the official transcript of this body, I am interpreting them in a certain fashion. If he believes that I am misinterpreting them, then I would be prepared to grant him leave at the conclusion of my remarks, because he has already spoken, to address my interpretations and to set the record straight. I would not be like others in this House have been and say that they would not grant leave for a Member to speak on a specific issue. I would not do so because I believe an informed debate is one that tries to understand all the different positions, and if a person inadvertently misrepresents a position or misinterprets a position, then others should have a opportunity to set the record straight.

He goes on to elaborate about that point about strong unions in the next point. Point seven, he says, that strong unions, and I quote, do not mind being answerable for their negotiations and for their successes and failures. Again that begs the question: what strong unions is he talking about, and if by inference there are weak unions, what are the weak unions. Let him have the courage to stand here and say, I believe that such and such a union is a weak union and for that reason likes final offer selection because it reduces their accountability to their membership, and they mind being answerable for the negotiations and for the successes and failures; for that reason they look to final offer selection for a crutch.

I do not believe that there is any union in the Province of Manitoba—and I will state it today and I will state it on any number of different occasions when I have the opportunity—that uses final offer selection as a crutch to avoid accountability to their membership or as a way to avoid being answerable for their negotiations whether they be successful or failure. If that is what he believes then I think he does not understand very well what is happening in the labour relations environment in the Province of Manitoba. Now, I want to come back to that point a bit later on in my comments in more detail but proceeding on in the way in which they are outlined—

Point eight, his concern about final offer selection is that they, and I quote, what you did is a contract that the Parties did not feel they had participated in. The inference there, which is not in the actual quote, is that if you do not feel like you participated in the contract you have no sense of ownership. If you have no sense of ownership it is of less value to you, and for that reason it is a weaker contract than it would be had you felt you had participated in the process and achieved a sense of ownership over the final result.

That which I have read on the issue of final offer selection says that that is not the case; that which I

have heard from those who have been involved in final offer selection in the Province of Manitoba since this law has been in effect say that that is not the case. The fact is because of the nature of final offer selection, the workers and the employers have to feel that they have participated in the process, because they put on the table the final agreement that they would like to see and one is chosen and one is not, but they have participated in the process right up to that point of decision-making.

If it is a decision that is in their favour, then I think they will feel differently about it than if it is a decision that is not in their favour, but in both instances I think they will honestly believe that they had a chance, that they had an opportunity, that they put forward the best proposal that they thought they could put forward. They will take some pride in that proposal even if it was not chosen. In the next set of negotiations they will work to have that proposal accepted by the other party.

So not only does it not alienate people, I think it involves them in continuing negotiations over a period of time. That is not a thought, an original thought, only of my own, that is a documented perception of final offer selection as it has worked in the past in other areas. I will get into some of the examples outside the Province of Manitoba. That is what we have seen happen over the last number of years here in this province.

What else did the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) say? I want to come back to this point in a bit more detail later on, Mr. Acting Speaker. Point nine, the Member for St. James says and I quote, final offer selection does not achieve what the proponents say it does, that is a peaceful workplace. It may end the strike. Will it create a peaceful workplace, he asks? Not a chance.

I would think that if the Member for St. James would go around to the workplaces where final offer selection has been a factor in the negotiations in the Province of Manitoba over the past number of years he will find that they are indeed peaceful workplaces. They are probably, and I am saying this out of conjecture. I cannot document it. I may be proven wrong in the future, but I think not. I believe, it is a belief, that they are probably more peaceful than they would be had there been a strike.

I can guarantee you that they are more peaceful than they would be had there been a breaking of the union or breaking of the employer. That is what creates the unrest and the disruption. It takes a very long time to get things back to a peaceful nature in a workplace after a strike, particularly a lengthy strike or a hard fought strike.

Anyone who has been involved in a strike or watched a strike unfold and been involved in the putting back together of the workplace after that knows that it is a long laborious process, that animosities run high during a strike, that the residue of that animosity lingers on and on and on and exhibits itself in all sorts of different ways throughout the workplace. He is wrong. He is absolutely incorrect if he believes that the final offer selection process does not help maintain labour stability.

If it does then it will result in more peaceful workplaces in a more peaceful society.

Then he says, in the next point, that the Liberal position is one that does not deny anyone the right of final offer selection even though they repeal the legislation, which provides for a legislated form of final offer selection, because as he says: the groups should be able to go to FOS by consent.

Mr. Acting Speaker, certainly they can go to final offer selection by consent. They can do most anything they want within the framework of labour relations by consent. The fact is, before there was the legislation we did not see final offer selection in any meaningful way in the Province of Manitoba. The fact is that if it is a matter of consent two parties must agree, and if one of those parties does not want final offer selection then there is no legislative way for the process to be tested. If the process cannot be tested then there is no way for that consent to take place. What he says may be theoretically correct but in reality of the workplace on a day-to-day basis it is not correct. It is wrong again.

Finally, point 10 that the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) made in his comments—and I quote again: I think that this issue—this is the Member for St. James speaking—has run its course in this province. It has been unsuccessful. It has caused disruption in the workplace which is not warranted. It does not stop strikes, in my view it creates unrest in the workplace and will continue to do so.

Upon what factual information does he base that assumption? He has categorically said that the issue has run its course, that it is done and through, that it is over. He categorically says that it has been unsuccessful. He says that it has caused disruption in the workplace. He says that it does not stop strikes. He says that it does create unrest in the workplace. He says if it is allowed to continue will continue to create unrest and disruption in the workplace. On what empirical evidence or facts—

* (1630)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), on a point of order?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): No, I wonder if the Honourable Member would submit to a question.

Mr. Cowan: Mr. Acting Speaker, I am tempted to say when I have concluded my remarks, but I am not certain that many Members will be awake at that time and I would like them to hear my answer.

Mr. Enns: I apologize to the Honourable Member, because I was otherwise detained from hearing the beginning of his comments and more particularly the comments that he made just prior to my coming into the House.

My question simply is: who is "he" in his references? "He says, he says"—I was just wondering who "he" was.

Mr. Cowan: The Minister of Natural Resources would not care to elaborate upon that question a bit while I finish—

Mr. Enns: Mr. Acting Speaker, it is -(interjection)-

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please.

Mr. Enns: It is my practice to pay avid attention to what is being said in this House, and he was making, in his precise manner, a point attributing to somebody that was saying certain things, and it is always helpful if one knows to whom that is being attributed. All he was putting on the record was that he was saying certain things and he was attributing certain things to the Bill under consideration. It would be helpful, for my fuller contemplation of his comments, if I would be given some indication as to who that person was.

Mr. Cowan: I thank the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) for his question. I look forward to his speech during the debate. However, the "he" to whom I am referring is the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Cowan: Let me tell the Minister of Natural Resources why I am dwelling on what the Member for St. James had to say. I am making particular and detailed reference to the comments from the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) on the debate on this Bill because I believe he, like the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), share some misconceptions about the impact of final offer selection in workplaces in Manitoba. Now, early in my comments, and I appreciate the fact that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) was probably in a meeting with some constituents and could not hear all of them directly, so I will just reference a few of them to bring him up to the point in the debate that we have now reached.

The reason that I think it is so important to go point by point through some of the things that have been said is based on my belief that the Minister of Labour and the Member for St. James do not fully understand—I am sorry, let me back up because the Minister of Labour quite appropriately is taking some offence to the suggestion that the Minister of Labour is a Member for St. James. I want to make it clear that in my mind the Minister of Labour is not the Member for St. James, nor is the Member for St. James the Minister of Labour, and the two are two distinct persons although they do share some common misconceptions. They may not be the same individual but they share the same false assumptions. They may not be one in body nor in soul but they are in fact one in their approach to labour relations in this province. So I apologize for having, because of an inadvertent slip, perhaps left the impression that I thought they were both one and the same. I certainly did not.

To go back to what the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) had asked me, because, while the Minister of Natural Resources and I differ quite a bit on a number of issues, we have from time to time agreed on issues and I do in fact value his contributions to debates. I

listen, as do most Members of this House, as did most Members of this House listen to the previous Member for Inkster, Mr. Sidney Green, who is sitting in the loges, when he spoke. While we did not always agree on certain issues—

An Honourable Member: That was when you were in the same caucus.

Mr. Cowan: Well, no caucuses are entirely consistent in any event, and people do not always agree on all issues all the time. So there were disagreements and there were agreements. But the fact is that when he presented a case it was well thought out, it was well documented, it was well researched, and even although one did not always agree, one found pleasure in listening to the way in which events, ideas, concepts, philosophy and facts unfolded throughout the debate.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry): Order, please.

Mr. Cowan: I say that not just because he is sitting in the loge at the present time, I say that because I felt it was an important contribution to a debate that is transpiring. It does lead me back to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), who has much of that same ability. So when he asks me a question, I want to answer the question, and when he says that, because of no fault of his own he may have missed the earlier part of my remarks, I want to share those parts with him, because I value his response to what I have to say. I would encourage him to ask me more questions about every half hour, 45 minutes.

What I said earlier was that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) and the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) were operating under some misconceptions. I said that not only did I believe that, but that other people in society believe that. I quoted an individual who I feel has a unique understanding of the labour movement in this province and has a responsibility to enunciate what the Manitoba Federation of Labour believes in, with respect to labour relations, due to her position as President of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, and that is Ms. Susan Hart-Kulbaba who was recently elected to the position of President of the—

I know that the Minister of Natural Resources will be listening because he does not want me to repeat this again, but perhaps what I will do is save my exact comments till he comes back and can continue on with what I was speaking -(interjection)- Yes, I said I was, well, for the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), my MLA, whom I look to for advice on Rules of the House, tells me it is inappropriate to reference the absence or presence of any Minister. I just note for the Member for St. Norbert that sometimes I do fall outside the parameters of the Rules of the House, but in this particular instance I do not think that was the case because I did not reference the presence or the absence. What I did say was that I was certain that he would be listening to my comments, because if I could say -(interjection)- No, I did not even say it when he was here.

If I could say anything that would imply that he was not here, I would have said that he is probably right outside where there is a speaker, and I am certain he is revelling in the comments at this very moment as he makes a very important phone call to his constituents. I would not want to deny him the right to speak to his constituents for fear of losing some of the flow of the debate or losing the opportunity to ask questions of me. We would grant leave for him, however, let me go back—and speaking of a person. Well, as the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) says, yes indeed, the dean of the Legislature is here. Not that he ever was gone, Mr. Acting Speaker.

What Ms. Susan Hart-Kulbaba had said earlier in a press conference today was, and I quote, "I would urge Mrs. Hammond to educate herself about final offer selection and the positive impact it has had on the labour relations climate in Manitoba. It works and it works well."

Well, what the Manitoba Federation of Labour is saying is somewhat at odds with what the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) said, and quite frankly, if I am going to take the advice of anyone on a labour relations issue in this province, I am probably first going to seek advice from the Manitoba Federation of Labour over the Member for St. James, or even the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond)—no disrespect intended. But the fact is that they have—so what I was doing in my speech to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) was going through point by point, in brief form, the comments from the Member for St. James, and indicating that I would go through them in more detail at a later time in my speech.

* (1640)

By coincidence, I had come to the last point on the list. I am not going to bore other Members, who have sat here and listened patiently to my comments, by going through the entire list again, but I would expect that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), given his great interest in this matter, will leave the comments in Hansard and will reply in an appropriate manner, either through questioning, which I would certainly appreciate, or through his own speech when an opportunity presents itself.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I have gone through the Member for St. James. What I want to do in the brief time remaining to me today—(interjection)—Mr. Speaker, the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) has just advised me that I may not get my entire speech in today. I think he is right, as I always think he is right. I think he has a unique perception of what is transpiring around him. I want you to know that I in no way indicated to him that I would be at this particular point in my speech at this particular time, but I think he knows that there is a lot that needs to be said about this. I think he knows that there is a lot that will be said about this. I think he knows that a lot of us will be saying that.

I want to go back to what the Minister of Labour, the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) said when he introduced a similar Act a couple of years

ago. I indicated earlier—for the edification of the Minister of Natural Resources who was listening at the time, but may have missed the exact words—that they did not succeed in passing that Bill to repeal final offer selection. I believe they will not succeed in passing this Bill to—(interjection)—The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) says from his seat, yes, they will; in this instance they being the Conservatives.

Perhaps I am wrong—perhaps. Maybe they will, but they will not do so without a fight on the part of every Member of the New Democratic Party Caucus. They will not do so, even with the support of the Liberals as they have had over the past few days in attempting to railroad this Bill through the House. They will not do so without a fight from the working people in this province. They will not do so without the 12 Members of the New Democratic Party using every opportunity they have, perhaps not on this phase of the Bill, but certainly as the Bill progresses its way through the normal legislative proceedings.—(interjection)—The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) says where are my legions, and I would have to ask of him what he means when he asks where are my legions?

There are probably more New Democrats in the House right now than there are other Members of other Parties.

An Honourable Member: That is a first.

Mr. Cowan: The Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus) says, that is a first. I do not know. I am sorry. Oh, the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) said, that is a first. I am informed by the Member for St. Norbert that the Member for Inkster said, well, that is a first.

If indeed it is a first—I do not know, Mr. Speaker—but if indeed it is a first, it shows how strongly we are committed to protecting the rights of working people in this province, that we would stay in this Chamber to provide support through a process which will see the stopping of the attempts of the Liberal and Conservative coalition to repeal the rights of working people in the Province of Manitoba. We will not leave our seats as long as there is a fight to be fought, a word to be spoken, a speech to be given, and a battle to be won.

If indeed, to the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), if indeed it is a first, it will not be a last. If indeed it is a first, it is the first worthy of the combined efforts of all New Democrats, not only in this Chamber, but in the workplaces, in the hospitals, in the municipal offices, in the schools, in the factories, in the plants, in the mills, at the airport, downtown, in this building, uptown, across town, in the North, in Brandon, east and west, in Thompson, Rupertsland, Flin Flon, The Pas, Elmwood, St. Johns, not St. James, oh, yes, Turtle Mountain, and, yes, indeed, in Inkster, because what is being said here today in this House does not stop here today in this House.

We will tell the constituents in Inkster what has been said in this House in defense of their rights. We will tell all the constituents from Inkster how the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) sat in his seat silent,

whipped in the submission by the Deputy Leader when it came time to defend their rights. We will tell them how the Member for Inkster chose not to enter into this very important debate when it came time to protect their rights in the shops, on the railway, in the coffee shop, in the hospitals, in the day care centres, in every workplace and work site throughout the constituency of Inkster.

It will not stop at the Inkster boundary. We will say the same in Transcona. We will say the same in Burrows. We will say the same in the Maples and the Kildonans. We will say the same in every constituency throughout this province, because what has happened today with this unholy coalition of Liberals and Conservatives to attack the rights of working people will not go unnoticed in the shops, in the packers, in the plants, in the mines, in the mills.

A moment ago I started out to indicate the points that I had taken out of the speech from the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) when he was Minister of Labour, when he introduced the first Bill to repeal final offer selection sometime ago. I became somewhat distracted and digressed for a moment. I would like to go back to that. I now know for sure, and I think that the Member for Concordia, my Leader (Mr. Doer), was very perceptive. Perhaps he knew that we would digress for a moment and become distracted when he said I would probably not finish my comments today. I now know that to be the case, because I have 11 points that I want to make with respect to the previous Minister of Labour's comments before I proceed on to the present Minister of Labour's comments.

I will not be able to carry through with all of them today, so maybe what I will do, rather than split up my analysis of the previous Minister of Labour's comments, is just reflect a bit on why it is this is a very important debate, and why it is that I cannot finish my comments today and, perhaps, may not be able to finish tomorrow or the day after. The reason I believe this is so very important, and I do not want to repeat what I have said already, but I think it is important to highlight the reason that I am going through such effort, and my caucus is going through such effort, and people outside this building are going through such effort to stop the railroading of this Bill through this House, to stop the repeal of workers' rights, is because we believe final offer selection has in fact worked.

* (1650)

It is not a belief that we have only. It is a belief that is shared by working people throughout this province and we believe, when the facts and figures are laid out clearly and concisely and elaborated upon and clarified over the next little while, that those who approach this matter with an open mind—and I know as legislators we all approach our business here with open minds—will be convinced of the fact that final offer selection can indeed provide benefits for working people, and what benefits working people in this province, benefits us all. It can provide for a more stable and peaceful labour relations climate and it does not take away the rights of working people during negotiations or contract disputes.

There has been an effort on the part of the Government to provide information in a way that casts a negative light on final offer selection that must at least be dealt with in a detailed way in this House where it should be dealt with, as Susan Hart-Kulbaba said, and I said I would read the whole release that she made today into the record and I will do so at my next opportunity, but I just want to read another portion of it and it will tell you why this is so important.

The release started out: Labour Minister Gerrie Hammond is casting a bad light on evidence that shows final offer selection is having a positive effect on the labour relations climate in Manitoba. She wants to make it easier for the Filmon Government to repeal this piece of progressive legislation by making it appear FOS is not working. That is the view of the Manitoba Federation of Labour president, Susan Hart-Kulbaba. That is their view, that is my view. We do not always share exactly the same view, but in this instance we do.

We believe that the Minister is trying to cast a bad light on the evidence that shows final offer selection is working. We believe we have a responsibility to provide the other side of the equation to talk about how it is working and to let the people ultimately, who listen to this debate and who make their determinations on the basis of an open mind and reviewing facts and figures, to make the decision as to whether or not the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond) and her Conservative colleagues and her Liberal friends are right, or whether or not an organization that represents 80,000 trade unionists in the province, in the New Democratic Party and many other progressive groups in this province, are right.

I imagine, Mr. Speaker, that it is not that either one of us is entirely right. There may be room where we can move. There may be room where she can move, but I do believe in large part what she has said about final offer selection is wrong, as I believe what the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) said about final offer selection is wrong.

I believe that we have a responsibility to put the other evidence on the table. I believe that the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) had that responsibility and was denied the right and responsibility to do so by the other Parties in the Chamber the other day. Because they have silenced one Member at one particular time does not mean they have silenced that Member nor does it mean they have avoided the debate. The debate will continue on.

Mr. Speaker, when the Federation of Labour goes so far as to say that a Labour Minister is purposely casting a bad light by the way in which her department and she use statistics, that is a very serious charge that must be answered. I know that the Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), in closing comments when she has an opportunity to do so, will want to address those very serious charges.

And I hope she will take—well, she says from her seat, and I am reading lips so I think I am probably correct, she says she bets—(interjection)—the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) tells me that she said: you bet your life. Mr. Speaker, the fact is that I hope she

takes as much time to deal with the evidence as I do during the course of my debate. I hope she is as thorough in her analysis of the facts and figures as I have been. I hope that she puts forward as strong a case for her own perceptions as all the Members of the New Democratic Party Caucus have done throughout this debate, so that we can have—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., time for Private Members' Business. This matter will stand in the name of the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan).

* (1700)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS
DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS
PUBLIC BILLS
BILL NO. 4—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC
AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 4, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am absolutely flattered that Members of the dirty dozen in the Second Opposition Party have so welcomed this contribution. . . . This is most flattering and I must say that before they all leave -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of comments, and I hope that my honourable friend, the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), will bear with me when I make my contribution to this Bill. Needless to say, there have been a number of varying opinions as to this legislation.

Some have considered it to be an attack on rural Manitoba. Some have considered it to be an extremely meaningful and poignant piece of legislation. There are those, even in the Liberal Party, I know, that have wrestled with this as an issue of major public policy.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell my honourable friends in the House that I think this genuinely is one of the more significant pieces of legislation that is before this Session. Bear in mind that given this is a minority Government situation, this may be the last Session before an election, because at any given time Government is not aware of when the combined Opposition might defeat us on a motion in the House.

We simply do not know, in Government, whether this will be the last opportunity for Manitobans to look at the Liberal Party which was said, at the start of this Session by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), as Government-in-waiting. That was stated about the 1st of May as we prepared for this Session, that the Liberal Party after the first Session, all but one of the Members were newcomers to the House. They were ready to govern. Mr. Speaker, that is an

interesting statement. I have made my point on whether or not they are indeed ready to govern or not. Manitobans have not, because Manitobans have not had an opportunity to express their confidence in that statement by the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs).

Mr. Speaker, what Manitobans will look at is the positions taken by the various Parties in this House on issues that are key and critical to the future of the Province of Manitoba, and they will judge the three political Parties. This is the first time that there has been going into an election a genuine three-Party potential race in an election.

This means that the actions over the last two Sessions are going to be those by which Manitobans ought to rightfully mark their ballots and make the decision over the next three to four years of Government. That is why this piece of legislation is so fundamentally important because I believe that this represents some of the finest policy direction that the Liberal Party is able to come up with. I think that this demonstrates the depth of ability to govern that the Liberal Party brings to the people of Manitoba.

This issue was brought forward by the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), one of the few Members in that Government who has a profile—and I say that with all due respect because I have come to know and admire and respect a number of the Members in the Liberal Party from personal conversations. Clearly the Member for Assiniboia is the one person who has gained a profile in this House as a newcomer MLA to the Liberal Party. He has done it by taking his responsibilities as Highways Critic very, very seriously. He has driven almost every single highway and provincial road in the Province of Manitoba to point out, and I sat through the Estimate process where he pointed out the areas of needed improvement in the highway project. He has taken his responsibilities very seriously.

His caucus have obviously taken his work very seriously, because they give the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) when we have 240 hours of Estimate time in total, they give their colleague, the Transportation Critic in the Liberal Party, some 33 hours to debate Highways and Transportation. Now that is the second highest debate of any set of Estimates this Session. That demonstrates the confidence the Liberal Party shows in the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) and his contribution to the House. What it speaks droves of, however—and this is what Manitobans are going to judge the Liberal Party on—is where their priorities are.

The Opposition House Leader (Mrs. Carstairs) was the Finance Critic and allowed 33 hours of debate to be dedicated to Highways and Transportation and not one minute of debate on the Finance Estimates of the Province of Manitoba, so that the whole financial agenda of this Government is not a policy issue for the Liberal Party as official Opposition, and I might remind them, as Government-in-waiting according to their Leader some eight months ago.

When the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) as critic for Transportation brings this piece of legislation

to the House, he introduced it as a very important piece of legislation, and I do not know whether the Liberals operate in caucus like we do, but before any Member brings Private Members' legislation it must be approved by caucus. I assume that the Liberals in an open democratic Party, a Government-in-waiting would have given whole-hearted support to the Member for Assiniboia's legislation. So that Bill is a priority of the Liberal Party and the main intent of that legislation is that we have clean licence plates.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Manitobans going into this next election are going to say the Liberals are the clean-licence-plate Party that do not want to debate finance Estimates, the spending of this province, but they want to spend 33 hours in Highways and Transportation Estimates. They want to put an important piece of policy, Liberal Party policy, namely, clean licence plates as their advancement of policy for the people of Manitoba as Government-in-waiting. Their platform is clean licence plates, no debate on the finances of the Province of Manitoba and that is why I said earlier on, this Bill has significantly more importance to the people of Manitoba as we approach an election than any other issue that has been brought forward by the Liberal Party in this Session or the last Session.

Mr. Speaker, this tells us that the Liberal Party indeed, through their Leader, did not truthfully tell the people of Manitoba that they were Government-in-waiting. That was a boastful statement without depth, without credibility, without policy, without program, without direction, and without vision for the people of Manitoba and that is why this piece of legislation is important.

This is the hallmark of the Liberal Party in Opposition. Clean licence plates, no debate on finance, no debate on the Premier's Estimates because they put 33 hours into Highways and Transportation discussing every road and every byway in the Province of Manitoba, but not one minute of debate on finances, where this province is going, where the future plan is, where the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has an agenda for the future. You know why they did not debate that? Because clean licence plates took a priority over debating the financial income and expenditure difficulties, problems, challenges in the Province of Manitoba. That is why I welcome the opportunity to debate in this province and I look forward to the election campaign to remind Manitobans that the Government-in-waiting, led by Mrs. Carstairs and her crew, have a policy for Manitobans of clean licence plates and nothing else.

* (1710)

Mr. Speaker, those people of Manitoba are going to have to make a judgment on the basis of what the Liberal Party brought forward and to date this is all they have brought forward, is clean licence plates in Bill No. 4. Now my honourable friend, the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr), is laughing from his seat. He had better enjoy the laugh he can have from that seat now because I do not know how the constituents of Fort Rouge are going to react to a Government-in-waiting with their major Party policy as exemplified in this Session being clean licence plates.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let me tell my honourable friends in the Liberal Party that, should this issue come to a

vote in this House, and I want to tell my honourable friend, the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) that I personally will be supporting in Private Members' hour this legislation. It is the most positive suggestion the Liberals have made in two years of this House. There has been no other suggestion worthy of support by my honourable Liberal friends.

I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that one of the finest, most outstanding Members of the Liberal Caucus is none other than the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) who has brought with forthright honesty the platform of the Liberal Party to this House.

Mr. Speaker, it may well be that after the next election the Member for Assiniboia is the only Liberal left and has to be the Leader. We would welcome that. We jest about this, but today—and I have to kind of reflect just genteelly on the Member for Inkster's (Mr. Lamoureux) outstanding, incisive and brutal questioning of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) today—that again we have the Liberal Party in disarray.

The Liberal Party is led by the, what was it, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Liberal Party last election, Mr. Gilroy was the campaign manager for the Liberal Party. The Liberals have prided themselves on their organizational skills in the City of Winnipeg. Mr. Gilroy is a councillor and he is the chairman of the committee that cut the libraries. Mr. Gilroy is chairman of the committee that can make those kinds of decisions on libraries, Mr. Speaker, and the words of the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) said, he did not want to do it. He is reaching out for us Tories to help him out.

That is why the Liberal Party is floundering in this Legislature, in the City of Winnipeg, and their most important policy is clean licence plates. I am going to support that policy initiative, the only one that has come forward from the Liberal Party, should this Bill come to a vote. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern and Native Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 10—THE BEVERAGE CONTAINER ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act; Loi sur les contenants de boissons, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). The Honourable Minister of Health.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my in-depth research of this Bill has led me and prompted me to speak on it this afternoon. I genuinely admire and respect the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) for the clear message that he has brought to this House in talking about beverages.

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, the cutting critic of the New Democratic Party in Health has reminded

me, yes, I was alleged to be the Member for Springfield's mentor at one time. Do you know what? For the life of me I cannot figure out why any person, who I thought was a reasonably astute politician, would leave Government to join the second row of the official Opposition. I mean, under ordinary circumstances people cross the floor to get into Government, and when they do that, quite often people cross the floor to get into Government in Cabinet.

I can recall—and I will give my honourable friends a little confession that I am proud of, but it is a little confession I have not shared with too many people before, Mr. Speaker. In the leadership of—I forget how many eons ago, in this great federal dominion of ours, I supported Jack Horner for the leadership. I did, and do you want to know why I supported Jack Horner for the federal leadership? I wanted a western spokesman in the national scene for the Progressive Conservative Party. I would never have torpedoed Lloyd Axworthy like this gutless caucus did.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I realize that principles are terribly important to two political Parties in this House. Progressive Conservatives have a philosophical agenda. We are clearly and identifiably in favour of the private sector and its role in the economy. There is another clear political philosophy in this House, that being that represented by the New Democratic Party, which believes that Crown corporations and Governments are the only answer to all of the evils and ills in this nation of ours, and we are philosophically disagreeing. But the one Party that does not have a philosophy that is clear, enunciable, identifiable, is the Liberal Party.

There was a gentleman here earlier this afternoon who I respected an awful lot when he was a Member of this House. He was the Member for Inkster when I came into this House—the Member for Inkster, and I ought not to be sharing with you his thoughts, but I will anyway. He did not have any respect for the Liberal Party, because the Liberal Party did not stand for anything except power—achieving power, maintaining power, without any principal base under which to base their decisions. The obvious question is, what has changed? Nothing, because when we deal with this very important Beverage Container Act, we have to consider the principles that are involved in those that bring this Bill to the House.

Mr. Speaker, principally, I supported back in those leadership days one Jack Horner, philosophically, because I knew he was a strong, solid voice for western Canada—(interjection)- I believe that Jack Horner might have been in favour of this legislation, but I did not ask him about that. But, Mr. Speaker, when Mr. Horner crossed the floor, he crossed the floor as an Opposition MP to join the Government of the Day, and not only join the Government of the Day, but to become the Minister of Transportation to try and achieve something for western Canada that he could not do having not led the Party to victory.

* (1720)

Now, Mr. Speaker, he joined the Liberal Party, much similar to the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), the

sponsor of this Bill, who joined the Liberal Party. Bill No. 4 again is an important Bill on principle and concept, because when Jack Horner crossed the floor to Government, delivered things in his constituency because he was a Cabinet Minister in Government, he was defeated. He was defeated roundly, soundly, and completely by the people of Alberta who did not want him to represent them as a Liberal.

Mr. Speaker, we have the Member for Springfield, the sponsor of Bill No. 4, The Beverage Container Act—(interjection)- 10, sorry, 10. Le Bill dix, Monsieur le President. But, we see this Member sponsoring this Bill, crossing the floor from Government to Opposition, and I will guarantee you, just as surely as I am speaking to his Bill today, he will not run in Springfield and be the next MLA for Springfield. He is a finished politician because the tendency is, there is only one MLA ever in this House, not including the Bill—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the Honourable Minister that I have recognized him to speak to Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act, and to keep his remarks relevant to said question, please. The Honourable Minister.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I want to tell you that this Beverage Container Act may well be another important piece of legislation that the Liberals have, but I am not sure there is unanimous consent on that side of the House that it be sponsored. I suspect there is a little suspicion of the true motivation of the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), because, after all, in his caucus, how can they say, well, where is he going to move to next. There is his former Party here. After all, he was a New Democrat before he became a Conservative to become a Liberal. Mr. Speaker, I realize that is not relevant to the Bill and I will not say it again.—(interjection)- Oh, they will not have him. He tried that before he went to the Liberals.

I want to tell you that I have recently read an article on plastic production. In the United States of America today, there are 30 million tons of plastics produced annually. The whole agricultural economy of the United States of America only produces 60 million tons of wheat. So you can see the magnitude of the volume of production of plastic products. Mr. Speaker, plastics are not biodegradable in most cases as produced today. They can remain in the environment for upwards of 200 years without breaking down. That 60 million tons of wheat that is produced will be consumed probably within a year and a half, somewhere in the world, and produce positive results in terms of the nutrition of hungry millions.

The United States is embarking upon a recycling effort, and one of the companies that are involved has committed to recycle 30 million pounds a year of plastic. Understand the dimensions: 30 million tons a year of production and an initiative yet to be commenced of recycling 30 million pounds a year. That means every single year in the United States alone, and Europe will have the same statistics, but I do not have them to share with my honourable friends in the House today.

We are producing enormous quantities of non-biodegradable materials that are littering the

environment, littering the beaches of the world, dumped at sea. The plastic ring containers that carry the six cans of Coke are littered in the ocean, and they entrap fish and other species and kill them needlessly. That is why this Government and this Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) have embarked upon a very proactive campaign on the environment.

One of the materials that have to be dealt with in a reasoned and responsible fashion is plastic containers. Many of our beverage containers today are plastic. The day of glass is gone, to be replaced by aluminum, which is very successfully recycled, and plastic which, to date, has not been.

I consider this a challenge, a challenge for Manitobans, Canadians, a challenge for people across the world, to get into more recycling of products that may in the long run require that we make the price of recycling attractive. We can do that in a number of different ways, and possibly one of them is to make deposits to such an extent that one will not, with impunity, toss away another plastic container or metal aluminum can into the environment.- (interjection)- My honourable friend says that maybe we should have a Bill here that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), on a point of order.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): I wonder if I could prevail upon the Honourable Member to get back to Jack Horner.

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

Mr. Orchard: I would with a great deal of—I would love to get back to Jack Horner, but, Mr. Speaker, I would suspect that you might not show your usual magnanimous tolerance, tolerance that has been exemplified in this House on how many occasions, when the Liberal Party have burned you on vote, after vote, after vote. Shame on the Liberal Party, these non-Parliamentarians. I shall not ever not abide by every single word that you give to this House.- (interjection)- The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) just woke up. What was it that caused that?

I simply want to close on this Bill by -(interjection)- no, no, I did not give the Speaker notice that I was the designated speaker on this Bill, so I cannot do that.

I want to say that this Bill as presented to us by the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) is a Bill that, I think, after the next election, he may wish that he had a deposit on himself and was able to be recycled, as is the proposal in this Bill. I am afraid that the Member for Springfield has no recycling value to the electorate of Manitoba and shall not be here after the next election, should the combined forces of the Opposition Parties decide to spring an election on the people of Manitoba. It is with some regret that I have to say that, because I have a deep and ongoing thought pattern for the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch). Thank you.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): I move, seconded by the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 13—THE MANITOBA INTERCULTURAL COUNCIL AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba, and the motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that the question be now put, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Is there leave?

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): I just want to indicate that our caucus would really like to hear another speech from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), but if he is too tired after giving two short 15-minute speeches, we will give leave from our caucus.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave? Agreed.

BILL NO. 16—AN ACT TO PROTECT THE HEALTH OF NON-SMOKERS

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), Bill No. 16, An Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers; Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave.

* (1730)

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson, on a point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): I just want to indicate that we would not want to deny the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) the opportunity to speak on this Bill, and notwithstanding other occasions when other Members have been denied that opportunity, we will allow this matter to stand.

Mr. Speaker: Leave has been granted. The Honourable Member for Radisson.

Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson): I would like, with leave, to take this opportunity to make a few comments on this particular Bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Honourable Members.

First of all, before I get into matters of substance on the Bill, I would like to say that I do not set myself up as being holier than thou. More by good luck than good management, I have escaped getting hooked on smoking, which is something unusual in that my father was a railroader. I was born and raised on the CNR, and the probabilities of someone being brought up on any of the railways and not becoming a smoker are very, very slim. My father was a very heavy smoker all his life. I think he once said he had used tobacco since the age of 14 and he was fortunate in that he beat the odds, and he died some seven years ago at the age of 92, and he went out smoking.—(interjection)— No, we will get around to the substance.

My two brothers, I am the oldest of three, my two brothers also were—one was, he is now dead, and the other one still is a heavy smoker. Somehow, as they say, by good luck rather than good management, I did not. While I experimented as all teenagers do, I did not learn to inhale and therefore managed to escape getting hooked.

However, I do not want to be seen as casting any undue aspersions on any Honourable Members in this House and also many good friends and relatives and so on outside the House who, unfortunately, are smokers and maybe would like to kick the habit.

First of all, I must say that smoking and primarily cigarette smoking is a dirty, filthy habit. The smell of butts and stale smoke and so on, cigarette butts I might say, gets all through the residences of smokers, and it settles on the walls, on the draperies, settles on the clothing and so on of households where there are heavy smokers, Mr. Speaker, and this is very offensive and not particularly pleasant. It is particularly unpleasant to go into the far too many taxicabs where the drivers smoke and the taxicabs reek of it.

Here I am not generalizing to all smokers, but a great many smokers have no sense of decorum or cleanliness. They butt their cigarettes all over the place. I have even seen cigarette butts on the floor of this beautiful building. They are littered all over lawns. One cannot go into the great outdoors even, 10 miles in the bush or whatever, without running across a lawn with beer bottle tops or soft drink cans and so on and so on. The human being at times can be a very dirty animal that befouls its environment.

However, and we read some of these comments, Mr. Speaker, well, first of all let me say that the evidence, the link between smoking and lung cancer and to a large extent heart problems and so on is not open to question any longer. We have known for some, let us say, a good two decades that this cause-and-effect link is there.

Now having said that, I can understand someone of let us say roughly middle age or roughly age 40 and up who unfortunately got hooked on smoking at the time when this was not clearly known, and those individuals might make a decision, well, I will give up five or 10 years of the tail end of my life to enjoy smoking during the remaining course of my life. That is an understandable, somewhat rational conclusion or decision, Mr. Speaker.

The problem is with the young people who are starting to smoke today. Now, I recall as a teenager some 50 years ago during the Depression in the '30s, in my day as a teenager very few of the girls smoked. There was a very deliberate campaign at that time on the part of the cigarette companies to get women to smoke. They supplied cigarettes to the motion picture companies, and if any Honourable Members get hooked on some late movies from back in the 30s, they will notice that all the female stars of the day, Joan Crawford, Bette Davis and so on were always lighting up cigarettes, very frequently with holders, and it was supposed to be very, very sophisticated. This is deliberately fostered and brought on by the tobacco industry, Mr. Speaker, to the extent that we are today—I do not have any figures, but I would say that women are certainly smoking as much as men, in spite of the fact that this dangerous link is known.

The product is still pushed. It is pushed on our young people to get them hooked at the young age and get started so they have them for life, unfortunately. This is something that disturbs me considerably, Mr. Speaker.

Might I also say that in my past 14 years of service on the faculty of the University of Manitoba I have noticed that very, very few of the students are smokers any more. Amongst those that are, I would make an educated guess and say that it is three to one, female to male—

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Patterson: —maybe it is five to one. It is the girls who are starting to smoke now, it is not the younger boys. I would assume that the same thing holds in high school.

As with any more or less addictive habit we get hooked on at a young age, we are going to continue that usually throughout the course of our lifetime. It is most unfortunate to see that this is happening.

So long as adults do anything, we cannot say to our younger people, you cannot do this, if they see us doing it. That is unfortunate. Nevertheless, we can, by various means, make it difficult or reduce access to it and also through education and knowledge try to dissuade the younger generation from getting started on this particular habit.

Many of those that are unfortunately in the probacco lobby will sometimes try to make a comparison between smoking and alcoholism. Well, this just does not hold, Mr. Speaker. In the first place, every—I would hazard a guess that the average cigarette smoker, probably 98 percent of the cigarette smokers are the equivalent of out-and-out alcoholics.

Alcohol is a very useful beverage. It is not at all harmful, in moderation. Humankind has been using alcohol from virtually time immemorial, and in moderation it does not harm the human being. Alcohol, of course, can be, is, and has been abused. It is very unfortunate some of the social wreckage that is due to alcohol.

Nevertheless, out of those that do consume alcohol say roughly 10 percent might become alcoholics.

Whereas those that smoke cigarettes, Mr. Speaker, 98 percent of them are the equivalent of those alcoholics. They cannot go five minutes without having a cigarette—a pack a day. They have to be lighting one off the butt of the previous one. So there is no such thing as a social smoke, enjoying a cigarette, say mid-morning coffee break, another one at lunch, another one at afternoon and a couple in the evening. It is just a continual smoke, smoke, smoke. That is why I say that the average smoker is the equivalent of an out-and-out alcoholic.

* (1740)

At any rate, this habit of smoking is a very costly one to society. The link between smoking and lung cancer, as I said before, is not open to question although the tobacco lobby does try to question it, and the cost to our health system in the treatment of the diseases that are caused by this habit is simply enormous. If there were no smoking, I would hazard a guess that the costs that our Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is faced with would be very, very significantly reduced.

At any rate, Mr. Speaker, anything that can be done, particularly to reduce the probabilities of our young people starting to smoke, is all to the good.

As I said before, I feel for older people who got hooked on smoking in the days when the ill effects were not definite and known, but it is very unfortunate that so many of our young people are still getting started. This is going to have continuing deleterious effects on society generally in the years to come.

For those reasons, Mr. Speaker, this Bill has a considerable amount of merit in not preventing anyone that does smoke from smoking, but making it somewhat or even extremely difficult for our younger people to get started and to get hooked on this very, very undesirable addiction.

So for those reasons, I think this Bill is worthy of going forward to committee so that all interested parties may have further input to it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

BILL NO. 17—THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Bill No. 17, The Employment Standards Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les normes d'emploi, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 18—THE OZONE LAYER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), Bill No. 18, The Ozone Layer Protection Act—that was ruled out of order.

BILL NO. 22—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 22, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 23—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 23, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 24—THE BUSINESS NAMES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 24, The Business Names Registration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'enregistrement des noms commerciaux, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 26—THE REAL PROPERTY AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 26, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

**BILL NO. 41—THE HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT(4)**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 41, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (4); Loi no 4 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

**BILL NO. 55—THE CROWN
CORPORATIONS PUBLIC REVIEW AND
ACCOUNTABILITY AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus), Bill No. 55, The Crown Corporations Public Review and Accountability Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'examen public des corporations de la Couronne et l'obligation redditionnelle de celles-ci, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

**BILL NO. 85—THE ELECTIONS
AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski), Bill No. 85, The Elections Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi électorale, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey). Stand.

Is there leave this this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

**BILL NO. 91—THE PUBLIC HEALTH
AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), Bill No. 91, The Public Health Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la santé publique, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, every once in a long while there comes a Bill to the House that reminds us that the reason that we are here is for good legislation, and not just to point our fingers at those people that we feel we want to blame for different situations.

This particular Bill that was introduced by the third Party has considerable merits in addressing the

difficulties of dealing with intoxicants and substance, and specifically with youths.

Mr. Speaker, this is a Bill that I believe all Parties agree to and I believe that all Parties can support. All Parties have indicated a fair degree of favouritism in reflecting on this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, they recognized the problem. I recognized the problem. I have seen the problem in my neighbourhood. I think that it behooves us all to pass this particular Bill to the committee stage, so that we can deal with it effectively and properly, making amendments that may be necessary to make it even better legislation and bring it forward.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that in this particular case, on this particular and specific Bill, it is time to put the Party partisanship aside and to deal with the intent of the Bill. The intent is to deal with a difficult situation that is often ignored by a population that somehow refuses to acknowledge the difficulty that certain individuals in our society have. Because of its degree of discomfort, Mr. Speaker, we turn our heads away from it and in so doing hope that it will go away.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately it does not go away. There are youngsters and children, particularly in the inner core of the city, who perhaps start through peer pressure or perhaps start as a lark or perhaps do it to impress older members of their group. For whatever reason they do it, they will sniff gasoline or they will sniff glue or they will sniff lighter fluid or any of those products.

* (1750)

Mr. Speaker, could we get the attention of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for St. Norbert has the floor.

Mr. Angus: Mr. Speaker, I particularly would like the Minister of Health to pay attention to this. This is a very, very serious Bill and it is a serious problem. If he is seriously interested in reducing the health care costs, he will look at Bills and legislation like this that are designed to prevent the problem, to help address the problem before it becomes a serious, costly problem in the hospitals.

I have some concerns with the Bill that I would like to address at the second reading. I would like to propose or suggest amendments for all Parties to consider at the committee stage, as I am sure all Members would like to have a frank and open discussion on this. I do not believe it needs to be dragged out. I do not believe that it needs to be delayed.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the evidence is well documented. It is showing up with uncommon regularity in society. It is indeed an unfortunate fact of life that the problem that is created by not admitting that we have a problem is an admission of ignoring the problem and it allows the problem to continue.

So it is with the greatest of respect to the institute of this establishment that I would seriously encourage

all Members of this House to pull together on this one Bill, specifically moving it on to the committee stage so that we can pass it into legislation and at least for today go home feeling good about the accomplishments that we have had. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey).

BILL NO. 95—THE CERTIFIED GENERAL ACCOUNTANTS ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik), Bill No. 95, The Certified General Accountants Act; Loi sur les comptables généraux agréés, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), on a point of order.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to alert Your Honour to the fact that although you did correctly state that this Bill is standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Niakwa (Mr. Herold Driedger), Hansard does reflect it as standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger).

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member is quite correct. There was an error in printing of the Order Paper.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

The Honourable Member for Transcona.

Mr. Kozak: Mr. Speaker, I understand that only a few minutes remain to me today to begin my remarks on Bill No. 95, The Certified General Accountants Act, but I would like to take this earliest opportunity to address certain remarks to this extremely important Bill. I commend the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for having introduced this Bill. As he pointed out on Tuesday of this very week, this Bill is essentially the re-enactment of The Certified General Accountants Act.

Every Member of this House will certainly share my view that the accounting profession is an important resource available to the people of Manitoba, to business in Manitoba and Government in Manitoba. All Honourable Members undoubtedly wish to provide full co-operation to the accounting profession in the efficient management of their affairs. It is, however, incumbent upon me at this time to state that the Bill before us is not entirely without controversy.

Because of the limited time remaining to me today, and I will certainly continue my remarks on a later occasion, I would like to point out to my colleagues that remarks I made in this House on Wednesday, January 24, 1990, with regard to Bill No. 75, The Insurance Amendment Act, bear a great deal of relevance to debate regarding Bill No. 95, The Certified General Accountants Act, because indeed the two Bills that we are in the process of considering and that I have just mentioned do share one controversial element that must be come to grips with by Members of this House in second reading and as we progress to committee stage.

My Party, Mr. Speaker, is certainly willing to see Bill No. 95 progress to committee stage so that we can address the controversial item that I will raise today and address it in some detail on a clause-by-clause basis. To provide my colleagues with an indication of the matter that we intend to address at great length with regard to this Bill and also Bill No. 75, I will simply today remind my colleagues of a couple of remarks I made on January 24 in speaking to The Insurance Amendment Act.

We are looking at a Bill, Mr. Speaker, that promotes the principle of self-regulation of professions. This is not a principle that is without controversy. I would like to address some of my remarks, both during second reading and during committee stage, to the controversies surrounding the principle of self-regulation. Indeed, my Party is prepared to see this Bill pass second reading because we feel that committee consideration will be of significant importance with regard to a meaningful exchange of views on the somewhat controversial concept known as self-regulation.

Commentators on self-regulation by quasi-autonomous professions have been of two minds on the value of the concept. Self-regulation as a concept dates back to the guilds of Medieval Europe, whereby various trades set standards for their members, standards for entry into the trades concerned. The principle has been in constant use throughout the Western World ever since the Middle Ages.

I do not stand here to argue with almost a full millennium of western civilization. In fact, I do point out that there is a strong justification down to the present day for a certain level of self-regulation within the framework of interest by the Government, which is ultimately responsible for the welfare of the public of this province and indeed jurisdictions throughout the Western World.

Quite recently, Manitoba's Director of Professional and Applied Ethics described Government participation in self-regulation as being based on something of a social contract. He has stated that society does not have the knowledge to enable it to control and police such professions as the dental or medical professions effectively. He indicates what society has done is reach a bargain with each professional group, something of a trade-off.

The professions are granted autonomy to self-regulate in exchange for a commitment to blow the

whistle on unscrupulous and dangerous practitioners. Where I start to have difficulties with the functioning of the principle of self-regulation is when I realize that the critics who argue that self-regulatory professions have sometimes attached considerably more importance to defending the interests of practitioners within those professions than they have had to defending the public interest in a general way, may well have an extremely valid point which deserves careful thought and debate in this House during second reading and during committee consideration of this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, I understand I have some time remaining to me to continue my remarks on a later occasion. I will certainly take the opportunity to do so. Thank you.

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

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).