

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 21, 1989.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to provide a copy to each of the Opposition Parties of the Report on the Brandon General Hospital Peer Review Committee.

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the 1989-90 Estimates for Manitoba Education and Training.

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

\* (1335)

#### Substance Abuse Federal Rehabilitation Funding

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, it is no wonder that the staff at the Manitoba Health Services Commission sit around and dream up wish list rewards for themselves. It is because they have no faith in this Minister's ability to make decisions and their frustration is showing. Well, so too is ours.

On September 28, I asked the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) why Manitoba had not yet signed an agreement with the federal Government as part of the alcohol, drug treatment and rehabilitation agreement. He replied that it was just a temporary program and he was leery of 50-cent dollars.

When we proved that he was wrong and it was not a temporary program, he agreed they had to negotiate an appropriate program. We have raised it a number of times since, and yet we have learned there have been no negotiations between this Government and the federal Government since we first raised the question on the 28th of September. Mr. Speaker, why is this Minister denying funding to young people, in particular, young people who desperately need drug rehabilitation treatment?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), again searches for issues where issues are not readily available to her. Let me deal step by step with the ones that she raised, and I trust that I will have the opportunity to reply fully.

My honourable friend raises the issue of a survey done at the Manitoba Health Services Commission, Mr.

Speaker, that is part of an opening up of the management process within the Ministry of Health. We are in. We are trying to work with the people involved in the delivery of health care within the ministry to find out what sort of initiatives may be appropriate to assure that people doing an excellent job are recognized for delivering that excellent job.

Mr. Speaker, that is just simply plain good management to involve those people who are carrying the freight in the department and to involve them in suggestions to senior management as to how recognition for a job well done might be provided.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of the Youth Drug Program, I will complete that answer at my earliest opportunity.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious where this Minister's priorities are. He is totally unconcerned with ensuring that young people denied treatment get treatment made available to them.

#### Lemay House Federal Rehabilitation Funding

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, Lemay House has an official waiting list of three months. Most agencies do not even make a referral to this youth counselling centre, because they know that they will never make the list. Tragically, many of these are young women and older women who suffer from a combined addiction as well as the history of sexual and physical abuse.

Why will this Minister not access federal funds that have been accessed by almost every other province in this nation to ensure that there is a treatment program for these women?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** I am very pleased that my honourable friend, the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), would bring up Lemay House.

Mr. Speaker, in 1983, on December 21, very close to today's date only six years ago, Mr. Reg Alcock, the Director of Child and Family Services, approved eight beds at a per diem rate of \$30, which did not allow proper staffing patterns. I am pleased to say that as of today with this Government there are 12 beds at Lemay House with the appropriate funding to assure that women receive treatment at Lemay House because of action of this Government.

\* (1340)

**Mrs. Carstairs:** The Minister of Health knows full well that the 12 beds presently functioning are woefully inadequate. Why will he not access funds from the federal Government to ensure that there are more adolescent treatment beds in the Province of Manitoba?

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Speaker, that is an issue very much in front of Government being discussed with St. Norbert Foundation, other institutions that provide services.

Mr. Speaker, how can my honourable friend, the Liberal Leader, ask questions sitting beside the individual who (a) underfunded, (b) provided only eight beds of support, which was inadequate six years ago when we moved to resolve that?

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member for Osborne, on a point of order.

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader):** If the Minister would check his facts, he would find that I approved the maximum I was able to, unlike the action that this Minister has taken.

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

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**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Minister of Health, to finish his answer.

**Mr. Orchard:** I appreciate my honourable friend who was a servant of the NDP, who followed NDP guidelines—a hex on both their houses, Mr. Speaker.

We are moving to resolve the problem with the resources of Government at Lemay House, focused to deliver not eight beds but 12 beds of service treatment, and we will do more, Mr. Speaker.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Mr. Speaker, the Liberal Party will not accept responsibility for the inadequacy of either the NDP or the Tories.

Mr. Speaker, this Minister—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** The Minister knows full well that Ministers establish policy and civil servants carry it out.

### Substance Abuse Federal Rehabilitation Funding

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, this Minister has refused as a Minister responsible to access funding that is available. Why has he consistently refused to access this funding? Why is he doing contrary to what every other Health Minister is doing in this nation and not providing adequate funding for drug rehabilitation, particularly for young people in this nation?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased my honourable friend, the Leader of the Liberal Party, would bring this issue to the House to show the inadequacies that her fellow traveller inflicted upon the system under the guidance of the previous administration.

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, the Liberal Leader, is absolutely wrong in that I do not care to sign an agreement with the federal Government. It is exactly because of the issue of Lemay House and other institutions that can and are prepared to deliver youth treatment programs that I have not put before the federal Government a proposal to access that funding, because you do not go to the federal Government saying, I am going to do something, give me money. They say, what are you going to do, and you have to have a plan.

Mr. Speaker, in co-operation with the groups who are currently involved in outreach, in residential treatment, in terms of out-patient services we are working very closely to try and determine which facilities in this province can adequately deliver a program to which we will access existing federal funds that last for five years.

\* (1345)

### Out-of-Province Treatment

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, we are at the present time sending a number of adults outside of this province for drug rehabilitation treatment. Can the Minister tell the House today if there is a disproportionate number of professional people, doctors, lawyers and judges being sent out of this province because MHSC does not believe they should be treated with their clients?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I fail to catch the last inflection and innuendo in my honourable friend's question -(interjection)- Yes, from time to time the AFM does refer clients out of province to treatment. For instance, I believe in the last 18 months to a year we have referred, I believe, five individuals to the White Spruce Treatment Centre at Yorkton, Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I will have to ask the AFM to provide to me those figures of the doctors, the lawyers, and those other professionals my honourable friend refers to, if they in fact keep their records on the basis of an individual's occupation. I will attempt to provide that to my honourable friend.

### Compulsory Education Programs

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, if we are going to control drugs in this province, one of the ways in which we must do it is with an effective drug education program. Tuning in to Health is not a compulsory program and at the present time only services our elementary school children in any case.

Will the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) make a commitment today to work with the Minister of

Education (Mr. Derkach) to ensure a compulsory drug education program in elementary and secondary schools throughout the Province of Manitoba?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, no I will not make that commitment today because that is what my colleague, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), and I have been working on for some several months in terms of the multitude of programs that are available through such service groups as the Lions, in provision of Quest and through the Manitoba High School Athletic Association in their Target program. Those are all programs that are available to the students of Manitoba, as I have indicated to my honourable friend, that are available when she stands in the House and says nothing is being done.

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend ought to talk to some of the people like Mr. Glimcher and others who deliver very effective programs in the high school system. That is exactly what my honourable friend, the Minister of Education, and myself have been discussing for sometime.

### **Municipal Assessment Act Differential Mill Rate Removal**

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, the Government is persisting in its effort to ramrod the new Municipal Assessment Act, Bill 79, through this Legislature over the objections of both Opposition Parties in this House and against the interests of the people of Manitoba. In 1987, our Government introduced a differential mill rate system for the City of Winnipeg to ensure that the banks and major corporations downtown did not get a tax break at the expense of homeowners in the City of Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, and to make sure there was a fairer system.

Can the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Penner) give assurances that this new Act that he is attempting to push through this House before Christmas, which removes differential mill rates, will not result in major shifts onto residential homeowners, and can he table the data to support his contention?

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):** I find it rather interesting that the Honourable Member for Dauphin and the New Democratic Party are indicating that we want to ramrod this Bill through the House. We had introduced, I had introduced, this Bill into the House on October 30, put it to second reading on November 2, and it was distributed widely. It was distributed widely to all municipalities on November 2, the same day.

We have had extensive consultations with many organizations across the province. We have had 10 years of consultations, 10 years, Mr. Speaker, of consultations on this Bill. However, it is not only those 10 years. We have met with the Keystone Ag Producers, the Municipal Association, the City of Brandon, the Municipality of Elton, the City of Thompson, the Town of Selkirk, the Town of Melita, the Municipality of Brenda, Arthur, Edward, public meetings in Melita, we

met with the R.M. of La Broquerie, Treherne, Manitoba Milk Producers, the Town and R.M. of Swan River, the City of Winnipeg—

\* (1350)

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

### **Impact City of Winnipeg**

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, there is no data. On December 12, in a letter, I asked the Minister for comparative data on the City of Winnipeg so that we could get an idea of where the impact would be. I was given only three pages, very sketchy information.

Why did the Minister provide only limited data on the City of Winnipeg impacts when Mayor Norrie last night said at the committee that the city assessors have all of the data, and they share it completely with the Province of Manitoba? Why has he not shared that data with us? What is he hiding and what will be the impact on the inner city residents versus—

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

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):** Mr. Speaker, as I said before, we had met with many municipalities as well as the City of Winnipeg. The mayor of the City of Winnipeg last night flew in from Europe, came in from the airport, specifically to urge the committee to get on with the establishment of the legislation indicating clearly that the City of Winnipeg was looking forward to and needed this assessment Bill that they were able to meet the commitments that they had made and were ordered to make the reassessment by the year 1990.

Similarly, we have been urged continually throughout the discussions and the hearings in committee, urged by virtually every committee that met with us and appeared before us, to get on with the Bill and to pass it before the end of the year. That would allow the Department of Education and the Department of Municipal Affairs to do the calculations that would give the assessment numbers to the Department of Education, as well as allow the Department of Education to announce the funding to the school divisions in this province. It is important—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Honourable Member for Dauphin.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Speaker, we do not have blind faith in this Government's competence to ensure fairness for this province, for the people of Manitoba, and despite the fact that Mayor Norrie flew in, and wants this rushed through, we do not have blind faith in this Government.

Can the Minister tell this Legislature whether the province and city have arrived at their figures based on 1985 market value or by some formula that is applied against the 1975 values? If it is market value, Mr.

Speaker, why was market value left out of this Bill No. 79? Why are inner city homeowners continuing to pay a much larger percentage of the value—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. The question has been put. The Honourable Minister of Rural Development.

**Mr. Penner:** I find it rather interesting that the Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) stands up and spouts figures that are simply not true. They are not correct. It indicates again that he does not know what they are talking about.

We have said continually that this Bill will give fairness and equity finally to people of Manitoba in the taxation of their property, and that is what they have been looking forward to for a long time. We have indicated that there will be some 70 percent of people in Manitoba who will benefit positively by this assessment legislation. I stand by those figures, Mr. Speaker.

### Appeal Process

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, the Ottawa figures say that 25 percent to 30 percent of Manitobans are going to be hit hard by this legislation. He talks about market value in his brochures, and he leaves it out of the Act.

I ask this Minister today, will the Minister give a commitment to this Legislature to meet with experts in the assessment field to ensure that adequate appeal mechanisms are put in place because we have heard before the committee that there are not adequate appeal mechanisms in this legislation? Will he meet, in the time that he has been given by the Opposition to improve this legislation, with them and ensure that there is a fair appeal mechanism put in place in this legislation?

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):** The Honourable Member for Dauphin raises two points. I had indicated yesterday in committee our willingness to move an amendment to indicate clearly that we would have a clear definition of market value in the Bill. I stand by that. That is our commitment to indicate to the rest of Manitoba that we have heard them, that we have heard their concerns in the committee.

I have also indicated clearly that Section 13, Section 41, and Section 42 deal quite adequately with the issue that the Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) raises, and therefore I think the legislation that we have presented and put before committee, and as indicated by virtually every organization that we have met with, is good legislation, is fair legislation, and will finally give equity to the people of Manitoba.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

\* (1355)

### Municipal Assessment Act Informational Sessions

**Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield):** Several groups, including municipal officials, Indian bands, and school board officials, have indicated that they have not received sufficient information on Bill No. 79 in order to properly analyze and make appropriate recommendations to this very important and complex piece of legislation. School boards in particular are concerned that this Bill not be rushed through, especially since they were promised information sessions that never materialized.

My question is for the Minister of Rural Development. Why did he refuse to provide these promised information sessions to the school divisions?

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):** I find the Liberal Member's questions rather odd. It is clearly an indication that he has not been listening to what I have been saying. I have invited both Opposition Parties to full briefings on this Bill continually. From before the time that we introduced it, I have indicated to them that I would co-operate in every way, shape and form possible to give them the information that they have requested.

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**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member for Dauphin, on a point of order.

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Speaker, this Minister said he is inviting them for full briefings. We have asked for information, we received three pages of incomplete data. Where is the information?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. That is a dispute over facts.- (interjection)- Order, please. Order. The Honourable Minister of Rural Development.

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**Mr. Penner:** We set up on a number of occasions meetings to brief the Opposition Parties, fully brief them. I had my staff and indicated to my staff that they should provide the Opposition with all the information that they had requested. At the meeting that was set up for briefing, a full briefing, of the Opposition Parties one NDP Member showed up. I think that is a clear indication as to what concern they have about this Bill.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The Honourable Member for Springfield.

**Mr. Roch:** Mr. Speaker, either the Minister is stalling, has trouble hearing, or refused to answer the question. I asked him why did he not give the promised information sessions to the school divisions as they requested and as they were promised.

**Mr. Penner:** Mr. Speaker, my staff were asked yesterday by a member of the Manitoba Association for School

Trustees whether it would be possible for them to sit down and brief them and discuss the legislation with them. The request for the meeting date that the MAST requested was February 15 and we said, yes, we will sit down and discuss this Bill with you and how it will affect you.

The concerns that are being raised by the Liberal Party are red herrings and red flags, and they are trying to make a political issue of this. They are trying to stall the Bill that Manitobans have been looking forward to for a long time.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member for Springfield, with his final supplementary question.

**Mr. Roch:** Mr. Speaker, this is ridiculous. He is the one who is trying to rush the Bill through, because virtually all of the presenters at the committee hearings including Mr. Manson Moir, President of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. Is there a question here?

**Mr. Roch:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Question, please.

**Mr. Roch:** My question to the Minister is: given the fact that the concerns expressed were not only about the Bill itself but about the haste in which they are proceeding—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

**Mr. Roch:** My question to the Minister is: why does he want to suppress public input and proper analysis of the public presentations, given the fact that the concerns are not only the Bill itself but the haste in which they are attempting to pass—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. The Honourable Minister of Rural Development.

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):** Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the Honourable Member asked this question, because we have said continually we are open to debate, we are open to discussion, we want to—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Penner:** —give all Manitobans a fair opportunity to appear. The Committee on Municipal Affairs sat this

morning to hear presentations by the public on this Bill. The Opposition Parties, both Opposition Parties refused to appear this morning at committee.

There was a presenter who was turned down today, because the committee could not sit and hear because the Opposition refused to appear.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member for Springfield, with a new question.

**Mr. Roch:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister knows full well that a committee was adjourned last night.

The Minister has stated that he introduced this Bill at such a late date because he did not want to introduce it prior to municipal elections.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member for Springfield has the floor. The Honourable Member for Springfield.

**Mr. Roch:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister has stated, as well as his colleagues, that they did not want to introduce this Bill prior to the municipal elections, the admission that this Bill was ready and could have been introduced as early as last September, probably before, if he would have had the political will to do so.

Mr. Speaker, given the fact that this Minister—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Order, please.

**Mr. Roch:** My question is to the Minister of Rural Development. Given the fact that this Minister and the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae)—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

\* (1400)

### Committee Scheduling

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member for Springfield for the last time—order. Order, please. The Honourable Member for Springfield for the last time. Order. The Honourable Member for Springfield will put his question now, please.

**Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield):** Will the Minister now agree to the Opposition's offer to co-operate by having the committee sit in early January so that the Bill may receive Royal Assent prior to January 15, the Minister's own stated deadline, January 15?

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):** I had written a letter to both Opposition Parties indicating to them the deadlines that had to be met by the departments in order to allow the Department of Education to do their calculation that would allow

them to make the announcement by January 15. I said, when I had verbally discussed with the Honourable Member from Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), the possibility of moving this Bill through this House would give the department ample opportunity to make those calculations. Everybody knows, especially the Members who have sat in this House and have been Cabinet Members in this House before, that it takes a long time to do those calculations, to provide the divisions with the funding announcements that they need by January 15.

I had indicated that I was pleased to hear them say they would accommodate that by January 15. I still am pleased to hear that. We are willing to sit this evening. We are willing to sit again tomorrow, we are willing to sit on the 28th and the 29th—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Springfield, with a supplementary question.

**Mr. Roch:** Mr. Speaker, is the Minister willing then to sit in early January, whether it is January 2, 3, 4, then in order to accommodate the public and accommodate Opposition Members who, unlike the Government, have not had several months with only a few weeks to—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

#### POINT OF ORDER

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** I believe the Honourable Member is asking a question, which is more appropriately a matter for House business. It would be more appropriate for the matter to be discussed amongst the House Leaders.

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, on the same point. The Member was asking a question in direct response to the statement made by the Minister. While I would normally agree with the Government House Leader, I think it is incumbent upon the Minister to respond to the information he puts on the table.

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

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader):** On a point of order. We have raised this as House Leaders. The reason these questions are being asked now is because the Government has stubbornly refused to listen to the Opposition Parties and make the scheduling in early January. So the Minister—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

**Mr. McCrae:** On the same point of order. I rose because recently you yourself rose, Your Honour, on matters like this suggesting that it be a matter that House Leaders discuss.

I would discourage Honourable Members, such as the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton),

from attempting to negotiate the business of the House on the floor of the House.— (interjection)—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Order, please.

**Mr. McCrae:** It may be that there are not very many days left before we all try to get together with our families and enjoy Christmas. It may be in these final days before that arrives the appropriate spirit might descend upon this place, and the House Leaders might be the appropriate people to discuss this matter.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised.— (interjection)— Order, please. The Honourable House Leader is quite correct. Where I have said in the past, discussions such as these, as House business, should be dealt with by the three House Leaders.

#### Deadline

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Springfield, with his final supplementary question.

**Mr. Gilles Roch (Springfield):** My question to the Minister of Rural Development then is this: seeing as he does not want to sit at a specific date in January, why did he state that January 15 was his deadline? Now we are willing to accommodate him as well as the public and as well as our own analysis.

**Hon. Jack Penner (Minister of Rural Development):** I have, on two occasions now over here, indicated that January 15, we must announce by statutory requirements that the provincial funding for educational purposes to support the school division must be announced.

Both Municipal Affairs and the Department of Education need a substantial amount of time to do those calculations in order to make those announcements. Members opposite certainly know that. I know both of them have people that have been involved in education for many years and know the requirements and the time lines. I said I was very pleased to hear both Opposition Parties agree that we could pass this legislation in order to meet those deadlines. I stand by that, and I was pleased to hear that.

I think we had sufficient co-operation from both Parties until they started to play politics with this man.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

The Honourable Member for Concordia.— (interjection)— The Honourable Member is quite correct. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I think all political Parties have said they want to deal with this matter by January 15, including the Minister. We stay by our word about dealing with this issue by January 15 in the Minister's letter. I think we should get off our stubbornness and start dealing with this thing on a more rational basis.

\* (1410)

**Department of Health  
Manual of Administration**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** My question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon). Over the last 19 months we have had a situation where we have not had a report from the Department of Health dealing with extended care beds in the Province of Manitoba. Yet we have found recently that the senior management of the Department of Health are meeting, full-day meetings, discussing areas such as for purposes of staff in the Department of Health, proposed perks in the Department of Health like condominiums in Hawaii, vacations, memberships in health clubs, all kinds of issues, Mr. Speaker, which I will table in this House which are contrary to the Manual of the Administration.

I ask the Premier, as Minister responsible to the Treasury Board, whether he will instruct the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to put a stop to these issues and only have recommendations that are within the Manual of Administration pursuant to Government policy?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I find it very interesting that the man with the camera who photographed empty shipping boxes and called them hazardous waste would even dare to ask a question today, after again maligning health care professionals with false information to this House. I expected when he rose he might apologize to Dr. Hammond and those members at Cadham Lab that he maligned with his misinformation yesterday.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. I should remind the Honourable Minister that answers to questions should be as brief as possible and should deal with the matter raised.

The Honourable Member for Concordia.- (interjection)- Order, please; order, please. I have recognized the Honourable Member for Concordia.

**Mr. Doer:** The employees at Cadham Lab thanked the Minister for cleaning up the chemicals yesterday.

I would now like to get an answer from the Minister. Why is he, as the alleged steward and leader of his department, allowing these groups of employees to meet and develop literally hundreds of ideas on proposals for employees, liquor, Jets tickets, draws for other things? Why is he allowing this to happen in his department when all the public knows? We have the pictures of empty beds at the Deer Lodge Hospital, full hallways in Misericordia and Municipal Hospitals—

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

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Speaker, in 14 of the last questions, my honourable friend, the NDP Leader (Mr. Doer), has posed 12 of them based on false information including the empty boxes at Cadham Lab yesterday.

My Honourable friend ought to reconsider his position that we do not allow the staff at the Manitoba Health

Services Commission, or staff anywhere else in the Civil Service, to deal with management, to ask how they can be recognized when they do a job well done.- (interjection)-

Yes, some employees have made the suggestion they would like some of the things he has put on the record, but those have not even reached the short list being considered by management. Those were rejected by the employees themselves. What is happening is the employees at the Manitoba Health Services Commission are now participating with management on discussions of how we make the conditions of work better and reward them for doing jobs well done in a non-monetary fashion, something that I think is long overdue—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**An Honourable Member:** I wonder if the Minister—

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

**Department of Health  
Manual of Administration**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** I would wonder whether the Premier (Mr. Filmon) would instruct his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to ensure that his senior management is working within the Manual of Administration, as head of the Treasury Board, rather than developing hundreds of ideas that are outside of the Manual of Administration for Government services; at the same time, we cannot get any plans for extended care beds. Will he instruct his Minister of Health to come in with the extended care bed plan January 1, 1990, rather than coming up with all these silly little ideas that are outside of the Manual of Administration?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I am glad to tell the Member for Concordia that unlike the days when the NDP were in Government, our Government is committed to keep our employees working within the General Manual of Administration.

Treasury Board, over the past year, has had reviews of this to ensure that all departments are working within the General Manual of Administration and ensuring that good management practices, at all times, are practised by this Government, unlike the waste and the mismanagement that occurred chronically under the NDP, the hundreds of millions of dollars of deficit, the destruction of our Crown corporations that occurred because of their lack of management ability under the NDP. That does not occur under this administration.

**Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project  
U.S. Corps of Engineers Report**

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** My question is to the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings). If it was not such a serious matter for the people of Manitoba, this Government's handling of Rafferty-Alameda would make an excellent plot for a Gilbert and Sullivan farce.

Dispute between two American departments over the monitoring of water quality and quantity of the Souris

River in North Dakota has now jeopardized the establishment of base-line data needed if Manitoba is to be able to determine the impacts from the Rafferty-Alameda dams. Therefore, can the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) tell this House what steps he has taken to ensure that the dispute between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Wildlife Service will not threaten Manitoba's interests, given that this dispute could actually lead to a violation of the Canada-U.S. agreement?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have long said that it is not their responsibility to provide downstream information from Lake Darling. I am not sure in what context the Member feels that we will now be denied that information. We believe there are other methods that we can use to acquire that information, and certainly we will continue to pursue them.

**Mr. Taylor:** It is well documented as to what the problem is.

### External Affairs Intervention

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** Mr. Speaker, has the Minister contacted the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Joe Clark, so that he can raise this problem with the Americans and ensure that the dispute will not adversely affect Manitobans?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** We have been in contact with Mr. Bouchard, but I have not been in contact with Mr. Clark on this particular issue. When I have a better understanding of the concern the Member is raising, I will be most glad to do that.

### Construction Delay

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** It is quite evident that this Government and this department are not monitoring the issue. Will the Minister now pressure his kissing cousins in Regina and Ottawa to delay any further work on the dam until this American dispute is resolved, given that a river management plan is a requirement by the federal Government and cannot proceed—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** Mr. Speaker, we have said that we would make sure that we would use every means at our disposal to make sure that the analysis and the base-line data on the Souris River Basin was completed up to the Assiniboine River. It is still my opinion from any information I have at this point that we should be able to accomplish that and then proceed to the River Basin Management with the proper base-line data.

### Northern Tax Allowance Extensions

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** Mr. Speaker, over the last three years, we in Northern Manitoba have been fighting for fairness on the Northern Tax Allowance. A number of communities have received it since that time, although they were recommended for being cut just recently. Others such as Thompson and Wabowden have been fighting on and off throughout that period to get fairness. Michael Wilson, the Finance Minister, made an announcement last Friday, which once again shows their ignorance of the issue, by only extending it for one year—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Does the Honourable Member have a question?

**Mr. Ashton:** Yes, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Kindly put your question now, please.

**Mr. Ashton:** My apologies, it is a very important and a very complicated matter. What I would like to ask the Premier is, what action has he taken since the announcement last Friday that some communities will be extended a year, whereas Thompson and Wabowden will be extended for nothing for next year, to ensure that we finally get some fairness out of the federal Government on the Northern Tax Allowance which would include reinstating every community in northern Manitoba to the full tax allowance that they deserve?

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

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I stand to indicate to the Member that the announcement last Friday was one that we found disconcerting on this side, particularly after I had brought the issue up again with Mr. Wilson when I met with him in early December. It was an issue on the agenda; I discussed it with him. He indicated there would be some changes; he did not go far enough, obviously.

**Mr. Speaker:** Time for Oral Question has expired.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, the motion adopted by the House yesterday to transfer certain Bills from one standing committee to another was prepared in English only. To comply with Section 23 of The Manitoba Act, and to ensure the correctness of those records, it should have been prepared in both English and French. This oversight has now been corrected, and I would therefore ask leave to move the following, and I would do so seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness):

THAT Bill No. 7, The International Sale of Goods Act; Loi sur la vente internationale de marchandises; and Bill No. 76, The Real Estate Brokers Amendment Act



(2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les courtiers en immeubles; be withdrawn from the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations; and Bill No. 33, The Ecological Reserves Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les réserves écologiques, be withdrawn from the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources and that these Bills be transferred to the Standing Committee on Law Amendments.

**(French translation)**

Que le comité permanent des relations industrielles soit dessaisi du projet de Loi no 7; Loi sur la vente internationale de marchandises (The International Sale of Goods Act) et du projet de Loi no 76; Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur les courtiers en immeubles (The Real Estate Brokers Amendment Act (2), et que le comité permanent des services publics et des ressources naturelles soit dessaisi du projet de Loi no 33; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les réserves écologiques (The Ecological Reserves Amendment Act), et que ces projets de Loi soient revoyés au comité permanent des modifications législatives.

\* (1420)

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there leave? (Agreed)

**HOUSE BUSINESS**

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I understand that if you were to ask you might find that there would be a disposition on the part of Honourable Members to waive Private Members' Hour today.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to waive Private Members' Hour? Agreed? (Agreed)

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, would you be so kind as to call the Bills in the following order: Bills 90, 59, 60, 31, 42, 62, 63, 64, 73, 74, 83, 84 and the remainder as they are listed on the Order Paper?

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader):** Just for clarification, Mr. Speaker, should Bill 90 pass, we will be moving immediately into Committee of the Whole?

**Mr. McCrae:** It would be our wish to move Bill 90 just as far along as we can, Mr. Speaker, and if that would include Committee of the Whole, that would be just fine.

**Mr. Speaker:** After second reading of Bill No. 90—

**Mr. McCrae:** The Bill should go as far as Honourable Members in the House will allow it to go before we move to the next Bill.

**Mr. Speaker:** Okay. The Honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, correct me, but did we deal with leave to waive Private Members' Hour?

**An Honourable Member:** Yes, we did.

**Mr. Speaker:** That has been agreed upon.

**DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS**

**BILL NO. 90—THE INTERIM  
APPROPRIATION ACT, 1989 (2)**

**Mr. Speaker:** On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), Bill No. 90, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1989 (2); Loi no 2 de 1989 portant affectation anticipée de crédits, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper) who has 24 minutes remaining, the Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

**Mr. Elijah Harper (Rupertsland):** I would just like to continue my remarks on this Bill, and I will not take much time as we want to refer this to the committee as soon as all the other people have spoken on this Bill.

I am very concerned as I mentioned earlier about the North and how some of the actions taken by this Government will affect mainly the northern people. Certainly one of the issues that I raised with the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) was the Northern Development Agreement in which many of the northern programs were funded. Now that development agreement is no longer there, what will replace that agreement?

This agreement has been in place for many years, cost-shared with the federal Government. It has been extended till 1990, as it will expire March 31, 1990. We have put in approximately \$275 million into this agreement, and many of the dollars that are provided for were used by the northern communities. We are concerned whether the dollars that will be lost as a result of not renegotiating the agreement—where is the funding going to come from?

The Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) had indicated to the Opposition when we were debating his Estimates that there were negotiations going on with the federal Government to cost-share on some programs.

Certainly the development agreement, the Northern Development Agreement, the Special ARDA agreement, are no longer there, and we are concerned as to where those dollars are going to come from. Most of the funding that went to the Northern Affairs communities, the capital funding, the community infrastructure, was cost-shared under that agreement 60-40. We are wondering where the Department of Northern Affairs is going to get the money to provide that ongoing program for many of the Northern Affairs communities.

In the community infrastructure, I believe, under Sector C of the Program—under Program 13, we were able to provide the funding for many of the infrastructure that is needed in the Northern Affairs communities. We have other programs in another sector of the agreement, which we are very concerned about, which is Sector B, the human development program, on which a major portion of the agreement was expended on. Certainly I believe my calculations were that we expended quite substantially under that human development program.

Many of the training opportunities under the human development program were funded for many of the northern residents. We are particularly concerned for educational opportunities and training opportunities because the federal Government has cut back on many of its funding, especially to the Indian people, as a result of the cutbacks they have made on their post-secondary education. We want to continue stressing to the federal Government and we want to make sure that this Government pursues ongoing discussions, or to try to increase funding for many of the Native students. Also by the federal Government not renegotiating the Northern Development Agreement, many of the educational training opportunities that were funded under that agreement will no longer be there. Many of the programs like BUNTEP, under which many of the Native teachers were trained, will no longer be there. The social workers under the Northern Development will no longer be there, and also the northern nursing that was provided for will no longer be there.

We are very concerned as to where the province will be getting the funding to provide the same kind of opportunities that were provided for under the Northern Development Agreement. I know the Minister has assured us that we would be getting some funding from the federal Government, or at least they were negotiating with the federal Government. I know that under this agreement, we had indicated that there would be some funding made available to provide funding at least till March 1990, and certainly we are concerned as to where the next budget for items for expenditure—where are the revenue or the dollars that are going to be available to expend on these programs?

We have had indications from the federal Government they are cutting back on spending and also trying to reduce the deficit, but certainly that does not help many of the northern, Native communities in the North to try to gain employment or to have opportunity to train or to go to school so that they can be educated for their future and also for their children.

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

Certainly the Government has announced a number of major projects in the North. Repap is one, the other one is Conawapa, the hydro development project. The hydro line associated with Conawapa that will be built along the east side of Lake Winnipeg is another major undertaking by this Government, which will come at some later point after the construction of the Conawapa Dam, which will provide the transmission line to bring it down south.

The other of course is the hydro line that will be provided to the northeast communities in northeastern Manitoba, which are my communities, part of my constituency, Oxford House, Gods Narrows, Gods River, Red Sucker Lake, Wasagamack, Garden Hill Reserve and St. Theresa Point. Those are the communities that I am talking about when I mention the northeast part of my constituency in which many of the people are looking forward to bringing this line into the community, and we are looking for training opportunities to take part in that development of that project to take on the contracts, to take on economic and also job opportunities.

Certainly we are concerned about the actions of the federal Government as to what northern Manitoba will be impacted. Certainly with the GST, the 7 percent tax on top of what we are being taxed already is going to be a tremendous burden. With the programs that have been announced by the federal Government, GST, the UIC, which makes it even more harder to get the benefits from UIC—certainly would have a tremendous impact in a community because most of the people only have employment for a few weeks during which construction takes place. We are not able to harness some of the benefits that would arise from UIC, and also other cutbacks.

\* (1430)

I mentioned the education cutbacks that are being made, and also now the federal Government is calling on the bands who have winter road contracts to build in those communities to put up 20 percent of their capital into the winter road system. Before this happened the bands were able to secure funding from the federal Government, but now the federal Government is forcing the bands to put up 25 percent of their capital which, I might say, were not even provided for under the present arrangement for any capital.

In a sense it is eroding the money that the bands are getting to provide for better living conditions. They may be using that 25 percent capital requirements for the winter roads off their housing capital requirement. It is dwindling, the limited resources the bands have.

We need assistance from the province to provide some job creation. I know that under the MCAP programs we were able to provide some job creation, at least subsidize the labour component, for many of the construction activities on the reserves. We need some job creation dollars and by not allowing that to happen, it makes it even more difficult for the Indian bands to be able to secure any kind of a cushion or funding from the provincial Government.

The province should not necessarily be looking at what the federal Government's responsibilities are. The Indian people are citizens of this province, and they certainly pay their fair share of taxes of the mentioned citizens of the province, and they take part in the development of Manitoba.

As I mentioned earlier, I would not be taking too long—I was reminded that I should not be taking too long—but certainly, I just want to say that in the North we need to get more involved, and also we need to participate in many of the decisions that are made in the North—the development of Conawapa. We need assurances that we have the jobs and training opportunities.

It is far too long that we have been sort of left aside. We see development taking place in our own backyards and not being part of it. As a matter of fact, over the many years, our communities have been stagnant—we see communities developing. They are taking advantage of the resource developments, whether it be mining, forestry or hydro development.

I think we have said for many years that we need to get involved. Slowly we are getting involved, but it

is not enough. We need to be more active, we need the assistance of the Governments. We need the assistance of the provincial Government, so that we can be more active, able to have an affordable house, a good quality house, a standard of living that is compatible with any other Canadian citizen in this country.

At this time in many of the reserves we do not even have water and sewer in our homes. Most of the people still have to get firewood, still have to go outside to go to the washroom, or even haul water from the lake. In Red Sucker Lake, I still do that when I go back and live a harsher life in a harsher climate of existence.

Certainly when we have a rich resource country like Canada, like Manitoba, we have these resources in our backyards, yet we do not benefit from those resources. As a matter of fact some of these hydro lines go past our communities, and we need to hook up to these, those lines brought into our communities, so that we can provide better living conditions for many of our aboriginal people and their communities.

Certainly this Minister says we tried, and he is carrying on the issues that we have indicated in this House—I am sorry, there is nothing new that this Minister has advocated, the hydro line, the Urban Native Strategy, the Native secretariat, all those things came from the planning of the NDP administration. They have no new ideas, and I am glad they are carrying on the activities.

We need to be more active and certainly as a provincial Government, we need to -(interjection)- that guy says I speak with forked tongue. I do not speak with forked tongue. We still need to resolve many of the outstanding issues that the federal Government and provincial Government needs to pay to the Indian people. One of them is the Treaty Land Entitlement that I raised during the Minister of Northern Affairs' (Mr. Downey) Estimates that came up.

I could go on and talk about many of the outstanding obligations, commitments of the Government of Canada and the provincial Government, but at this point I will conclude by saying that I will just put a few remarks on the Interim Supply. I know we passed 95 percent of the Government expenditures, but certainly we look forward to more programs for the North and also training programs, educational opportunities for the people in the North. Thank you, Mr. Acting Speaker.

**Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia):** It is certainly a great honour to be able to stand today and place on the record the comments regarding Highways and Transportation. That is the area and only area I will be speaking to.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am profound by the statement of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) a little while ago stating that the Highways budget has increased, or the Capital budget I should say, had increased over approximately \$7 million.

Schedule 4, if the Honourable Minister would kindly look at the total for the Department of Highways and Transportation funding for the adjusted vote in 1988-89 was \$219,257,100 and for the year ending 1990 is

a total of \$225,481,100, which equates to approximately \$6 million, give or take a thousand dollars here or there. I am completely amazed at this Minister's calculation. No wonder we see the economy of Manitoba taking such a plunge, because obviously he does not know how to do proper mathematics.

It is a funny thing, when you are in Opposition you can advocate all kinds of things but when you come to power you seem to forget all of the things that you said when you were in Opposition.

**An Honourable Member:** You will never have to worry.

**Mr. Mandrake:** Well, the Honourable Minister for Seniors (Mr. Downey) said, we will never have to worry. Continue on with the path that you have taken, i.e., coming to Assiniboia doing canvassing, and I have gone 4 percent in the polls because of your ignorance. I will tell you that right now. Please come back. Please come back.- (interjection)-

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

**Mr. Mandrake:** It is totally profound that when they were in Opposition back in 1986, the 5th of June, 1986, recorded in Hansard, PCs advocated this. We need another \$100 million or \$150 million in Highways and Transportation, and what do we give this year, a paltry \$6 million. Is that not nice? Here he is, here they are, when they were in Opposition they would advocate for a horrendous amount of money for Highways and Transportation, but put them into power and all of a sudden they are completely muted. I am completely amazed at this Minister's inability to be able to convince the Treasury Board to give them an appropriate amount of money for the Highways and Transportation.

**An Honourable Member:** That was the taxpayers who give us the money.

**Mr. Mandrake:** The Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says, the taxpayers give us the money. Indeed it is true, no question about it. All I am saying is that when you are in Opposition and you advocate for \$100 million to \$150 million for a budget for Highways and Transportation, I think is very, very irresponsible.

**An Honourable Member:** What would you advocate for?

**Mr. Mandrake:** A respectable amount of money.

Mr. Acting Speaker, let us not talk at both sides of our mouth. Let us be reasonable and always respect what we are getting in—a very good case in point.- (interjection)-

The Honourable Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) is chirping from his seat. He has an opportunity to set a dedicated fund from the money that he is collecting from the one cent per litre tax. He has that opportunity. He should show initiative today and next year we can have a minimum of \$14 million minimum, Mr. Acting Speaker, in our Highways and Transportation budget.

All they have to do is show some initiative, and the Highways and Transportation budgets could at least show that much of an increase in the forthcoming budget.

\* (1440)

I would like to go on further about the Highways and Transportation. I want to go to—my favourite subject, of course, is going to be—

**An Honourable Member:** Licence plates.

**Mr. Mandrake:** The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is chirping from his seat saying licence plates—just my favourite subject. How naive can you be? Here is a frontbencher of the Party in power making a ludicrous statement like that. I have more important things to do than start conversing with the Minister of Finance on licence plates. I have put my Bill through and I think it is a very good Bill. Obviously they do not think so.

While I am on that subject let me just say this: the way the Bill was presented before, Mr. Acting Speaker, the friendly and Manitoba could not be covered. All I am saying—and the Member for Morris, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), should not be so naive as to laugh from his seat with respect to my remarks about friendly Manitoba, because I am proud of my country, I am proud of my province. I served my country for twelve and a half years. I am proud that I am a Canadian, and I only hope that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would do the same thing, instead of being so naive as to say, well it is a trivial little Bill. It is not trivial.

In the rural areas we have Crime Watch. The way it is right now, Mr. Acting Speaker, we only have one licence plate with which we can identify the vehicle and that is the rear licence plate. If the farmer notices a vehicle out on the road, a suspicious vehicle that is sitting there, there is no way he can identify it by the front plate, because it is no longer in existence. The NDP went and took it out.

Therefore, the rear licence plate is more paramount right now that it be cleaned, because rural Crime Watch is a very, very important facet for the rural people. We have seen an escalation of crimes against our farmers, crimes against the farmers' stock, et cetera, and I could go on and on.

I want that on record so they can no longer say that I am against rural Manitoba. I am more so for rural Manitoba than any place else. Let us not put that on record, as the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would like to have us believe.

One thing I would like to go further on—and that is with one subject we all know and we have always been cognizant of, Highway 75. Mr. Acting Speaker, when this Honourable Minister took the position of Minister of Highways and Transportation, in his first budget he said, I will work from both ends on Highway 75. We applauded him for it. We certainly would—at least he is showing some initiative, and he was going to work from both ends. A lot of people made a lot of sly remarks about that, but I think the Minister of Transport knew

what he was talking about. Maybe he did not put it in the right tone, but still we knew what his agenda was.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the thing is what are we going to do in the interim? What are we doing in the interim to make sure that Highway 75 is made a safe road to travel on? In a very recent article in the Morris paper, it states that they have had numerous accidents whereby the highway was very, very slippery.

I came back from the United States after the November 11 long weekend, and I made comments, went to the Minister of Transport (Mr. Albert Driedger) personally. I suggested to him that the road just past Emerson was in a horrible shape, was very, very slippery, and it could be very dangerous to the travelling public. He took that under advisement. Of course, I did not hear an answer back from him. Reading the Morris paper, I noticed again we have had accidents on that same road, being Highway 75.

I do not understand the mentality, that kind of mentality. When we have a major road such as Highway 75, the sanding vehicles should be on that road constantly. Whenever we have a sleet or a fog or a freezing fog such as that, which we have had in the past month and a half or so, that road, and particularly that road—we cannot afford to lose any more people. We have lost too many people on that highway as it is.

I would strongly suggest that the Minister of Transport (Mr. Albert Driedger) now address that issue a little bit more vigorously than he has in the past. We have to be very, very careful so we do not lose any more Manitobans or our visitors that come to Canada. This is totally ridiculous, whereby we have a main highway of that magnitude and not address it in a fashion in which we should.

I am profound that this Minister has not addressed the most important issue that is going to be put in front of him within a very, very few months, and that is the GST, the 7 percent GST. We heard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) in this House stating that he has done a study for the Highways Department and Tourism.

This Minister has not even had the courtesy to call in the two critics and say, this is what it is going to cost Manitoba because of the 7 percent GST. No, he has not. It seems to be the mentality of this Tory Government. It is the mentality of this Tory Government to go ahead and just do things whatever. They all want—Bill 79 is a good example; the drunken driving Bill is another good example. They had to come back with X number of amendments. They do not even know which way they are going, up or down, east or west.

**An Honourable Member:** No, we are going south.

\* (1450)

**Mr. Mandrake:** I doubt it very much. I want this on record. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) says I am going to go down south. Very nice, that is part of free trade. We can all become Southerners, in other words, Americans. Sure, finally we have him on record.—(interjection)—

The Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) asks me whether or not the parachute did not open. I will tell you something, at least I am proud to be a paratrooper. Does he have the guts to do something like that, go serve Canada? Go on, get off, serve the Canadian Armed Forces. There you go, you are sitting in your seat and making stupid, idiotic remarks like that.

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

**Mr. Mandrake:** Mr. Acting Speaker, anybody who wishes to make any comments about my military career, I will stack up my military career against anybody's. I served with great honour; I served with great honour, Mr. Acting Speaker. And I will serve my Queen anytime that she ever asks me to go and do that. Anytime.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to now just indulge for one second on a particular letter that the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) wrote to a constituent of mine when the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) visited her house. I will quote a paragraph from the letter just to show you the magnitude of the VIA Rail cuts. Now we have heard this Minister saying that communiques have gone down to visit the federal Minister of Transport and that we have put our case very, very strongly with regard to the VIA Rail cuts. Yet there is nothing done, still no way to say to the people of Manitoba that we are going to be able to reinstate it back to its original 11 trains per day. None.

Mr. Acting Speaker, but this is what the Minister wrote, and I have it right here, and it is a reduction of VIA Rail service by itself by half, misrepresenting because it went from 11 to three trains. Now where does this Minister go off making statements like that. Can he not count? I think he has been taking lessons from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Further on he said, it could mean a loss of \$50 million annually to the provincial economy; a loss of up to 1,000 jobs; would take \$30 million from the economy; with another \$15 million to \$20 million loss annually in the purchases of goods and services.

Now in my calculation, Mr. Acting Speaker, that is close to a million dollars per year we are going to be losing in our economy because of VIA Rail cuts.

**An Honourable Member:** A million?

**Mr. Mandrake:** No, \$100,000.00. Pardon me, it is \$100 million, \$100 million. It is \$100 million, Mr. Acting Speaker, lost in this economy because this Minister is unable to deal with his federal Tory, his federal cousin.

**An Honourable Member:** Peanuts.

**Mr. Mandrake:** Well, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) says, peanuts; \$100 million is peanuts, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is amazing; it is totally uncalled for. How can anybody, a Minister of the Crown, state that \$100 million is peanuts? Mr. Acting Speaker, 1,000 jobs are going to be lost in this provincial economy because

of VIA Rail cuts. Oh, it will probably go higher, no question about it. All I ask this Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) is, has he done an impact study as to what—

**An Honourable Member:** You bet he has, you bet.

**Mr. Mandrake:** You bet, he says; there he goes again. Obviously, Mr. Acting Speaker, this is the avenue in which this Government is going and I ask, are they going to do a study, they are going to do a review of the study, review the review, and so on and so forth? They will never come up with an answer, because they are not going to be in office by the time the thing is going to be finalized.

I mean, these people are so scared to make a decision if their life depended upon it, if their life depended upon it. They have no clout, no clout whatsoever with their federal cousins. We are losing 1,000 jobs in Manitoba because of VIA Rail cuts. What has he done? Well, he spoke to this here Benoit Bouchard. He spoke to him. I mean, this is—

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**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry):** On a point of order?

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** On a point of order. I wonder if we could help the Member to some degree and make a correction—a thousand jobs in Manitoba with Via Rail? We have a total employed of a little over 600 and we are losing 212. I want him and myself to have the record on the same level.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry):** No point of order; dispute over the facts.

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**Mr. Mandrake:** The Honourable Member, my colleague from Transcona (Mr. Kozak), of course brings up a very, very valid point. This is only Via Rail. These are total jobs in Via Rail. Now what about the CN jobs that are being lost, Mr. Acting Speaker? You just cannot comprehend the impact on our economy once January 15 rolls around. It is going to be just horrendous to our economy and this Minister will do nothing. At least he has not shown us that he can have some clout with the federal Minister. He went down to Ottawa and we on this side of the House, and the same thing goes with the New Democratic Party, we consented to have a submission with the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Workers, the City of Winnipeg, to put our name to that submission. Did we, the two official critics, receive a final edit of that submission? No.

**An Honourable Member:** You did not ask for one.

**Mr. Mandrake:** Well, the Minister says I did not ask for one. I think it would only be common courtesy if we are going to put our party and the New Democratic Party onto that list we would have received a final edited edition of that submission, offered to us in good faith

as a working party. This Government does not want to work in conjunction with the Opposition Party. They want a bullfighter. Ramrod things through whether you like it or not. Take it because we know better, they say.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am very, very amazed at the stand that was taken by the people, and of course this Government taking absolutely a no-leadership stand on Via Rail. I have before me 359 signatures which a senior citizen in our constituency provided me with asking for this Government and the federal Government to cease and desist on these cuts on Via Rail, 359 signatures. A senior citizen, may I add, by the name of Mr. Harry Andrews provided me with this petition.

How much more, how much more can we go on record as saying, please talk to this Minister? If he cannot do it I suggest to him, talk to the First Minister today before it is too late and please go to Ottawa, sit on the doorstep of the Prime Minister and reason with the Prime Minister. I mean do not go all the way there with your tail between your legs like he did on CFB Portage. Or else ask Dorothy Dobbie to stand up and tell us what to do.

I am simply amazed how convoluted some of these answers we have been getting on this side of the House on questions that we have been asking. It is just unbelievable. Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to also make mention of an article in the Winnipeg Free Press dated October 15. Here is another example of what is happening on a federal level.

\* (1500)

The Canadian Export Development Corporation has provided a \$100 million low-interest loan to Amtrak to purchase \$120 million worth of new coaches and dining cars.

One hundred million dollars in our own country would have bought the same thing for VIA Rail. We would have upgraded our dining cars and our coaches with that low-interest loan without any problem. But no, we would prefer to give it to the Americans. It is not only that one instance. We have the federal Tory Government offering to go down to the third country—\$800 million to build 38 kilometres of track in Tanzania, through the same—sure, corporation—development corporation.

Why do we not clean our own home first? Let us clean up our own yard first. Let us establish a passenger service that is second to none. We can do it, because when the railroad was established we only had 2.5 million people in here, and we had a railroad from one end of the country to the other end of the country—and proud of Confederation. Now we have got 25 million people and we cannot sustain it. That to me sounds completely ludicrous. Not only that—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

**Mr. Mandrake:** The VIA Rail is to me, in my humble opinion, a very, very important and a very environmentally sound means of transporting our senior

citizens, our tourists, and our low-income people throughout all of Canada, not just only a select triangle part of Canada, that being Ontario and Quebec.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as an editorial that was placed in The Financial Post of July 10, 1989, the author of course is Allan Fotheringham—this is what he said in nice bold letters: Voters to Remember VIA on Election Day. I will guarantee you that all people in my constituency of Assiniboia are going to know what this Government's stand was on VIA Rail and what they have done, what kind of attitude they have towards a national dream such as VIA Rail.

Yes, absolutely true. The Honourable Member, my colleague from Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) says, a national disaster, and that is what it is, Mr. Acting Speaker. It truly is a national disaster when we can go around offering a low-interest loan of \$100 million to Amtrak, and yet we cannot do the same thing for our country. I do not know where this priority of this Tory Government or the Tory Government in Ottawa is.

**An Honourable Member:** That is because you are not prepared to do anything for our country.

**An Honourable Member:** That is right.

**An Honourable Member:** People like you are not prepared to do anything for your country.

**Mr. Mandrake:** The Honourable Members are saying I am not prepared to do anything for my country. Well, I hate to say this, Mr. Acting Speaker, I have done a lot for my country. I do not think they can say that. I am working on my second career now. My first one was with the Armed Forces and very proudly so, and now as a politician. I am going to stay here for many, many years to come. A lot of them are not going to be here while I will be here yet. I will guarantee you that, no question in my mind.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Mandrake:** Yes, that is right. The Honourable Member, my colleague for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) says, I went up in the polls, and that is exactly right, Mr. Acting Speaker, because the constituents were simply appalled that the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) would find time to go around and knock on doors. You mean to tell me, they do not have anything to do? They have a province to run.

The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has completely kiboshed his Health Department. Mr. Acting Speaker, he is in total disarray in that department. The Finance Department is the same way. The Highways and Transportation Department is the same way. Eventually, we are going to have all these departments just going, staggering from day to day from one end to the next day not knowing where we are going.

While I am on the subject of Highways, I would again like to bring to the attention of the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) with the Annex "A", Churchill Enhancement Initiatives. There were 40. Pardon me,

now there are 50. There are now 50 initiatives done that he had addressed and offered us a copy of. Mr. Acting Speaker, they say that they are for the Port of Churchill. They are certainly going to work in concert with the federal Government with regard to the Port of Churchill. Hopefully we will have an infrastructure in the Port of Churchill whereby it will be a viable community. Not one initiative has been addressed. Not one initiative.

It does not take money to put into action some good initiatives. All it takes is to talk with people in Russia. For example, bring in, I forget now what the product is, I think it is something to do with fertilizer. I am not a farmer so I am not that conversant with it, but as I said, there are so many things we could do with the Port of Churchill. That is absolutely outrageous. No, we do not wish to address that issue. Probably the board is going to die because just no initiatives are going to be put in place here by this Government so that the Port can be a vibrant port. Not only that, but it belongs to Manitoba.

During Estimates, I was asking the Minister with regard to decentralization and other subjects that I had addressed and again I would like to ask him, Mr. Acting Speaker, with regard to decentralization.

This Government is on record as saying that we are in favour of decentralization. We are, too, no question about it, but what a beautiful way to start decentralization than the centralized booking system. Right now a person in rural Manitoba, if they want to have a booking to take a driver's test or else a written test, they have to phone on a WATS line to Winnipeg to get a booking. Why do we have to go through such a process?

I will give you an example. An honourable constituent of Carman approached me on Saturday at Unicity and he said to me, he says, this centralized booking system stinks. I said, well, what is the problem, sir? He went on to say, my son wants to get his driver license. Apparently it is just before Christmas and he wants to give it to him as a birthday present. He said, first I have to go drive in to Carman and pay my fee for the written test. Then he goes and then he has to come back to Carman to pay another fee for probably the traffic test.

There are two trips that he has to make into Carman with no reason whatsoever. One trip would have been sufficient. One trip should be sufficient. Now maybe I did not listen, did not hear him properly. I do not know, Mr. Acting Speaker. I would never question an honourable friend like that to put wrong information to me.

Mr. Acting Speaker, as an example, the manager in charge of the Portage la Prairie testing unit, guess where he comes from? He lives here in Winnipeg. He travels back and forth to Portage la Prairie. What a beautiful way to decentralize is to say okay from now on, let us set a date line, and we are going to hire somebody from the Portage la Prairie area to fill that spot. Now would that not be a most logical thing to do? Would that not be the logical step to take?

\* (1510)

Hire somebody from within Portage la Prairie to fill that position and that person will buy a house in Portage la Prairie. That person will spend money in Portage la Prairie, as opposed to coming in from Winnipeg, driving into Portage, and coming back at night. He is being paid for their job and what does he do? He spends all his money in Winnipeg. Portage la Prairie does not get anything. Now I do not think that is a proper avenue to take. That is only one example that I could address.

I would like to again bring the attention to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger). I am not asking for an exorbitant amount of money, a little bit of common sense should prevail. Here we have an air brake manual for people who wish to study to be able to get their tractor-trailer licence. This thing here goes on to say application air is shown in blue and there is no such a thing there. I brought this to his attention, Mr. Acting Speaker, during the Estimate process. Did this Minister get back to me and say, yes, Ed, that was a very good idea and I will be addressing it and I have already addressed it?

We are now in December and we have yet to hear from this Minister. What corrective action has he taken on this very, very important manual? This manual teaches basic fundamental valves in a tractor-trailer for people who wish to learn to drive a tractor-trailer. How can they say yes we are very, very open Government and et cetera, et cetera, et cetera, and yet cannot address a very, very small issue like that. It is beyond me, Mr. Acting Speaker.

**An Honourable Member:** A lot of things are beyond you, Ed.

**Mr. Mandrake:** The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) again chirping from his seat, everything is beyond me. Just to tell the Minister of Finance, I will stack my integrity against his integrity any day in this House, any day, no question in my mind.

Mr. Acting Speaking, I would like to also—one other point and that is particularly on yesterday's Question Period when I asked the Minister about the taxicab board. This taxicab board has been studied to death. It has been studied to death. We had the Touche Ross Report, we had the Fox-Decent Report, we had the review of the Touche Ross Report. Now they are going to have another review. Then we had Jodi Gilmore doing another study. Why does this Minister not show proper leadership, so that the taxicab industry will know tomorrow exactly what their rules are?

**An Honourable Member:** They will have shields.

**Mr. Mandrake:** The Honourable Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) is chirping from his seat they will have shields. Well, he said 60 days and we have yet to hear about that 60 days. What is happening? What is happening, Mr. Acting Speaker? Nothing is happening. We have not heard one word from this Minister with regard to that very important issue, very important issue, because we cannot afford to lose another human being in our taxicab industry, not one. If the shields will do it, then do it now.—(interjection)—

That is being arrogant, what they just said now. That is just being arrogant, because no human being should be killed or assassinated, Mr. Acting Speaker, particularly in the taxicab industry. We have had three too many in this province. This Minister should show leadership today so that the industry can walk around, be proud, and not have any problems. This Minister does not want to do that, Mr. Acting Speaker.

With that comment, I thank you very much for your indulgence and I thank you very much for the indulgence of all Honourable Members. Thank you very much.

### COMMITTEE CHANGES

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** I would like to make some changes to the committee for this evening. I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: Helwer for Burrell; and Downey for Findlay.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Gaudry):** Agreed. The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

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**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I just want to take a few moments to add a few remarks to this particular debate on the Interim Supply Bill before us. This is an opportunity to talk generally about Government fiscal policy and about the finances of the province as well as the economic situation which eventually affects the revenues and expenditures both of the provincial Government.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am particularly disappointed at the weak-kneed approach of this Government to the goods and services tax. Instead of standing up boldly and strongly and saying no, no, no, to the Minister of Finance in Ottawa, and to Mr. Mulroney and his Government, here we are on the verge of setting up a joint administrative apparatus.

I know the reasonable answer will be given and has been given by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon): well, we do not want to have duplicating administrative services, why should we go through all this hassle, and so on. Maybe some day eventually if that ever came to pass, said the Government, we may want to do that.

In the meantime, Mr. Acting Speaker, the Government should be more aggressive, more active in its opposition. It is just not good enough to just mildly and meekly say, well, we are against the tax and we do not like the tax, and in the next breath say, but we are quite prepared to accommodate the federal Government in the implementation. It is just not good enough. (interjection) Well, you have not said that.

My understanding from statements of the Minister of Finance and the Premier is that this Government is ready to co-operate with the federal Government in ensuring that there is an efficient collection system inasmuch as the federal Government has indicated it is interested in implementing the GST. I do not want

to put words in the Minister of Finance's mouth, but this is the impression I have, the impression that the people out there have.

I want to take this opportunity to register my disappointment, particularly when we have so many Manitobans who are still fighting this. I mention in particular the Manitoba Society of Seniors who have called for a boycott on January 18 and 19, asking all Manitobans to participate in a historic protest to get the message to Mr. Wilson and the federal Government that this planned goods and services tax is unnecessary and is unfair, that it is going to hurt consumers in this province, that it is going to hurt the economy of the province.

The Manitoba Society of Seniors can be joined in this and will be joined in this with organizations such as the Anti-Poverty Association, the Manitoba Federation of Labour and many other organizations, including business groups, I might add, Mr. Acting Speaker, who are upset with what is about to be imposed upon them.

I am particularly annoyed with this move by the federal Government and the lack of sufficient opposition by this Government, because this tax is not an equitable type of tax. It is a tax that will take, proportionately speaking, more money from poor people rather than rich. I am particularly concerned because—as we have tried to point out previously and I am going to take the opportunity to repeat—the corporate income tax as a percentage of total income taxes taken by the federal Government from all sources, corporate and personal, the corporate percentage has dropped steadily over the last several years. Whereas you could go back to 1950, the corporate tax take was 37 percent, or you could go back to 1964 it was 20 percent. Today or at least in 1988, it is down to 9.1 percent according to the information we have. Percentage-wise there are many reasons for this. All I am repeating are the numbers. The fact is that in terms of a proportion paid by the corporate sector, their proportionate contribution has diminished.

\* (1520)

**An Honourable Member:** That is right. It means people are wealthier.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I beg your pardon.

**An Honourable Member:** It means people have more wealth as individuals.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Acting Speaker, when I look at the details of this—and the last figures we have were for the year 1987—we find that there were 93,405 Canadian corporations which together made over \$27 billion worth of profits and which did not pay one red cent of income tax. I think that is grossly unfair, not one penny for various reasons.

**An Honourable Member:** Did they escape tax or did they just not pay?

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, as far as I am concerned, they paid no tax. They paid no tax whatsoever and I



am reminded that at least in the United States they say to their corporations: regardless, you will pay a minimum corporate tax of 20 percent, regardless. I understand that if that American rule, which I think is a good rule, was applied to Canada the federal Government would be able to earn, I believe, something in the order of \$5 billion or whatever. A substantial amount of money could be obtained by the federal Government if it simply adopted this American rule, a minimum tax of 20 percent on all corporations.

Included in those 93,000 plus corporations are all the banks of Canada, all the financial institutions. The banks have not paid one penny. In 1987 which is the latest year that we have statistics from the Department of National Revenue—

**An Honourable Member:** Does that have anything to do with the Third World country losses?

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** No, I do not think it has.

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, you do not.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, I do not have that detail. I am simply saying that it is a shame that the banks of this country which together, plus the other financial institutions including the trust companies and other loans and savings organizations and so on, tallied a profit of \$17.7 billion collectively and did not pay a nickel, not a penny, not a penny on that.

What we are suggesting, Mr. Acting Speaker, is this is one major area that the Government of Canada could look at in order to obtain needed revenue to cover the expenditures at the federal level. There are—and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was speaking from his seat about the banks losing money in Third World countries. My information is that the banks made \$2 billion worth of profits, just talking about the banks themselves— did not pay a nickel, did not pay a nickel.

At any rate, if the Minister of Finance wants to defend the banks and the major corporations, go to it. I am going to defend the constituents of the Minister of Northern Affairs, the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey). If he is not going to stand up for them, I am going to stand up for the seniors and for the others in the constituency of Arthur. I am going to stand up for the Member's constituents who do not want the goods and services tax. Here the Minister of Northern Affairs is part of a Government which is really not fighting this as they should. They should be fighting it to the bitter end.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I would ask the Minister responsible for senior citizens if he is going to join their boycott on January 18 and 19. I would ask him to join that boycott instead of going along with this Cabinet agreeing to implement a joint collection system on the GST. This is just not adequate.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

I would make another suggestion to the federal Government and that is to look at their monetary policy. The monetary policy that we have of high interest rates is slowing this economy down, it is hurting Canadian exports, and therefore, we have a monetary policy which is hurting our economy, including the Manitoba economy. For every point of additional interest rate, \$1.5 billion is added to the Canadian deficit, \$1.5 billion. I say here, therefore -(interjection)- Well, this is a fact. I did not make this calculation. I have read about it and I am going to accept their estimate.-(interjection)- Well, you do not have to accept all estimates, but I will accept the fact that a higher interest rate adds to the national deficit. It has to. It is logical. It is a rational conclusion.

An estimate is one point of additional rate of interest at the bank rate level which affects the entire structure of interest rates, adds \$1.5 billion to the deficit. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I want to register my disappointment with the Government not fighting this issue to the extent that it should.

I would also take this opportunity to say that I am disappointed that there are growing signs of economic recession in this country, and it is going to affect Manitoba. Unfortunately our farm economy has been weak, because of the drought -(interjection)- and because of other—well, Mr. Speaker, we get these stupid suggestions and interjections from the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey). They are totally irrelevant. All he is doing is adding to my length of time. If he wants to continue to interrupt me, I will speak for the 40 minutes. I was only going to speak for 10 or 15, but if he keeps it up I will be here for 40 minutes, no problem.

The economy shows many signs of going into a recession. We have seen the latest figures of job losses, fewer people working this year compared to last year. Now we have the latest information on population. It is interesting to observe that, yes, indeed for many years we had population loss through interprovincial migration. We did not always have loss on interprovincial migration.

There were some many years, there were years, in fact they were all NDP years, when the population actually increased and also when we did not lose any people on interprovincial migration. They were all NDP years that there was no loss on interprovincial migration. There was a net inflow in 1982, a net inflow in 1983, and 1984 was more or less break even.

It is interesting that when you look at the numbers and you look at the population growth, and these are numbers that are available from Statistics Canada, that does quarterly surveys, that the population growth has been above average, either average or above average of the 10 provinces during the NDP years. It is only in the Conservative years where the population growth rate seems to be below the Canadian average. Certainly the last—I can check those figures a bit more, but certainly the last year or two, the last two years were ranking ninth out of 10th.

The only other province that is in a worse situation than ourselves is the Province of Saskatchewan. Their

rate of growth is 10 out of 10, but Manitoba's rate of population growth is nine out of 10, well below the average. As we look at this, Mr. Speaker, we can see that there is a pattern. We will have to research these figures a bit more, we will have to study them a bit more and just see what other implications there are.

Virtually speaking our population is stagnating, our total population is stagnating because of the loss of people. Why do people go? They go for a number of reasons, but the main reason is because there are more job opportunities outside of Manitoba than there are within the province. I say, therefore, this is a reflection on the amount of economic activity providing jobs for Manitobans. If there are not enough jobs being provided, people are going to look elsewhere.

Certainly they are voting with their feet. They are moving with their feet and for 1989 to date we have lost somewhere in the order of, by quick calculation, about seven or eight million people. In 1988 we lost 9,529 people on interprovincial migration. This year 1989 looks to be a record year, it will be higher than that. It is running around seven million already in the first three-quarters—(interjection)—seven thousand—pardon me, thank you—7,000 in the first three-quarters.

At any rate the fact is that we have a modest amount of international migration to offset this, and then of course we have the natural rate of increase, the births over deaths. The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that the Manitoba population is at the present time, and has been in the last year and a half or so, stagnating. In fact in the fourth quarter of last year, 1988, the population was even lower than it was in the third quarter, so from the third quarter to the fourth quarter there was an actual drop in the level of people in Manitoba.

\* (1530)

You are looking at over the last couple of years, there is no question but there is stagnation, and that stagnation is indicative of the very slow type of economic growth we have in this province, and indeed lack of growth in many parts of it. As a matter of fact, I am sure we do not have the detailed breakdowns, but if you looked at these numbers on a regional basis within Manitoba you would see some regions, such as the Parkland, actually diminishing in population, and there are other areas as well of this province where you would see, in the rural areas, absolute depopulation occurring where there are fewer people living there today than there were a couple of years ago, or five, or 10, or 15, or 20 years ago, for sure.

So, Mr. Speaker, what this boils down to—I would be the first one to recognize that it is not the provincial Government who can correct all the economic ills of this province. I used to say that in Government, I said that in the Lyon years when we were on this side, I said it in Government in answering questions, and I say it again. I mean, there are so many factors that bear on the economic health of Manitoba, not least of which are national trends, North American economic patterns, policies of the federal Government, what happens to our trading situation with our trading

partners, particularly the United States. But having said all that, we still have to recognize that the provincial Government does play a role in this. The provincial Government can play an important marginal role and can make the difference in many areas in terms of stimulating the economy.

I guess this is where we have a basic philosophical difference because our approach said, okay, we should use the Government—I am repeating what Ed Schreyer used to say when he was Premier of Manitoba—that we use the Government as an instrument to bring about the economic development, the economic growth that Manitobans want and use it as a positive institution that it is, a positive instrument. The spending and borrowing ability of the province does bear on the financial situation of the province; it does bear on the economic situation of the province.

I guess the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and this side would say their philosophy is the least Government is the best Government, the less Government the better. Although I must say, Mr. Speaker, that with the Premier we have, he is doing his darndest to keep down some of the reactionary people he has around him, and I am not going to name any names, who would really like to really hash, hack and slash, would really like to reduce health care spending substantially. They would really like to cut back on Child and Family services.

They would really love to cut back on a lot of social programs. They just do not go for it, but with their Premier saying, now take it easy boys, girls, take it easy ladies and gentlemen, we have to put forward; we are a minority government; we have to be very careful here; we have to show a moderate face, and we have to remember there are a lot of people who live, particularly in Winnipeg and Brandon and the North and certain cities, who are not so happy when you talk about cutting back on social programs, or squeezing them, or keeping them. At any rate, Mr. Speaker, that is the philosophy I have heard from time to time expressed on the other side. The less Government the better Government.—(interjection)—

Well, if the Minister is saying that you do not believe in that, you really believe more Government is better. I am not sure what you are saying. My impression is that you would rather have lower level expenditures, lower level of taxes and generally take a position, the truly small "c", big "C" Conservative position, where the Government steps back and plays a more passive role.

Our position has been that, no, let us use the Government as an instrument to stimulate the economy and, if necessary, have job and training programs when necessary. They are not the solution. They are not a total solution by any means, but they can help in certain specific areas for limited periods of time. I guess, to some extent, this Government has recognized this because for all the negative comments you made about the job programs you still have them.

In the Minister of Education and Training Estimates right here, there are a couple of million dollars; it is less than the monies last year or the year before, but

the money is still there. If you really did not believe in it, I suppose it would be zero, absolutely zero.

You cannot criticize jobs, and training-on-the-job programs that we talked about, and which we built up under the Manitoba Jobs Fund, and say they are totally wrong. If they are totally wrong why are you spending, why are you asking us to spend a few million dollars on it? That is what I would like to know. Having said that, I recognize that you have cut it back. I guess that is the modest, moderate approach that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) wants to take at this time in a minority Government situation.

Mr. Speaker, I am not prepared to go into any more detail. We could, we could speak about a lot, but since the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) is not there to, sort of, urge me on to be more eloquent at greater length, I guess I will be much more brief in my remarks. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, I would really hope and urge that the Government would be more active and aggressive in fighting the GST.

What I would really like—I would love to see the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) to go out and go to bat and help them to get the message out for the boycott—get the boycott. I have talked to several hundred seniors in my riding the last couple of days, I was with many hundreds of seniors the last couple of days in my riding. They are all very keen on this January the 18 and 19.

I could not think of a better Christmas present for the Minister responsible for Seniors to give them, to say to the seniors—phone up Al Loveridge, the President and say, I am Minister responsible for Seniors' affairs in the provincial Government. I am going to do what I can to help you sponsor this. All we are asking is to make people aware of January 18 and 19 as being the day of the boycott, that is all that they are asking for. We would like people to stop spending as well, but that is all they want.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not consider it—it is politics in the broadest sense. It is politics in the sense that in the political arena we are having to fight the federal Government. Mr. Speaker, I have talked to hundreds of them and I do not think, when I say I support this and I would want to see the provincial Government do something to help them—I do not believe it for one moment—they did not think that was a bad approach. They thought that was a rather good approach.

That is my disappointment. It would be great if the Minister of Seniors could say, yes, we have a Christmas present for them. I am going to stand up now and tell them that we are going to stand shoulder to shoulder with the seniors of this province, and fight the federal Government on this. When this gets to committee stage we may have some more things to say in detail, but for the moment I guess we will conclude our remarks. Thank you.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey), that Mr. Speaker do now leave

the Chair for the House to resolve into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report on Interim Supply Bill—on Bill No. 90, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1989 (2); Loi no 2 de 1989 portant affectation anticipée de crédits for third reading.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill No. 90, with the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### BILL NO. 90—THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT, 1989 (2)

**Mr. Deputy Chairman (Harold Gilleshammer):** The Committee of the Whole will come to order to consider Bill No. 90, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1989 (2).

Does the Honourable Minister of Finance have an opening statement?

\* (1540)

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I do have an opening introduction. I am prepared to read into the record, if Members want, specifically the meaning of all the sections listed in the Bill.

However, if it is the wish that I not read that in fuller explanation—it would take me roughly about 10 minutes to do so—if it is wished, then I will submit the copy of the text to the Clerk. That can be presented as read into the record—whatever the Members wish.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** Does the Finance Critic for the official Opposition have a statement? The Member for Transcona.

**Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona):** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman. The Minister's offer to table his explanation, clause by clause, of the text of the Bill is quite satisfactory to us. We have no further opening statement.

**Mr. Allan Patterson (Radisson):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I would just like to take this opportunity, in addressing this Bill, to address a few questions to the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board (Mr. Connery), seeing that this opportunity was inadvertently sidetracked during Estimates.

Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the dedication and the work that the board itself has undertaken in the past year in addressing many of the problems internally, which do not require any legislation. The Minister and the board have been very co-operative in keeping us informed of the steps that they have taken and what they plan for the future.

But nevertheless, Mr. Deputy Chairman, some problems still remain and we will, while acknowledging the thrust that the legislation and the internal changes and reorganization are taking, be continuing to monitor the progress that is being made, particularly in the light

of calls that we do still get, although not in as great a volume as heretofore. We will obviously be holding the Minister to account.

Could the Minister inform us just what progress has been made, say, in the past couple of months, given that we missed the opportunity to address much of this during the Estimates some weeks ago? Could he just bring us up-to-date on the ongoing progress and any further changes that have been implemented in the past few months, during the fall?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister responsible for The Workers Compensation Act):** I thank the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson), the Liberal Critic for Workers Compensation. I can say that he has been a responsible Member, and we have had good communication, and we have co-operated between myself and him and the board very closely. Where I do show my indignation and my frustration and my anger is toward the New Democratic Party and the critic, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), for his irresponsibility. When we had an opportunity in Estimates to discuss Workers Compensation, their Party refused to ask a question, and that Member never even showed up in that committee once to ask a question. In fact, I saw him in the hall—

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**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think I have already stated for the record that I was in the Health Committee Estimates. If the Minister would refrain from the personal attacks, I think we could probably get into a number of questions which I do have on Workers Compensation. I would suggest that perhaps he keep his remarks relevant to the questions that are put by committee Members. It might assist the function of the committee.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** A dispute over the fact is not a point of order. The Honourable Minister.

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**Mr. Connery:** The Honourable Member for Thompson feels silly, feels incompetent, and he is. He should feel ashamed for letting down injured workers. What did he say when I asked him in the hall? He said, we have more important things to discuss than the Workers Compensation. That is what he said to me in the hall.

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**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** The Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, our roles are quite clear in terms of the fact that Members should be truthful in statements they make before the House. The statement that the Member just made is a complete and absolute

fabrication, and I would ask him to withdraw that. First of all, it is not in order for the Member to be recreating discussions that are held outside of the Chamber. Second of all, it is not in order for him to put incorrect information on the record. I would suggest, once again, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that you ask him to come to order and answer the question, a very specific question, that was asked by the Liberal Member, and not engage in this rather pointless and petty mudslinging.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** The Honourable Member does not have a point of order, but I believe the Minister should respond to the question that has been put. The Honourable Minister.

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**Mr. Connery:** Thank you. The Member knows very well that in Workers Compensation, there was an opportunity afforded this House at five o'clock of the Monday afternoon. When inadvertently my salary was passed and I came back at eight o'clock to discuss the Estimates of Workers Compensation, the Liberals were here wanting to ask questions and—by leave of the House we can do anything in this House—we wanted to revert back to Workers Compensation. The Leader of the New Democratic Party said, no, you passed the Minister's Salary, and refused to go back.

So, Mr. Deputy Chairman, there is a place and a time to do it, and that was in Estimates time. The Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) wasted two and a half hours. The Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was here, and as a matter of fact, brought it up that the Member for Elmwood was wasting the House's time, and we did not get into the Workers Comp. Mr. Deputy Chairman—

**Mr. Patterson:** It is not a point of order, Mr. Deputy Chairman, but if the Honourable Members will indulge me for a moment, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is under some time constraints and the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has some questions he wishes to put to him, and I would be glad to yield the floor to them for such time as they take to clean up their—

**Mr. Connery:** I thought it should be put on the record, the facts of the irresponsibility of the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton). Mr. Deputy Chairman, let me tell you that at Workers Compensation we have some 300 dedicated employees that are working very, very hard to bring the Workers Compensation up to where it should be. It is not there yet. I make the comment that we are not satisfied that we have the operation running as efficiently as it will. It takes time, but we are making that sort of progress. I think the telephones are answered much more quickly now, you do not have that long delay in the turnover.

There is a—not an intercept—a group now that is reacting very quickly to ones that have very obviously no contention as to the injury, that it happened in the workplace. About 45 percent of the reported time-loss claims are responded to within about two weeks. At the commissioner level, the final appeal, we are down to where a person wanting to register an appeal, can

do so within a week or two. That is being cleaned up. We still have at the review level, which is, adjudication is first, then there is review, and the appeal.

At the review level there is still a bubble of backlog that has not been brought to the time frame that we think is appropriate during the training process of a lot of the people. It takes some time. The adjudicators take time to train. You just do not hire somebody off the street. There is no program for training adjudicators. We have to do it at the Workers Comp. They took some of the competent people from review to help train some of the new adjudicators, and that created a bit of the bubble in review. So it is flowing and it has improved tremendously since we took office.

With Graham Lane, we have a superb CEO. We have in place a good administrative staff; they have been adding to it. A couple of the people from the "I" team have been hired on—Karn Sandy, for instance, an excellent administrator for us, doing a good job. Give us another year and we hope to have all of the fine details moving very, very quickly. I think basically that is where we are.

\* (1550)

We also have, as the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) knows, a new employment services office on Portage Avenue out close to the Weir Building, for which I gave him a packet of information, along with the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), to review, to see what we are doing in the employment services. That is for injured workers, to find them an appropriate job, or to get them into training that can train them for another job if they cannot go back to their previous employment. So that is the opportunity that we are affording them.

There have been significant numbers of staff brought on to facilitate the handling of claims, the adjudication of claims. Previously the workload was so high, people were working overtime. They were tired. We are bringing that down. I have talked to the union leader, Dave Cutler, at Workers Comp—they are quite happy with the progress that is being made—and with the CUPE rep from the local; the first time that ever has happened, that Government has consulted with the union and is consulting with the workers at the lower level, to make this operation functional. They are very pleased that they are part of the solution. That is so important, because every person that is over there is part of the solution, and those 300-plus people are working dedicatedly to bring it in.

Are there more questions or is that it?

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I understand the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has certain time constraints so I am quite prepared to get up—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, there is a competition going here, so—Mr. Deputy Chairman, the report of the Brandon General Hospital Peer Review Committee was

just released. I only obtained a copy of it a short while ago, and I have not had an opportunity to study it at any length and any depth.

There is one or two points that have caught my mind, and I would like to ask the Minister who set up this committee earlier this year to look at the question of various things which have been happening, such as seasonal closure of beds, and so on. We have been waiting for this report.

I note in particular that the Peer Review Committee recommends a reduction in the number of acute care beds at the Brandon General Hospital. I wondered if the Minister could elaborate on this. Is he aware of this recommendation in the report? I would imagine he is. Is he in agreement with this recommendation?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, my honourable friend, I know, is wanting answers on the report. I just want to offer my honourable friend a bit of a caution before he maybe makes his weekend news in the Brandon Sun and the radio stations and television stations.

This report is the first time that ever a problem at an institution such as the Brandon General Hospital has been dealt with in this fashion. What we did is that, instead of having the usual shooting war in public with Government saying one thing, and the hospital and various components of the hospital saying different things, the only losers being the public in not understanding what the issues are, we struck a committee.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, the committee we called a Peer Review Committee. It was chaired by the executive director of the Misericordia General Hospital, had membership in terms of health professionals from the system, in addition to the chief medical director of the Brandon General Hospital, the executive director of the Hospital, the director of Nursing of the Brandon General Hospital and citizens at large from Brandon.

Those individuals sat down to deal with issues which have been facing the Brandon General Hospital over a four-year period of time in particular, to try without the normal public battles which occur from time to time, to try to focus in on the problem, to try to make recommendations to Government for consideration by Government and the Board of the Brandon General Hospital. The recommendations which were made there were made unanimously by a committee involving substantive membership from the Brandon General Hospital. That is, indeed, Brandon General Hospital's participation in the recommendation, including the one my honourable friend refers to.

If my honourable friend takes time to read the report, he will find that some of the admitting patterns and some of the issues which come out of that review point to the need to address certain management practices within the Brandon General Hospital. He will also note in there that it is pointed out by the Peer Review Committee that for four years some funding recommendations to Government have not been followed.

I am trying to be very balanced in my approach here. I am not saying it is the hospital's fault, or the

Government's fault, or any particular individual's fault. Before my honourable friend picks in isolation what will make juicy news for the weekend in Brandon, he ought to consider the format, the process and the involvement of Brandon General Hospital to come to those recommendations. Those recommendations will from now on be dealt with by the commission and the Ministry of Health and the board in management of the Brandon General Hospital to determine the course of action, to determine what is doable.

The issue of the acute care beds is very important in terms of carrying on and furthering the redevelopment plan that has been basically on hold at Brandon General Hospital for a decade.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could tell us to what extent there will be a reduction in acute care beds. First of all, I gather from what he is saying, he is accepting the recommendations of the committee, so he is agreeing that there should be a cut or a reduction in the number of acute care beds in the Brandon General Hospital, which is a regional hospital in Westman. If that is the case, could he indicate what kind of a cut he is looking at and obviously there will be some savings of money, I presume, because of that cut. Has he any idea what is involved in terms of numbers of beds and dollars saved?

**Mr. Orchard:** Now I know where my honourable friend is coming from. He wants his headline in Brandon this weekend that Government is going to cut beds at the Brandon General Hospital. Mr. Deputy Chairman, that would be a false allegation for my honourable friend, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) to make. Before he goes off to make his weekend news, I strongly suggest to my honourable friend that he sit down with the chairman of the board of Brandon General Hospital, the executive director, the chief of medical staff, Dr. Taylor, and the director of nursing in the Brandon General Hospital to find out the background on that recommendation which they concurred in entirely.

Before my honourable friend attempts to harness whatever cheap politics he chooses to put out, Government has not made any decisions in terms of this report.

\* (1600)

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**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** The Honourable Member for Osborne, on a point of order.

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Opposition House Leader):** The debate at this moment calls for people with legitimate questions, about problems in this province, to be described as cheap politics. I would ask that the Minister withdraw that.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** The Member does not have a point of order. The Honourable Minister of Health.

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**Mr. Orchard:** I know that my honourable friend was embarrassed by his 1983 response in terms of youth treatment, wherein he did not care for them then and tries to appear to care now. I do not want to get into that issue. I simply want to tell my honourable friend, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), that Government has neither accepted nor rejected any of the recommendations in that report. I am pointing out to my honourable friend, before he makes his weekend news, to talk to the Brandon General Hospital to find out whether they are satisfied with the process of consultation, discussion, with the attempt to bring to a reasonable series of recommendations issues that have plagued the hospital for four years now.

Four years, that I might remind my honourable friend, two and a half of which he was the senior Cabinet Minister representing the interest of Brandon General Hospital. If he might want to check in there, he will find that the funding problems which are alluded to go back four years. The summer bed closures that are alluded to in there go back four years, when he was the Minister responsible. I am simply asking my honourable friend that we have enjoyed excellent co-operation from the City of Brandon, from the board of the General Hospital, from the executive director of the General Hospital, from the chief of medical staff, Dr. Taylor, from the director of nursing in the Brandon General Hospital plus a number of professionals outside of the Ministry of Health who have dedicated their time and their service to focus in on the issues raised for the last four years at Brandon General Hospital.

They have made some unanimous recommendations to Government, which I reiterate to my honourable friend, have not been accepted nor rejected. They are there for discussion with Government, in a reasoned fashion, as we have been doing for the last two and a half months with this peer review committee. So before my honourable friend attempts to harness whatever he sees as a political opportunity here, talk to the Brandon General Hospital before you maybe err in some of your statements.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** It is rather amusing, Mr. Deputy Chairman. When you are on that side it is supposed to be all sweetness and light, and reason and rationality, and so on, but from the Opposition side it is nothing but political opportunism and cheap politics, or whatever the term the Member or the Minister wants to use. It is cheap politics because I am concerned with what goes on in the hospital that not only serves the Westman area, but happens to be in my own constituency.

I know many of the people, including the executive director and staff, nursing staff, medical staff and so on. I would like to remind the Minister, when he starts to criticize the fact that we were in Government part of the time that he refers to, the last four years, that a lot of good things happened at that hospital. I would remind him, and I was not going to take the time to do this, but we brought in the central laundry facility, brought in a badly needed CAT scan. We set up a

hemodialysis unit and at the same time owed millions of dollars, millions of dollars, and what it did was strengthen the role of the hospital as a major regional health care facility.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, not only that, simultaneously, during part of that time, we spent nearly \$20 million in building three beautiful nursing homes in the city. We have got, I would admit, about the finest nursing home care to be found in any region of the province, very fine facilities, and the Minister knows that. I am very proud of the fact that we developed these particular personal care homes.

But, Mr. Deputy Chairman, it seems to me that the Minister is somewhat backtracking now. In his first statement I thought he was more or less happy with these recommendations and wanted to proceed with them and now he is saying, well, they are not necessarily bound by these recommendations. But it seems to me that one of the major recommendations has to do with the number of acute care beds. That is the key portion of this.- (interjection)-

Well, I would remind the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Connery) that in Estimates, it is not just questions, but it is also statements. This is not the Question Period.- (interjection)- Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, it was not my idea to interject at this time. I mean, I was prepared to wait my turn. I do not want to be unfair to anyone, but this is a critical matter and it is an issue that a lot of people are concerned about, particularly seniors and people who are handicapped. People often end up in the hospital and they will be concerned about this.

So I ask the Minister then, is the Minister saying categorically now that he, as Minister, will ensure that there will be no cutbacks in acute care beds in the Brandon General Hospital? Is that what he is saying, there will be no cutback in acute care beds?

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I can assure my honourable friend that the development decisions made at the Brandon General Hospital will be in full co-operation and agreement of the board, of the management, and of the staff of Brandon General Hospital, and that process will go on with open discussions with this Government—I do not know what kind of a system my honourable friend operated in—and when those decisions are made, and I will not prejudge what they may be, but they will be with complete agreement of the board, the administration, the medical staff and the nursing staff, as was the case with the recommendations.

My honourable friend attempts to say I am backing away from the recommendations. My honourable friend asked a direct question, and I simply told my honourable friend that was a recommendation unanimously agreed to by the hospital, by outsiders and by representatives of the ministry. Those recommendations form the basis for problem resolution of the issues addressed over the next number of months. Government has not agreed or disagreed with any of them, but we will be working in co-operation with the hospital to seek those answers and those resolutions.

Now, when my honourable friend refers to all of the wonderful things that he was able to achieve, he fails to give credit to the Opposition in 1986, and my honourable friend, Mr. McCrae, who convinced the Progressive Conservative Opposition that Brandon ought to receive the next CAT scanner, and we made that an election commitment and dragged himself, as the Minister of Brandon, dragging and screaming to make that commitment as well in Brandon and, as a result, Brandon is recognized today as serving the Westman region by having a CAT scanner.

My honourable friend had the opportunity, as the lead Minister representing Brandon for I do not know how many years, without being able to deliver that. It took the push and the shove of the Opposition, led by Mr. McCrae as a candidate in Brandon West to accomplish that for the citizens of Brandon.

So if my honourable friend wants to take the rest of the day talking about who did what, and what is good, and what is bad, we will be here, we will be here talking about it. But I simply want to tell my honourable friend from Brandon East that he ought to sit down with the chairman of the board, with the administration, chief of medical staff and the director of nursing and talk about the process that led to the report that I tabled today, the first time it has been used it. It appears to be a much more reasonable way to approach issues in health care than the confrontational tactics that have been part of management in past years. I think it provides Government with some reasoned approach to resolving of problems in co-operation with those who have opinions to offer, and even vested interest in the recommendations. It has been a most interesting and informative process of co-operation and consultation between the ministry, experts in the health care field, Brandon General Hospital, and the community of Brandon.

\* (1610)

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I find it amazing and amusing and unbelievable when I hear this Minister talk about how he wants to be so rational, and want to co-operate, and want to change the system, when he has just finished calling the doctors of Manitoba liars, particularly the president, Dr. Bartlett, a liar. That is terrible. When you talk about confrontation and—

**An Honourable Member:** Who is the liar?

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Who is the liar? Yes, that is just a terrible way to deal with the medical profession in this province in my opinion. I am not so sure whether— if I could sort the wheat from the chaff in the Minister's remarks—whether he told us that the local medical community was in agreement with this. Maybe they may have been represented on this, but it was they who were making a great deal of noise and raised the issue earlier this year about the problem of closure of beds and inefficient funding. I would be very surprised if they would be happy with some of the recommendations made here.

I would make this comment too, Mr. Deputy Chairman. For him to suggest that the CAT scan is in Brandon

because they were in Opposition, is utter nonsense. How convoluted can you be in your reasoning? We made that commitment way back, and he does not know. We made that commitment way back and long before the Honourable Member used his confrontational methods that he refers to, which he does not want us to do now. He cannot take credit for that, I am sorry, he cannot. If he looks at the records very clearly he will see when the decision was made and how it was made.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, the basis for this report, recommending to the Government to cut back on the number of acute beds, is simply based on a statistical average that has been calculated by the Manitoba Health Services Commission as to the number of acute care beds per thousand people in the province. Just because the Westman area is slightly above that average, this seems to be the basis for recommending a reduction in the number of acute care beds. I wonder if the Minister could comment on that?

What about the waiting list that the doctors raised the questions about? It was they who raised it, not the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans). They made a big issue of it. What is this going to do to the waiting list? Are they going to discourage people from going to the hospital? Are they going to discharge them more quickly? Just what is going to happen? I do not want to get into all this detail, but the fact is this is a major recommendation which has a lot of financial implications. It is really downsizing the role of the hospital as an acute care bed facility. That is what is about to happen if the Government pursues the recommendations of this report.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I can do nothing other to help my honourable friend understand better than: (a) to ask him to sit down with Dr. Roos, and (b) to sit down with Dr. Taylor, the chief of the medical staff representing the physicians, and ask those questions as to why the recommendations were made and what was the genesis behind the recommendations.

I did not sit at the Peer Review Committee, but the chief of the medical staff of Brandon General Hospital did. My honourable friend might ask those very interesting questions of him. I would urge him to do that before my honourable friend starts spreading any sort of misinformed information à la Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer), with empty boxes.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I am going to be certainly discussing this with people in Brandon, connected with the Brandon General Hospital, to get their reaction. It seems to me that what the Minister now has is a report which he is about to use, he is able to use, to reduce the amount of money going into acute care bed services at the Brandon General Hospital. That to me is the bottom line, a cutback in the number of acute care beds. I believe, as sure as we are sitting here and standing here, that this is what is going to happen.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, as I indicated earlier, now my honourable friend has at least been more forthright in how he is going to approach this

report, agreed to by the chairman of the Board of Brandon General Hospital, the chief executive officer, the head of the medical staff, the head of the nursing staff.

He is now going to say that this report is Government's answer to cutbacks and Government's plan of cutbacks. My honourable friend will attempt, in his narrowed way, without information, without discussion with the Brandon General Hospital, who unanimously agreed to the recommendations provided to Government—he will go out and get his Friday, his Saturday weekend story without consulting with those people in the hospital to find out what their reaction is, because my honourable friend, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), is more interested in narrow NDP politics than quality health care. That is where my honourable friend from Brandon East will become—

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**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** The Member for Thompson, on a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, we have a number of provisions in our Rules, a number of provisions in Beauchesne's, which clearly indicate the Members should not be imputing motives to other Members. The last statement was clearly in that category. I would ask that you request the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) answer the questions, perhaps even debate the issues which have been raised by the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), but it is not in order to impute motives to other Members.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** The Member does not have a point of order, but I would urge Members to choose their words wisely. The Honourable Minister of Health.

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**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I simply ask my honourable friend, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), who is a long-time veteran of this place, that if he is genuinely interested, as he alleges to be, in the long-term development of Brandon General Hospital, before he makes statements which may not be based in full knowledge and accuracy, he simply have discussions with the board, the management, the medical staff and the nursing staff as represented by those four individuals on the committee who just presented to Government the report this week. To simply sit down and become acquainted with the background, with the information and with the issues presented in that report.

It would do him a world of good personally. More importantly, it would provide excellent information to the citizens of Brandon, and those are really the people we ought to be trying to represent in this issue and not get caught up in his weekend headline. Talk to the chairman of the board, talk to the executive director, talk to the chief of the medical staff, talk to the director of nursing, and find out why those recommendations were agreed to by themselves.



**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I indeed indicated earlier that I will be talking to some of the people connected with Brandon General Hospital, but it is not a matter of misinformation or anything. All you have to do is to read the recommendation, I mean, how much further do you have to go?

It states clearly that a phase reduction in the number of acute care beds be undertaken now in keeping with the agreed number of acute beds that will be included in the redeveloped facility. I mean, there is a recommendation—and it is referred to two or three times—that there be a reduction in the number.

So I can talk to a lot of people, but I can read and I know what I read. This is my final question to the Minister, if he wants to answer. Is the Minister going to accept this report or not?

He seems to be defending it. On one hand, he says, it is not Government policy; on the other hand, he is making a case to accept it. So I am asking the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) whether, having met with some of the people, having looked at the report, he is now prepared to accept the report and to follow through with the major implementation, major recommendation of the report, which is the reduction on the number of acute care beds. Is he prepared to move ahead with this now?

\* (1620)

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I will tell my honourable friend what I told the chairman of the board, the chief executive officer of Brandon General Hospital, the head of the medical staff, the director of nursing yesterday and the other members of the committee who were there: (a) I appreciated their efforts and their honesty in presenting that report; and (b) that I would work with them in my role as Minister responsible to implement those recommendations that we can agree to implement. Notice the emphasis on, agree to implement. In other words, implement them as partners in health, with the hospital in agreement with which recommendations we shall implement.

That contrasts rather significantly the exercise that my honourable friend participated in in Government, wherein they ordered in Winnipeg the closure of acute care beds to the numbers of 112 three years ago. That was without consultation, without peer review, without participation by those institutions. That was simply a cold, blunt, heartless directive of a NDP Government. I have indicated to the members of the committee, to the chairman of the board, to the chief of medical staff, to the director of nursing and to the executive director of Brandon General Hospital that Government will work with them in implementing those recommendations that we can mutually agree to. Mr. Deputy Chairman, that is a reasonable course of action, to work with the Brandon General Hospital in making those decisions.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I just do not accept the thesis of the Minister that when we were in Government, it was all confrontation, all imposition, no consultation whatsoever, and now that he is the Minister, it is all consultation, it is all sweetness and

light; it is all co-operation. It is not just black and white by any means. It is not by any means, particularly when it comes to the words of the Minister who has taken on the medical profession of Manitoba, calling them liars, it is just incredible. It is going to be interesting to see how this report is accepted by the community. He keeps on referring to the Members of the committee and that we should talk to them, and how they have agreed to this, and so forth and so on and that it is all here for us to review and so on.

The fact is that this report indeed will be studied by people in the medical profession. Through the media, it will probably be reviewed by the citizens of the community, and I would dare say that there is going to be a lot of apprehension when you tell the people of the community, and I do not mean just Brandon, I mean the Westman area, that there will be fewer beds to serve them in the future, rather than more.

**Mr. Orchard:** I want to thank my honourable friend for his obvious compliment that there was indeed confrontation when he was part of Government with the health care community. His colleague, the Minister, invited doctors to leave Manitoba if they did not like it. Now there is consultation, and there is discussion and there is open discussion with health care facilities. I appreciate that recognition of a change in style and attitude and openness of Government with those health care professionals delivering service.

That is the whole genesis, Mr. Deputy Chairman, behind the Peer Review Committee, where Government did not act in isolation and order the Brandon General Hospital to close beds as the NDP were wont to do. We sat down with the senior people in the Brandon General Hospital and talked as responsible health care professionals to get advice on how we resolve problems that have gone back four years in the operation of the Brandon General Hospital. The process was a good one. The process is an important one. The process is one which provides direction to future Governments regardless of who is the Minister of Health in how to come to grips with controversial and complex problems in health care.

Do not do it in isolation, do not unilaterally order beds to be closed as the NDP did, but rather try and sit down and understand the issues, and make reasoned solutions possible. That is good management, that is good health care delivery, that is excellent consultation to be undertaken within the health care field. If my honourable friend, the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), believes that that kind of consultation and input from affected facilities and health care professionals is the wrong way to approach, then I say to him, my honourable friend will never enjoy Government again, because health care professionals throughout the length and breadth of this province never want to return to the confrontation, to the isolation of the NDP, where they simply were told, close acute care beds, or they tell doctors, leave the province, we do not need you.

Those days are gone, and I am glad my honourable friend from Brandon East recognizes that the confrontation of the NDP, the lack of openness, the

lack of consultation is gone, and that the new style of open negotiations of committees of peer review involving the institution is a better way to go. I thank him for that endorsement.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I cannot accept those remarks of the Minister of Health. He is putting words into my mouth and he is misleading this House when he makes that statement.

The fact is that when we were in office there was plenty of consultation, and there were plenty of committees. There were committees with Manitoba Health Services Commission. There were all kinds of committees set up on all kinds of specific issues, whether it be the hemodialysis program, whether it be a program of redevelopment of the hospital; there were all kinds of consultative committees. Maybe they did not get the publicity that the Minister got with his review committee, but the fact is they were there and there was consultation.

I reject categorically his assertion that we ordered the Brandon General Hospital to close beds; that is not true. They made a decision. It was made by their board and by their management to reduce the number of beds during the summer. It was strictly a seasonal thing. The interesting thing is, that is still going on today. But not only do you have a closure for seasonal purposes, now we have a recommendation that is going to actually eliminate beds. That to me is a structural change that has taken place and is far more serious.

It will be interesting to see how the community reacts to this because I do not think they will be as positive as the Minister would like to think. For one who has just finished calling doctors liars in this province, I will just not accept his assertion that he has a non-confrontational style. It is anything but non-confrontational.

**Mr. Orchard:** Again I thank my honourable friend for his warm endorsement of the open style of Government which we have brought in. I also want to just simply close with good advice, and I often give it to my honourable friend. Talk to the chairman of the board, the chief executive officer of Brandon General Hospital, the chief of the medical staff and the director of nursing. Talk to those people, ask them what their input was, ask them what their thoughts are, ask them why they made those recommendations to Government, because the Brandon General Hospital, in its entirety from board through to nursing staff were full partners in that report.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** I just want to indicate that we have some questions for the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation (Mr. Connery), who earlier was seeming to express some concern about not being asked questions, and I know I cannot refer to why I cannot ask him questions directly now, but I did want to say that we want to ask him questions on Workers Compensation.

I do want to correct the record, if I might, because I think the Minister has a great deal of difficulty sometimes in bringing truthful information to this House. The fact, for the record, is that when we would have

normally dealt with Workers Compensation Estimates, I was in the other committee, as was to be expected. I am the Health Critic. It was indicated at the time, and the Liberal Member was also unable to ask questions. The Minister responsible for Workers Compensation seems to have some difficulty in understanding that what we are dealing with now is Estimates time. Before he comes in and mouths off and wastes the time of this committee, before we end up wasting more time while we wait for the opportunity to ask the Minister questions, I would suggest he first of all check his rules and second of all make sure that he is making accurate statements in the House.

Nobody ever said the questions on Workers Compensation were not important. In fact, Mr. Deputy Chairman, it was quite the opposite. It was indicated to the Minister that throughout this Session, we are going to be asking a lot of questions, particularly on the Bill that the Minister has brought in.

I am not going to debate the Bill right now, Mr. Deputy Chairman. I want to ask questions to the Minister.

\* (1630)

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** Order, please; order, please. I believe I should point out as Chairman that the Minister did yield the floor to another Member, and was excused at that time. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

**Mr. Ashton:** Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I also believe though that it has been standard practice, certainly in the eight years that I have been in this House, that when we ask for Ministers to be present, they are usually present for the entire meeting of the committee. I have raised those points to put them on the record, as I want to indicate quite clearly, and indicate as the Minister should be aware that this is Estimates time we are dealing with right now.

As I said before, there were reasons, I was in the other committee, and I was asking questions on the Health Department, and that is something that happens when you are a critic for a number of different areas. I would hope that the Minister instead of coming in with the tirade that he came in with earlier, particularly given the fact that he was not—

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** Order, please. I would thank the Member for his clarification and the Minister is now here. We can proceed with the questions. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

**Mr. Ashton:** Deferring once again to the—

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**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** On a point of order, the Member for Inkster.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am pleased that the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) was pursuing a line of questioning to the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation, and it gave the floor to the Member for Brandon, so

that he could get on the record to facilitate the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). I would suggest if maybe the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) would give the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) the floor, so he can continue with his questions and we can proceed.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** On a point of order.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I believe I had the floor. I had indicated to the Liberals that I would be deferring it immediately after making the comment because I know the Member was on a question, but I did have the floor and wanted to make some comments.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** There is no point of order and I do not believe there was an agreement at that time, and I would recognize the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

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**Mr. Ashton:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman. I just wanted to put those comments on the record because the Minister who had come into the Chamber before had raised the issue. I want to indicate for the record, without getting into the type of attack that the Minister got into that I do not think we should be doing that in the committee. I believe we should be asking questions that are important to this province including in terms of Workers Compensation.

I explained to the Minister privately what had happened. He was right in the committee when the Estimates of the Department of Health were being dealt with, and I really would hope that the Minister would recognize the fact that it is very difficult for anybody to be in two committees at once and certainly attempt to ask questions, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that would give proper attention to a very important area.

That is why we are going to be asking questions of Workers Compensation today, and as I said before, and the Minister perhaps was not aware of the comments, this is Estimates time. This comes right out of our allocation for Estimates time. We will be asking questions on the Bill as well, and I would just hope that would be clear and that we could get on with the questions now, starting with the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) and afterwards, I have a number of questions as well.

**Mr. Patterson:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, amongst the many changes in the Workers Compensation is the rather major change in the composition of the board to what the Honourable Minister has called the corporate style of board with a part-time board concerned largely with policy and the general direction of the organization, and then with the full-time appeal board.

I do not want to criticize this move out of hand, Mr. Deputy Chairman, because it must be recognized in human affairs, and all of our organizations, business, government, or whatever are human organizations, and there is no such thing as certainty. We can say that

we think such and such an action is taken, such and such we think is likely to happen. We might be able to put some degree of probability on it. So I would say with this type of organization, Mr. Deputy Chairman, we will wait and see how it works.

Now I am quite sure the Members of the New Democratic Party, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), and possibly many unions will allege that this type of board will result in it not being in the best interests of injured workers, and that somehow or other the board itself will not be as responsive and as oriented to looking after the injured workers.

Well, I would like to say, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that we will again experiment and it might well turn out to be a much better form of organization and we will continue to monitor it and, as I say, wait and see.

Can the Minister give us some indication of how well this new structure is functioning to date? There was this separation of the permanent appeal board, which will handle only appeals, from the part-time board with its tripartite composition of the worker representatives, management representatives and then those who are representative of the public interest, as of course defined by the Government of the Day.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment):** The Member knows that the current legislation calls for a minimum of three people. We have appointed four people from the community at large. As the Member knows, there are six people technically in the appeals area and we have asked the chairman of both appeals committees not to be part of the decision-making, but the two labour reps and the two management reps sit with the other four when it comes down to final decision-making on policy at this point. That is the current structure.

The structure in the future will be a tripartite, will have a policy committee comprised of two, two, and two. We will also have the board made up of part-time people, plus at least one full-time commissioner from the labour side and one full-time commissioner from management side to give that hands-on feeling that comes from working with claims at all times. The concern was of having the appeals commissioners on the policy, that maybe sometimes they are too close to the adjudication and they felt that would be separate, yet they would still be part of the final decision-making within the policy, so they will always be there.

The goal, with the new legislation, is to make it tripartite. If the members from the community at large had an idea that both the labour and the management representatives were opposed to, they would have the strength to overturn it, so no one group has the power to put something in unilaterally. They have to have the concurrence of at least one of the others to do something, and that makes sure that there is no overburdening power delegated to one group or the other.

I think it is working. I have met with some of the people, in fact, I met with one of the commissioners just this week for lunch on Tuesday to ask how the board was working and if it was coming, and he was

very pleased with the progress to date, the co-operation. We hope that it will continue, but it is a new process, and I agree with the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson), and we are doing it in the same way.

We are taking a look at how it works and when we had our news conference I said that I, as the Minister, and this Government are determined, absolutely determined, to make Workers Compensation work in the best interest of injured workers so that they get fair settlement quickly, rehab as quickly as possible, so that injured workers who are capable of going back to work would go back to work as quickly as they can, preferably in their old job. If they cannot do their old job then preferably with that same employer, but if for some reason their injury prevents them going back to their original employer that they would have a job with another employer as quickly as possible.

\* (1640)

One of the concerns raised to me by the unions was that some employers were maybe not wanting to take somebody that had already been injured in case there would be a reoccurrence. Well, there is the Second Injury Fund and that basically, I think, was because of not knowing the procedure. I assured the unions and I stand in this House committed that we will not stand for businesses refusing injured workers an opportunity to work. We will work with the employers; we will work with the employees who have been injured to ensure that they have a job. Injured workers have a right to a job as well as any other employee who has not been injured.

Yes, we are looking at the Workers Comp Board. We will continue, no matter if it is working good two years from now, we will try to make it better. There is no plateau that we are trying to achieve in Workers Comp. We have some initial steps which really were required because of the mess we inherited, but once we have cleaned up the mess, then we want to continue to fine tune forever.

As times change and as the workplace changes, we ourselves will have to change the policies and the procedures. At one time, it was basically only injuries that were affecting workers. Now we have industrial disease and all of the other things that go with the modern workplace, so we have to be adjusting, and hopefully, in a pro-active way.

Our first primary goal still is to prevent injuries, and we have a very close working relationship with the Workplace Safety and Health Committee. As you know, Workplace Safety and Health is funded a hundred percent by Workers Compensation, but it is under two different Ministers at this point. I had them both prior. Our goal in their department, and the goal of Workers Compensation is to as much as possible prevent injuries, prevent industrial illness, and to therefore lower the premiums. We are working very hard toward that end. There is a new person in charge of Workplace Safety, in the name of Tom Farrell. I worked very closely with Gerrie Hammond, the Minister of Workplace Safety, and I think that we are coming along.

Previous to us getting involved we did not even know what industries, and what specific businesses within

those industries, were problem industries as far as injuries go. We did not have the mechanism, the means, of tracking and of following it down. Now with computers and so forth, the processes are coming in line that we will be able to determine a specific business, and we are not going to go there with a big hammer, but we will find if a business is having some problems with injuries, we want to go and work with them. If there is an industry in general, we will work with that industry, and some industries are more prone to accidents because of their nature. Lumbering is a very hazardous one, where, say, cooking is not as hazardous, it is more burns and cuts.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Nevertheless, we want to work with industry to reduce the number of accidents, especially when we look back at the asbestos industry and things like that. We are talking about what can we foresee as being something that could be a similar incident so that we could prevent them happening in the future.

**Mr. Patterson:** Another major change, and this is one in the way of the assessments on employers where the King Commission, amongst its many recommendations, had recommended against having the so-called merit rating assessment. Nevertheless, this has been implemented. In this change in particular, there are many allegations made that this is going to be to the severe detriment of injured workers because employers will then put pressure on workers not to report accidents, or to return to work before they are really ready, and so on and so on.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I fully realize and understand that these are only speculations. It is something that certainly might happen, but we cannot say with any degree of certainty, or even high probability, that it will happen. There are some positive aspects to the merit rating system to induce employers to be more concerned about safety so they do not get injured workers, and the accident rate is reduced.

We might track this to see if in fact some employers putting pressure on injured workers not to report accidents might show up, let us say, in some significant reduction in the number of claims over some period of time. Could the Minister tell us if the board is doing anything in particular to try to see if this type of thing is in fact happening, or if it were to happen, if there is some significant numbers of employers so pressuring workers not to report accidents, has the board some mechanism or procedures in place that they might be able to recognize this?

**Mr. Connery:** We are getting into some questions that require more details. This is why we have the Estimates process where we have the staff that are there, that have all of the detail at their fingertips to be able to answer in depth the very legitimate question that the Member for Radisson is asking, which was refused by the NDP. That is why we are into this now. We could have had all of the staff, and they were here on that Monday night to answer questions and to have all of the detail, but we do not have that detail at our fingertips to give.

Let me say this to the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson), that prior to experience rating being implemented, I had heard complaints from workers and from unions, as we met with unions unlike the previous Government. We met with them to hear their legitimate concerns. They said that even then the safety personnel people were discouraging some people from reporting minor injuries because they had so many days without work loss, you know that was happening. We frown upon that, and so the concerns raised by the unions that this might happen with experienced rating is there. We have listened to their concerns. I am equally concerned. We have talked about it with the Board of Commissioners. We will do whatever we can to ensure that employers do not do it.

If you will notice, part of the changes are the changes in the fines. The size of the fines that we can levy out to prevent that sort of thing happening, the deterrent effect is there to the corporations. Once again, I do not have the Bill with me. We could have given the explicit numbers if we were in a proper Estimates process that was refused by the NDP.

We would have had those specific numbers for you to show you. They are very significant fines. Fines that would never be levied on an employee because if an employee does gerrymander the system, the courts would determine a fine, but what if a large business, a big business was doing it, there are some significant fines to deter them from doing it. That is why we put that in. We are concerned with the state, the claims made by the unions, we are watching it very carefully. I make, very clearly in this Legislature, that I will ride herd very heavily on any business that tries to discourage an injured worker from reporting that claim.

**Mr. Ashton:** Just in terms of the experience rating system, I want to indicate that we in the New Democratic Party are totally opposed to the move taken by the Minister. It is interesting. The Minister talks about how the labour movement is totally against it. The Minister himself acknowledges the reason why we are opposed to it.

He indicated and it is true that even without the experience rating system you have pressure on people not to report accidents. The Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak) attests to that first with his own experience, with Inco, et cetera. He had a broken leg and he was kept at work because of the pressure not to report accidents. That takes place when there are internal company policies to try and attempt to have a limited number of accident days lost. That has been in place, but now what the Minister has done is added to that in terms of that pressure. Now there will be a direct trade off between the number of accidents reported by a particular company and the amount of premiums they pay. That is what concerns us above and beyond everything else on that. In fact I would ask the Minister, I have a number of questions for him.

\* (1650)

The first question I will be asking him will be in terms of whether he will in fact be monitoring, or whether he will commit now that if there is evidence that people are being discouraged from reporting accidents

because of this, that he will be willing to withdraw that policy. I state that, Mr. Acting Chairperson, because in industries that in effect have had this in place, for example, the railroads, and there are Members in this House who represent areas with a lot of railroad workers. The experience in those industries, if you talk to the employees, has been that this has taken place. What happens is, when you are dealing with industries and there are a number in Manitoba because of the federal jurisdiction, they pay premiums based on their accident experience. They essentially have their workers compensation administered by the Workers Compensation Board as operated as a separate system.

What the employees will tell you is that there is a great deal of pressure on people to return to work. There is a great deal of pressure not only on that, but in terms of opposition to claims by people whose only job with the particular company they work for is to try and keep the number of claimants down on workers compensation. What I will ask the Minister is, he has brought this in because of the Conservative position on this, okay, that is something we really cannot do much about, that is their ideological position if you like. They believe this is the appropriate thing to do. I will ask him, will he at least be willing to change that policy back to where it was if there are, and I believe there will be, clearly documented cases of people being pressured back to work because of the implementation of their policy?

By the way, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am already getting calls from people who are saying that is happening, and I do not know if the Minister has been talking to those people, but will he at least be willing to reverse that if he is proven wrong and if people are forced back to work?

**Mr. Connery:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I am really quite surprised but very pleased that the Member for Thompson, the critic for Workers Compensation, would finally stand up and ask a question on Workers Compensation. Several times we have invited that Member to visit the Workers Compensation facility so that staff there could brief him, could explain what was going on, to show him the changes that were being made. He said that he would go, then did not show up, never had the courtesy to tell staff that he was not coming. We had staff sitting there prepared with overheads and everything else to show what was going on. Would he go? No, he would not. When we then brought the Bill in, Bill 56, we made arrangements to meet with both caucuses to explain Bill 56 to them, bringing the CEO and bringing in -(interjection)- You were not. You were not.- (interjection)- Do not worry, we will get to that.

Mr. Acting Chairman, the Liberal Party, the Liberal Critic sat and met with Workers Compensation staff to have the legislation explained to them. The critic for the NDP walked right through the office, would not even acknowledge the staff was there, but I will say that the Leader of the Opposition finally did one humane thing, and he did meet with them and was briefed on them and made some comments to them.- (interjection)- or the Leader of the nondescript Opposition.

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**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The Member for Concordia, on a point of order.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** If the Government cannot organize their business in such a way to have an LAMC meeting called at the last minute where a House Leader has to go to the meeting, as Leader of the Party I participated with the Workers Compensation committee and we did the LAMC together. I think the Minister should be forthright and honest in dealing with this important matter.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order, order. The Member does not have a point of order. The Honourable Minister.

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**Mr. Connery:** The Leader of the NDP is usually out of order and his mechanism is not working too good but that is okay.

**An Honourable Member:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Connery:** Your mental mechanisms are seldom working. Nevertheless, the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), the sometime critic of the NDP for Workers Compensation does raise a legitimate question. When he says, will we watch, absolutely we will be watching very carefully to see if there is anything at all that would indicate—(interjection)—The Leader of the NDP (Mr. Doer) is rather jealous that I am leaving a week from today for Puerto—Vallarta is the pronunciation.—(interjection)—Okay, we will have a press conference, I will even invite you. The Leader of the NDP would like to come to that press conference.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order. The Minister for Workers Comp has the floor.

**Mr. Connery:** I do not blame the NDP for being sensitive because they have showed their colours when it comes to workers, and they do not have any concern about them. But we will, as a Workers Compensation Board, be monitoring very carefully those concerns raised by the unions, raised by the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) and the facetious question raised by the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I asked before that we would confine our remarks to the Workers Compensation Board, but this Minister likes to yap and yap and yap. He also likes to get up and make statements that are completely untruthful, and I would say to the Minister if he would care to check the facts, first of all, in terms of meetings with the Workers Compensation Board—

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**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The Minister, on a point of order.

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Co-operative Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** I would ask you to direct the Member to—when he says I made statements that were untruthful is tantamount to calling the Member a liar. I would ask you to ask the Member to—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The Minister does not have a point of order.

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**Mr. Ashton:** Thank you for pointing that out to the Member. I just wanted to indicate once again that the Member likes to yap. Perhaps he does not have a difficulty in terms of conflicting schedules. After the last Cabinet shuffle, most of the Minister's responsibilities were removed from him, and perhaps he has the luxury of organizing his meetings so there is not a conflict.

In my position as House Leader as well as the Health Critic, and as well as the critic for the Workers Compensation Board, I will tell you, as the Leader of the New Democratic Party indicated before, that I had to attend a meeting of the LAMC which was indicated at the last minute, and there was a conflict. I raised this directly with the Leader and the Leader of our Party thought that Workers Compensation was so important that he personally, at the last minute, went and attended that meeting.

That shows the concern of the New Democratic Party for Workers Compensation Board. I do not mean to downplay my own position in the caucus, but I will say that if the Minister would recognize what happened, it showed the commitment to the Workers Compensation Board by the New Democratic Party, the fact that the Leader of the Party felt it was important enough to take time out of his busy schedule to deal with it.

If the Minister insists on yapping and yapping and yapping, it appears to me, Mr. Acting Chairperson, that there is no control over there. I know we have been attempting to co-operate, to try and get a number of Bills through, but every time we start raising issues of concern, the Government gets up and filibusters its own Bills, or filibusters its own committee hearings.

Now if they want to filibuster and prevent the passage of the Bills we have indicated that we are willing to pass through by tomorrow, let the responsibility be on their shoulders, because we have indicated, and we have indicated in writing that we are willing to see a number of Bills pass through, including Interim Appropriation. If they want to filibuster it, let them do it. As I said, there seems to be no control.

I would urge the Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) perhaps to talk to some of his Members because what we have seen from the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation is just absolutely pathetic, Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is absolutely pathetic. If he does not have anything better to do with his time than to get up in this committee and launch into these personal tirades of his, then I would suggest that he do us all a favour and turn over the responsibility

for the Workers Compensation Board to somebody—perhaps there must be somebody on those Benches—who will spend their time looking after the concerns of injured workers instead of coming in here with the petty tirades of the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation Board (Mr. Connery).

Getting back once again, I would ask the Minister, I would plead with him in terms of our concerns to deal with those concerns, and in terms of the time constraints, not to get into these tirades, these tirades which are not factual, Mr. Acting Chairperson, as I have indicated, but to deal with the concerns. I will ask the Minister a number of other questions, and I would ask him if he would please, if not for me, I do not really care—I have come to know this Member in the last number of years as the Member who will get up in terms of these personal attacks and cheap shots. I have known that. Quite frankly, I consider it a badge of honour, almost, to be attacked by this Member because I think it shows how desperate he is to deflect from his miserable record in terms of Workers Compensation.

\* (1700)

So I will ask him further, he introduced the Bill - (interjection)- Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I thank the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger) who I think is probably one of the few people in this House who has managed to maintain the spirit of the season, the Christmas spirit, and I would prefer that we all did that. I would certainly agree with the Minister.

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation—there were many recommendations made by the Legislative Review Committee which the Minister has had for a considerable period of time. When the Minister came into office, many of those recommendations were well underway in terms of being studied by the implementation team which he has made reference to. When he introduced the legislation in this House, he indicated that he was dealing with—and the Minister can correct in terms of the figures, because he had given a number of different figures with a number of recommendations he was dealing with—I believe about 16 recommendations from the Legislative Review Committee. Some he had indicated were being dealt with partially, as well.

What I would like to ask the Minister is the status of some of the other recommendations. I will start with one in terms of decentralization. An extensive paper had been prepared by the committee that was reviewing Workers Compensation, part of the change in Government. The Minister responsible for Rural Development (Mr. Penner), and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) have talked about decentralization. I would assume that the combination of those two facts would lead to the decentralization of Workers Compensation being fairly well developed in terms of proposal stage. By the way, it is something I would strongly support in terms of getting services out to injured workers in their own communities, getting claim services, rehabilitation services.

What I would like to ask the Minister is the status of any proposals in regard to decentralization with the

Workers Compensation. Further to that, when can we expect some sort of an announcement in conjunction with the overall policy that will see some of the services of the Workers Compensation Board moved out into rural and northern communities?

**Mr. Connery:** Well, that is typical. The Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) tries to use threats and intimidation, that we will sit forever and we will not pass anything unless I am nice to him. He can go suck on sour lemons, because he has already put himself in the type of person that he is. I have no qualms.

He talks about about decentralization. Well, we are not going to be moving the main building, I do not think, out of Winnipeg. But we are going to be looking at, for the first time under this Government with the new legislation, being able to have people—Mr. Acting Chairman, he was so concerned about asking questions, to get answers, and then he talks to his other cohorts there and has not listened to one answer. So I do not even know why I waste the time of answering the guy.

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**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Point of order. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, the last comments of the Member—

**An Honourable Member:** Are disgusting.

**Mr. Ashton:** —are disgusting, as the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) suggests. It is not in order for the Member to suggest that we have not been paying attention in terms of the answers that have been given. I will not listen, by the way, if the Member wants to get into his personal tirades, but if he is going to give factual information on questions that are answered I will listen to him, and listen to him attentively. Quite frankly, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have not heard answers yet in answer to my previous question. I would ask him to deal with that, instead of the other irrelevancies he has brought into his supposed answer.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** The Honourable Member does not have a point of order.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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**Mr. Connery:** We are hearing applause from the former Minister of Highways who said, I did not know, when his employees dumped hazardous wastes in one of the municipal dumps. So I would not applaud too hard.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**An Honourable Member:** What was your comment?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order, order. The Honourable Minister has the floor.

**Mr. Connery:** What did you say?

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer):** Order, order. The Member for Dauphin.

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Acting Chairman, if the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery), the Minister, is not interested in dealing with business of this House, let us recognize other speakers and get on with the business of the House. He is wasting the time by his nonsense.

**Mr. Connery:** The Member asked about decentralization. We are going to be having in place, under the new legislation—(interjection)—I was just waiting for you. You wanted an answer to your question. I thought maybe when you were listening—(interjection)—

When you asked the question about decentralization, one of the things that we want to ensure is that we have people in the North—and this was a concern raised to us by injured workers, that they could be adjudicated by northern people. We will have that opportunity to do that. That was a commitment to us—and also to be able to fly somebody, a chairman, to the North to adjudicate those claims of those injured workers. So that will take place with the new legislation.

The new legislation—the Member asked a lot of questions. He asked what are all of the various recommendations of the King inquiry that have been fully or partially implemented. As the Member full well knows, I would have to have staff here to go through them one by one to tell him of the answers. That is what the Estimates process is for, is to have staff so that we can give the Members the full details. Members of the Liberal Party might like to know some of the answers to those questions. We do not have all of the details in front of us. We are not able to fully answer those questions. That is why we have the Estimates process. This process is for questions of the larger philosophical nature, and I am prepared to answer them.

**Mr. Ashton:** The Minister obviously does not understand what we are dealing with. It is quite common for Members of the Legislature to ask questions, this comes off Estimates time. The Minister does not understand that. It was also indicated to his Acting House Leader last week that there would be questions in terms of workers compensation, and I believe the Liberals have indicated as well to the Minister that there would be questions on workers compensation.

Quite frankly, I would say the Minister should not have to have staff here to be able to ask questions about the implementation of the Legislative Review Committee. He has been the Minister for more than a year and a half, he has brought in a Bill, and in the Bill he indicated how many of the recommendations of the Legislative Review Committee were going to be implemented, and now he comes in here and says I do not know enough about the Bill. Mr. Acting Chairperson, that is not good enough.

The Minister should be able to give at least some indication. If he cannot give indication as to exact numbers or exact recommendations that have not been

implemented, can he at least answer this question: will he commit himself to implementing the many recommendations of the Legislative Review Committee that are not included in the Bill before the Legislature; and if so, when is he going to bring in further amendments that are going to deal with many of the very important recommendations of the Legislative Review Committee that have sat, gathered dust on the shelf for the last period of time? I would like to ask the Minister when will he implement those other recommendations?

**Mr. Connery:** I would be very pleased to send a list to the Member—and I will copy the Liberal Party so they have the same information—a list of the recommendations of the King inquiry what have been fully implemented, what have been partially implemented, and what other ones they are looking at. I would be quite happy to send him a list of those, and we will obtain that detail for him. They are important because we have enacted a lot of those.

The Member full well knows, there is Bill 56, it is part of the legislative change that we are putting through workers compensation. I have conveyed to the Member in private, in this House, and outside of this Chamber, that next year we hope to have the benefits package to bring along, which deals with the claims, the cost of the claims, and what we are going to be paying for the injured worker to bring it up to the modern era. He knows that this is going to take place next year. I have already told him that. That is the process we are working on. At this point we are on schedule.

\* (1710)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** I just have a couple of brief questions for the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation.

One of the largest numbers of calls that I do receive as an MLA for the last 18 months, has been in regard to workers compensation. I have been hearing from several very frustrated people in terms of the length, the period that they have had to wait in order to go through the appeal system. I understand that the Government has been making movement and that in some areas, in particular the final appeal board, I understand that there is no backlog.

What I would like to know from the Minister, in terms of approximate, because I know he does not have the staff here, but what type of a backlog there currently is in the review committee stage. Does he have an estimated date, or some type of a timetable when he expects that particular backlog will be cleared up?

**Mr. Connery:** I thank the Member for that question, and once again I do not have the exact numbers at my fingertips. Once again it is a question that we will answer by letter to the Member. The number was higher, they brought it down; I am guessing that it is in, at review, it is somewhere—four to six weeks, in that area, that it is at now. We would hope to have that lower. We are talking on averages, because it depends on the individual case, if they have to go to medical review



panels, or additional medical review, and sometimes these are protracted investigations by doctors, so some of them can carry on quite a while even in review. We are looking at averages. I think it would be safe to say that three or four weeks at review might be a reasonable time—five weeks—that we could go through.

The primary adjudication, as I mentioned earlier, for those that are very obvious cases, are going through, about 45 percent of them, in a very short period of time before their first cheque is sent to them. We want to get those first cheques within two weeks, because that is the time that their unemployment insurance will cut in, or whatever benefits. It is important that individual injured workers are not waiting for money. We recognize that. It is the same as with rehab, we want to get them into the rehab process as quickly as possible, get them retrained and get them back working as quickly as possible. But the explicit numbers I will get for the Member, and in this case, I will copy the New Democratic Party Critic.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** To follow up, once the backlog which is currently in place has been taken care of, what type of—and maybe he might have to take this particular question also as notice—but what does the Government feel would be an acceptable level from an injured worker to enter into the process? If he is going through both other levels of appeal from the initial adjudicator, what type of a time period does he foresee for the average case to go from the door to the final appeal decision being made? Any idea on that?

**Mr. Connery:** I think on the average, and once again I am going from memory—we go through a lot of statistics and figures—I think the average is in around the 21-22 days for the first adjudication. Then, if we are looking at four to five weeks for the second adjudication—and these are average figures, you have to remember that. Then of course the final appeal could take three months because usually, if we are going to final appeal, there is new medical evidence, or there is some error and there has to be some research done, and by the third one it is longer.

So I guess, if you are going to the final one, I would hope we would be done in four to six months if they are going through all of the processes, provided the people process or go in for an appeal immediately. But we have a lot of complaints come in, and people say, well, we are not happy with adjudication, with the settlement we have, but have not gone and put in their name to go to the review committee which is the first one after adjudication. So it is up to the individual to put their name in, if they are not satisfied that they were not properly adjudicated, to immediately apply.

There are a whole lot of factors that come into play, and part of it is the individual, part is the complexity of the injury. If it is back injury, those are ones that are quite difficult to diagnose. If it is industrial disease, once again, it is a little more difficult. If it is a broken arm, broken leg, or cuts, those which are very obvious, we can deal with them very expeditiously and without the time frame to diagnose them. But an injured shoulder, torn back muscles, these are the more difficult ones and take a little longer.

In the past, some of them went well over a year as you know, and your Party had many complaints. Those same complaints were raised to me. We worked those down now. People were waiting, in fact, months just to get an appointment, and then months before they were heard, and months for a decision. As you know, when the King board was put in, they accepted claims going back to 1948, 40-year-old claims. There was a whole bulge of people who reapplied. A lot of them did not have new evidence, there was no error made, but that was the process and the current legislation allowed that.

The new legislation states there has to be a reason to ask for a second appeal to the commissioners. So there was a bulge and there were some very long, protracted delays before some final decisions were made. That affected the legitimate ones that should go to review, and that is our concern. We do not want to have just frivolous claims to be made just to take a chance—maybe somebody will maybe give in this time—when there is no real reason to change the decision.

So that is the best guess. Everything going very quickly, it could go through in a couple of months, but that would be probably on the shorter end of the time frame.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is not very often that I would agree with this particular Minister. I know this might not be the best time to bring up this question, and in fact it might have been better to bring it up during the Estimates, but as he has so eloquently put it, it is no fault of the Liberal Party or the Government that we were unable to cover Workers Compensation in Estimates. I would appreciate if he could give me some idea in terms of the percentage, or an approximate percentage, and if he cannot give it to me now because his staff is not here, he could send me a copy. What type of a percentage of actual cases that go to the review committee are actually overturned from their initial adjudicator?

**Mr. Connery:** That is really why when I say I was furious and everything else about not having the Estimates process, it is for this very specific reason where you could have asked the questions, got an answer, and then that might have triggered another subsequent question to that answer, which you do not have that opportunity to do now. That is unfortunate.

Of those figures—I would have to get them—I would guess, if we were getting much over 10 percent, it would mean somebody in the initial stage was not doing a good job. I would guess at 10 percent, but that is just a wild guess. I do not know if that is where it is or not, but we would be quite happy to supply that information. Also, at the same time, we would do it at the appeals level, which I am sure you would want to have.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** One of the reasons why I asked that question is that some of the individuals that I have met with appear on the surface, and I am no adjudicator nor would I want to be an adjudicator, because it is a very tough position that they are put into, but in some

of these situations I have a lot of sympathy for what they have to go through in terms of waiting, and if they are in the appeal process have to wait indefinitely when they have mortgage payments and monthly bills that are coming in. It is somewhat unfortunate, because of the backlogs of the past and current, that they are put into that type of a situation. I know in particular one case where an individual had to sell his cottage and had to sell his van because of debts owed or incurred.

The next question to the Minister is: the Workers Rehabilitation, is there any type of backlog there where, if a person is in need of Workers Rehabilitation, is he or she given the opportunity upon the recommendation of Workers Compensation?

**Mr. Connery:** Mr. Acting Chairman, when persons are injured, of course, they go in for diagnosis and if it is an injury that they will heal from and can go back onto their original job, naturally they go back. Rehab is when the individual is injured to the extent that the injury needs some time to repair and it could be a loss of a leg and they have to go to get a prosthesis. That takes time; that is part of the rehab system.

Then part of the rehab might not only be from a physical nature but might be from an educational nature that they have to be retrained. For instance, if a trucker lost both legs in an unfortunate accident, he would have difficulty being a truck driver but maybe could become a bookkeeper. If he did not have the skills for being a bookkeeper then they would enroll him in classes, first of all determining whether he had the aptitude and the individual wanted to do that line of work, then they would give him that sort of rehab training and then also go on a job search.

I would suggest to the Member—and I gave the Member for Radisson (Mr. Patterson) a package a while back from the facilities that we have on Portage Avenue, which is the employment services for people of this nature—that you have a tour through that facility, and it would help all Members at some point to go through so when their constituents call they would have an idea what the facility is. That is the sort of thing we do, and it is to get people into there very quickly.

As you know, or maybe do not know, when we took over office the director and assistant director of Rehab were gone. They had quit in frustration. They just could not stand what was happening from the previous administration. We have literally had to rebuild that organization from the ground up and I can say that the crew and Graham Lane, hired by the commissioners, has been a good choice and he has done an excellent job. The support that he has given to the union workers and received back from the union workers has been excellent.

The reports that I get from the workers at Workers Compensation is that Graham Lane is the best thing that any Government ever did for Workers Compensation. He is not the only one, there are over 300 dedicated people there working to make this system the best system that we can make it. We have appeals commissioners that are going and doing their darndest to give fair and quick adjudication, and we are putting in a new board so that policy will flow much quicker.

\* (1720)

**Mr. Mark Minenko (Seven Oaks):** Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to direct a couple of questions to the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board (Mr. Connery). The first question deals with the building that is being renovated on Portage Avenue. It used to be the Gladstone Datsun location. I was wondering if the Minister can advise us what offices of the Workers Compensation Board will be located at that location and will that be another location for workers to attend to various services there or what is the purpose of that building?

**Mr. Connery:** Mr. Acting Chairman, once again, unfortunately that is a question that had we been in the proper Estimates process with all of the staff here, we could have given him that question very quickly. I am not sure what reorganization of offices they are going to do. As you know, we have the new facility across from the Weir Building on Portage Avenue for employment services along with the criminal injuries offices along in that one. What they are going to put into that office I am not aware of today. Our satellite office for the appeals commissioners is over on Hargrave Street. You know where it is. I am not sure what they are putting in there, but I would be pleased to respond in writing to both Parties following.

**Mr. Minenko:** I have a question dealing with the construction industry. I have recently read and followed up an article in the construction industry magazine, where it dealt with various issues dealing with workers compensation, but more importantly, a new safety-prevention officer that they are looking at setting up in co-ordination with the Minister and the Workers Compensation Board.

I understand from the article and speaking with them that they have worked directly with the Minister and, although I appreciate that his staff is not here, I would hope they would be able to provide some information as to how that is progressing. I understand that the association was looking to their membership to vote on this additional assessment that they would be voluntarily paying to the Workers Compensation Board. I am just wondering if the Minister can advise us as to the progress of this particular initiative by the construction industry.

(Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair)

**Mr. Connery:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I believe it is January 1 that new program will be in place. I was lobbied quite extensively by both the construction industry and the heavy industry, which is the road builders, for safety programs to prevent accidents. Of course, I really appreciate the industry for their concerns, but they have two concerns with doing it:

First of all, they are very human people and do not want to see injured workers and, of course, the cost of workers compensation, which has to be passed on to the consumers of whatever they are building. It is that extra to housing, if you are going to buy a house, because the businesses do not absorb the workers

compensation assessment premiums. They are passed on to the consumer. We all pay those workers compensation premiums.

So they are very concerned about preventing accidents, having programs specific to their industry, and that is what they are wanting. So we have agreed, not through me, but through the Workers Compensation Board in consultation through the commissioners to put that in place, and that is going to be, I believe, January 1, but I would have to double-check. We will read Hansard and answer all of the questions that have been asked, if I have not adequately answered them.

The assessment would then be applied to all members in that industry and it would be automatically charged. It is a surcharge over and above the regular program. The industry knows full well that if the program is successful and accidents are reduced, their premiums will be lower and in the long run, they will be saving money. It is the same as me buying seed for the vegetable farm; you have got to put the seed in the ground before you can reap the harvest. They are doing the same thing and it is seed money to really be a benefit in the long run.

**Mr. Minenko:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have spent some time reviewing the information they provided to me. They have provided me also with information with what has been happening in Saskatchewan, and the record of injuries, and the reduction of injuries to workers in that industry, in that province, with the introduction of this new safety officer.

Can I ask the Minister then, is there going to be an extra cost to the Workers Compensation Board for really administering an extra little fund, and how does the Minister and/or the Workers Compensation Board intend to deal with that aspect of this issue?

**Mr. Connery:** I will have to get the exacts for you. I believe that the cost of the administration would be part of the surcharge, but I am not totally sure. If it does prevent accidents and prevent somebody from being maimed or even killed, then we have gone a long way to achieving what we want.

As I said earlier to the other Members, our goal at Workers Comp, along with Workplace Safety, is accident prevention. That is goal No. 1, but accidents will happen no matter how good a program we have. Then, of course, speedy recovery of the injured worker, speedy rehabilitation and getting them back into the workforce, if that is at all possible, that is the goal of Workers Comp.

**Mr. Minenko:** Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this then is something new for the Workers Compensation Board here in the province. Can the Minister advise us whether he is prepared, or the board is prepared, to invite applications from other sectors in the province which presently have a levy paid to the Workers Compensation Board for a similar type program in other industries?

**Mr. Connery:** I would have to talk to the board on it to see what they feel. We are open to suggestions from any group, whether it be the Opposition, from unions,

from business, for any program or ideas as to how we can have a safer workplace. Any proposals brought forward would be examined, but initially we want to ensure that what we are doing is right, so I doubt if Workers Comp would automatically throw it open to every sector of industry in Manitoba and put in the program. We want to ensure that what we are doing works, and if it does work, then of course we would encourage it in other sectors.

**Mr. Minenko:** How was this sector then selected as the real pilot project for the success of this program?

**Mr. Connery:** I guess they are the industry that has been initially most concerned and have continually lobbied. It is also an industry that has a high accident rate because of the nature of the industry. The construction industry—as you know, when they were doing the Eaton's building and putting all the new windows in there and you see all those people up on the scaffold—is obviously a very high risk industry. So anything they can do, it is a good pilot project to have. I think it is one that would probably be an indicator quicker than a lot of others, although the heavy industry is also one that would give a good indication.

The doors are not closed to any thoughts or ideas. If other industries came forward now, I am sure the board would take a look at it. There is no blanket decision that whoever comes forward would automatically have a program.

**Mr. Minenko:** I would like to now if I may, Mr. Deputy Chairman, ask the Minister some questions with respect to the Government's policy on assessment based on performance. I think as I have participated in debate on a number of Bills brought before us, there is always the intention and the view that the vast majority of businesses as evidenced by Bill No. 63 and Bill No. 64 are, of course, outstanding corporate citizens in our province and contribute and so on.

There are always the few that choose to disregard rules and regulations and put on pressure and so on. As a result, Government has to respond by introducing legislation like 63 and 64 to deal with those problem spots. I would like to ask the Minister responsible for Workers Compensation, how he intends to monitor the situation to ensure that employers are not discouraging their employees from filing the appropriate forms to bring to the attention of the board an injury suffered by a particular employee. What system does he have in place to monitor and ensure that that is not happening today?

\* (1730)

**Mr. Connery:** I think the Member full well knows that unless somebody comes forward and says that they have been, of course, how do we know. It is like Bill No. 63 and No. 64 which are the business practices. If somebody does not complain, you are not going to get all of the answers. We will have inspectors out through the workplace safety. I am sure an arrangement there will be worked out to monitor and, if they saw somebody at work that obviously was injured, to inquire if the report had been made.

I have asked the Workers Compensation Board of Commissioners and Graham Lane to take a look at what could be in place and they are watching it. They have not told me of a specific program, but any injured worker complaining would naturally be responded to very quickly. I also know the nature of what can happen if an injured worker does complain about his boss discouraging him, what kind of pressure that puts him under. Coming from the business community and working with employees and other businesses and understanding that, there is a problem and we are not hiding our eyes from the fact that there may be some—and they are very few—that might attempt to discourage their injured workers from reporting.

Now, obviously, if it was a serious injury where they had to be hospitalized, there is no way that can be done. It would be more injuries of strains and sprains and that sort of thing, although I was told when I went on a junket as Minister of Labour before, that there was a worker on crutches and the foreman said: Just come to work, you do not have to do anything, just be around and you will get paid, but just do not report the accident. Well, that is fine if it is a very simple injury, but if there is some rehabilitation work required in that injury, then of course that is detrimental to that employee's health.

So we frown upon that in any way and will continue to watch and I am sure the unions will be very quick to report it. That is the way an injured worker could report, through the union, that they were, and then the union could take that up with me in a group or block complaint. We would then investigate from that basis. I am really concerned about that issue and we are not going to just sit by and idly let it go without some observation.

**Mr. Minenko:** I appreciate the Minister's concern and I think he certainly has an obligation to be concerned, but I am also concerned that it seems like in a number of instances where this Government has instituted various programs they have not put safeguards in it, or they are seemingly not looking forward to try to deal with some problem spots.

As a result, I would like to ask the Minister whether the workers have—because I think the vast majority of workers in this province—perhaps the Minister responsible for Labour (Mrs. Hammond) could correct me—but if I remember correctly there is a large portion of workers in this province who do not belong to unions and do not necessarily have that assistance to deal with these sorts of problems. I think the people who are not members of unions are probably in a most dangerous situation because they may not have collective bargaining agreements and things of that nature to protect their interests. It is those workers that I think we should be most concerned about. I would ask the Minister then if he could respond, either later on verbally or by correspondence to myself as to some of the initiatives the board is looking at in dealing with this. He suggested that perhaps they are and he may not be totally aware of all their operations, but I would ask the Minister to pursue this further because I think this is an important issue.

Were workers advised, and in what fashion were they advised, as to the changes to how assessments would

be levied? Were workers advised? I presume the employers were, but were the employees advised?

**Mr. Connery:** Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, through the news release that came out, naturally the employees would know that the Workers Compensation average composite went down from 263 to 261, very insignificant change. I do not know the relevance of the employees knowing what the assessment rate was; it is very important that the employers know.

The Member knows that there are numbers that, if I had my staff here, we could give to you, but something like 7,000 employers had reductions and then there was a number that did not, and then a few that had an increase. There were more had a small reduction; some had an increase. For those employers, of course, they are notified directly what their rates would be, but as far as the employees go I do not know the relevancy. There are about 30 percent of the work force who are unionized; about 70 percent of the work force are non-unionized.

I recognize what the Member is saying, that yes, indeed, it is easier in some respects that they can report through a union; but also they can report it directly and those are the mechanisms and situations, things that we want to see what can be done.

I will have Workers Comp review Hansard after we are done; they will see what I have responded to. Those areas where there is more information to be gleaned, I will send to both critics and hopefully the critics would distribute to the Members.

**Mr. Minenko:** I was indeed encouraged by the Minister's response and as I rose to my feet another aspect of the operation disappeared, but he quickly reappeared again. I see the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) is indeed encouraged by that response.

I would like to ask the Minister responsible for the board, how often have employers been prosecuted in the Province of Manitoba for not reporting accidents? When was the last time an employer in the Province of Manitoba was prosecuted for not reporting an accident, not submitting the E4 form or whatever the appropriate form is, and when was the last incident?

**Mr. Connery:** That is one of the responses that we will have to reply to you by letter. The part of the speed-up has been that we are now phoning a lot of people immediately. When somebody walks in the door, and they have had an injury and they process a claim, they do not even wait. We do know that there are employers that have been tardy in filling out their forms.

My comments to the Chairman and to Graham Lane is that we do not want to fool around with employers that just do not care and are not going to be receptive. I am all in favour of fining them and fining them quickly and fining them heavily. We have to keep in mind the type of company. It can be a small company with one or two or three employees, where the individual is not right up with all of the regulations. We have to take all of those things into consideration.

I guess in the sense of penalties, we would want to look at the circumstances—was it a deliberate act of

not reporting to frustrate the system? I have no time, no truck with that kind of individual at all, those that are smaller employers and are not fully aware of the regulations, and do not have an accident—maybe one every five or 10 years—and so they are not up to speed on it. I would have some sympathy towards those. That is where the board will be calling them quicker to say: where is your report and why is it not in? That is why the penalties are there and I have no—Penalties is a two-sided sword. It is for those employees who want to cheat the system, and equally for those employers who want to frustrate and cheat the system. It does not matter to me who is wrong, they should be penalized.

**Mr. Minenko:** We are encouraged by the Minister's response and I certainly hope that he, and the Department of Labour, say, and Workers Compensation Board are indeed vigilant about this, because certainly the success, I think, of the program depends very much on that.

I am a little concerned about the comments the Minister has made about—and as the Industry and Trade Critic, having been to a number of businesses both large and small in this province, various locations, I can appreciate the time they put in dealing with Government paperwork and so on—I am a little concerned when the Minister seems to be taking on the role of the prosecuting attorney as well as the judge in determining what are the conditions that will be in place before an employer will be prosecuted.

\* (1740)

I think that, I would presume, and I have not looked in any great detail at legislation dealing with this particular aspect of the Workers Compensation Board, but I would hope that the Minister and the board do not get into that sort of situation where they then are deciding who is getting prosecuted and who is not. I think the letter of the law should be a level playing field.

I can appreciate that in some situations conditions may exist that provide an explanation, but does the Minister not think that would be something more appropriate for a judge to decide and not the board or the Minister?

**Mr. Connery:** I have had conversations with the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) and he is sincere in his questioning, so I take it under that context. I think there has to be some common sense and some discretion as to what we do. The type of fines, the penalty imposed, is not on behalf of the board, as the Member knows. A court of law judge will determine if we decide to prosecute, to push it; a judge will make the decision as far as the penalty goes. His concern is when we say we do not think somebody should be charged in this particular case, and I guess we have to take a common sense look at it.

We could clog the courts with people who are innocent, as he knows very well, if he goes back—and I think he supports The Business Practices Act, Bill 64—that it says, deceives or misleads. If somebody

just makes an error in that legislation, we are not out to prosecute him. It has to be a deliberate or an absolute in doing it, and the same is with Workers Compensation. If somebody is an unknowing worker or employer, and by some reason does not report it as quickly because of innocence, then I think we would be wrong as a Government or as the Workers Compensation Board to be pursuing those businesses.

It is where he is flaunting the law and is saying, we do not care, we will take our own darn time, there are penalties in there to bring them in line. I would support severe penalties.

**Mr. Minenko:** I just want to leave the Minister with that thought, because there has been no way that we in the Opposition or the public would know whether someone is indeed flaunting the regulations and the legislation or not when the department itself starts using the discretion.

I am concerned about this, because if an individual is indeed innocent, that if the legislation requires intent and the intent is not there, then indeed that is something for a judge to determine. I appreciate common sense because too often, I think, people in Government do not use common sense when looking at things. I still think what matters is that this is definitely a new area, a change in the policy in the way of assessment, where I think there has to be some due consideration.

On that note I would like to direct my attention to the Minister responsible for Industry and Trade (Mr. Ernst), and ask him just a -(interjection)- Mr. Deputy Chairman, the Minister is advising whether we have completed any questions on the Workers Compensation Board. I am not aware if anyone else is or not. Perhaps the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) may want to speak to that.

**Mr. Ashton:** There have been a number of questions that Members have in regard to other departments. I just want to indicate that we will be continuing to raise questions on Workers Compensation at other opportunities.

I indicated earlier that we will be into debate on the Bill on Workers Compensation and expect it to be an extensive debate. We expect that a number of issues will be raised at the committee stage as well when, once again, there is quite adequate debate. Although I do have a number of questions that I would like to ask, we are once again under time constraints, and in fairness to the Member who has been waiting on other questions, and as part of our hope to be able to cooperate in terms of the passage of Interim Appropriations and a number of Bills by tomorrow, I will be deferring in terms of further questions at this time.

**Mr. Minenko:** I would like to then direct some questions to the Minister responsible for Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst). In a recent issue of The Economist magazine there is an article dealing with Boeing. Earlier this year, the Minister and his Government, with great fanfare, introduced Boeing's expansion here in the City of Winnipeg, and we all welcomed that news,

considering what has been happening over the last year that I do not want to go into.

My question though, to the Minister, is this: based on this article in *The Economist* of November 11 of this year, it suggests that Boeing is looking at expanding to a tremendous degree in Japan. Has the Minister and/or his department reviewed the situation here with respect to Boeing in light of Boeing's expansion into Japan, and what are the results, if any, of consideration of that issue, because it may well have a long-term negative impact on Boeing's continuation here in the province?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** No, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

**Mr. Minenko:** Would the Minister and his department be considering that that should be an issue to be considered and studied by the research department?

**Mr. Ernst:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, the Boeing airplane company—well, first of all, "Boeing," the Boeing company, I believe is four or five different divisions: the airplane company which manufactures airliners, the aerospace company which does certain work for NASA and so on. As a defence contracting division, it has a computer products division, and it does some other high tech work in one further division, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

You have to understand that I think the Boeing airplane company—which is the one, I believe, that is referred to in that article—like anybody else is considering industrial offsets. If they are going to sell Boeing aircraft to Japan in very great numbers, which is the anticipated situation, then Japan is going to insist on industrial offsets the same as the Americans are insisting on industrial offsets with regard to automotive products from Japan coming into the United States.

So while Japanese cars that are imported to the United States will require some assembly in the United States in order to meet their import guidelines, then similarly Japan is requiring the Boeing company to do just the opposite by development of manufacturing facilities in Japan. Just look at the competitive nature of the situation. Wage cost alone in Japan is significantly higher. Operating costs are significantly higher in Japan, so I do not think there is any great fear that the Boeing aircraft company is going to move all of its operations to Japan.

Quite frankly, the Japanese are moving their manufacturing operations out of Japan because they cannot afford to compete in the global market with the kind of cost they have in doing that to manufacturing at home. So what happens is the R and D is being done at home and, for that matter, some manufacturing, but much of it heavily intensively robotic as opposed to labour intensive. Those industries which require manufacturing labour intensiveness are in fact being shifted to places like Thailand, mainland China, Vietnam, and a number of other countries in southeast Asia.

So Boeing's order book, I think, is now filled until the year 2000. They will be manufacturing latest model

747 and 737 aircraft until that time. The Winnipeg plant produces two products. It produces wing-to-body fairing, which is the piece that connects the body to the wing of the airplane for all 747s manufactured by the Boeing airplane company. It also produces that same wing-to-body fairing for all 737 aircraft manufactured by the Boeing company. It also produces some leading-edge composite work as well.

I see no real fear at all that the Boeing airplane company is going to be leaving Manitoba. As a matter of fact, their order book is so full and their deliveries are now somewhat behind because of a recent work stoppage that they have had, that their concern is they cannot get the place built fast enough to produce the kind of products that they have, and they are working overtime to complete that expansion.

**Mr. Minenko:** I would like to explore some other areas of interest, but I understand the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has a series of questions to one of the Ministers who has been waiting, and I will allow the Member to carry on.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I just have a couple of questions for the Minister responsible for MPIC. I know he realizes that I am very concerned about this for a number of reasons. The general insurance division—and I know we are not talking about special risk extension, we are talking about the personal commercial lines. I am really trying to get some information of just what the status is of that division.

I was pleased to note in the annual report, which was just filed, that the division is in the black. It has \$315,000 worth of profit, commercial and personalized together, and that is all the information I have. I do not have any other details. It seems to me, given the fact that the previous debt has been wiped out, and I appreciate that—I think that was a good move and it is not a first time of course in Manitoba, because goodness knows we have wiped out enough debt of CFI and Manfor over the years and other organizations. At any rate, that has been done. That has been done, and the fact is it has been put on a good basis, and I am complimenting the Minister.

I am just asking—we have had the report from Ernst and Young, and it did not recommend that we sell it. It was not supposed to recommend whether we sell it or not anyway. It made observations, and it looked at options. They were not negative at all about carrying on with the business. They gave some good reasons why it should be: rate stabilization in the province, protection of existing policy holders, plus the jobs. So there are some good reasons for it, but I read from time to time in the paper where the Minister is considering bids. The *Free Press* had a story a couple of days ago, a week or so ago, about Wawanesa maybe interested and so on.

\* (1750)

I was wondering whether the Minister could—well, first of all I would like him to reconsider and give the corporation, say, a couple of years. Give them two years. We do not want it to go on if it is always going to lose

money. Nobody wants that. Give them two years and see what happens. This is our request, a reconsideration. He may not wish to reconsider even though there has been something of a turnaround. My question then is, if he is not prepared to reconsider, what is his timetable for divestiture?

You surely have some idea of what you plan to do. Have you had many bids? How are you analyzing them, and just what is the time frame in which you are operating? If you could get up and say, look, we think we should give them a little more time to operate, I would be one of the happiest Members in this Legislature. Just give them a little time, give them a couple of years and see if they can continue to carry on as they have been, by turning it around. It seems to be working.

I want to compliment everybody for it. I am not being negative and I am not trying to be partisan in my approach to this. I know we cannot help it from time to time. I would really love to see this division carry on. I wonder if the Minister could comment on this.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am pleased to see that the Member for Brandon (Mr. Leonard Evans) is taking the approach that he is in seeking further information in relation to this corporation. The problem, however, that he did not allude to in relation to personal and commercial insurance is that the report also clearly points out that, given a period of years, any personal and commercial insurance entity probably does not normally make money on the premiums written but in fact combines that to a large extent with revenues earned from investments.

Unfortunately, one of the reasons this corporation came to the position that it did in the last two or three years was that it was never funded well enough from its inception. That means they are more vulnerable to market vagaries; that means they virtually from time to time, in order to try to build up their customer base, had to take some extreme sales moves into the market and probably as a result picked up some bad risks that cost them in the long run.

The conclusion that I draw from the report that the Member refers to is that unless the Government is prepared to put up quite a bit more money and give them some reserves so they can have monies from those reserves to supplement the profit side of the picture, they will likely show a very bad financial record over a short number of years.

The underwriting in the corporation has tightened up in the last year and a half. That was starting to happen to some extent under the previous administration because they knew there was trouble with the losses that were there. That in fact has now compounded itself into a situation where, while they are competitive on the market, they now have a better portfolio. They, however, are at a very unstable situation considering that they have no income based on investments.

Unless the Member wants, I will sit down, but I do not have an answer. I can answer the second part of your question, if you wish. On a time frame for

disposition or divestiture, depending on how you want to word it on this arm of the corporation, we have indicated that we are prepared to receive offers on the corporation, but we are not going to tie ourselves to a time frame, given that we have certain criteria that we intend to meet. If that criteria can be met by those who are prepared to make legitimate offers for the corporation, then I feel we can sit down and enter into negotiations.

At this point, I will share with the Member, as I will share with anyone else who would ask, that there has been some interest expressed. Obviously in this kind of a situation one has to realize that the expression of interest does not necessarily lead to a sale, and discussions will have to be held.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I thank the Minister for that information. I would gather that while he is still interested in divesting of this particular division of MPIC, there is no fixed deadline by which he sees the corporation getting rid of this particular aspect of general insurance.

I really believe, as the consultants have stated, that there are some very major benefits to the people of Manitoba by keeping the division, one of which is the fact that it does provide rate stabilization. Because we are running out of time, I am not going to repeat that, but I think the Minister knows what I mean.

Secondly, there are all the existing policy holders, many of which are non-profit, remote areas, et cetera, and I cannot see them getting this kind of insurance from the private sector, at least they have not been that successful—

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** I am interrupting the proceedings at this time, we are nearing six o'clock and there are a number of items of House business that have to be completed.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Could I just ask a question? Will we be able to discuss this tomorrow?

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** Yes.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I thought there was an intent to get this passed this evening, so I was trying to accommodate the passing this evening. If that is the case, then I would just have the floor when we reconvene tomorrow or whenever.

**Mr. Deputy Chairman:** So, we can conduct the House business then?

The committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

## IN SESSION COMMITTEE REPORT

**Mr. Harold Gilleshammer (Deputy Chairman of Committees):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has been considering Bill No. 90, The Interim Appropriation Act, 1989 (2), directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**COMMITTEE CHANGES**

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** I have a committee change, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), that the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) for the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), and the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) for the Member for Rupertsland (Mr. Harper).

**Mr. Speaker:** Agreed.

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs be amended as follows: Gilleshammer for Pankratz.

**Mr. Speaker:** Agreed.

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