



Second Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature  
of the  
**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

---

**STANDING COMMITTEE**

on

**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

---

40 Elizabeth II

---

*Chairman*  
*Mr. Marcel Laurendeau*  
*Constituency of St. Norbert*



**VOL. XL No. 6 - 1 p.m., FRIDAY, JULY 12, 1991**



**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	ND
DOER, Gary	Concordia	ND
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIB
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Cliff	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	ND
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIB
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	LIB
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**  
**THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

**Friday, July 12, 1991**

**TIME — 1 p.m.**

**LOCATION — Winnipeg, Manitoba**

**CHAIRMAN — Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert)**

**ATTENDANCE - 11 — QUORUM - 6**

*Members of the Committee present:*

Hon. Messrs. Enns, Findlay, Manness

Mr. Ashton, Ms. Barrett, Messrs. Connery, Edwards, Laurendeau, McAlpine, Reimer, Santos

Substitutions:

Mr. Penner for Mr. McAlpine (1837)

Mr. McAlpine for Mr. Penner (0115)

**APPEARING:**

Gary Doer, MLA for Concordia

Donald Orchard, MLA for Pembina

**WITNESSES:**

Cynthia Devine, Private Citizen

Lorne Morrissette, Private Citizen

Cindy Terry, Private Citizen

Buffy Burrell, Portage Labour Committee

Jim Silver, Private Citizen

Kevin Dearing, Private Citizen

John Loxley, Private Citizen

Clarence Giesbrecht, Private Citizen

Rosemary Miguez, Private Citizen

Zully Trujillo, Private Citizen

Ed McColm, Private Citizen

Barbara Jones, Private Citizen

Elaine Ducharme, Private Citizen

Steve Roznowsky, Private Citizen

Robert de Groot, Private Citizen

Maggie Hadfield, Communications and Electrical Workers of Canada

Emile Clune, Private Citizen

Gary Ewen, Private Citizen

Sidney Green, Manitoba Progressive Party

Ted Yorke, Private Citizen

Harry Paine, Private Citizen

Joanne Maciag, Private Citizen

**Written Presentation Submitted:**

Leona McEvoy

**MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:**

Bill 70—The Public Sector Compensation Management Act

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Will the Standing Committee on Industrial Relations please come to order. This afternoon the committee will resume consideration of Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act. I would like to indicate that this committee will also be meeting tomorrow, Saturday, July 13 at 10 a.m. and continuing all day. A further meeting has also been called for Monday, July 15 at 10 a.m.

I would like to inform the committee that a written presentation from Leona McEvoy has been received and will now be distributed to the committee.

\* (1305)

Just prior to resuming hearing of public presentations on the bill, I would like to remind the public that the process that will be followed by this committee is that out-of-town presenters will be asked to identify themselves to the committee clerk, and the committee will endeavour to hear from those persons first. Once the out-of-town presenters have been heard from, the names will be called from the presenters list in numerical order. If a presenter is not here the first time his or her name is called, that name will be dropped to the bottom of the list. If that presenter is not here the second time his or her name is called, that name will be dropped from the list. However, it should be noted that the committee will attempt to accommodate those persons, especially those from out of town, who are unable on a certain day but can attend it on others.

I will now ask that if there are any out-of-town presenters in attendance at this meeting, please identify themselves to the committee clerk. Pat is coming back there now, and the committee will endeavour to hear from the out-of-town presenters first. At this time, we are going to start on the top of the list.

No. 1, Penny Trefflin; No. 2, Peter Vanderelst; No. 3, Doug Vanderelst; No. 4, Donne Flanagan; No. 5, Richard Orlandini; No. 6, Cynthia Devine. Just one moment, Ms. Devine.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Even though I am married to a person named Ginny Devine, and somebody has already made a comment about both Grant Devine and Ginny Devine, I am sure Cynthia Devine is not related to either.

**Mr. Chairman:** Anyway, Ms. Devine, do you have a written presentation?

**Ms. Cynthia Devine (Private Citizen):** No, I do not.

**Mr. Chairman:** In that case, just carry on.

**Ms. Devine:** As Mr. Doer pointed out, I am not related to him by marriage, nor am I related to the Premier of Saskatchewan by political inclination, so I am making my political views clear from the start.

I am here to speak in opposition to this bill. I am a worker. I am a student. In the past, I was a civil servant, worked for the provincial government, so if I was in that situation right now, this would be affecting me very directly. As it is, it is affecting me indirectly in a monetary sense, but certainly directly in terms of what it means to work in this province when the government is saying that my democratic rights are being taken away.

\* (1310)

I understand that this is the only province where these types of hearings take place, and I appreciate that. I appreciate that this government has made an attempt, an invitation to the public to speak to this bill, and I appreciate that very much. However, over the past 24 hours, I have seen that that process has been controverted in such a way that the hearings are not really open to the citizens of Manitoba, and let me relate to you how that has happened.

I came here yesterday after work at 7 p.m. I stayed here last night till 2 a.m. I did not have the opportunity to speak. This means that my employer is suffering, and I am going to be suffering this

weekend because I am going to be doing my work this weekend instead of today or yesterday, as I had intended. The problem is that there is really no way of people knowing when they are going to appear on the list.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order. Just one moment, please

### Point of Order

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** I think that the formal point is, I think that you, Mr. Chairman, should ask the speaker to come to the point, but more importantly than that, I feel badly if the member sat here all last night and did not have an opportunity to present, because I was led to believe that the room was canvassed, and the committee wished not to rise until everybody who was here had an opportunity to present last night.

If I am in error in that belief—I was not in attendance here, but certainly I was told that there was an effort to hear everybody who was in the room last night. So I apologize on behalf on the committee as a whole because nobody should wait that long and not have an opportunity, given that the committee was prepared to sit to hear everybody.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Minister, but you did not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairman:** Ms. Devine, had you given your name as one of the presenters last night who did not want to stay? We had canvassed the House last night, and those who wanted to make their presentations were allowed to make them last night. We said that we would call the names, and we would not drop them from the list last night, of those people who were here. So if you were here last night, you were not dropped to the bottom of the list and you remained at the top. Were you one of those persons who stated they were willing to come today?

**Ms. Devine:** Okay, I will respond to that by saying that it would have been impossible for everyone who was present last night to speak last night. It would have been physically, logistically impossible because there were approximately, I believe, correct me if I am wrong, 20 people remaining to speak at 2 a.m. It would have been impossible to hear all of those people in the a.m. I chose to speak—

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. We can discuss that matter further, but last night, we were willing to sit to any period of time that the members wanted to, and we did not drop anybody from the list. We made that perfectly clear last night. We are trying to draw through and have everyone make their presentations. Anyone who was here last night was not dropped from the list. We canvassed the House, and we gave everyone ample opportunity last night, but I am not going to debate with you.

**Mr. Doer:** You ruled the Minister of Finance out of order on his point, and he was out of order in terms of raising, as a point of order, the order and the process of this committee, as you have ruled. Is that correct?

**Mr. Chairman:** That is correct. Carry on, Ms. Devine.

**Ms. Devine:** I just want to make the point clear that, yes, I could have spoken last night at 3 a.m. However, if every other person present here would have put their name on the list to speak last night, it would have been logistically impossible to have all those people speak by 10 a.m. because, up to that point, from 7 p.m. till 2 a.m., six persons had spoken, so how would it be possible for 20 people to speak in the remaining six hours? Absolutely impossible.

I just wanted to make that point, but I have a further point about the process. It is not all right for working people of Manitoba to be expect to be heard at two and three in the morning. That is not reasonable. If we are going to make this accessible, reasonable and open to the citizenry of this province, then it has to be during hours that are reasonable and accessible to those people; 3 a.m. and 4 a.m. is not accessible.

I do not think that giving people an opportunity at two and three in the morning is the answer. I think that is something that this committee should look at. I believe there are still hundreds of names on the list, and if it means stretching this process over a couple of weeks, then I think we are going to have to look at that. If the government is sincere about wanting to have input into this bill from the people of this province, then I think we have to look at doing that in a real way, and trying to cram it into the wee hours of the morning over a few days is not real participation. That is all I have to say about this point.

Excuse me, I have the press release of this in my bag, which I just want to get.

**Mr. Doer:** On a matter of committee business, what is the intent of the committee, the sponsoring minister, in terms of time duration tonight? Is it the intent to still go through the committee by attrition, or is it the intent to have a reasonable hour for the public? Politicians are used to the process by attrition, but I do not think it is good public policy.

\*(1315)

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairman, we have been berated for not having -(interjection)- No, no. We have been berated, not by the member. I am not saying by the Leader. I say, we have been berated for not having an opportunity for people to come away from their normal work time so that they will be able to address this question on the weekend. To me, that means Friday night and as much time Saturday as we can possibly contribute towards that, in fairness to all the people who want to present then and not interfere in their normal work hours.

The government has indicated fully that it would like to be able to call everybody first chance as of the end of today. It is hoping that everybody who wants to speak tomorrow will have an opportunity. If there is an overflow to Monday, so be it; if there is an overflow to Tuesday, so be it, but all I am saying is Saturday is a crucial, critical day, and I would say Friday night also, to maximize the number of people who can make presentation. We will see the number of people who show up.

**Mr. Doer:** I asked a question and I got an answer, but it was not a definitive one for dealing with some of the public concern on the other side.

**Ms. Devine:** I just have to add one more procedural point which I forgot earlier, and that is, when people's names are dropped from the list for the first time, I mean, fair enough. If they cannot be here, they cannot be here, but I understand that, after they have been not present the second time, their name will be dropped from the list altogether. I think that is problematic for a number of people who simply cannot be here when their name is called. I do not think it is because these people are lacking in interest or desire to present to the committee, but it is simply impossible for them to be here at that time, so I would ask that perhaps the committee reconsider that procedure and just leave people's names on the list until they have had a chance to speak or in some way have indicated that they are no longer interested in speaking.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Devine. If you can just carry on now and try to keep it relevant to the bill, please.

**Ms. Devine:** According to the press release that was released by the government on June 3, the purpose of this legislation is to "protect taxpayers, vital services and jobs." That is from the first paragraph of the press release. According to figures I have from the Manitoba Federation of Labour, the real wages in Manitoba are 10 percent lower than they were a decade ago. In spite of that, unemployment in this province is over 8 percent, and it is threatening to rise.

Cuts in real wages have helped create more unemployment by cutting demand for consumer goods and services. What I want to just note by services here, we are not talking about essential services like health care, dental care, child care. We are talking about services like dry cleaning, carpet cleaning, that kind of thing, that people will do without if their wages are cut back or if they do not have as much disposable income. Further, the press release states: "Everyone must share in that goal."—i.e., the economic renewal of Manitoba. "By asking those groups employed by the people of Manitoba to put aside their wage demands for one year, we feel we can continue to preserve and protect jobs and services that Manitobans need without putting the burden on the taxpayer of today and tomorrow."

Well, I do not believe that this government—

\* (1320)

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Just one moment. Could I please ask everyone who is making presentations, as well as the committee members, if you could please speak very clearly and loudly into the mikes. We have someone in the audience who has a hearing impediment, and it would make it much clearer for him in the back of the room. Thank you.

**Ms. Devine:** Am I not speaking loudly enough?

**Mr. Chairman:** It was not just for yourself, it was for the committee as well. Go ahead, Ms. Devine.

**Ms. Devine:** I do not believe that this government has preserved or protected jobs and services. I am aware of a friend who has a daughter who was going to be attending the psychiatric nursing training program this fall, and she will be unable to do that because that program has been cut. I am aware, as a student in the past academic year, that I have to

buy every piece of paper at the university in my classrooms. Professors do not even give us assignments. We have to pay for those assignments, which is a far, far cry from when I went to university the first time and got my undergraduate degree. So I am seeing that on a very direct level. I am seeing the size of classrooms being increased.

The ACCESS program, which was a successful program to train low-income people for productive careers, was cut by \$1.6 million; \$1 million was cut from the seniors 55-Plus program to keep up with the cost of living and support the now defunct RentalStart program; \$1.7 million was cancelled for high school student bursaries; some million dollars were eliminated from community colleges resulting in cuts to programs and teachers; \$3.7 million have been cut from student summer jobs through CareerStart and northern student employment programs.

I know from my own classmates, many of whom have a long employment history, that they were unable to obtain employment in their field of study this summer, which is quite different from the past. In the past, I was an employer for the STEP program, had many students applying for those jobs and was able to provide employment for students. Now I am on the other side of the fence. I see colleagues of mine who are students looking for jobs, and they cannot find jobs, people from professional colleges who are unable to find employment this summer—

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Ms. Devine, I have allowed you some leniency here to get started on it, in making your opening remarks, but I must advise you that we are speaking and trying to be relevant to the bill, and it is Bill 70, so if you could bring it around to Bill 70, I would appreciate it.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Doer:** On the point of order raised by the Chair, the member is presenting arguments in dealing with the bill and the principles contained within the bill, as articulated in the government's own press release, so I think the member's presentation in dealing for the rationale for the bill and the principles contained therein is absolutely necessary and consistent, sir. I think that it is right out of the minister's own press release on the principles of the bill and the rationale for it, and surely the rationale is part of the debate on Bill 70. Is it needed or is it not, and is it consistent or is it not with the

statements of the government? So I think the presentation is very, very relevant to the issues before this committee.

**Mr. Chairman:** I would ask you to carry on, Ms. Devine, and if you could please make it germane to the bill, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Devine:** I just want to add to some of the comments that were made by Mr. Doer. I think, in the examination—

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. All we are going to end up with is a debate between members and the presenters, if this continues. I would like to remind all honourable members that this is a time for us to be hearing presenters. We are dealing with Bill 70. When we are dealing with a bill, we are to be relevant to that bill. When the presenter is finished, you can question the presenter for clarification of her presentation. I would ask the members of this committee, if we could please adhere to those rules, or we are going to be stretching this out and some of these members who have said they will not get to speak again will be backed up again. It is not fair to the public that we drag it out this long.

Ms. Devine, if you could carry on, please.

\* (1325)

**Ms. Devine:** I think any cogent examination of a piece of legislation involves looking at the purpose and the effects of that legislation. What I am trying to articulate now is the government's stated purpose of the legislation, so I would wish to continue. I am nearly finished dealing with the press release at any rate.

The only other cut that I wanted to mention was the \$.5 million cut in dental care for children. What I am trying to point out is that the stated purpose of the government, I think, is not absolutely as we have seen reality in the province. If the purpose is not as stated, i.e., to protect taxpayers, to protect jobs, to protect services, then what is it? This becomes my word against the government's word, so I think we have to look at something else. We have to look at the effects of the legislation, because I can talk to the government and say, well, I think I know what your purpose is, but that is really not going to facilitate anything but a confrontation between us, so I want to look at the effects of the legislation.

I think the effects will be twofold; there will be two direct effects. One is to freeze the collective

bargaining process in the province. Now, unhappily, the Supreme Court of Canada does not recognize collective bargaining as a democratic right; however, Section 15 of the Charter may be called to bear in this matter. I think that the government may be looking at constitutional challenges of this legislation, so I would beseech you to take this back to your drafters and have a second sober look at the legislation in terms of its constitutionality.

First of all, as some of you are probably aware, Section 15 guarantees equality of rights to all persons in Canada. If a piece of legislation discriminates against a particular group of people in a particular way, then that legislation may be found to be unconstitutional and have no force and effect. I suggest to you that it is quite possible that this legislation takes public sector employees and anyone else that the bill may pertain to—and the bill may pertain to quite a wide group and treat them in a way that is different from other people in Manitoba. That is what discrimination means in the constitutional sense, so I think you might be looking at a Section 15 challenge.

Further, there may be division-of-power arguments brought to bear in this. In the past, telephone employees, for example, have been seen as part of a national system and therefore fall under a federal jurisdiction, yet MTS employees are contained in this legislation. That may be another point that is brought to bear by the unions, by the MGEA in particular, perhaps by the MFL.

In terms of a constitutional challenge, anyone knows that to take a case all the way to the Supreme Court—and you are going to be looking at taking it all the way to the Supreme Court because that is where these constitutional questions are decided now—is going to cost approximately, conservatively, a million dollars. If you can anticipate fairly clearly that a piece of legislation—and I say it is not going to meet the purpose that you are saying it is going to, and it is definitely going to bring a constitutional challenge, is it wise, is it prudent to look at possibly a million-dollar expenditure to have this thing taken to the Supreme Court?

I also want to talk about what it means directly and in the long term when people's democratic rights are taken away. You say in the press release: "Everyone must share in that goal."

"By asking those groups employed by the people of Manitoba to put aside their wage demands for one year, we feel we can continue to preserve and protect jobs and services . . ." and so on and so on.

It is not true that anyone has been asked. No one was asked to put aside their wage demands for a year. The people, the workers of Manitoba have been told that this bill is in process; this bill has been discussed; this bill has gone through second hearing; this bill is now in committee, and yes, a few Manitobans are going to get a chance to voice their opposition, but that is far different from a participatory process of asking people to put aside their wage demands.

I mean, what you are talking about sounds like a very nice situation where we are all in this together and we are all working together, but it is not the reality in this province. There is a polarity between the working people of this province and the government of this province, and putting a nice sounding, pleasant press release out does not take that away. It is simply not true that workers of this province have been asked to put aside their wage demands.

\* (1330)

What does it mean in the long term when people's participatory democracy rights are taken away? I think, over time, people change. People's desire to help each other, people's desire to co-operate, people's desire to work hard for the province for a sense of community and a larger sense of provincehood is going to be taken away if they feel like they are constantly at odds with the people who are governing the province.

I think in the long term you are creating something very, very dangerous. You are creating a population that is going to lose heart and is going to become very pessimistic, very unhappy and very unwilling to work. Anyone who has children knows that the way to work with children is to involve them in a democratic way. I am certainly not equating the workers of Manitoba with children; however, you are in a position of authority, but you have to remember that you are in this position because the people of Manitoba voted you here, at least some of the people of Manitoba did, so you have a responsibility to use that authority in a democratic way. You have a responsibility, I think, to work with the people of the province and not tell them this is what is going

to happen to you now and just benefit a few people in this province.

Specifically, I had a very nice copy of the bill attached to this press release, which now has vanished. Does anybody have a copy of the bill? Thank you, that is all right.

There are particular sections of the bill that I would like to draw to the government's attention. Section 2(1) says that "this Act applies to every collective agreement with a date of expiry that is on or after September 1, 1990 and before September 1, 1991, or any later date that may be prescribed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council." Now the Lieutenant Governor in Council, I do not have to tell you people, is cabinet. I mean, again, I am just trying to point out that it is a very narrow group of people who are going to be making the decision about the breadth and the duration of this legislation.

Section 4 and Section 8(4) scare me a little bit. "This Act prevails over every other Act, every regulation, every arbitral or other award or decision and every obligation, right, claim, agreement or arrangement of any kind." I am looking at the word "right" in particular. My worry is that this legislation therefore supersedes any other rights that worker or anyone else who is under this legislation may have. Does this mean that the human rights code is superseded by this legislation? Does this mean that other pieces of provincial legislation are superseded by this code? I think that Section 4 and Section 8(4), which talks about the regulations having the same power, is a very, very dangerous piece of legislation, and I would like to see, at the very least, that word "right" stricken from this piece of legislation.

Section 8(1) deals with the breadth of this legislation and may be extended to anyone who may become payable directly or indirectly by government. Well, that is just about everybody, is it not? That scares me. Not only are we talking about the entire Civil Service here, but we are talking about anyone who may directly or indirectly become payable. Well, does that mean that -(interjection)-

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Could I ask the honourable members wanting to carry on a conversation to possibly carry it on at the back of the room so we could hear this presenter. We have a number of presenters, and I would like to hear a number of them.

Carry on, Ms. Devine.

**Ms. Devine:** It just seems that is very, very wide breadth, and just about anyone in the province could be construed to fall under that. Is this really, in sheep's clothing, a wage-and-price-control piece of legislation or wage-control piece of legislation?

The press release talked about civil servants. I would disagree with the legislation even if it was that narrow, but in reality we are talking about a much wider populous when you look at Section 8.1.

Also, Section 9.1(c) and Section 10 suggest that a regulation, which could be enacted under this legislation, could be enacted as late as December 31, 1992, which is the end date of the time at which this legislation can be kind of re-enacted—not re-enacted, but could apply to any particular collective agreement. It suggests that a regulation could be enacted on that date, the end date, to continue the legislation in force for another 12 months. In effect, I think this legislation could go much longer than we have anticipated. It is not going to end possibly on December 31, 1992, but it could be extended another 12 months beyond that, taking us to the end of 1993.

That really brings to a close what I wanted to say. Just in summary, I think any constitutional look or democratic look at any piece of legislation will involve an analysis of the purpose and the effects of the legislation. As I have tried to state, I do not think the purpose of this legislation is to help taxpayers' jobs and services but rather to hinder workers and will, in the long term, affect services, and it will affect taxpayers negatively.

I think the effect of this legislation is going to be probably a worsening economic climate in the province. More importantly to me, it is going to affect the psyche of the people of this province in the long term. You are going to turn the working people and the citizenry of this province into an unhappy lot who is malleable, who lacks inspiration, who lacks enthusiasm because they have simply been told what to do too often without participation.

I think you are going to be looking at a constitutional challenge to this legislation—I hope very much that you do—if it passes. I will do whatever I can to fight this legislation, if that happens, but I hope that some of what I have said and some of what the hundreds of other people are saying has done something to the consciousness of the people in government and perhaps to some of

the Liberal members so that this legislation is defeated.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Devine. There are a number of questions that will be coming forward for some clarification of your presentation.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Chairperson, I noticed you mentioned clarification as your lead to introducing my questions.

In your brief, which I found very interesting—I thank you for your presentation—you mentioned Section 15 of the Charter of Rights and the equality rights provisions. How would you equate this case with the unilateral action of the Conservative government in Saskatchewan dealing with the dairy workers' dispute? Have you studied that case in Saskatchewan where the courts have ruled in favour of workers' rights over government action?

**Ms. Devine:** No, I am afraid I am not familiar with that case.

\* (1340)

**Mr. Doer:** It dealt again, Ms. Devine, with Section 15 and raised some of the same points you are raising about a Charter violation.

You mentioned that you would see it going to the Supreme Court. How long would you see this taking? How long would it take to have this challenge proceed to the Supreme Court, pursuant to Section 15, if that was utilized?

**Ms. Devine:** Of course, any constitutional challenge or any court case has to go through the lower courts. Initially, this case would have to go to the Queen's Bench level in Manitoba. That, I expect, could take, because it is a constitutional question and perhaps quite complicated, upwards of a year. Then, if it is appealed, it would go to the Court of Appeal, which again I would approximate a year, and then to the Supreme Court. It could take anywhere from one to three years. I think we are looking at, at minimum, a five-year process here.

**Mr. Doer:** If the Supreme Court rules similar to the decision in Saskatchewan and consistent with the points you have raised on Section 15, the only recourse the government would have to implement this bill, if they were unsuccessful in the courts, which I believe they will be, as you do, is the notwithstanding clause. Would that be your understanding of the only provision the government could use, therefore, to bring back the autocratic provisions of the bill?

**Ms. Devlne:** Yes, they could use the notwithstanding clause which, by convention or by practice or by tradition, this government has not used. I think it would certainly be an unpopular move by the government to use the notwithstanding clause.

If there was a way that the legislation could be read down so it did not offend the Charter, that might be another way. I really do not see how it could be read down, because if you read it down, you would be just then confining the provisions of the act to a smaller group of workers. That would not take the basic problem away, which is that these particular workers would be treated in a discriminatory fashion. I do not think that would be an option.

I think you are right. You are correct that the only option would be using the notwithstanding clause.

**Mr. Doer:** The Premier (Mr. Filmon) of the province has been very, very critical of the Quebec government utilizing the notwithstanding clause. It seems to me that this, the use of the notwithstanding clause, could potentially embarrass the province of Manitoba in a very, very extreme way in a very crucial period of time in our history. Would you not see the citizens of Manitoba, in order to implement this legislation, and the government using the notwithstanding clause—do you think that would hold Manitoba up to ridicule, given the Premier's comments about Bill 178 in the province of Quebec?

**Ms. Devlne:** I certainly do. I am aware of this government's opposition or criticism of Quebec's use of the notwithstanding clause and certainly all other Canadians' criticism of that.

The notwithstanding clause is a very, very serious section in the Constitution. It should only be used very, very sparingly and very, very carefully. If this clause was used to, in effect, quash workers' rights in the province of Manitoba, it would do two things. It would hold Manitoba up as—excuse me, but nothing short of fascist, really. Further, it would just be an utter loss, an utter defeat for working people in this province and would do the same kinds of things that I was talking about, talking about the psyche of the people in the province and defeating people.

**Mr. Doer:** Just so I can be honest with the presenter, I support keeping the notwithstanding clause in the Constitution until we get a number of decisions out of the Supreme Court over the next 10 years, but I do not support utilizing it in any case that

I have ever seen so far in this country. We will have to wait for the pornography decisions and some others that I think are very interesting over time in the 1990s, I would suggest.

You mentioned the participation rights of people. When they are taken away, people change. This is something we have heard from other committee representatives. In fact, Hydro employees and Telephone employees who call themselves very moderate and reasonable people now are saying, you are waking up the sleeping giant or you are forcing us into greater militancy. Can you give some examples or information on that point that you raised? I think it is a very important point. I think it is again very key in terms of labour-management relations in Manitoba in terms of the labour peace we have had in this province, in relative terms, and what this bill may do in that regard in terms of whether it jeopardizes the labour relations peace or whether it enhances labour relations peace.

**Ms. Devlne:** I think we are actually dealing with two things here. One would be an increasing polarity between the labour movement and between the government. That is one issue. The other issue is a general decline in the morale of the population of the province that would not be confined merely to people who are in organized labour but would extend to their families and their extended families and their neighbours and so on. So an entire population would be swept up by that.

Certainly this legislation would not be operating in isolation to create that change in morale of the population. It, along with other pieces of legislation, like Bill 68, like Bill 35, so on and so on and so on, contribute to that decline in feeling among people that they have any way of any power of any control over what is going on in their lives. When people feel like they have no control on what is going on in their lives, they give up hope and they stop caring and they become less enthusiastic and so on and so forth. I would say that is a long-term process.

In the short term, you are going to find people who have an outlet, a way of working with other people, i.e., in organized labour, become much, much more militant and much more vocal. I met a couple of people here last night who are in unions but who, up until now, have never been active in their unions. These people—I do not know if I would call them militants, but they were out here last night and they were ready to speak. I think one of them did have the opportunity.

It is similar to, I think, the frustration and the feeling of being boxed into a corner that aboriginal people in this province and in this country were feeling last summer. It just felt like the democratic tools and the democratic processes that we trusted in and we believed in were no longer available and that there had to be other methods of getting our point across. I think that is exactly what is going to happen in this province and is happening already.

I think it is going to mean an increase in polarity between the government and working people. It is going to mean an increase in militancy and possibly an increase in violence.

**Mr. Doer:** Again, that is consistent with, particularly, people in the Crown corporations who have been presenting briefs so far and others as well, generally.

You mentioned the section that had the overriding clause on rights, which would of course be overriding provincial legislation of rights. You could not override the Charter, obviously. Your position is the bill should be scrapped on principle. I understand that. If you were looking at that section, have you had any other legal advice that indeed overrides The Human Rights Code? Notwithstanding the fact that you have agreed you, on principle grounds, want the whole bill to be defeated, how would you see remedying that issue of rights, which is a very important fundamental principle issue in this bill?

**Ms. Devine:** I have not had independent legal advice or opinion on that—simply from my own reading and seeing that word and knowing that when that word is in a piece of legislation, it means something. In Canada, when any piece of legislation is passed after another piece of legislation, it has more power than the preceding piece. Okay?

**Mr. Doer:** Yes, that is the judges' decision, I think, on pensions on the Human Rights Code.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is that your answer?

**Ms. Devine:** No, that is not the end of my answer.

I would, at the very least, simply strike the word "right" from Section 4 and from Section 8.4, but I would not leave it at that. I would want to study the wording of those two particular sections further to get a full understanding of the meanings of the words "obligation, claim, agreement or arrangement of any kind."

I would say right now, on first reading that the word "right" should go from both of those two, but we should not leave it at that and take this back for further consideration by the drafters.

\* (1350)

**Mr. Doer:** One last question, you mentioned again the dates and, by regulation, the ability to extend dates, the date being December 31, and the ability to extend it gives you a much more broader time frame than the original press release would lead one to believe. Has the government confirmed that interpretation is correct, or has the government refuted that interpretation of the ability to have sort of the trickle extension kind of process by Order-in-Council?

**Ms. Devine:** I am not aware that the government has either confirmed that is the meaning of those two sections combined or refuted it. However, my reading of it very simply states that it is possible. As long as it is possible for the government to extend the purview of this legislation for another 12-month period beyond 1992, then it means that it is possible.

If the government intends this legislation to only go until the end of 1992, then that should be stated clearly in the legislation. There should not be loopholes like these ones left open to extend it further.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you very much.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Chair, I appreciated very much your presentation. It opened a lot of issues for me that I had not been aware of.

In one point you did mention, in response earlier to the questions from Mr. Doer, some of the effects of the legislation. I do not believe you were asked a question on when you mentioned in your brief about the division of powers argument and you talked about the Telephone employees. Could you clarify that particular effect that you see of this legislation, please?

**Ms. Devine:** As well as I can, off the top of my head, there have been many constitutional cases involving division of powers arguments, i.e., who has jurisdiction over various types of employees and various types of undertakings that they are involved in, the federal government or the provincial government? As you are aware, both levels of government have equal power within their jurisdiction, but we have to determine who has jurisdiction over what.

In many early Supreme Court of Canada cases, and even before that Privy Council cases and subsequent ones, there have been many cases involving Telephone employees from a number of provinces. Depending on whether the government can see that the Telephone System or the work that the employee is doing is integral to the overall operation of the undertaking, then they will probably find it within federal jurisdiction. For example, in Manitoba, if the court finds that any particular group of Telephone employees are doing something that connects them integrally with the rest of the telephone system and the telephone system connects to other provinces, physically—Saskatchewan and Ontario—then that is going to be seen as something that is interprovincial and, therefore, under federal jurisdiction.

I am not absolutely sure on this, but it is certainly going to be a very possible constitutional challenge that, at the very least, the Manitoba Telephone System employees who are contained in this legislation may, in fact, sit outside it. It may be unconstitutional to include those people in this piece of legislation, because they may fall under federal jurisdiction and not provincial.

**Ms. Barrett:** Are there other employees? Did you use the Telephone employees as an example, or is that the largest kind of group—or just briefly some other kinds of groups of employees who might fall under this particular case?

**Ms. Devine:** It is going to depend on the type of work those employees do. If any employee is working within an occupation that is interprovincial in its nature and has in the past been ruled as part of the federal jurisdiction, then they will fall under the federal jurisdiction.

Telephone employees leapt out at me, but there might be others. If there are interprovincial trucking employees, they may fall under federal jurisdiction, so again the province would be illegal in its attempt to limit their wages.

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Chair, would this be a separate court challenge from the potential Section 15 challenge? I am trying to get the logical extension or even the illogical extension of the potential court challenges. Could they go together? Could one go and then the other, or would they be two separate challenges going at the same time?

**Ms. Devine:** It is very likely that they would go at the same time. There is no reason why they could

not go separately. Just in terms of cost, it would be likely that those people opposing the legislation would work together and take this challenge as one package.

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Mr. Chairperson, I want to thank the presenter for her presentation, which I also found very interesting and provocative.

I want to pick up on the last point Ms. Barrett was asking about. Are you aware of any employees covered by this legislation who have ever been covered by the Canada Labour Code or the Canada Labour Relations Board federally, such that there would be some evidence that they may fall under federal jurisdiction?

**Ms. Devine:** No, not offhand. I would, I guess, throw the ball back to the minister to take this piece of legislation back to the drafters and have them do some research on those constitutional questions.

**Mr. Edwards:** I think maybe the minister has surveyed this at some point in his drafting of the bill. That may be a question he may want to answer in the fullness of time.

I am not aware, I must say, of any employees who are covered by this legislation who have, prior to this, been ever covered under the federal jurisdiction. I understand the point you are making about MTS. All the same, I have not seen any yet that have come under the Canada Labour Code.

As well, you may be aware that there are a number of provinces which have brought in similar legislation to this. Are you aware of any challenges in the courts, as you speak of, that have been launched in any of those other provinces?

**Ms. Devine:** No, I am not aware of any challenges. However, I wanted to point out that even within one employer like MTS there may be one group of employee who is under federal jurisdiction and another who is under provincial jurisdiction. So it is quite possible that MTS employees as a group may—I mean, they may all be under federal jurisdiction for the purposes of this or some of them may be.

I am afraid that I cannot give you any further specifics on that.

**Mr. Edwards:** That is clear that an employer can have employees functioning under the provincial scheme and some under the federal scheme. That is clear. I am just not aware of any that are covered

by this act that have ever fallen under the federal area. Your argument, nonetheless, is interesting.

With respect to the Charter, Ms. Barrett mentioned Section 15, is that the section you are perceiving a potential challenge being launched under?

**Ms. Devine:** Yes, the equality rights section. That is correct.

**Mr. Edwards:** I am not sure if you are aware—maybe you are, you have obviously done some research—that there is a 1989 decision of the Supreme Court on Section 15. That set the stage. It was the first sort of definitive answer on Section 15 in terms of how to interpret it.

It did indicate that the only groups protected by Section 15 were, in the words of Mr. Justice McIntyre, discrete and insular minorities who had been adversely affected and, in fact, who had a traditional history of being in need of protection and having been discriminated against. Do you think the 48,000 civil servants, and I am not saying that they are or they are not, I would just appreciate your views, various salary ranges, various jobs, are going to fit within discrete and insular minority as a prerequisite for qualification for protection under Section 15?

**Ms. Devine:** I think it is certainly an argument worth making. Certainly, the labour movement, workers, people who work for money have historically been discriminated against and have historically been oppressed, which is why we have trade unions. Subsequent to having trade unions, certainly the trade union movement has been discriminated against by employers and sometimes by government. I think that argument certainly can be made and could be made very effectively.

**Mr. Edwards:** Just one final question. I appreciate your comments. You did indicate in your final statement, and it obviously struck a cord with me, because I represent the Liberal Party on this committee, that you hoped Liberals would be listening to you. I want to assure you, we were. My concern is, how was that provoked that we would be singled out as a party that should be listening to you, in the sense that I think all members should have and hopefully will be? Do you have any evidence or any specifics as to members here in this Legislature in the Liberal Party who have not supported the position you take, which is that the bill should not pass?

\* (1400)

**Ms. Devine:** I guess I am not clear about what the Liberal Party position is. I am aware of what the NDP position is. I am aware of what the Progressive Conservative position is. I was not aware of what your party's caucus position was. I was making a point of hoping that the Liberal members at this committee were listening and were taking some of these arguments that not only I but hundreds of other people are making.

**Ms. Edwards:** Mr. Chairperson, I can assure the speaker, we have been. I would also hope that others, when they look at these issues, would consider comments made the very day the legislation came forward by members throughout, the questions the next day in Question Period, every speech that has been made on this legislation, which has been entirely consistent and has been in opposition to this bill. I would hope that would have—

**An Honourable Member:** Put out a press release.

**Mr. Edwards:** Well, the member suggests putting out a press release. No other party put out a press release except the government. She has talked about that press release much to the disdain I am sure—

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable members, this is not a time for debate. This is a time to get clarification. There are a large number of presentations coming forward, and we would like to hear them.

If you could put your question now, please.

**Mr. Edwards:** The Chairperson and the minister will, I am sure, remember that these questions are directly related to a comment made by the presenter. That is what I was talking about.

In any event, my final question to the presenter goes back to her question as of rights and whether or not rights are affected. Can you illustrate or paint a picture for us of how rights in the Human Rights Act or others might be affected by this legislation which, in effect, puts in a wage freeze? How would that affect—have you given that any thought as to how that might actually work out in the workplace as a real infringement on a person's, say, human rights or other?

**Ms. Devine:** I have not contemplated a particular example of where that might happen. On principle, I object to any piece of legislation which—it states

very openly and clearly that it will override any other rights that people may have. So, on principle, I object to that word being used. I am sure if we sat here long enough, we could come up with 15 or 20 examples.

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway):** Could you explain your apprehension about the overriding primacy contained in Section 4 that this act prevails over any other act, why you feel this is risky or dangerous?

**Ms. Devine:** I think that I partially answered that to Mr. Edwards, just to say that, in principle, I reject any piece of legislation which claims to override other rights. As I also explained to Mr. Edwards, I have not, at the tip of my tongue, any examples where that might happen, but it would not take very long for us to collectively come up with a number of ways that that might affect someone adversely. I just think that any piece of legislation that says outright this legislation stands above any other rights that you might have is very, very dangerous legislation. We do not want to be in a situation where we are creating legislation that takes away rights in this country. I think that this country is all about creating legislation that gives people more rights.

**Mr. Santos:** That is the status of primacy of being an overriding law or statute, is that not normally reserved to a constitutional document or a constitutional provision, not just an ordinary statute?

**Ms. Devine:** At the provincial level, an ordinary statute can overrule an ordinary statute, and our human rights code in Manitoba is an ordinary statute which could be ridden over by this one. It cannot override the Charter of Rights. However, if my rights are somehow contravened by this legislation, I am not immediately protected. First, they are contravened by the legislation. Then I have to make a constitutional fight to get them back.

**Mr. Santos:** On the same provision, there is also a provision that it can override any agreement, award, arrangement, of any kind. Is that not also risky and dangerous in your opinion?

**Ms. Devine:** It is, in my opinion. I said I think earlier that I think that the word "rights" should be stricken from both of those sections of the legislation, but also that the drafters should have a second look and this committee should have a second look at those other words. The word "agreement" is a good example.

If, for example, I am one of these people who is indirectly payable by the government of Manitoba; let us say I am doing a contract with the government, and you contract with me to do some kind of consulting work for \$2,500. Towards the end of that work being done, we renew that contract for another year. Well, that means effectively I could not build my costs and so on into that new revised agreement. I would have to be settling for \$2,500 for the second year of work, even though all of my other costs may have gone up.

**Mr. Santos:** Do you think this provision is a prerogative of a settled general principle of law that agreement must be kept, the contract must be abided by *Pacta Sunt Servanda*?

**Ms. Devine:** I think that is an interesting point in contract law that again people might want to look at.

**Mr. Santos:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you very much, Ms. Devine, for your presentation.

At this time, I would like to inform the committee that we are going to deal with the out-of-town presenters that the Clerk has brought forward. The first out-of-town presenter is No. 112, Lorne Morrisseau. I saw him a minute ago.

Do you have a written presentation, Mr. Morrisseau?

**Mr. Lorne Morrisseau (Private Citizen):** No, Mr. Chairperson, unfortunately, I do not. I have a verbal presentation. I appeared 112 on the list, and I happened to come down a little earlier so I was not prepared with a written brief.

**Mr. Chairman:** Okay. Just carry on then.

\* (1410)

**Mr. Morrisseau:** Mr. Chairperson and members of the legislative committee on Bill 70, I strongly oppose the implementation of wage freezes for workers in the public sector or any sector in the province of Manitoba. It was not all that long ago that Premier Filmon stated in the Manitoba Legislature his support for the free collective bargaining process by stating: We will act in good faith at all times in the open free collective bargaining process with all the employees with whom we have to negotiate.

Mr. Chairperson and members of the committee, I have been taught that a person's word is a bond never broken. Premier Filmon did more than break his word, he annihilated it. The implementation of a

wage freeze on the public sector is the destruction of the free collective bargaining process in Manitoba for the period of one year and perhaps longer. It appears to me that the principles of free collective bargaining are meaningless to the Filmon government.

The longstanding tradition of bargaining in good faith and achieving settlements through a process of negotiations has been eliminated by the stroke of a pen. It also appears to me that this government lacks principles, and it certainly lacks respect for workers' rights in the free collective bargaining process. This action is neither fair nor reasonable. It is irresponsible. Freezing wages in these recessionary times has a negative effect on the Manitoba economy. Removing workers' disposable income, which is probably in the area of millions of dollars from the economy at this time or at any time, is wrong. What is needed is leadership and a boost in confidence in the economy and increasing consumer purchasing power through fair and reasonable wage adjustments. The government has a responsibility and an obligation for provision of quality and vital services to the people of Manitoba by the people of Manitoba, its public sector workers.

In making reference to the June 3 press release announcing the bill, in the opening paragraph the statement reads: In an effort to protect taxpayers, vital services and jobs, Finance Minister Clayton Manness said he will be introducing a bill to maintain public sector wages at their current level for one year.

I would like to point out in the area of vital services, one area that comes to mind currently is the situation where vital services in the Parks region where formerly beach patrol, beach safety officers, were provided throughout the parks in the province of Manitoba. That only exists now in one park and that is at Grand Beach. I had a discussion with a former park beach patrol officer yesterday that had discussion with a friend of hers that was a former beach safety officer, and this past weekend there were a couple of near misses.

At Winnipeg Beach there is no safety program for the public to go and enjoy the beach. There is potential for unfortunate drowning of some citizen and the potential is greater for children, because they have a tendency to wander off, and these beach patrol officers were on these beaches watching for these occurrences. That is a vital

service that has been eliminated by this government.

Another area that has been cut back is in the dental health services that affects all the school-age children in and around the area that I live in, in the town of Selkirk. Another area that the government made reference to about vital services was that of mental health services. In the budget exercise on April 16, they made a drastic move in the area of mental health whereby they eliminated the most prominent and well-known psychiatric diploma nursing program in Canada that had been in the town of Selkirk at the School of Psychiatric Nursing for 70 years.

The elimination of approximately 13 jobs seems to contradict the press release. It was articulated that there was an effort to protect jobs. The effect of the declining education programs for the mental health education system is going to have far- and long-reaching effects where we need to establish a strong mental health program with educated professionals to provide that important facet of the health care system. Removing that important program from the mental health centre in the town of Selkirk is contrary to what is stated by the government with its intent.

The number of students who have graduated at the mental health centre on average has been approximately 25 to 30. There are a number of students who had indicated that they had intent to enter the nursing program in Selkirk, and now they are not able to do so because there is no program. That action took a step that does have a direct economic impact on the town of Selkirk. It wipes out a number of jobs. The payroll that was going into the town of Selkirk will now be eliminated from that School of Psychiatric Nursing. It will have an effect on the health care system in mental health because of a declining number of graduating psychiatric nursing students.

This has been pointed out in a newspaper article that the Winnipeg Free Press had on April 19. Jim Beach, director of the Regina-based Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology said he is worried Manitoba's health services will suffer as a result of the decision to close the Selkirk School of Psychiatric Nursing. It appears this aspect has not been looked at. What will happen to the present mental health centre in the future?

**Mr. Chalman:** Order, please.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek):** On a point of order. Mr. Chairman, I am here to listen to the Bill 70, and we are talking about health care. I would ask that you please bring the presenter relevant to the bill, please.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. McAlpine. I would ask the presenter if he could try and be germane towards the bill. That is what we are hearing here today, and if the presenter could please direct and be relevant towards the bill at this time. There will be some questions of you later for clarification of your presentation, if you do not mind.

The honourable member did not have a point of order.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Chairperson, I would hate the speaker to take any indication from your comments or Mr. McAlpine's that he is not being entirely relevant. He is. He is talking about the press release—I have heard him quote it—in an effort to protect taxpayers, vital services and jobs. He is talking about that comment which was issued by this government with respect to Bill 70. I would suggest to the speaker, I hope he does not think he is not being relevant. He is. In my view, he is totally relevant.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Mr. Edwards, you do not have a point of order. We are discussing the bill and not the press release at this time, and I would ask that we be relevant to the bill.

**Mr. Doer:** The Chair is saying, on a new point of order, that either the press release has nothing to do with the bill which is probably more accurate than not, or that we are out of order talking about the press release if it is relevant to the bill. So, surely, the government's articulation of the principles contained within a bill is entirely in order for any citizen to speak to, because it is contained within the press release. The minister should stand by his press release and not have witnesses and citizens who are talking about his press release be ruled out of order. I think that you cannot have it both ways. Either your press release was inaccurate to the principles of the bill, in which case the press release should be withdrawn, or the people can speak to it.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairman, the great democrat himself, the Leader of the NDP party, knows that we have been called here by the Legislature for a bill referred. That bill is No. 70. That is the reason that we are here. We are not here to discuss either the

press release of the government, the press release of any other party, but Bill 70. That is the strict reason that we were here. That is the only point that I think has to be made at this time.

We welcome all presentations on Bill 70 and its basic principles. The principles as enunciated in that bill are whether or not there has been an infringement significantly on free collective bargaining, to use the words of the members opposite, whether or not the government has the right to bring in legislation of this form, and whether or not the regulations and the powers given to under the bill are overpowerful, to use the words of some. I would say, Mr. Chairman, you have every right to call the presenter to order.

\* (1420)

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Chairperson, surely the minister's public pronouncements on the bill that he is introducing contained within the most public document that is produced on any given bill, i.e. the minister's own press release, is absolutely available to anybody to comment on in terms of dealing with the principles of the bill. The minister's press release articulates the alleged mechanics of a bill and articulates the alleged reasons for it. When you are taking away the rights of free collective bargaining in a bill, and the government has stated the reason for that in a press release, surely that is germane to the debate in this room. Why are we taking away rights? What are the rationales for that, and those rationales are in the minister's press release.

I think that it is entirely accurate and relevant for people to speak on the minister's press release dealing with Bill 70. They are not speaking on the minister's press release dealing with The Statute Law Amendment Act or some other provision of the Legislature. They are dealing with the minister's press release dealing with Bill 70. If the press release is inaccurate and therefore leads anybody off the debate, that is a different issue.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Chairperson, I acknowledge that you did not censure the speaker strictly and say, do not say this or do not talk about this. You indicated that you would prefer things to be germane. The indication from that to the speaker and to other speakers who are presently waiting to be heard is that what this speaker is talking about is not germane.

Mr. Chairperson, I want an indication from you on that issue, because we have now heard two speakers who have referred to the press release. The press release articulates pretty clearly in the opening sentence what this minister feels the principles behind the bill are, and he puts forward the defence for the bill, if there is one—and I do not think there is—but this is the best he comes up with.

These speakers are directly commenting on that issue. There is no other more relevant issue than the principles which the minister articulates in defence of his bill. This is the most relevant, in my view, document other than the bill itself which of course does not deal as straight a principle as such to talk about. If the minister did not want us to talk about whether or not it protected taxpayers' vital services and jobs, what does he want us to talk about? That is his defence of the bill.

This speaker should take no indication in anyway, shape or form that his comments are not relevant. If the chairperson thinks otherwise, I want to hear that. I want a clarification of what the chairperson believes is or is not relevant.

**Mr. Chairman:** I believe we are finished our little debate. I would like to remind the honourable members that we are not here to debate at this time. We are here to hear the presenters. I think we should carry on and hear the presentation from Mr. Morrisseau.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Morrisseau:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I did not intend to focus my comments totally on the mental health centre and the mental health services. However, the opening salvo in this debate, I reacted to the June 3 news release, and that is where I started gathering my thoughts and was looking at actions that had taken place currently.

The reason I speak to the mental health centre situation is because I have a long personal history of having family members who were employed there as early as in the early 1940s and late '50s and '60s, and I worked there myself for almost 20 years. I know many, many people there who are in the same situation, that the attack at that mental health centre is an attack at their heart strings and their livelihood, and that is why we want to raise that issue when it is deemed appropriate.

I thought it was appropriate to raise it because it talks about vital services, and I believe the Selkirk Mental Health Centre is one of the most vital

services the province of Manitoba offers in the area of mental health. It made sense to me when I was putting pen to paper to try and make a connection with this vital services comment that is in the June 3 press release and the relationship to Bill 70.

In any event, I was almost completed on my remarks on the Mental Health Centre. The only comment that I wanted to make relating to that is that I understand that the town of Selkirk, the mayor and the council have passed a resolution urging the provincial government to reconsider the closure of the mental health centre and reinstitute the program. We also understand that the Selkirk district and Chamber of Commerce has also communicated with the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in the same identical vein that they would like to see that program reinstated just like the rest of the citizens, students and employees at the mental health centre in and around the town of Selkirk.

Moving on, on a couple of comments relating to Bill 70 and the vital services that it mentions, again, talking about jobs and the intent of Bill 70 to protect the taxpayers and to protect jobs, I had a discussion with a worker who was commenting on Bill 70 whose hours of work were drastically reduced. Where he formerly worked as a full-time employee for a department, his work is now cut in a number of weeks to 32 and, in some cases, 26 weeks. He said, not only do I receive zero wages through this bill, they also have cut my work in half in some cases.

He has articulated of different friends who have had their weeks cut in the case of 30 percent. So they have actually received a 30 percent or 40 percent, in some cases 50 percent, reduction in their disposable income. We are talking about being fair and reasonable here. All these people want is a basic increase in wages that would keep them up with the current market and the current consumer price index, but they are falling further and further behind in wages plus reduction in hours.

In any event, I just want to go on and say that this burden for all these vital services that are so important to the province is carried out by the people who are providing the service, of course, and it is very unfair to freeze the wages of these workers through this bill. The public sector workers have long been the whipping persons of this government, and it has certainly come to a head with this Bill 70.

By freezing wages through this bill, we will end up in a situation where workers will be in a situation where they are in a catch-up situation that will take years to achieve, and equality may never be achieved. All I believe workers have asked for is that they receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. My question is, what has happened to fairness? What has happened to equality? They have gone out the window with this Bill 70.

I believe that the government has made a very grave and serious error in continuing with this strategy of implementing wage freezes to alleviate the provincial economic woes. This legislation strips workers of their democratic rights by removing their right to negotiate wages, benefits and other terms and conditions that have long been a standing tradition in the province of Manitoba and in Canada. Is this Filmon's government's example of fairness? Is this not an erosion of democracy, I ask you?

This proposed legislation will not help the economy. It will only make it worse and worse. Who is going to fill the void on purchasing goods and services as these workers receive a reduction or zero wage increases, as they are forced to cut back in their standard of living? My question: Who is going to fill the void? Is it ghosts that are going to be buying these goods and services?

I urge this committee to review the impact of this bill, both short- and long-term effects, and I strongly urge members of this committee to recommend the withdrawal of this regressive piece of legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Doer:** You mentioned your long experience at the psychiatric facility at Selkirk. I was wondering, how is the morale in the psychiatric facility? A nurses' aide at Selkirk, as I understand it, gets zero percent increase.

**Mr. Morrisseau:** Correct.

**Mr. Doer:** A nurses' aide working in Selkirk today, as we speak, gets a zero percent increase, and a provincial doctor employed by the Province of Manitoba in the same period of time when the contract expired got a 7 percent increase on about a \$90,000 salary. I would ask whether Mr. Morrisseau feels do people feel that is a fair wage control program that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has brought in under Bill 70?

\* (1430)

**Mr. Morrisseau:** In answer to your question, Mr. Doer, I have been asked that question by a number of individuals in the same type of situation. That is why I wrote that question to the committee. What happened to fairness and what happened to equality? I have had discussions with individuals who are psychiatric nursing assistants and they have indicated to me, just like they have indicated to their friends and co-workers, how the effect of the GST and the other problems with the economy are affecting them personally and have noted that when they go through the various check-out stands in stores throughout the province in doing their purchasing, that they do not have a counter that leads for the lower end paid people to go when all the prices are reduced. A loaf of bread costs the same for a psychiatric nursing assistant that is making not that high a salary as that of a doctor who received an increase in salary. It is not fair. There is no fairness.

**Mr. Doer:** The government has a number of nurses working at the Selkirk facility, and it also has settled with a number of other nurses that are working in psychiatric facilities outside of the provincially run government systems. Am I correct in my assumption that a nurse working in Brandon, Portage and Selkirk in those provincially run facilities would be getting zero, and a nurse working in a psychiatric ward at the Health Sciences Centre or Brandon General Hospital would get the negotiated increase made by the government? Is my assumption correct on the application of Bill 70?

**Mr. Morrisseau:** Yes, Mr. Doer, I believe that your assumption is correct. I say so with some authority, because my spouse is a psychiatric nurse who does not work presently for the provincial government, and she is active with that organization in dealing with their employer and involved with that union and has been in consultation with other facilities. That is the understanding that I have been led to believe through her checking it out with different individuals in the different health care facilities.

**Mr. Doer:** Do you feel that in talking and listening to psychiatric nurses, will this contribute to the turnover rate in Portage and Brandon, Selkirk, vis-a-vis other facilities, because I would note that some of our most mentally ill people in our society are in those institutions, unfortunately, and therefore will that lead in a drain of the professional people who would be working in those facilities going into

other health care facilities requiring the same qualifications?

**Mr. Morrisseau:** Yes, Mr. Doer, I had a discussion with one of the present students at the Psychiatric School of Nursing recently, just as a matter of information this morning, about their nursing program and their continued fight to try and lobby whoever they can to have the government overturn that decision. We were talking about the opportunity for some of the graduating students from the 1991 class and their potential for employment.

My understanding is that there is a possibility for an on-call casual position that is being bulletined, and there is a board being set up to interview applicants at the Selkirk Mental Health Centre next week. However, the other individuals who are there are, for the most part, young individuals, and their basic comment is, to hell with it. I am going out of the province. There is no future here in the very short term, and the long term does not look any better. They want to go and try and establish a career that provides them with an adequate standard of living for the profession that they have chosen to work in.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you, Mr. Morrisseau. Thank you very much for your presentation.

I would like to now call on No. 257, Ms. Cindy Terry. Do you have a written presentation?

**Ms. Cindy Terry (Private Citizen):** No, it is oral.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** You may proceed, please.

**Ms. Terry:** My message today is one of loss, but before I start to talk about that I would like to say a word about how inaccessible this was for me today. I live in The Pas, and you are not leaving Winnipeg to talk to anybody, as far as I know, out of the city of Winnipeg. It makes it very difficult for those of us who live out of Winnipeg, especially this far away, to talk to you. It was very difficult for me to even get on this afternoon and, thanks to the Clerk, we have that done. I would just like to express that. I tried phoning as of Wednesday to get on, and finally now, this afternoon.

As I said, my message is one of loss. I have lost much since this government has come into power. Mostly I have lost my security. Many people in my workplace do not know if they have a job from one day to another. I will talk when everyone is quiet.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** You may proceed.

**Ms. Terry:** It is very difficult to work with people if they are constantly insecure about whether they have a job or not. I am a psychology major, and those of you who have taken psychology know about Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Maslow says that you need to have security. You need to have food; you need to have shelter; you need to have a sense of where you are and a sense of security. This Filmon government has taken away my sense of security and has taken it away from my fellow workers. They have basically taken away the essence of people, that bottom layer.

What this government does not realize is that when you take away their sense of security, their sense of belonging, and they are too worried about whether they are going to have a job from one day to another, they do not work to their potential. If you want people to work, you have to give them security. You have to give them a reason for wanting to work, and you have taken that away. You have taken away people's sense of security, of where they are.

I think another major area of loss is in the area of education. I come from the community college system, and in that system you have wiped out 176 SYs.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Ms. Terry, I would just like to remind you, as we have been reminding the other members, if you could bring your presentation relevant to Bill 70.

**Ms. Terry:** I will, but I also have the right to—I will. It all comes together, believe me.

You have taken away all of these positions. You have taken away educational opportunities. You have taken away the ability for people to go to school. I am now entering into university programs. You have raised the cost of tuition by not funding the colleges and the universities. So there again is another loss.

Each time this government acts, we lose. I am a single parent. I have two children. I have lost in the daycare. I have lost my sense of security. When I want to go to education there is nothing but losses with this government. There is nothing for me to be happy about.

Now, to Bill 70—this continues on my field of loss. I have now lost my right to collective bargaining. I have lost buying power. You have taken away my

cost of living. You have taken away things that I had previously.

\* (1440)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer):** Ms. Terry.

**Ms. Terry:** Am I not important enough to be listened to?

**An Honourable Member:** I am listening, too.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer):** You may continue.

**Ms. Terry:** My cost of living has increased substantially as a single parent. My daycare costs have gone up. My Hydro has gone up. My telephone has gone up. My Autopac has gone up, but my wages are frozen. You have taken away my right to buying power, my right to support my children, and probably my right to a job.

I find it very strange that you have money for Ducks Unlimited, but you take away jobs from natural resources workers; you take away water resources workers. I find it very strange that you can give money to the MTS chairperson but you cannot give money to ordinary people. Tell me, am I less important than those people? It seems like it.

I believe in equality and this government is anything but fair or treats people with equality. This government uses coercive power, the power of the worst type. You can see it in all forms as we look at their legislation. This government makes it very, very difficult for single parents to make it from day to day, never mind try to improve yourself. By cutting jobs, by cutting daycare, by cutting educational programs, by cutting things like ACCESS, which are really important to people in the North, it is very plain that this government wants to keep single parents, especially single moms, down in the gutter. Then do you know what they do? They stomp all over them. That is what is happening to us.

Thank you very much.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer):** Thank you very much, Ms. Terry. Any questions?

**Ms. Barrett:** Ms. Terry, I appreciated your comments. They clearly are heartfelt and come from your own experience. I am wondering if you could expand a bit on your use of the term "coercive power" as it relates to Bill 70 and how you see the implications for people in your situation and the workers of Manitoba?

**Ms. Terry:** To me the term "coercive power" means that you have no participation in the decision making. You are told what to do, and if you do not do it this way, then you are in extreme jeopardy. I know people in my workplace who are scared to death of this government. They are fearful for their jobs. They are fearful for their right of being. That is coercive power. That is no exaggeration. It is out there. My friends, they are afraid to speak because of what this government may do to them. You read about it in the history books and you think, well, it can never happen to you. Believe me, I have experienced it daily.

**Ms. Barrett:** They are scared and fearful. Can you give us a sense of what kind of thinking or what kind of background Bill 70 is coming from?

**Ms. Terry:** Where the bill is coming from?

**Ms. Barrett:** Yes, you are talking about the effects of the bill. Can you speak to what you think are the causes of the bill?

**Ms. Terry:** I have great trouble with the causes of the bill, because I do not believe the ideology behind what this government says the causes of the bill are. I believe that we need services in this government and in this society. We need daycare services; we need dental health services; we need educational services. We need to be able to have a secure job, and when this government takes that away, the secure jobs, and freezes what you do have and what some unions and some groups have gone out and worked for, already have achieved, and takes that away, people are really shaken. They are left with nothing and their whole inner being is insecure. That is what this bill has done. It has made people so afraid and so insecure.

**Mr. Doer:** Thank you very much for providing us the opportunity here—one of our first northern perspectives. I guess it is very difficult to be before this committee. The North, of course—the Golden Boy faces the North in this building. If I remember Eddie Johanson's words of Vive le Nord ringing out in The Pas always, it is, I think, an important vision for all of us in this committee room.

Northern communities sometimes have more difficulty in attracting people to their communities in both the private and public service. Has there been any discussion in the community of The Pas about whether this will have a situation where people are not able to be attracted to certain jobs over a period of time, because of the recruitment implications of a

wage freeze and collective bargaining freeze? What impact will that be, would you think, on the citizens in the North, generally, and in The Pas specifically?

**Ms. Terry:** I can tell you that a number of people are already leaving the province. I myself am leaving this province at the end of August. I cannot survive in this system. It is too oppressive. It is too coercive, and I have no security. I cannot work, and I cannot allow my children to be raised in a system that is so insecure. If I am insecure about what is happening in my work force, that directly affects them. So, yes, people are leaving this province because of this.

**Mr. Doer:** Well, I am sorry to hear that. Notwithstanding partisan politics, I would like to see as many people as possible stay in Manitoba—I think all of us would—and be attracted to our province.

You mentioned you have worked in the public service and are working in the public service. How long have you worked in the public service, and is this the worst that you have seen this situation? It is a very serious situation that you are outlining for us on the committee today.

**Ms. Terry:** I have worked for 16 years, 15 of the last years I have been a community college instructor. I have never seen the devastation, I have never seen morale as low as it is at this point, and I keep a pretty close eye on what is happening around.

**Mr. Doer:** I have heard other people in prior days. It was my own biased assessment that there were all these notions about the Sterling Lyon years. In fact, presenters have even pointed to the picture, I think, on the wall. Are you saying, for us today, something that we have been saying, and I think this is serious, I really do, that people are more worried, scared, frightened and the morale is so low now as a result of Bill 70 and other issues, not just Bill 70, than it has ever been in the last 15 years that you have worked for—obviously three or four Premiers in three or four governments?

**Ms. Terry:** It has never been lower. I want to raise a point that you keep saying to each speaker, do not talk about anything but Bill 70. The point is that everything this government has done, leading up to Bill 70, affects how it affects people. If you had not laid off 1,000 people, and if you had not taken away daycare, if you had not taken away ACCESS, if you

had not taken away education programs; it would not be as devastating. It is still a very, very devastating bill but you keep dumping and dumping and dumping on people. They cannot handle it. That is why it is so devastating.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you very much, Ms. Terry. We are continuing calling out-of-town presenters. I would like to call now on No. 271, Mr. Darrell MacKenzie. We will then call on No. 87—

\* (1450)

### Point of Order

**Mr. Doer:** If he had to go get his family he has already been noted as once called. This would not be the second, and he is out, is it?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** I believe this is his second call, yes.

**Mr. Doer:** He is being called a second time because he is out of town and you moved him up, not because of going on the order of the list.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** I believe the clerk had already canvassed him. He was only the third out-of-town one to be called. We will now call upon No. 87.

**Mr. Doer:** I would really strongly recommend, if Mr. MacKenzie is from out of town and was picking up his family, that the minister would not throw him off the list today. I just leave that with the minister.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** If he is coming back, well then we will consider him.

\*\*\*

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** We will call on No. 87, Buffy Burrell. Do you have a written presentation?

**Ms. Buffy Burrell (Private Citizen):** No, I do not. I am sorry, I did not have time to do a written presentation.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** That is okay. You may proceed then.

**Ms. Burrell:** Good day. I am here representing the Portage la Prairie and District Labour Co-ordinating Committee. We represent 2,700 members and their families in the Portage la Prairie area, of whom many are affected by this regressive piece of legislation.

Firstly, on behalf of our membership and all rural and northern citizens, I want to express our deep disappointment in this committee's and the government's lack of commitment to rural and northern citizens. By holding hearings only in the city of Winnipeg, this government is showing its lack of concern for all citizens in this province, citizens which I remind you, you profess to represent. By holding hearings in rural and northern Manitoba, you are precluding ordinary citizens from participating in the process, a process which is supposed to be for the people, which is supposed to be guaranteed in a democratic society.

We believe that every citizen whether they live in Winnipeg, Thompson, Flin Flon, Swan River or Portage la Prairie should be given the same opportunities to express their views on Bill 70 or any other issue. We believe that, as citizens of Manitoba, we should be allowed to speak. Is it not our democratic right?

The Portage la Prairie and District Labour Committee is opposed to Bill 70 and the Filmon government's continual attack on the working people of this province. Since Filmon and his Tory government achieved a majority government, they have mimicked their federal and provincial Tory counterparts in their attacks on public sector workers and antilabour actions. These attacks on ordinary working people in Manitoba have escalated to the point that we have lost all trust of Mr. Filmon and his government. As workers and citizens of this province, we have been subjected to lies, lies and more lies from Mr. Filmon and his cabinet.

When Mr. Manness introduced his budget and laid off hundreds of workers and cut or abolished many programs, he said he had no choice. We believe he had other options. He could have introduced fair taxation in the province of Manitoba. Mr. Filmon, during the 1990 election campaign, in a response to a question from the Manitoba Government Employees' Association replied: Any further significant changes to the Manitoba labour laws or The Civil Service Act would only be undertaken after consultation with the public, business and labour. We believe the Manitoba labour laws and The Civil Service Act should reflect the legitimate needs of the public at large as well as the view of management and employees.

Where was the consultation? Where was the dialogue prior to introduction of Bill 70? Perhaps they used the same process as Mr. Manness used

in Portage la Prairie when he consulted on the budget with his friends, the Chamber of Commerce and business, but no labour organizations or workers. Filmon's total disregard to working people and ordinary citizens of this province has gained him and his government a reputation of not caring for all Manitobans, of being untrustworthy and a detriment to this province, just like Mulroney is to Canada. It is our belief that Mr. Filmon is following closely behind Mr. Mulroney and Mr. Devine in his attack on working people of Manitoba.

To quote Mr. Filmon again: a Tory is a Tory is a Tory. Bill 70 was introduced in the Legislature without any consultation or dialogue with the 48,000 workers affected by the bill, nor with the organizations who represent these workers—another show of the Filmon government acting in bad faith.

Bill 70 is not the answer to the problems of this province. Mr. Filmon has expressed that we want to have a climate in Manitoba that would bring business to our province. What he has created is a market which is either limited in its spending power or has no spending power left whatsoever. Bill 70 completely wipes out the collective bargaining process for large sections of workers in this province, a process that has worked for decades. Bill 70 gives Filmon and his Tories the power to extend legislation to more jurisdictions or for an unestimated time without discussion, no debate, no accountability to the people.

This in itself makes this government comparable to governments in South Africa, Chile, El Salvador, Iraq, et cetera, and their attacks on the rights of their citizens. It sure builds trust in the people. It leads one to think what is next. Perhaps they will pass legislation to bring back child labour or abolish arbitration, the right to an education, the right to vote for certain citizens, the right to anything the Tories dislike.

It is our belief that if Bill 70 is enacted we are allowing Filmon and his government to act without any accountability to the people of this province. Is this not contrary to all the principles of democracy? Bill 70 not only freezes wages for a year or longer, depending, it freezes the working conditions and the benefits of the agreement. To what purpose I ask?

The Tories are not satisfied with freezing the public workers' spending power. They want to ensure that any new or improved benefits they might

be entitled to under law or that they might negotiate are withheld. Why a single mother might be allowed to stay home with her child a little longer.

Bill 70 is regressive. It is an attack on the public sector workers in this province. It allows Filmon and his Tory government to incorporate any group into the legislation. Bill 70 takes away our right to collective bargain in good faith. Bill 70 gives Filmon and his cabinet the rights to which only fascist dictators have given themselves. Bill 70 is a detriment to this province and its citizens. It must not pass. It must be defeated.

The Portage and District Labour Committee is totally opposed to Bill 70 and to the antilabour antics of this government. We believe there are alternatives. We believe that resolutions can be achieved through bargaining in good faith through discussion, through consultation of the citizens and group.

We believe in this province and its citizens. Unfortunately, we do not believe in Filmon and his government who have lied to us too many times. We have lost all trust in this government to act fairly, in good faith or in the best interests of its citizens. We believe that we can expect more antilabour legislation from this government. We want to say to you that we will fight you, your attack on workers and the labour laws both during this process and other processes and during the next election, and we will win.

Thank you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you very much, Ms. Burrell. I would ask the audience for proper decorum and dignity with regard to spontaneity, if you would not mind, please.

**Mr. Doer:** I am sorry, I clap every day. I hope it does not—I always thought clapping was a dignified response. I have even clapped for the members opposite from time to time.

I have some questions. Portage is a vital community and there are a lot of public services in Portage, one of the most essential services in our province, I would think, and one of the toughest places to work. If I was to subjectively look at where there is a tough place to work in the public service, it seems to me, and challenging place, based on my experience as a volunteer with Special Olympics, it is the Portage Developmental Centre. Those people who work there are very dedicated to the people who are in the centre. I am just worried that

they have had—I think they have had a period of time of being strike-free forever, since labour laws were established in this province. Is this law, this freeze, in the developmental centre, is it in your opinion going to contribute to any loss of morale, increase in militancy because of the anger that is being felt by people, that do not feel appreciated for a job well done in that centre?

\* (1500)

**Ms. Burrell:** I do not think the morale in the Manitoba Developmental Centre has been any lower than it is right now. I am not sure it could ever get lower. We have people there who are working, who are supervising other people who are being paid less, and they are told that there is nothing that can be done about it, that they should have—when we first tried to bargain it, they were told that it was not a bargaining issue, it was a pay equity issue. When they came to deal with it under pay equity, they were told it was a bargaining issue, and they should deal with it at the bargaining table. Well, they have had that right taken away from them. They can no longer deal with it at the bargaining table because everything is frozen.

Yes, there are those groups who are angry in there. They are having problems hiring nurses right now, because of the fact that there are nurses there that again in that particular series that the supervisors are making less money than the workers. It creates problems there. The workers are becoming more militant. At one point, they had a demonstration at MDC this winter where they had a record number of people out. They had a local meeting of the health component alone at one point during bargaining where they had well over 500 people at the meeting. That is a record. Their meetings are usually 15, 20 members. Yes, the morale is low. It is going to affect the workers and, yes, we may lose people to the point where we are going to have a hard time running the place the way it should be.

**Mr. Doer:** I just want to pass on to those people working there our appreciation and dedication to their job, a very difficult job.

Provincial government doctors have not been included in—both the fee-for-service doctors and the provincially hired doctors—have not been scoped into this bill for purposes of zero percent, a prescribed zero percent for one year or longer. Again, you have a situation where a nurses' aide in

the Portage Developmental Centre under this bill gets zero, and a provincially hired doctor gets 7 percent. Is that having any effect on the morale of the staff at the Portage Developmental Centre?

**Ms. Burrell:** I think it is having a great deal of effect. Maybe Mr. Connery would like to comment on that one, too. I think a number of people were at his house the second day after we heard about the bill being instituted, picketing his house, because he chooses not to have a constituency office, so we took it to his home. Secondly, a smaller number but a majority of the people who were at the second picket where Mr. Connery was speaking to a powwow of the friendship centre, I believe it was, on a Saturday, a number of them met him in the parking lot to express some concerns. A number of them will be again approaching Mr. Connery to sit down and have some dialogue that, unfortunately, did not take place while I was away.

They are very upset, not only the Manitoba Developmental Centre—the Agassiz Centre, the staff there are very upset. Almost every civil servant and public sector worker in that town are upset and concerned and ready to do something. We get calls constantly, every day, wanting to know what we are willing to do. The militancy in Portage la Prairie from when I moved there two and a half, three years ago, has gone from almost zilch to a great higher degree. I am not saying it is 100 percent, but we are getting there. If this government keeps enacting this type of legislation, we will be on the streets a lot in Portage la Prairie.

**Mr. Doer:** I am sorry to hear that this bill will precipitate that kind of feeling, but I am very delighted to hear that you are working on the member for Portage. I can encourage you to keep working on him. We hope to persuade him at this committee, and other activity in the community of Portage, to vote with us and vote for free collective bargaining. We have not been successful in the Legislature. I think you will be more successful in your community.

One of the only strikes that I can recall in the provincial public service was in the jails of Manitoba in 1977. Portage has a correctional facility. I think it is the women's jail at Portage, if I recall correctly. I do not know whether that is the right term now.

**Ms. Burrell:** It is now called the Portage Correctional Institute.

**Mr. Doer:** Okay. I was wondering, people who work in security positions like that are often under a lot of stress, a lot of pressure. Do you see this precipitating any action in the Corrections system based on your experience at the Portage centre?

**Ms. Burrell:** Yes, it has already created some very angry people. They, again, knowing the meetings and types of meetings that they have with their union, normally do not participate in union meetings. The other day on a Sunday afternoon, a majority of those people met, because of the fact that not only are their wages frozen and their benefits, but now their employer has decided that they can no longer work 12-hour shifts, that they are going to put them in unsafe working conditions by taking away the third person on the midnight shift. These people got together and met with management and have changed some of the things. They will again be working with the rest of the people out there, because they are angry. They are upset. They are being cut back. They cannot perform their jobs the way they like to because of the fact that there are not enough employees there.

The other centre that we have in Portage la Prairie under the correctional facility is the Agassiz Youth Centre, I believe it is now called. We have a large contingent of our membership there through the MGEA, and they are also very angry. They are starting to build up again to start some type of job action and are requesting that their union do something. Not only again are their wages being frozen but, because of the cutbacks in the government, they no longer have nursing staff that is adequate and almost lost a child because of an overdose of medication that was given to them the other day.

**Mr. Doer:** Well again, I do not know whether it is germane to Bill 70 in terms of recruitment or other factors so I will ask the question. If they are short of nursing staff, is the Portage Correctional facility and the Agassiz Centre breaching the Narcotics Act of Canada in terms of distribution in Canada of drugs?

**Ms. Burrell:** They very well could be. I am not sure of all the details as yet and I intend on working on that over the next week with the local, trying to find out exactly what happened. I have just found out about it, that they almost lost a child because of inadequate application of administering drugs.

**Mr. Doer:** I am sure the government will want to be posted on that, and so will the MLA, and so will all of us on our side as well, and I hope the child is—

**Ms. Burrell:** The child is fine now.

**Mr. Doer:** Thanks. The issue of negotiating, and you mentioned the 12-hour shift and it is a very important issue, the law prohibits any negotiations on anything for a period of a year, or a period of time extended by Order-in-Council for an undefined period of time after December 31, 1992, for one year.

Does that mean that management is now using that provision of the act to stop their negotiations on items like 12-hour shifts which, of course, are very important for people? Shifts are obviously very important and usually have been determined at the workplace, consistent with certain parameters.

**Ms. Burrell:** I am not sure if I can answer that, totally, Mr. Doer. I have been out of the province for four weeks and I have just gotten back and have not got a total handle on everything that has been going on, but what the management of the Portage Correctional Institute did was just serve notice of a new shift schedule abolishing most of the 12-hour shifts and leaving some people on 12-hour shifts, but a majority of the people working 8-hour shifts. It is my belief, but I am not 100 percent sure, that there is still some dialogue going on about 12-hour shifts, but I am not at liberty to say for sure if it is still going on or if it is not. It could be stopped by now.

**Mr. Doer:** One last question. We have heard from representatives from a group of trades organizations, Highways, Telephones, Hydro, right across Crown corporations, et cetera, who have said that they have never gone on strike before but, in the words of Hydro employees, woke up the sleeping giant. Telephone employees say, I never wanted to go on strike but you are making me militant now, et cetera, Highway employees the same thing. Just what is the perception of workers in Portage that traditionally have gone about their business, negotiated a moderate increase and not withdrawn their services? Do you see the psychology in the atmosphere changing in Portage and adjacent areas with those public sector employees?

**Ms. Burrell:** I see two things happening with Bill 70 and other things that the government is doing. I see those workers becoming very, very militant that two years ago were not militant. They are taking the

attitude, well even if I am not militant and I mind my own business, they are going to wipe me out anyway so I might as well become militant and be noticed. If I go down, at least I am going down fighting. That group of people is becoming greater and greater all the time.

The other group of people, to quote Ms. Terry who spoke just before me, are very fearful and want to just hide in a corner and do whatever they can not to be noticed so that they are not the next ones that are being cut from the payroll of the government, or by redundancy of spin-off services to the community when the government jobs are gone, so there is twofold—

\* (1510)

**Ms. Barrett:** I have one question of a more general nature that also deals with Portage. It, arguably even more than other communities in Winnipeg, has been hard hit in the last few years and is reeling from decisions made as a result of federal and provincial governmental, financial, fiscal and monetary policies. Two parts: Can you tell me what the percentage of the employees in Portage are public servants, i.e., are affected by Bill 70, and secondly, what the impact of Bill 70 is going to have, in your opinion, on the economy and the environment in Portage which, as I have said, is already reeling under Tory policies?

**Ms. Burrell:** I would say that a majority of the workers in Portage la Prairie directly, or indirectly, but mainly directly, fall under the auspices of Bill 70 that will be hurt by it. The spin-off in our community—one person said to me the other day that she does not believe that there is a family in Portage la Prairie that is not affected by Bill 70 and what it is going to do to our economy. It is probably going to hurt us a great deal, much more so than other communities because of the fact that we are already losing our base from a Tory policy. We are losing Campbell Soup because of the free trade bill—we have lost it. There was talk, although it may be slowed down because of the fire that they had in the Maritimes but during the free trade debate, McCain's have said that they would eventually have to leave the Portage la Prairie area. We have been waiting for that doom to fall on us, as well.

So with all of these things together, for the economy it is not great. A group of us got together a couple of months ago at a conference to talk about the economy and we counted up, amongst

ourselves, at least 30 to 40 businesses in the last year and a half that have closed down, small business, medium-sized businesses that have either closed down completely in the community or have been moved out of Portage la Prairie.

There are a few businesses opening up. I noticed last night in the paper that our Keystone Sports Centre was having a liquidation sale, bankruptcy sale, that they had received goods from another sporting goods company in Portage la Prairie that had gone bankrupt. A major furniture store overnight was closed down. It was gone. Florist shops have closed down, small businesses, family businesses are gone that can never be replaced.

So our economy is going to hurt probably a little more than a lot of other rural communities because of these things that have happened to us. What I see for Portage la Prairie in the next little while is something that probably they have never seen before, and that is a lot of labour unrest. Like I said in the first week that we knew that the bill had been introduced in the House, we had people out on the streets demonstrating twice, and that is unheard of in Portage la Prairie. Labour has never really gone out and done much of that. We had a major demonstration in the spring over collective bargaining because they were going nowhere.

So the labour unrest in Portage la Prairie, I assure you, is going to become worse. It is going to grow and it is going to grow.

**Ms. Barrett:** Just one final question then. Would you suggest or recommend that people who are interested in seeing what the effects of Bill 70 and other provincial and federal government policies are having on Canada, sort of look at the Portage area as a microcosm and that the spotlight should remain on Portage in the near future?

**Ms. Burrell:** Very definitely.

**Mr. Edwards:** I want to ask the presenter—a very interesting presentation. What I glean from it, you made one comment about employees who I think you said were somewhat fearful of coming forward—

**Ms. Burrell:** That is right.

**Mr. Edwards:** —with a condemnation of this bill and had some fear of recrimination. Can you illustrate on that, I mean, can you indicate what numbers might be feeling that? Is there a general consensus amongst workers that you know of that they do not like the bill but some are just not coming

forward? Is there indeed fear of recrimination in the workplace?

**Ms. Burrell:** One of the roles, other than being the President of the Portage and District Labour Co-ordinating Committee, I also happen to work for the Manitoba Government Employees Association, and the first two days of that bill being introduced, the first week—then I left town for four weeks and I am just getting back in—the first week that the bill was introduced in the House, I must have had 150 to 200 calls telling me that they were really concerned about this bill. I said, well you will get the opportunity. Well, no, no, we want you to speak on our behalf, we want the union, we do not want to be noticed. They come to you with grievances and you say, well you are going to have to file a grievance. Well, no, no I do not want to do that because I do not want the government to know me. If I am just a number they are not going to know me, they will not lay me off, they will not do anything to me. So, yes, they are afraid to come forward because of that; they think something else will happen to them.

**Mr. Edwards:** Do you think that the fact that the government laid off 958 civil servants just weeks before they brought in this legislation had something to do with the fact that people understood very well that their jobs may be on the line and that the government would not hesitate to cut jobs?

**Ms. Burrell:** Most definitely. Through our leadership of the MGEA, at a meeting with the Premier and some other people, he was asked whether or not, if the MGEA achieved during bargaining a wage increase, whether or not there would be more layoffs in the Civil Service, and they said most definitely.

So of course these people are scared and they feel there are more layoffs coming, that it is just that they are biding their time. So they are keeping their heads—I should not say their heads—but they are keeping what they feel is a low profile so Clayton Manness will not see Randy Porter's name go across his desk and fire him, that is what they are feeling. Then there is another portion of them, not as great a portion as those, who are saying, I do not care if Clayton Manness sees my name, he can fire me because he is going to fire me anyway.

**Mr. Edwards:** Just one final question. Is there any fear you have that employees may work out the frustration they must feel, and in particular if they do not feel comfortable coming forth publicly with it, that

they will work that out in the workplace through—and you have already mentioned lack of morale—just a general slowdown, just not going the extra mile which they might otherwise do because they feel not appreciated in their jobs? I am not suggesting that any worker would endanger safety or not to make sure that the job was done, but just a feeling that the extra mile will not be gone because of a general lack of morale in the workplace? Is that a possibility in the workplaces that you know of?

**Ms. Burrell:** Most definitely. Right now there are people—we will use the Manitoba Developmental Centre for an example—who used to take their own time to take, and I do not want to call them kids, the residents out into the community to take them on special outings. Well, they do not do that anymore. They used to take them out for lunch on their days off, take them home, do special extra things for them. They do not do that anymore because they do not feel that they are appreciated. They do their jobs at work, and please do not ever think that they are not doing their jobs properly. They get frustrated and they may take out their frustration on their co-workers. Hopefully, they will not take them out on the people who they are servicing, but occasionally that does happen, that people do, for some reason, break down and take that out on the people they are supposed to be looking after. Of course the labour relations process does fall into place.

The more these things happen, the more and more we are going to have cases like that happening of abuse, more and more cases where they are so short staffed, where somebody is, because one hand does not know what the other hand is doing, where a child is given an overdose of whatever medication he is taking and almost dies and is run back and forth to the hospital three or four times in the back of a van. Like I mean those are things that should not be happening to people but because people are not there, their morale is low, they do not have time to record everything. They just do not have the time anymore and their morale is such that maybe I do not stay the extra half hour to do the things that I might have done a year ago.

So these things are not being done and, yes, it is going to affect the service that the people are giving.

**Mr. Edwards:** One more question I wanted to put to this presenter. You say you had a whole host of phone calls when this first came in and you have obviously spoken to many of your members in the

wake of it. They have known for many, many months, as you have, that the government's position was zero and two as a negotiating position and I think that was articulated some time ago, certainly before this legislation came in. Are the people you know of, the employees, are they more frustrated about that, about the actual wage freeze as such, the position of zero percent and two percent, or the process that the government has led them down and then changed the rules halfway through?

**Ms. Burrell:** Our membership feel betrayed, they feel that they have spent thousands and thousands of their dollars in collective bargaining that was totally useless because they feel that this government had the intention of introducing this bill before we even started collective bargaining and felt that if they had to do it, they should have done it way back then so that would not have been a process that they felt totally—during the whole process of bargaining, they also felt very disgruntled, very upset and felt a lack of trust in the people who were—not the union—representing them as the government. When this bill has been introduced, after they have gone through a whole year of bargaining and getting absolutely nowhere and then this bill is introduced, of course their dismay is much greater. They have lost whatever faith they had in the people who represent them and I do not know what you can do that would perhaps bring that faith back.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** I could not, not ask a question to a former constituent and good friend. I am sorry I missed the first part of your presentation—

**Ms. Burrell:** I will share a copy with you.

\* (1520)

**Mr. Ashton:** I appreciate that. I am sure you pulled no punches and expressed your views very directly. You always have, and I can imagine what your views, as they were expressed earlier, were.

One question I have asked of people—it is interesting in this case to ask this directly of you. I find that these committee hearings are fine as a formal process, and perhaps the closest thing some of the government members are going to get to hearing directly from real people as to what is going on out there in terms of collective bargaining and the real chaos this bill is going to cause, and just how angry people are and frustrated, but I want to focus in slightly a different way to end off. If you could talk

to somebody who might be thinking of voting with their conscience, might have an open mind on this and recognize that it would only take one or two members from the government side to either not even vote against the bill but abstain, and noting that your MLA has abstained on other bills, or not been present to vote—

**Ms. Burrell:** We are working on him.

**Mr. Ashton:** I know you are probably working on him. I have been working on him as well. I have been reading the Portage Daily Graphic editorial of a few weeks ago and the comments of four out of six Portage residents in the Portage Daily Graphic saying they were against the wage freeze.

Have you had the chance to talk directly to your MLA, the member for Portage (Mr. Connery)—

**Ms. Burrell:** Yes.

**Mr. Ashton:** —or any other government member who might be thinking of voting with their conscience on this, might still have an open mind, might be willing to listen? What would you say to them more on a personal level, on a one-on-one basis, rather than in the context of a formal presentation? What would you say to them to get them to either abstain or vote against Bill 70?

**Ms. Burrell:** I would probably say to them that as of—

**Mr. Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you very much for your presentation, Ms. Burrell.

**Ms. Burrell:** Oh, I have not answered the question. I was waiting for Mr. Manness to quit talking.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Go ahead. I am sorry, Ms. Burrell.

**Ms. Burrell:** As somebody who would approach this, I would say let us take a look at labour history in Canada. The labour history of Canada is that we fought, and we fought some damn good fights out there. We have always done it under the collective bargaining process in good faith. That has never failed, and as much as the big lie is out there that labour is the problem in this country, it is not. Let us take another step and try the collective bargaining process one more time. Let us see if it cannot work, as it has over hundreds of years in this country and other countries.

**Mr. Ashton:** With those few words, I think you have said it all. Keep working on the member for Portage.

**Ms. Burrell:** Thank you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** I would like to thank you very much for a very interesting presentation, Ms. Burrell.

We revert to the list, No. 7, Jim Silver. Do you have a written presentation?

**Mr. Jim Silver (Private Citizen):** No, I do not.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** You may proceed then.

**Mr. Silver:** Mr. Acting Chairperson and committee members, my name is Jim Silver. I am speaking today as a private citizen. As a taxpayer, I pay quite a lot of taxes, actually. I am quite well paid. I have a family, and my wife stays at home to look after my children. I do not have any fancy investments so I get hit rather hard by the tax system. So not only am I a taxpayer, but I pay, relative to many others in our society, disproportionately a lot of taxes.

I am also a user of public services, as we all are, a user of a vast array of good quality, generally speaking, public services. I have a five-year-old daughter who has just completed her first year of nursery school. We were quite concerned that the nursery program in Winnipeg No. 1 was going to be cut. It may still be cut at considerable detriment to other five-year-old children, but, in any event, we got the advantage of it.

I should say, also, that I am paid from the public purse. I am a faculty member at the University of Winnipeg, but I am not here to do any special pleading. We have been saved, so far, from the effects of this bill, though, as you know, under the provisions of the bill, our number could be called at any time, but so far we have been saved from the provisions of the bill. My point in being here is not at all to do any special pleading for faculty members. Rather, my concern here is with the community, with members of the community, broadly defined.

Finally, I am a member of Choices, the citizens' Coalition for Social Justice. Many of the speakers who have preceded me have been from Choices; many of those who follow me will be from Choices. We are the organization that produced the alternative provincial budget, a very, very good quality comprehensive budget which showed that when it comes to fiscal policy there are choices. This government has made particular choices. They did not have to make those choices; we do not have to be going through the agony of Bill 70. There were other alternatives available to us. So I speak to you in those various capacities.

I want to start by making a preliminary comment about democracy. Meetings have been held the last couple of nights until, well, not the small hours of the morning, but indeed getting into the big hours of the morning, five o'clock, I understand, the night before last. I left at two o'clock in the morning last night and things were still going hot and heavy. I do not know when they finally concluded, 3:30, four o'clock, 4:30, very, very late—altogether too late.

This is inappropriate. You know that this is inappropriate. You are jamming this down our throats, doing this deliberately to ensure that ordinary working people do not have the opportunity to say their piece. It is unreasonable to expect people who have to get up in the morning to go to work to be here all evening to wait to speak at 3:30 or four or 4:30 or five. That is unreasonable. It discriminates against working people, it discriminates against women. Do you expect women to be leaving here at three o'clock in the morning? That is an unreasonable expectation, I submit to you. It discriminates against those who have to make child care arrangements. It is very, very difficult at three o'clock in the morning to make arrangements for your children—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. McAlpine:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to hear the speaker. I know he has a presentation to make on Bill 70. I would really like to hear him make his presentation on Bill 70 and not on the process. We have already gone through that, and I would ask you to keep him germane to the bill, please.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** On the point of order, you do not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Silver:** Well, I appreciate your anticipation of my comments, and I will come to them in due course. Some of you may have read the Spicer commission report and one of the very, very glaring items in the Spicer Commission Report is its concern for the arrogance of politicians. This holding of hearings long into the night is an example of what people from coast to coast to coast in this country are absolutely fed up with. We have had enough of it; the Spicer Commission makes that absolutely clear. It is ironic, it seems to me, that in the era that has seen the Berlin Wall fall to the joy of people all around the world, we see you denying the freedoms that have been rejoiced in eastern

Europe. Part of the globalization process that neoconservatives talk about so much is the spread of democracy; it is the democratization; it is the advance of freedoms, including the right to free collective bargaining. It is ironic that a party, and a movement—

I am sorry. I will wait until you are finished.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** You may proceed, Mr. Silver.

**Mr. Silver:** It is ironic that a party that talks repeatedly and ad nauseam about free markets and free competition denies basic freedoms. Bill 70 removes our freedoms. It removes our freedom to negotiate wages; it removes our freedom to negotiate working conditions. It is wrong, in and of itself, for these reasons, given the extent to which people in this country treasure our freedoms, given the history of this country which is a long struggle for the gaining of these kinds of freedoms. More than this, Bill 70 is wrong economically, and it is on that front that primarily I want to address my comments.

Positive labour relations are an essential part of a rational, prudent, economic strategy. We have seen, over the last 150 years, a very great advance, gradual, only as the result of a lot of hard work and struggle by ordinary working people. We have seen nonetheless enormous advances which have resulted in peaceful, free collective bargaining which is advantageous to all of us, not only in terms of increased freedom—it is that—not only that, but in terms of increased productivity. The slow gradual increases in wages that people have won over the decades increased the total amount of purchasing power in the community. The higher wages and better working conditions that working people are able to negotiate in the course of free collective bargaining force innovation in the workplace. When wages are going up, when working conditions are improving, it is no longer possible to run industry simply on the basis of cheap labour. You have to innovate.

\* (1530)

We have innovated in this country. We have innovated, and we have become a successful economy in large part because workers have struggled to push up their wage levels and the dynamic that that creates has made us a competitive world economy. Not only that, free collective bargaining is a rational, peaceful way to

solve disputes, a way appropriate to an advanced civilized society. Yet this bill, Bill 70, is guaranteed to sour labour relations. Soured labour relations make the public sector less, not more, productive. It is, in ever so many respects, irrational economically to introduce Bill 70, and so one wonders why is Bill 70 being introduced.

Ms. Barrett, for example, asked a previous speaker specifically, what do you think has caused this bill, why is this bill being introduced? Well, in my estimation it has to do with the theory which drives this current provincial government and the same theory which drives the current federal government. I would like to make a couple of comments about that, if I may.

The theory has it that the main problem and the analytical starting point in the economy is the problem of deficits. Deficits are too high. That is causing various kinds of problems. Therefore, deficits must be reduced. It follows from that, in the context of this theory, that the way to reduce deficits is to cut expenditures. That is the only solution to the deficit problem. The deficit is the No. 1 problem. The only solution to that problem is to cut expenditures, not to bring about meaningful tax reform to solve the problem on the revenue side. There is all kinds of empirical evidence around in this country to demonstrate the merits of tax reform, not by stimulating the economy through public investment, not by investing in people. The theory has it that the way to solve the deficit problem is to cut expenditures.

Bill 70 is, of course, a part of this. It follows logically from this kind of a theoretical construction. Let us place this in a slightly broader context then. We are looking here at a part of a broader process which has to do with cuts to public spending. Now, the context for this is one with which I sympathize. This provincial government is caught in a fiscal squeeze and there really is no denying that. They have said that they are having problems, and I certainly concur. This province, like many provinces, is suffering. A big part of the problem is the offloading that the federal government is engaged in. This has been the case since the mid-'70s, a process accelerated since 1982 and particularly sharply accelerated since the election in 1984 of the Mulroney government. I think what lies behind a good part of this is an attempt to eliminate the universal shared-cost programs which have been so valuable to the development of this country

and which are so much respected, as all public opinion polls make clear by the citizens of this country.

So we have a federal government making very, very substantial cuts to the transfer payments that this province, in particular, relies upon. At the same time, we have the Free Trade Agreement which is proving to be an unmitigated disaster for this province, the claims of the provincial government notwithstanding. The Free Trade Agreement is not helping this province. The empirical evidence is there. All that the supporters of the Free Trade Agreement have to rely upon in their claims that it is going to help us is future promises: Trust me, baby, everything is going to turn out all right. Well, everything is not turning out all right so far. What we have is empirical evidence and the empirical evidence demonstrates a very serious problem, a problem characterized by, among other things, a high rate of plant closures, downsizing, job loss, a very, very serious problem in that respect.

The Free Trade Agreement, of course, also adds very considerable pressure on our shared-cost programs. Certain provisions of the Free Trade Agreement, Articles 2010, 2011 and 1605, for example, make it virtually impossible for us to ever introduce again a new universal shared-cost program. This is very, very clear through a careful reading of the actual text of the Free Trade Agreement.

Manitoba, as everybody in this room knows, certainly everybody sitting on this committee, is exceptionally reliant upon these universal shared-cost programs. It is exceptionally reliant upon the redistribution of the wealth of this country. In other words, this is not an economy, this is not a province, that thrives upon the pure market, far from it. Relying on the pure market is a real problem for the province of Manitoba. We need the redistribution which has made Canada a decent place to live, which has made the Canadian economy a strong economy.

Far from getting that, what we are getting is that the east-west links that bind us together as a nation are being severed. The CBC is being cut, VIA Rail is being cut, all at the very moment that the north-south links that threaten our sovereignty and threaten our economic prosperity are being tightened. It is sheer lunacy in the face of these kinds of developments for this provincial government to be advocating that we should take

over full taxation powers and full spending powers for those items which fall within provincial jurisdiction, thus eliminating the transfer payments from the federal government. This would really place us in a severe fiscal squeeze, one from which we certainly would not recover.

The solution to all of these problems—they are real problems. We are faced with offloading; we are faced with the Free Trade Agreement; we are faced with trade liberalization and globalization which creates a very, very difficult economic environment for us. The solution to this problem for a province like Manitoba is to spend money, not to cut expenditures. We should be spending money. We are in a recession. The government should be spending money, money which is in the form of an investment.

This was the philosophy of Duff Roblin, a Conservative Premier who brought this province into the modern era. Here, his picture is over to my left, appropriately to my left. This was the philosophy also of Edward Schreyer who really did little more than simply extend the fiscal policy and the economic strategy of Duff Roblin. He is even further to my left back here, a terrible depiction of Mr. Schreyer, but nonetheless there he is. These are the people who brought Manitoba into the modern age, out of the Douglas Campbell era, the era when no money was spent at all.

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources):** Who is also on your left.

**Mr. Silver:** Well, it is a rogues' gallery, all in all, Mr. Enns. I do not wish to pick upon all of them.

These are the people who brought us into the modern age, and they did it by public spending. It is clear if you go back, as I am sure Mr. Manness has done, if you go back and read the budget statements, you will find Mr. Roblin extolling the virtues time after time after time of reasonable public investment. That is exactly what he did that brought us into the modern era, that brought us the level of prosperity that we now enjoy, a strategy carried on by Mr. Schreyer.

Manitoba, a have-not province needs public spending. Canada needs public spending. Canada needs an active state, needs state intervention, needs state involvement. Canada would not exist, it would not exist today, if we relied purely upon the forces of the marketplace. In terms of the market, in terms of the pure market, Canada

does not make sense. This is another one of the very great worries that those of us who oppose the Free Trade Agreement have. The Free Trade Agreement moves us away from an active role for the state. Its whole purpose is to minimize the role of the state and to turn decisions about the economy over to the marketplace.

\* (1540)

In pure market terms, Canada does not make sense. If we go that route, we will not survive. If we go the route that Mr. Manness is advocating, of our province taking over full taxing powers, then Canada will not survive. Manitoba will suffer severely in economic terms. Canada will ultimately break up in a number of regional blocks, and the result will be the end of what I think has been a very, very effective experiment over the years.

After Mr. Roblin and Mr. Schreyer, of course, we had Mr. Lyon who again, appropriately, is depicted to my right. Mr. Lyon came in with the same strategy that this government has: cut and cut dramatically. Acute protracted restraint was the terminology that was used, and the result of this economic strategy was economic disaster. The Manitoba economy performed less well than almost every other province as indicated by all the major economic indicators.

Let us look at population: Manitoba during the Lyon years was the only province to show an absolute drop in population.

Employment levels: The smallest increase in jobs was attained in the neoconservative province of Manitoba.

Housing starts: The worst record in housing starts was in the neoconservative province of Manitoba.

Economic growth: The lowest level of increase in economic growth was in the province of Manitoba.

Private investment: The smallest increase in private investment, the province of Manitoba.

Public investment: The smallest increase in public investment, the province of Manitoba.

The policy of expenditure cuts leads to economic disaster. The empirical evidence is there. It is available for anyone who seeks to look at it. It spells out the reality, the outcome of the policy that this government is pursuing. This perhaps is why the Lyon government was one of the few one-term governments in Manitoba during this century.

Indeed, it may have been the only. I am not sure if it was the only. It may well have been the only; if not the only, certainly one of the few. It was a one-term wonder. The citizens of Manitoba, seeing the empirical evidence before them, tossed the rascals out. Thank heaven. It is interesting to note that the Lyon government started by cutting a thousand public servants in their first year. The number has a familiar ring to it.

The Pawley government was elected after the defeat of the Lyon government, and they adopted a different economic strategy. They went back to a strategy very, very similar to that used by Roblin and that used by Schreyer. The consequence of this was that Manitoba avoided the serious cutbacks that plagued other provinces during the 1980s. By comparison with, let us say, Saskatchewan, whose policy was cut, cut, cut—the Devine government's policy—Manitoba during the Pawley years performed very, very well. The long-term economic decline, the gradual economic decline that has characterized the Manitoba economy through most of this century was stopped by the Pawley government.

If, for example, we take this number, the percentage of all Canadian income earned in Manitoba, and we look at that number at various times throughout Manitoba's history—let us go back to the wheat and railway boom which created and shaped this province. At that time, Manitoba was earning something in the order of 9 percent or 10 percent of all the income earned in Canada. By 1926, we were down to 7.3 percent; 1945, we were down to 6.1 percent. By 1958, after the no-public-spending years of the Douglas Campbell government, we were down to 5.1 percent. By 1969, our decline continued; we were down to 4.4 percent. By 1977, we were down to 4.1 percent. The decline continued.

We slowed the decline during the Schreyer years. The Manitoba provincial economy outperformed most other provincial economies during the Schreyer years, but the province's decline in terms of our share of total national income continued to go down. By 1981, we were at 3.9 percent. In 1988, we were still at 3.9 percent. In other words, finally, after a long, long secular decline in Manitoba's share of total Canadian income, the decline was at least halted.

There were no great economic miracles, as you all know, during the Pawley years. The Pawley

government was a rather timid government in many respects, much more timid than many of us would have liked to see, but they did, nevertheless, not adopt the policy of many other provincial governments, which was that policy oriented around cutting. They did not cut, cut, cut; rather, they ran up the deficit. The consequences there in the information that we have available to us, the economic indicators that we have available to us, Manitoba did better during the Pawley years than most other provinces.

If we look outside Canada, we see exactly the same kind of phenomenon. In employment terms, the strongest economies are those in which you see significant state intervention and significant public investment. Those are the economies that perform well. Northern Europe, Sweden, Austria, Norway, West Germany—these economies all have common characteristics. They are mixed economies. They use public investment as a way of stimulating the economy, as a way of guiding the economy.

The neoconservative approach with which this government is so enamoured is an unproven approach. It is pure theory. We have no empirical evidence to demonstrate that this approach will work. We have some empirical evidence to demonstrate that if it is going to work, it is going to be at great human cost and only in the long run. We have the experience, for example, of Britain, where Margaret Thatcher was elected in the year 1979, where throughout the 1980s we saw cuts, cuts, cuts.

This morning, you will have read, I am sure—the Conservative Party members of this committee in any event will have read *The Globe and Mail's* Report on Business, no doubt looking to see how well their stocks are doing and, perhaps in the course of doing that, they will have read the article by Edward Greenspon, who is the managing editor of *Report on Business*, and he refers disparagingly to the neoconservative experiment in Britain and refers specifically to the collapse of the infrastructure of Britain and talks specifically about the merits of a moderate approach characterized by state intervention and by public investment.

We have the example of Saskatchewan from which people are fleeing as fast as their feet will take them, or we have the example of the United States. Is Reagan's America our model? Is this what we model ourselves upon? Is this what we aspire to? I take it it is. I take it you have some reason for

adopting this strategy. I take it you have some evidence.

Let us look at the evidence: A disastrous health care system, a health care system that angers growing numbers of Americans who look northward to Canada with envy; crime and violence at a level that far exceeds what is the case here in Canada; Third World conditions. Indeed, we have in many urban centres the Third World. The Third World is not some distant place in Africa or Asia. The Third World is in New York City; it is in Los Angeles; it is in the big American cities. Children die because rats bite them, because the government does not invest in creating the conditions in which all people can have some kind of equal opportunity. We now have the situation where cities in America are declaring bankruptcy. They do not have the funds because of the cuts engaged in by the federal government to carry on their normal operations. The infrastructure in America has been savaged.

\* (1550)

I have staying at my home at this moment two family members who, to their very great regret, moved two years ago to California. They have a six-year-old who is in public school in California. They tell me that the classroom is threadbare and that literally every week there is some kind of fundraising activity designed to get the equipment in the classroom that the children need. Push these costs onto the private citizens who are least able to afford them. You know, of course, California, Proposition 13, cuts to taxation, cuts to expenditures, a collapsing infrastructure and a worsening of the problems that characterize America.

During Reagan's years, we had a dramatic increase in the number of millionaires. We also had a dramatic increase in poverty. We had the collapse of what is called the middle class. Of course, it is not the middle class. This is American language. It is the working class. It is the working class, the people who earn ordinary incomes which they got, by the way, through free collective bargaining, which is being eliminated as a consequence of Bill 70.

In summary, the intelligent use of the state, the intelligent use of public investment, yields positive results. Canada was built by state intervention, by an active role for the state, by public investment. All of you sitting around this committee table know that

to be the case. You know that is our history. Manitoba does well when governments are in office which use the positive state, which use state intervention, which use public investment. We do better during those years than we do during those years when there are governments in office whose economic strategy is predicated upon cuts.

In the case of Europe, of course, the same is the case. Those economies that do well are those economies in which there is an active amount of state intervention and of public investment. Reliance upon the market, upon the pure unadulterated forces of the market, is dangerous. It creates private wealth and public squalor. The market is no friend of a province like Manitoba. We exist on the periphery of the economy. We need the intelligent use, the moderate use—I am not, of course, arguing here for an Eastern European strategy. An Eastern European strategy does not work. It has collapsed, but the alternative to that is not the Latin-Americanization of Eastern Europe, surely. It is to have some kind of moderate state intervention and public investment.

That, I submit, is the case with Manitoba as well. We need an active state. We need state investment; we need state activity. The state is an abstraction. It means people; it means state employees; it means civil servants. We are talking here about having a Civil Service. We need a Civil Service, and those civil servants need secure working conditions.

You heard the comments by the speaker immediately before me—very eloquent, very heartfelt—a single parent from The Pas who is regrettably leaving this province because of the economic strategy adopted by this government. He made a plea to this committee to understand the kind of insecurity that results from this kind of an economic strategy.

Workers who are insecure are not workers who are productive. This is the kind of circumstance that Bill 70 and the whole economic strategy of this government is creating. Public servants also need democratic rights, including the right to free collective bargaining. The solution to the problems that face this province is not to be found in cutting wages. Bill 70 is about cutting wages, reducing the wage bill. It is true, the wage bill is substantial. It is a very inviting target. I can understand at one level why Mr. Manness would have targeted public wages because they are big, and if you eliminate any

increase, you make a substantial impact upon that deficit which, of course, is the starting point, as I said earlier.

High wages are not what is causing the deficit, and again, I refer to the empirical evidence that we have available to us. Accelerating public spending, accelerating public wages, are not the cause of the deficit. Statistics Canada recently released a report which argues that the deficit at the federal level is attributable largely to foregone revenue and high interest rates. By foregone revenue, what they mean is the bogus tax reform entered into largely by the Wilson government, but by the Wilson government's predecessors as well.

Statistics Canada reports that specifically it is not the social programs that the federal government is targeting which are causing this accelerating deficit. It is not the social programs, and it is not the high wages being earned by public sector workers. The strategy therefore is not a strategy of cutting. Yet, at the federal level, the strategy adopted is cut, cut, cut. At the provincial level, the strategy adopted is cut, cut, cut. It is always the same. It follows from the same theory.

It is just a theory. There is no empirical evidence to substantiate the merits of the theory. The empirical evidence is to be found in Britain where they have public squalor. The empirical evidence is to be found in America where we have the same. The idea behind this theory is that by beating up on workers through measures like Bill 70 and by beating up on the poor by cutbacks of many kinds—and one could go on a long litany of cuts in the core area of this city which have been significant and which have been damaging and which are damaging people's lives—the theory is that by making these kinds of cuts, private capital is going to come into the province. It is not. It is not coming into the province.

A recent Statistics Canada report, which I must admit I have not had the opportunity to read, but which I read about in the daily press which is not always totally reliable so I am not 100 percent sure of my ground here—I am reporting only what the press reported—the press reported Statistics Canada as having said that Manitoba under the current Filmon administration ranked 10th among our provinces, and you may recall there are 10 of them—10th among our provinces in private investment. The whole theory is, cut, cut, cut and the private capital will come rolling in, so we cut, cut,

cut and there is no private capital. Go back to the Lyon years. Where did the province of Manitoba stand in terms of private investment after the years of cutting? Tenth. We are right at the bottom of the league.

Now, even if the strategy would have worked, and there is absolutely no empirical evidence that it will, but even if it were, even if we were to get substantial private investment, the strategy is a problem. First of all, it is immoral. It is, plain and simple, immoral to be imposing the kind of cuts on the core area of this city and the people who live there that this government has been doing, and that is reason enough not to pursue a strategy of public investment cuts. It is absolutely reprehensible that these kinds of cuts are being made—reprehensible.

Leave the morality of it aside. It is economically inappropriate. These costs that are now being imposed upon the residents of the core area of this city, as well as the residents of the province of Manitoba more generally, are going to have to be paid, if not now, then later. You are the people who like to tell us that by incurring high deficits, we are imposing a burden upon the future generations. You, sir, are imposing a burden upon future generations by starving this province of public investment, by cutting social programs, by cutting education costs. The cuts to social programs and to education are deferring those costs to the future.

My children, your children, our grandchildren, as Mr. Mulroney likes to put it in talking about the cost of the deficit, they will bear the burden of the cuts that you are now engaged in. These burdens will be borne for many generations. How? Higher welfare costs further down the road, higher policing costs further down the road, the costs of prisons. What will become of these people? More and more of them will be on the dole, will be the recipients of welfare payments, will be in prison. I do not have exact figures. You have rushed things along so quickly that I could not pull all the numbers together that I wanted.

\* (1600)

My recollection is that it costs \$80,000 per annum to house a prisoner in a federal penitentiary. Can this be cost effective? Is this the fiscal prudence that you claim? Surely it is not. More than that, it simply is the lost productivity. We lose the productivity that resides—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you, Mr. Silver.

**Mr. Silver:** I am not finished. I will resume my comments when these gentlemen—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** You may proceed. We are listening. Everybody is listening.

**Mr. Silver:** When we do not invest in our people—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** I would also point out that we are on Bill 70, which I hope you will—

**Mr. Silver:** Oh, I am absolutely on Bill 70, sir. It is a matter of cuts in public expenditures. Bill 70 is about cutting public expenditures, which I am sure you will appreciate. I am talking about what becomes of the province and the citizens of this province when we insist upon cutting and cutting and cutting some more. It creates economic disasters very, very much precisely on the consequences of Bill 70. I am addressing myself to the question that Ms. Barrett asked of a previous speaker, what do you think has caused this problem? Sheer ideological inspiration, not empirical evidence of any kind.

Furthermore, why would we take all of this money out of the province, why would we take it out of the economy, when we are in a recession, when plants are closing, when businesses are bankrupt, when Portage Avenue is virtually vacant? It makes no sense. It makes no sense at this time to engage in a policy of cuts. It makes no sense to cut public spending.

Spending cuts, including Bill 70, which is an example of this broader strategy, which is part and parcel of this broader strategy, are economically the wrong strategy. There is an economic problem. You have more or less identified the problem, not completely correctly in my estimation, but more or less, one cannot miss the problem, the kind of fiscal squeeze that is being imposed upon us, and you have chosen the wrong solution to the problem.

Let us look at Bill 70. Bill 70 is altogether too blunt an instrument, even if it were the appropriate strategy to engage in public spending cuts, which it is not, at least so far as we are able to tell from the empirical evidence we have available to us. It is altogether too blunt an instrument. Are all public sector workers overpaid? Surely not, absolutely not. Public sector workers cover the continuum. Some of them are very highly paid. Others are not well paid at all. Some are in economic

circumstances which make them well off. Others are not at all. Many are single parents earning \$27,000 or \$29,000 a year with escalating daycare charges and all the rest of the kinds of problems. Bill 70 is altogether too blunt an instrument, even if it were the appropriate instrument.

It is not the appropriate instrument. This is not what is causing the deficit. An accelerating wage bill in the public sector is not what is causing the deficit. The deficit in this province is being caused by cuts in transfer payments. It is being caused by the recession. It is being caused by high interest rates. It is being caused by regressive tax reform, what is called tax reform. The problem is the theory. All of this is predicated upon the theory, the neoconservative theory, the neoconservative ideology which starts by identifying the deficit as the No. 1 problem, the prime problem. All else must be placed on a backburner. Let us deal with the deficit. How shall we deal with the deficit? We shall cut. We shall cut our expenditures.

By focusing on the deficit as the main problem and by seeing the solution to that problem as public expenditure cuts, it is working people and the poor who pay the price. It is, committee members, not a surprise and not a particularly penetrating sociological insight to observe that there is a clear class bias to the neoconservative strategy. It is working people and the poor who are being asked to bear the burden of the economic problems that we now face.

The neoconservative argument is that cuts will bring the deficit under control, thus freeing up money which can then later be used on social programs. We cut social programs in order to save social programs. To people of my generation, it kind of brings to mind the public relations exercises around the war in Vietnam. We had to eliminate that village to save that village, to save it from the Reds, to save it from communism. We burned it to the ground to save it. We are going to burn these social programs to the ground in order to save them.

This is a nonsensical kind of approach. On the face of it, on the surface, it is nonsensical, and when you pry beneath the surface to look at the reality, it continues to be nonsensical. Cuts, it is argued, will free up more money for investment, will result in private investment pouring into the province. It is not the case. It is simply not the case. The private investment is not pouring into this province. We cut and cut and cut and cut and the private capital does

not come. It did not come during the Lyon years, and it is not coming during the Filmon years.

The theory is wrong. The theory does not work. There is no evidence to substantiate the theory. We need public investment. We need an investment in people, in education, in training, in social programs. People are our resources in this have-not province. We have many, many talented people and we have many other people who have the capacity to be talented people and to make an enormous contribution to the well-being of this province and the citizens of this province. They need a little help and that help must come from the state. It does not come from the private sector. The private sector is not to be found. The private capital is not pouring into this province. We need a strong public sector. We need public investment. That means democratic rights for public sector workers. That means free collective bargaining, free and fair collective bargaining.

Bill 70 should be scrapped. It is simply the wrong solution for the problem. It is not the solution for the problem. It is wrong ethically. We have had 150 years of hard working-class struggle to make gains slowly and gradually which have made Canada a better place in which to live. We all benefit from those working class struggles, from those trade union struggles that have preceded us for the past 150 years, a major consequence of which has been expansion of the freedom that people realize and experience in their day-to-day lives.

Bill 70 goes back on that. It takes us backward. It does not expand our freedoms. It reduces our freedoms. This is the government of free markets and free competition removing freedoms. Ethically this is not the direction in which to move. Why would we move in the direction of denial of freedoms at a time when eastern Europe is exploding with the joy of more human freedom? It does not make any sense to me at all. I think it is wrong ethically. It is wrong economically. There is little question that economically this is a nonsensical strategy. It is going to increase labour strife; that, in turn, is going to lower productivity. We do not need lower productivity in this province. We need higher productivity in this province.

As you yourself, Mr. Manness, have stated over and over again, it is a tough competitive world out there. We need more productivity. Your measures, sir, are not going to increase the productivity of the public sector, and of course, it is part of an overall

economic strategy that is laying waste to this province. It is based on an economic theory put before the public by Adam Smith in published form in the year 1776—yes, indeed, 215 years ago when the world was a different place. This government is out of date. It is living in the past. This is a different world, a world in which all the empirical evidence makes clear is one in which those economies which do well are those economies which use a moderate amount of public investment and state intervention. We are being taken back to the ideas of Adam Smith. We are being taken back to the years of Douglas Campbell and Sterling Lyon. We should change our direction. We should eliminate Bill 70.

Thank you very much.

\* (1610)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you, Mr. Silver. I would remind members of the decorum of the room, in the committee, for clapping. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Ashton:** Incidentally, in terms of your comments on the process, I can indicate that our caucus, the New Democratic Party caucus, is fully in agreement. We do not feel it is appropriate for people to have to make presentations. We were fortunate to be able to make some accommodations yesterday which prevented people from sitting here, because, quite frankly, we could have been here all night. I do not feel that is the process for public hearings. We certainly agree with that, and we would hope that today, for example, we will not run into the same situation again, the five o'clock in the morning, 3:30 in the morning. As you said, many people before this committee are working people who are willing—we have had people willing to stay until three, four or five in the morning, they feel that strongly about the issue. They should not have to and we certainly agree.

I wanted to ask a question in regard to what I thought was an excellent overall view of the, let us use this word, ideological background to this. I do not think there is any other way to describe Bill 70 than as part of the ideology that you referenced. It is not unique. This type of philosophy has been applied by other Conservative governments, other Liberal governments as well in Canada. There are six other jurisdictions, as the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) often points out, that have brought in wage freezes. It is part of, I believe, the overall perspective that you indicated.

I was particularly interested in your comments on eastern Europe. I have watched the events with great interest. I have been in a number of the countries and while some of the trends there, I think, are not necessarily going to lead to the greater freedom that people have anticipated and certainly some of the events of recent times which have seen the exacerbation of some of the traditional nationalistic conflicts in the area, the interesting thing about what happened is that essentially one of the initiating forces behind the change in the first country essentially that moved to more of a western style democracy was in terms of solidarity in Poland in 1979. The first struggle was not for elections. The first struggle was free democratic trade union, an independent trade union movement.

I am wondering, and you have referenced this indirectly. I am asking this question, because two nights ago we had somebody here from Czechoslovakia who left when the Soviet tanks entered in 1968 to crush the Dubcek attempt, the Prague Spring. He said he would have thought that this kind of legislation would have been introduced by the hard line Czech government of the '50s and 1960s. I am wondering, when you reference what is happening in eastern Europe, how you feel this is in comparison to what has been happening there where one of the key areas developed in the last 10 years has not been just democratic elections, but a democratic, an independent trade union movement.

**Mr. Silver:** I would not want to go so far as to equate this government with the previous governments that operated in eastern Europe. My point was simply that this is a—pardon me? I am sorry, I did not catch Mr. Enns' comment. I am sure it was with his usual penetrating insight, so I would be interested to hear it.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** You may proceed.

**Mr. Silver:** I thought Mr. Enns was addressing me.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** No, he was not. You may proceed with Mr. Ashton's question.

**Mr. Silver:** It is not a matter of the provincial Tory government being equated with the administrations in eastern Europe at all. It is simply a matter of our introducing legislation which erodes freedoms which we have worked for for a very long time in this country, which are beneficial to us as individuals and to the society as a whole and which people in Eastern Europe have been working very, very hard

for and will be delighted to get if, indeed, they end up getting them. I mean it is quite unclear now what is going to happen in eastern Europe.

I personally am delighted at the fall of the governments in eastern Europe, but what will replace them is very, very difficult to say. Those who pursue the ideologically driven free market approach to economic strategy may find that rather than becoming like the well-to-do western European nations, they will become more like the market-driven economies of Latin America where you have grotesque disparities of income and where the market works very significantly to the disadvantage of ordinary people. The pure approach of a complete state-dominated, state-controlled command economy does not work. At the other end of the ideological spectrum, the pure approach of the pure market similarly does not work. We have the substantial empirical evidence on both scores.

What I am appealing for is some kind of moderate approach. I am appealing for an approach based upon mixed economy and based upon attempts to advance people's freedoms. We have talented people in this province. Given the freedom to use their talents, we can make this a prosperous, happy province. The way to do that is to give people various kinds of freedoms, civil liberties, trade union freedoms and more positive freedoms, not just freedom from the impositions of government, but the freedom to realize their full potential, which comes through public investment. The only way to do that is through public investment. The private sector simply will not do it.

To go back to the point from which you started, Mr. Ashton, I concur, we have a strategy here which is driven solely and purely by ideology. What empirical evidence we have suggests that this is the wrong strategy, that the ideology is a mistake. I think in due course we will abandon—the western world, those who have adopted, those parts of the western world that have adopted this absurd strategy will abandon it, but what damage will be done in the meantime? What damage will be done to the people in the core area of the city of Winnipeg, for example, as a result of these cuts? We will pay the price for that for a very, very long time indeed.

**Mr. Ashton:** Just one further brief comment and question. Indeed, I think one of the interesting aspects of your historical overview is unfortunately I feel in a lot of cases those who do not learn from

history, to rephrase, paraphrase the quote, are condemned to repeat it. I really believe that some of the mistakes, although incidentally not all of the mistakes, of the Lyon government are being repeated. In some cases this government is inventing new ones. The Lyon government never—it laid off civil servants, but it never suspended collective bargaining rights for the four-year period it was in, nor did it roll back labour legislation. In some respects, and I have said this, and I almost choke when I say it, the Sterling Lyon government was not—I do not want to say all that bad, but it was not as bad in this area.

I want to ask you a specific question more personally focused. At the beginning of the presentation, you indicated you are a faculty member with the University of Winnipeg. We have raised the fact that one of the inequities of this bill is who is in and who is out. I am not suggesting for a moment that, for example, university professors should be included, but we have seen throughout these presentations and the last number of days we have seen nurses' aides earning \$21,000 a year, a number of them came forward who are working for privately owned nursing care facilities, one owned by Trizec, are now having their wages frozen.

Incidentally, three women have been here and all three of them were making about the same range, \$21,000 a year. They ranged in experience from 11 to 18 years. They were the most senior people in their workplace. The question they had was, why me?

I am just wondering what your perspective is as someone who has been excluded thus far and, of course, if you read the legislation, you could be included tomorrow with the stroke of a pen. Believe you me, I want to make it very clear, I am not arguing that you should be included. I am wondering how you view this. I would like to see everybody in the public sector treated like university professors currently and doctors. I am wondering how you feel that this reflects on the fairness of this approach when someone such as yourself is excluded and a \$21,000 a year nurses aide working for a privately owned nursing facility is included and has their wages frozen.

**Mr. Silver:** Mr. Ashton, I am grateful that you are not advocating that we be included under the provisions of Bill 70. However, I take your point. Who is in and who is out does not seem to bear much relationship to rationality.

University professors, particularly those of us who are at senior levels or middle levels, are, I think, relatively well paid. I personally have no particular complaints about the salary level that I am at, although people who are just coming into the profession, I think, are relatively speaking underpaid.

\* (1620)

The more general point is that there is no real rationality to who is in and who is out. That university professors should be out, should be excluded from the provisions of Bill 70, that doctors should be excluded from the provisions of Bill 70, I believe somebody back here showed me some Statistics Canada data just before I came up and it had to do with medical doctors. I am not sure if it was referring to Manitoba or to Canada as a whole. I think it was Canada as a whole, but I am not certain. In any event, fully one-half of those medical doctors was earning in excess of \$100,000 per annum. Clearly that is unreasonable that they should not be made subject to the provisions of this bill when nurses aides who are making \$20,000 a year are made subject to the provisions of this bill. That is inequitable. It is unfair, and it is difficult to find the rational grounds upon which one would make that kind of a delineation. One assumes again that this has to do with the ideological character of the legislation, the ideological character of the economic strategy and related to that, the class character of it.

As I indicated, it seems to me, and I do not want to sound dogmatic, because I do not consider myself to be a dogmatic person, that there is a class character to this legislation and a class character to the overall economic strategy that is working people and the poor who are expected to pay the price of the economic problems now confronting this country. The more well to do simply become more well to do.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you very much, Mr. Silver.

I now call on Mr. Kevin Dearing. Do you have a written presentation?

**Mr. Kevin Dearing (Private Citizen):** As a matter of fact I do.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** The Clerk will pass it out. Let her pass it out and then we can start.

**Mr. Dearing:** I only have one copy.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** You may proceed then, Mr. Dearing.

**Mr. Dearing:** I will start by reading the brief that I wrote, and then add on a couple of afterthoughts, having read the proposed legislation.

First of all, as the provincial representative of the Canadian Federation of Students, I urge this committee to do everything in its power to defeat Bill 70. The statements that I am making have been arrived at from talking with other students and are supported by the student unions that are member locals of the Canadian Federation of Students. Through talking with students about Bill 70, I learned that there are a number of reasons why students find this proposal offensive.

First of all, most students are also workers, and although many are not unionized, virtually everyone I talk to understands the advantages of belonging to a union and would like to be organized at some point and are politically sympathetic to unions. This bill is a proposal to unilaterally dictate terms and wages to its provincial employees, thereby attacking the most fundamental trade union right to collective bargaining. Therefore, as students become aware of Bill 70, they realize, as the already existing labour movement has realized, that Bill 70 is frankly intolerable.

Another reason why students are opposed to Bill 70 is because the attack on workers' rights to collective bargaining is a parallel to the attack on students' right to an education. Whether you are a student living on a student loan allowance, which has not gone up since 1986 or a student facing tuition increases of 60 percent over five years or a worker whose wage increases have been generally below the rate of inflation for 16 years, as I understand public sector workers have, we are both being squeezed by a system and a government which is acting against us.

The Tories tell us that there is no money left for our education or for fairly negotiated collective agreements. However, when it comes to destroying an environmental refuge like Oak Hammock Marsh for the amusement of some hunters or funding elitist private schools or putting a Tory land developers project ahead of many other more needed social housing projects or for building a new arena when we already have one, millions of dollars of provincial money suddenly become available. Obviously there is money available but

only for the elites. For the overwhelming majority of Manitobans, there are cutbacks and outright attacks on our standard of living.

A third criticism that I have heard from students about the proposed Bill 70, and other policies like it, is that it reveals an extremely shortsighted and narrow way of thinking. I think that was demonstrated most clearly in the speaker before me. A society as well developed as ours in Manitoba needs to be maintained in the way that it was built, through struggle and compromise, through co-operation and a mixed economy, as well as a more or less sensitive, or at least responsible, governance. However, through blatant attacks like Bill 70, this government is trying to roll us all back to the Victorian era.

Just as with the system of post-secondary education, if you do not fund it properly, it begins to fall apart. Skilled people leave the province for better opportunities elsewhere. The people left behind are frustrated by being prevented from working to their potential and being recognized as such. As one part of the society deteriorates, the other parts are affected in turn. This government with its budgetary onslaught on the education system, the health care system, the daycare system, community nonprofit organizations, democratic city government and public sector workers is accelerating the overall deterioration of our province to Third World resource exporting/cheap labour conditions.

What I just said relates to a fourth reason students are against Bill 70. That reason is what this proposal would mean to the level of services we receive from the government due to the dismal management-employee relations that this government is promoting, as well as the additional strain on public sector employees due to layoffs, hiring freezes, wage freezes, difficulties in recruitment and generally being overworked and underpaid. This bill is not the action of a socially responsible government. Not only do most of us know, through friends and family, public sector employees who will be adversely affected by this proposed legislation, and the number of employees of community organizations who are operating on grants, which after reading the legislation may also be subject to this, but many of us stand to be affected by it as well, many of us as students I mean, as potential employees later on and as users of

other government services. This ties in directly with the next issue.

Our future—for the reasons stated above, we recognize that Bill 70 is a threat to our way of life in this province. I again urge the committee to recommend the defeat of the bill or even scrap it before it gets out of committee. Bill 70 must be stopped as it is disastrous for the future of Manitoba. Moreover, it is an issue for students right now, because when you live as marginally as many of us do, you come to realize that nobody really has economic security unless we all have economic security.

After reading the bill, I quickly came across a number of other reasons why I am personally offended by this, and I think other students would be as well. It first of all is starting off with the language. Calling it a public sector compensation management act, I think is really misleading. To talk about compensation to the public sector when in fact their rights are being attacked is just blatantly throwing it in the face of the workers and the people who are being affected by this.

Some of the sections, and I do not have a copy in front of me, but I made a few notes, such as Section 2 or subsection 3, reveals the nature of arriving at this bill that this government has taken and the intended way of carrying it through is through legislating and not negotiating. From there through Section 5, there is a section dealing with the fact that all contracts are going to be automatically extended for a year without significant changes unless the cabinet makes decisions around those changes, which I think, given the fact that they put forward this bill in the first place, we know what kind of changes this cabinet would like. It is certainly not to the advantage of public sector employees.

Section 6(1) also speaks to some of the same problems and that is that the contracts would not be changed. It does not specify, I did not see and I wish I had another copy in front of me, but it did not specify the time period that they were not going to be changed. Following that, in 6(2) no increases. Section 6(3), the fact that all the talks that were currently underway or the bargaining that was currently underway are off due to this legislation, and I think that is what I have heard earlier from other speakers who came before, this sense of betrayal that they felt by negotiating or spending their union money on preparation for negotiation and in

negotiations and to have that thrown back at them by this proposed piece of legislation.

\* (1630)

Another language or semantic point: permitted adjustments. I think that sort of speaks again to the dictatorial nature or the authoritarian nature of this Bill 70, permitted, i.e., permitted by the Lieutenant Governor in Council or what that refers to is the cabinet. Whatever the cabinet permits shall be the rules and regulations of collective agreements for the time period of this bill.

Seeing that cabinet can decide to extend this "to persons not otherwise covered by this Act," in relation to payments that "are or may become payable directly or indirectly, by the government of Manitoba under an agreement," I think is just a sweeping range. It is this wide range of opportunity for abuse that is in this legislation by saying that people who are indirectly or even may be directly or indirectly funded by the government are liable to this piece of legislation or are bound by this piece of legislation, again, upon an Order-in-Council. It is just sweeping powers that are given to the cabinet in this bill again re-enforce the image of dictatorial nature that this government is seeking or dictatorial relations in this province that this government is seeking.

Furthermore, there are other offensive parts, moving on to Section 9(1)(a) where the cabinet has total power in regulating what is going on. I touched on that previously up and down throughout the bill, and (b) extending part or all of Bill 70 to any collective agreement cabinet wants. I cannot believe that is in there, and I do not know what it is referring to exactly. It just seems to be so widespread or in such great breadth that the regulations of Bill 70 can be extended to, and it just says, any collective agreement.

Moving down to 9(e), also fixing the expiry date of any collective agreement. Again and again and again, we are just being faced with things which are totally offensive to the process of collective bargaining. It just guts all the intent and all the purpose of what bargaining between unions and management is all about by saying, quite frankly, that all these terms are going to be dictated by management.

Actually just touching on a couple of other things that, having written this brief yesterday, I wanted to elaborate a little bit, and that is going back to the

point of the connections between students and our right to an education and workers and the right to collective bargaining in this province. Why I think we feel solidarity there is because it is the same government doing the same things for the same reasons or similar things for the same reasons. They are eroding hard won gains by common people, common Manitobans, the right for all Manitobans to have certain democratic rights. It is increasing the gap between working class Manitobans and students in that category, and the corporate elites. I think the intent of this government is to increase those gaps as part of the corporate elite agenda for this country. That is moving back to the point I was talking about, and that is short-sighted and narrow way of thinking.

I think it is true to say that the problem of debts are problems with the federal government in transfer payments. I think this government should always be in opposition to the feds about those matters. Also, there are other problems that led to the fiscal crisis that we are facing. One of those is money to megaprojects. Saying that \$500 million, or approximately that, is available for a Conawapa dam project I think is, again, offensive when they are talking about an unnecessary, environmentally destructive dam project, while at the same time proposing a piece of legislation to sack the democratic rights of public sector employees.

I think there are other problems behind our fiscal crisis. One of them is free trade. I think, again, the speaker before me did a much better job than I could in elaborating why free trade has not done any good for Manitoba. It has led to the weakening of our economy because our economy, frankly, with all the plant closings and all the money that is going south instead of staying in Manitoba is just a part of the corporate agenda that is again betraying the people of Manitoba.

Another problem I think that is part of the crisis in our province is privatization, both nationally and the provincial efforts that have been going on amongst other Conservative provincial governments, and cutbacks of public spending. I mean, you look at even the Blakeney government, which I do not think was the best government in the world for their environmental record. Anyway, you look at their history of public corporations and the way they managed the economy through a mixed economy and moderate involvement in the economy through Crown corporations and establishing new Crown

corporations. They returned balanced budgets year after year.

Privatization of profitable corporations, whether it is Air Canada or even the proposals and the rumours around the Post Office, or all the other cutbacks which are in fact de facto privatization by contracting out, those are all problems that have led to the fiscal crisis that we are now in. What I am saying, quite frankly, is public sector employees and the workers are not to blame for this. They should not be shouldering the burden of the fault of corporate-backed agendas and Conservative governments.

I think a fundamental principle, for me and a lot of students that I know, is the problem is never the people. The people are not the problem. The problem is how we are organized. This piece of legislation is seeking to blame public sector employees for a fiscal crisis that they had no part in creating. The problems for this government rest with the government, or the fiscal crisis rests with the government, the decisions that they have around megaprojects, supporting free trade, privatization and cutbacks and generally destroying the mixed economy that we have and was functioning at least moderately well for most Manitobans.

The idea of this Bill 70 I think should be thrown right out, but even logically it does not follow. The hypothetical gains, and I will not say there are any real gains, of trying to cap wages like that are not worth the costs. All of these decisions that are being put into place are not worth the long-term costs that they will provide for Manitobans or that they will not provide for Manitobans, pardon me, the destruction of our way of life, again.

If there is such thing as a social contract, then this government and this Bill 70 is breaking it. It is the kind of thing that is a hindrance to recruiting to public sector and to other things. I know a lot of students, personally, who have gone elsewhere over the past three or four years because of the problems of lack of funding or underfunding in this province. I am speaking primarily around education. I think again, that cutting back on post-secondary education is similar to cutting back on the public sector and public service, quite frankly. I think there would be a lot of people like the woman who spoke from The Pas, who came down from The Pas to be here today, who just cannot hack all the decisions that are being thrown at us undemocratically by this government.

What do you think it is going to do to Manitoba in the long run, is one thing that I wanted to ask. Obviously, I just want people to think about that when it comes time to deal with this proposed bill.

\* (1640)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer):** Thank you, Mr. Dearing.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to ask a couple of questions.

Mr. Dearing, do you think a student has the right to an education?

**Mr. Dearing:** Yes, I most definitely do.

**Mr. Santos:** Do you think this right should be entrenched as a constitutional right?

**Mr. Dearing:** I think that would be an excellent idea. I think that we, in the Canadian Federation of Students, should be mobilizing on that—much the same way other rights that Canadians hold dear ought to be entrenched, like say rights to collective bargaining. Aboriginal rights and treaty rights ought to be more specifically addressed in the Constitution. Women's rights obviously should be more specifically addressed in the Constitution than they are currently. I think the right to an education is another thing that goes the same way.

Just speaking to that for a second, the right to an education, I do not think—what I would like to see happen is where that is really in place, where student aid is accessible and tuition is reduced to zero, as far as I am concerned. If we could support education, primary and secondary education through government money, I think it ought to be accessible all the way through. The tuition is a hindrance to Manitobans, which I do not think is justified.

I think education is a right, and I think that the tuition system is keeping it to either the elites or people who have to spend, like myself, five or six years working part time and going to school part time to go through this education system.

**Mr. Santos:** Do you think that public social spending for education will lead to more economic growth in the future?

**Mr. Dearing:** Yes, again, I agree. Education is a classic example of an investment, a socially productive investment. I can see what is happening first-hand when a lot of talented young Manitobans are leaving the province because of better educational opportunities in other provinces,

because of more adequate loan and funding situations and better quality programs in other provinces.

I think Manitoba is really losing out in this score through not taking the lead or not even keeping par with other provinces in the educational funding. I think it is quite clearly an investment to have an educated work force. It is an investment in standards of living for all Manitobans, including even our democratic processes. I think it is an integral part of that.

**Mr. Santos:** If the quality of human resources, including their managerial skills and their technological development, if it is a factor of production, do you think it is worthwhile that governments should even go to deficit in order to finance the higher education of its own people?

**Mr. Dearing:** I do not buy the arguments that deficits are the big boogeyman they are played out to be by governments. I think basically it is an excuse or a foil to cut social services and social programs, which in fact increases the inequality in our society. I think it is to the advantage of corporations in particular to see a less educated work force, to see a more financially strapped work force by capping wages, by increasing unemployment. I think it is to the advantage of corporate profits when they do those things.

I think that is the real reason. The deficit is being thrown out as a scare tactic. In fact, if you look at the strategies around the deficit, there are a lot of very fair and not too difficult remedies to that one. Some of them are the tax breaks that are being handed out and the corporate handouts, whether it is prioritizations around handouts to friends or the chair of MTS or whomever it happens to be. It is tightening up a lot of those loopholes.

In the taxation system as well, there are a hundred and—I think Neil Brooks had written something around \$170 million—I cannot quite—I will hold back on that. I will just tell you, quite frankly, there are billions of dollars in this country that are escaping through tax loopholes which benefit the wealthy and the elites of our country at the same time as they are trying to cut back on social programs which are universal for all of us.

Again, getting back to the point around education is sort of what I was thinking of before when talking about—we have universal primary and secondary education. What we want in the elimination of

tuition and a properly funded education system is universality that benefits all Canadians, not just the elites who can get in through whatever ways and do not mind the higher tuition. We want universality that actually benefits all of us and not just the wealthy.

**Mr. Santos:** Should we force people to get educated? For example, we have a compulsory public education system. Should we force the young students to go to university?

**Mr. Dearing:** I think education is an opportunity, and people should realize that. Currently, with the restructuring of our economy it is a fact that a lot of the jobs that are coming in, that are in the future are more technological and require more education than they have in past.

It is the kind of thing that ought to be accessible for everybody. Retraining ought to be accessible. There should not be as many structural impediments or regulations to retraining, such as the conditions around UI and retraining, where you only get sponsored for a year when it takes about two or three years to complete a program. Those kinds of matters I think ought to be addressed as well.

**Mr. Santos:** We have, however, a very limited amount of public resources. If we run out of money to run social services, including higher education, where would we get the money?

**Mr. Dearing:** Well, I think there is quite a wide range of options, tightening loopholes for one. There are a number of loopholes that exist in our tax system which would help the feds come closer to meeting their problems with the deficit, which would help us in Manitoba because of the way the feds have been cutting back on transfer payments. I think both levels of government have responsibilities that they ought to be taking on and are not currently doing that.

\* (1650)

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Acting Chair, I am very interested in your presentation. You have covered a lot of the same issues and the same concerns that have been raised from a variety of different perspectives. It is quite interesting to see how they all come together.

I have a couple of questions I would like to ask you about the students you have been talking about and with, whose views you are representing here today. What areas are the students from? I would like to know, have you been talking to people mainly in Winnipeg, outside Winnipeg? What areas of

study are they in? Are they all post-secondary or younger?

**Mr. Dearing:** I have been talking to, I guess—mostly post-secondary. The Canadian Federation of Students' membership is student unions, universities and colleges, and mostly people who are involved in student politics, because they are pretty much the ones on campus who are around in the summertime to be available for these kinds of things.

If it was during our academic year right now I could guarantee there would be a lot more students organized and addressing this.

The people I have talked with, some in Brandon, some who live in eastern Manitoba who come into the city to go to university, some whom I represent, some who have family members in the Civil Service who are being attacked again and again, whether it is the layoffs and the squeezing of the budget that they have to deal with or this piece of legislation which automatically applies. There are people of different social backgrounds as well, all different social backgrounds.

**Ms. Barrett:** If you are talking mostly with the people who are involved in the student governments of the various universities, have you also talked with people who are from the various faculties and schools within the universities, or has it been mostly one kind of faculty of study? I am trying to get a sense of the range of students you have been talking to and the range of their areas of study.

**Mr. Dearing:** We have not touched on that much, our different academic interests and the different disciplines that we are studying. I could not really say which departments are represented in which proportion in concern about this—just sort of pretty general, to tell you the truth.

It has been mostly university students and not as many people in college programs or in the nursing program in Selkirk or where have you. I think it would not be too hard to guess what students generally think of this government. I think we have had some indication of that.

**Ms. Barrett:** Are any of these students you have talked to or any students you know of who have concerns about this bill planning to—or having it as a potential that they might, after university or their education, think about a career in the public service?

**Mr. Dearing:** I think that frankly, yes, there are people who would like to have an opportunity to work in the public sector. I think the public sector is such a large part of our economy it is hard not to.

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Acting Chair, what is your sense then, if there is a certain percentage of the students that you feel would be interested in making a career in the public service, of the impact of Bill 70 on that career option or that ability of students who are making use of our post-secondary education and becoming a good human resource for us to utilize? What impact is Bill 70 likely to have on their freedom of choice in this regard?

**Mr. Dearing:** I think many of them would think twice about it, definitely. When I said students are in many cases workers and are public sector workers, and are potential or future workers in the public sector, I was thinking in general terms. I know that something like Bill 70, if that entered the scene, and I sure hope it does not, it would cause a lot of people to think twice about what they were getting themselves into.

I think most students, like I said, would like to be in a job that is unionized or organized and that has some meaning. I think that this just strips away the meaning of unions and rights to collective bargaining altogether. I think it would cause a lot of people to think twice and a lot of people to be quite angry and quite militant about the relationship between a management government like this and their own positions as workers.

**Ms. Barrett:** Thank you. You have stated in your written brief and as well in your answer to my latest question that you believe that many students feel the union movement is a positive factor and that Bill 70 will have a very negative impact on the union movement and ability of people to utilize the things that the people have been fighting for for hundreds of years.

Why do you think that students, and particularly the students you have been talking with, feel the union movement is a positive thing and that Bill 70 would have a negative impact? Why the connection between the students you have talked with and a positive sense of the union movement?

**Mr. Dearing:** I think again, it is because most students are workers. It is not hard to see the advantages of being organized. You do not get stepped on as much. You get stepped on a bit, but

you could get stepped on a lot more if you are not organized.

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Acting Chair, should Bill 70 come into effect, do you anticipate students, particularly as we get into the fall, taking any action? Will you be recommending any further action on behalf of students and the workers?

**Mr. Dearing:** It is hard to see exactly what is going to happen even with this bill and with other people opposed to it. I definitely will follow up on this. I know that a lot of students are also in solidarity with the public sector employees on this issue. Yes, we will be following up on it together.

\*(1700)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Thank you, Mr. Dearing.

I would like to now call Mr. John Loxley. Do you have a written presentation to distribute?

**Mr. John Loxley (Private Citizen):** No, I do not.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer):** Okay, then you may proceed. Thank you.

**Mr. Loxley:** My name is John Loxley. I am chairperson of Choices: A Coalition for Social Justice. I thought it might be useful to begin my discussion of Bill 70 by saying a few words about who we are and why we would be interested in this government initiative.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

We are a social action group, a coalition of people who are drawn from most walks of life. We have representatives in our midst from various churches. We have residents of the inner city. We have a very strong aboriginal membership. We represent women's groups, at least they are represented in Choices. We have people who are unemployed, people who are on social security. We have members whose primary interest is to further the improvements and conditions for people with disabilities. We have representatives from environmental groups and we have academics. In addition, we also have members who are nonunionized workers, as well, of course, as unionized workers.

Our objective is to promote an improvement in living standards in the province and to further equity in Manitoba. We believe that current unemployment rates, nationally standing at 10.5, are excessively high. We promote the goal of full

employment. We are in favour of improving economic and social security for all sections of society, regardless of who they are and where they live in Manitoba. Above all, we believe in furthering the democratic process, which is why I am here today.

We believe that democracy can be strengthened both in its parliamentary form, represented by the members here, but also in extraparliamentary fashions. We believe that public participation in both forms of democracy is excessively limited at the present time and should be broadened. I will return to that theme throughout the presentation. We believe, therefore, in assessing critically government policies at all levels from the point of view of the objectives which we are attempting to promote.

It is no accident that Choices was formed earlier in the year because it was clearly apparent earlier in the year that policies of both the federal government and the provincial government were working to the detriment of the objectives that we are promoting. We believe they are, in general, promoting greater inequity. They are leading quite deliberately to increases in unemployment. They are eroding in some significant areas the security which ordinary people have, including social security networks, UIC, et cetera. We believe they are eroding the quality of life for significant sections of society, while, of course, promoting the well-being of a privileged few. We believe that in several important areas they are eroding the democratic process in this country and more specifically in this province.

We do not believe, however, that the way to proceed is simply to criticize the different levels of government. This has never been the objective of Choices. We believe that democracy is furthered by information, discussion and debate, and that of necessity that will often be of a very critical nature. We believe in that. We believe in furthering that. We also believe that to be useful, ultimately, discussion and critique has to be accompanied by constructive suggestions. Therefore, we have attempted throughout our short existence always to provide alternatives when we have criticized a certain line of policy or a certain line of action. I will again return to this theme throughout my presentation and discussion on Bill 70.

I think it is necessary to preface my discussion of the bill by explaining how Choices works in order to

give members a fairly clear idea of the perspective from which the group is likely to be discussing this particular initiative.

We believe that Bill 70 contains a number of extremely antidemocratic features, and we would urge you to withdraw this bill and to return to the status quo in terms of collective bargaining.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

We believe that collective bargaining is a basic democratic right. We do not believe that you, the government, gave this right to the people of Canada and to the people of Manitoba. We do not believe it was your right to give away. Free collective bargaining was fought for over many, many years by the labour movement, and we believe that it will continue to be fought for in spite of your efforts to abolish it.

To do as you propose to do, which is to freeze collective agreements, is not only to freeze wages. Clearly, this is one of your intents. By doing so, of course, you will guarantee that all persons affected by this initiative will receive, throughout the process of the year, a reduction in their real incomes of at least 6 percent over that period of time. We believe that is serious in itself, and I will come back in a few moments to talk about that and the implications of that.

The initiative that you are undertaking does much more than that. It freezes other aspects of collective agreements. The only item that is not frozen is the commitment to job security which was attached to previous agreements. What you have done or what you are proposing to do therefore is to interfere in a very significant fundamental way with industrial relations in this province and with basic democratic rights of the workers of this province.

\* (1710)

You are saying to them and you are saying to us that you know better than anybody else what the content of these agreements ought to be, monetary wise and otherwise. You are saying to them that these agreements as they stand will stand in all but the job security aspects and that you have decided that working conditions are just fine for them, thank you very much, for the foreseeable future. This is not the way a democracy is supposed to function. It is not the role of the state to intervene in this arbitrary dictatorial way and to abolish the right to collective bargaining.

I think it is important to understand exactly what you have done. What you have done is not only freeze wages and thereby, at least what you are proposing to do—excuse me. Would you please give me the courtesy of listening to my presentation?

### Point of Order

**Mr. Enns:** The committee meets here at long hours. We make it the privilege of any citizen in Manitoba to make their presentations. There is nothing in the rules that says we have to listen to them.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Loxley:** There is nothing in the rules—

**An Honourable Member:** Shame!

**Mr. Loxley:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I think that last comment speaks for itself, speaks to a theme that I was to pick up upon later in my presentation, and I think it shows the kind of disdain that some politicians and some members of this government have for members of the public. I would remind you, sir, that common courtesy is not written into the rules of this House. People assume that you can adhere to that without it being written down. So I would ask you again to pay me some common courtesy and listen or maybe just conduct your discussions elsewhere.

This initiative that is being proposed does more than reduce real incomes of civil servants. It, obviously, leads to greater insecurity of jobs because that is not guaranteed. What it does do also is that it rules strikes illegal for people covered by this bill. I think that is something which has to be emphasized, something which has to be stressed, something which has to be deplored. You are interfering with basic rights as they have been negotiated over the years, as they have become accepted as part of our democratic framework in Manitoba and in Canada.

I would argue and members of Choices would argue that collective bargaining has a central role in a democracy and that you do not build a democracy by abolishing it by fiat at the whim of the government to suit its own particular narrow ambitions at any particular point in time. So there is, I believe, in freezing collective agreements, a very strong antidemocratic bias.

I would also argue, secondly, that there is a very antidemocratic bias in the abolition of previously

understood arbitration arrangements. What the government has done is taken agreements, which have been longstanding, and rule arbitrarily and independently that arbitrators cannot be trusted to serve the public interests. This is a remarkable conclusion for you to draw, given that the whole basis of arbitration is founded upon a belief that it is possible in a democratic society as a last resort to put the parties down, hear them debate, look at both sides of the argument, and presumably both sides of the argument would include any concerns that the employer has and this would, therefore, include any fiscal concerns that the employer might have and then make a decision in the interests of social harmony and the better prosperity of the province and country.

I, myself, have had the privilege of being involved in a number of arbitration hearings. I believe that for all its fault and flaws, where parties have agreed to arbitration, it is a process that ought to be recognized as being legitimate, as being in certain situations the best way to proceed and maybe the only way to proceed if social justice is to be preserved or strengthened in any significant sense.

Industrial peace has often been arrived at only by resort to arbitration and regardless of the bitterness that sometimes accompanies that process. I believe that as a last resort it is probably or should I say infinitely preferable to wielding the large legislative stick which in the process totally dispirits members of the public sector, totally destroys their confidence in their employer, and also leaves them helpless in the face of your slight but nevertheless powerful majority in the House.

What is more disturbing about these particular initiatives is that they are in several ways very open-ended. They are open-ended with regard to who is to be covered, which particular collections of workers are going to be affected by your administrative legal stick. They are totally open-ended with regard to when they may be subject to these controls. You reserve these rights to yourself.

What gives the government the confidence to believe that it is a more impartial arbiter than the arbitrators who have served this province long and well? How can the government be an impartial arbiter and at the same time be the employer? This contradicts some very fundamental principles of collective bargaining and of democracy as we know it. These measures are therefore arbitrary. They

are discriminatory and not applied to all groups in society. You pick and choose, apparently with no very sensible rhyme or reason, and the action shows a complete lack of confidence in a long established and highly regarded process of last resort in industrial relations.

\* (1720)

It is claimed that it was necessary to interfere with arbitration as a last resort because the public sector had chosen to use arbitration fearing that other approaches to collective bargaining would not yield as high returns. This may well have been a correct interpretation of the decisions of some unions to opt for arbitration. It is a decision that is clearly within the agreements as they stand, and it is a decision which you have unilaterally and arbitrarily chosen to overturn.

I think that by including certain types of workers in your initiative, you have given the lie to this particular interpretation of why you have chosen to do what you have done. In this respect, you have chosen to roll back the wages of the workers in the casino. My understanding of that particular group of people's situation is that they did not opt for arbitration. They took the existing nonarbitration route to its limit and in the process payed a very heavy price in terms of loss of security and loss of income. Now they face a retroactive rollback.

I think this is important for a number of reasons: one, because it demonstrates that your initiative was aimed at much more than the arbitration process, those who have resorted or have chosen to resort to that. Secondly, it raises what I believe to be a practice which is extremely dangerous, again, to our democratic conditions and that is giving to yourself the power to reverse decisions which have been arrived at freely in the past following democratically accepted, widely regarded, highly regarded, widely regarded, practices of collective bargaining.

I fear that in that what we are dealing with here, the danger is first of all that you discredit the due process in all its forms and you reinforce the cynicism which is widespread in the public's minds about the trustworthiness of politicians at all levels. You also pick, of course, a group of workers who can hardly be regarded as privileged in any sense, and who have already paid the price materially, financially, for following the legally accepted and

popularly regarded, highly regarded, ways of doing business.

They paid their price. They lost their incomes. They marched on a picket line. They were given increases and you have rolled them back or you threatened to roll them back. This is arbitrary. It is dictatorial. It simply reinforces the loss of confidence that is widespread now in governments, politicians in Canada and, above all, it threatens all of us, unionized or not, because it threatens the sanctity of contractual agreements.

So while this may appear to be just a small group of workers and not particularly important in this province, bear in mind that from time to time they were able to mobilize massive public support for what many people felt was a just grievance, and bear in mind also that they stand as a precedent for the rest of us, even if we are not affected directly. They stand as a precedent which could mean at some point in the future that all of us could be affected whether or not we are unionized. Businesses with contracts with you could be affected if this is the way you do business. It seems to me that you have to be very, very careful before you jump into legislative print on issues like this. These are not small items.

So I believe that, in terms of democracy and in terms of safeguarding our social and political security, what you are doing in this bill is very retrogressive. It is for that reason, at least partially for that reason, that we believe you ought to give yourselves a break, take a rest, go to the cottage, by deciding not to proceed with it. We would even put together a picnic for all of you, I am sure, to help you along.

There are other problems though, while you are pondering that offer, with what you are doing.

**An Honourable Member:** Sounds like bribery to me.

**An Honourable Member:** It looks good to me.

**Mr. Loxley:** Well, we would certainly be in favour of that. There are other problems with this particular initiative, and these have to do with fairness. We have heard a lot about, well, this initiative only covers certain sections of society.

I would like to give you figures from Revenue Canada, some figures from Revenue Canada, about the impact of what you are doing, which I think would help to demonstrate what you are doing. These figures are drawn from the income tax

returns, the data analyzing those returns by Revenue Canada, which were sent to me free of charge unlike provincial income tax figures. They show that doctors in this province, in Manitoba, over 50 percent of doctors earn over \$100,000 a year. They show that all but 180 out of the 1,400 doctors in this province earn in excess of \$50,000 a year. I use this example because it is an example that I believe you have had before you without figures in the last few days.

When you look at the provincial public sector, 46 percent of those employed in the sector earn less than \$25,000 a year or did so in 1988—these figures are 1988—71 percent earn less than \$35,000. One third of public sector servants, public servants in the province earn less than the average private sector salary of \$20,000 a year. So I would like to underscore the point that was made earlier and has been made several times, that this is a very crude, blunt measure which goes right across the board. It is totally insensitive to income differences. It shows no creativity whatsoever and no ingenuity, even if one were to agree with you that some kind of restraint were in order. I would not acknowledge that at this point. I think it also shows a complete lack of social consciousness that this measure can be brought in, in this very crude, blunt, across-the-board fashion. I will just get a glass of water while our friends have a little chat.

\* (1730)

This initiative does nothing to deal with these kinds of income differences and the kind of inequities that are built into our remuneration system. It simply freezes what is, penalizes everybody by 6 percent. Of course, that freeze would hit people at the bottom end much more than those at the top, because people at the top end would be saving anyway. There is no attempt to use the power of the government through the collective bargaining process to help improve the equity of public sector salaries, and to use that by example, to try to improve equity throughout the whole of the province, by example, to influence the private sector.

I would also argue that there are lessons to be learned from Canadian history about the impact of this kind of freeze. One of the lessons to be learned, apart from the fact that it creates enormous social distress and upheaval, another lesson is that it tends to be a purely temporary, at best, phenomenon, because we know that as soon as the freeze is lifted,

the problems that you have created have been buckled up, and you will find yourself facing a much tougher, hopefully I might add, group of workers who are demanding redress. I wonder to what extent the government has factored this into its calculations. There is a long history which, I would suggest, bears looking at.

The process, of course—and this point has been made already quite eloquently by a previous speaker—you create within the public service a tremendous disillusionment, a complete loss of incentive and a dispiritment which I think is bound to affect the level of performance of the public sector. When you add that general discouragement to the climate of fear, which has become quite rampant since the last budget, I believe we are doing a great disservice to the public sector. I am not one who shares the view that the public sector and public sector employees are lazy or necessarily overpaid or idle or what have you. So I would ask you to bear that in mind also.

Why was Bill 70 introduced in the first place? I am pleased to see that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) is in fact here. It was introduced as part of a general position of the government that the province is in a fiscal crisis which is or would without this kind of initiative very quickly spiral out of control. This impression has been created for the last, I would say, for about the last nine months and earlier in terms of public pronouncements, but I think most of the image of a public purse under siege was created by a press conference at the end of last year, I believe, in which the Minister of Finance presented figures showing the budget deficit rising to \$800 million, \$900 million in two years time.

This way of making projections I think is not a very productive way of going about business. What it does—I mean, anybody can draw straight lines, and you can say that if the population of Manitoba proceeds to grow at eight people a year, then in two billion years you can make the calculations. It is not very helpful. To my knowledge, no one in this province was suggesting that the straight lines be drawn in terms of fiscal expenditures.

Beyond that—I will come back to that in a few moments—much of this crisis, I would say that some of it is real in the sense that we are in the middle of a recession. We are using, of course, Choices uses more or less the same economic data as the government, so we are aware of the seriousness of the situation from our point of view. We are aware

of the situation with regard to federal transfers, and we share the governments concern about those trends in transfers and we would support any initiatives that the government and opposition parties take to try to rectify this assault on transfers to Manitoba and an assault on health and post-secondary education in particular.

Having acknowledged that, we also believe that the fiscal situation is to some degree self-made and to some degree illusionary, but self-made in the sense that your government has chosen to reduce income tax and the employment levy by over \$150 million in the last two years. This was a choice you made. The minister is shaking his head. It is there in your budget statements, if they are accurate. These were choices which you made and which you could unmake or could not have made if you had chosen otherwise. Part of the reduction in income tax personally I felt was quite appropriate, especially the portion of it which went to the poorer sections of society, but the general across-the-board cut in the rate was clearly regressive and handed huge amounts of cash to people who do not really need it.

The illusionary side of this, of course, and I should add that at that time when these cuts were made nobody was told that you would be laying off 450 to 1,000 or whatever the number is of civil servants or that some basic services which people hold dear would be under threat. This was never made apparent at the time. I believe that people ought to have been made aware of the kinds of choices that you were making as you made them, not 12 months later. The illusionary side of things is that we do not really know what our budget situation is. The minister may know. The public does not.

What we have from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), from the Department of Finance, is in the last budget two sets of budget figures, budget figures for last year and budget figures for this year. The latest actual spending figures we have as of two weeks ago, if I am correct, relate to December last year, interim reports up to December last year. At that point in time, the government had underspent its budget by about \$160 million according to the figures released by the department.

Now some of these are probably payments in progress. Some of it is probably payments which fall in the last quarter of the year, but we are told that over the years, the government, different governments have been somewhat successful in

getting seasonality reduced, and this figure seems to be particularly high.

My question would be to the minister and to the committee, is this a real figure? Have we underspent by 160? Have we underspent at all, because if we have, we have carried that underspending from last year's budget into this year's budget, and the province would then be sitting on a whole pile of money which might conveniently show up later in the game to be available for the Fiscal Stabilization Fund, to be available for further tax cuts, to be available to indicate that the government is a good money manager?

If that is indeed what is happening, and I think it would be interesting for members of the public to know, then that ought to be made clear. That figure does, though, seem to be very high and higher than normal, one would think, bearing in mind all the difficulties of dealing with such a number.

\* (1740)

I would argue, and Choices would argue, that it would help all of us, when a budget is presented, that we know the actual, or at least on the best available information, the actual spending of the previous year or the best estimate as of that time, rather than comparing budget with budget which tells us very little.

We are also informed that federal income tax projections for Manitoba are significantly better than those being used by the province, and again, if this is the case, it would be useful to know why it is the case, and if it is not the case, I think members of the public would appreciate knowing that also.

On this point, we realize that both in a professional capacity as an economist and as a member of Choices, people like myself need access to information as much as possible. This may be a nuisance to the government, but I think that a free flow of information, readily available information without necessarily people having to ask for it or pay for it, within reason, would be a great help in enabling the public to assess what is going on and to participate in the process of discussion about events which affect not just the government, but all of us.

We feel it is important that access to information be improved in this sense, and this is not to suggest that information is necessarily being hidden or

deliberately kept back, but simply to make the plea that information ought to be more readily available.

The budget situation has other dimensions, as well. I mean, clear choices have been made on the expenditure side, and naturally governments are going to have their agenda. We do not believe that many of your initiatives serve the cause of social justice or equity within the province. We do not believe that this is necessarily your interest either.

We are not particularly impressed in the use of public money to elite private schools. I think we have made our position on this very clear. We do not share your enthusiasm for a million and a half dollars in low-interest loans to a development like The Rotary Pines project which we believe is an abomination on several fronts and has no support, by the way, from the community around that area, let alone from city planners and people concerned about the future of the city.

We do not believe that the investment of a million dollars in Ducks Unlimited for the devastation of a natural wildlife area is a particularly smart use of public money and many sections of society, including sections which would normally I think be quite supportive of your kinds of policies have distanced themselves from this particular initiative.

We think that the approach to decentralization was not thought through particularly well, especially in the light of the last budget when you seemed to be pushing \$5 million in on the one hand and then laying off all kinds of Natural Resources people in the regions on the other. We all wondered out here what was going on in terms of regionalization and decentralization. Basically, you have taken an idea that has some merit in the long term, and I think you have made a travesty of it and thrown away money in the process.

There are all kinds of other tax breaks that we have drawn attention to in the past. We feel that on the expenditure side, you have made choices with which we would strongly disagree, and these choices have made the budget situation worse than it would otherwise be.

In attempting to compensate for this attack on decency, you then make cuts on the expenditure side, and these cuts are very instructive because they tend to affect some of the weakest sections of Manitoba society. There is a very clear pattern running through these: \$1.6 million cut from ACCESS which is a highly successful program

training low-income people for productive careers; \$1 million from the 55-Plus program for seniors—that kind of cut deserves much more public outcry than it has had; \$1.7 million cancelled for high school student bursaries; money taken out of community colleges at the very time when it is acknowledged that Canada's productivity would rely much more on the output of colleges like that than probably on any other institution.

You have gutted the summer Student Employment Program and in the process, of course, hopefully, educated large numbers of Manitoba students about the true nature of Tory policy. You have cut back on dental care for kids, certain kinds of daycare expenditures and medical treatment. You are beginning to deinsure medicare.

We believe that these choices stand in stark contrast to positions of social justice. They complement, we feel, the corporate agenda on the other side of the coin, the handouts which you have given to very dubious and not strongly supported projects.

You have prejudiced the future of the country by denying appropriate levels of funding to universities. I am not here now speaking of professors' salaries or making special pleadings for that, although I do share Professor Silver's point of view that people at the bottom end of the salary scales are generally underpaid in Manitoba, probably by \$10,000 to \$15,000 relative to salaries elsewhere. I would argue that the lack of a student bursary program is killing postgraduate education in the province, and I would argue that the physical structure of our universities is in some disarray. I know from experience that class sizes have risen from an average in the first year in our department from 80 to 130, making any kind of pretense at contact with students a farce.

Our salaries have not been frozen, but expenditures elsewhere in the university have been badly affected. We do not believe that any of this was necessary, and we also believe very strongly that last year's budget was much more of an ideological exercise than of a sensible fiscal exercise.

In line with our approach which was always not just to criticize, but to attempt to be constructive, we designed a budget. We did not, of course, have the kinds of resources which the province has. We would not want them, to be honest. It would not be

a good use of those resources. We could certainly use some more help if members of the public feel like making donations.

With the data available to us and the expertise available to us, we felt that it was possible to design a budget which protected public sector employment, which promoted the efficient use of public sector resources by freezing supplies and services, which guaranteed the important services provided by the province to those sections of society most in need, which funded health services at the kind of level that we feel is likely to be needed, which is somewhat in excess of what the province budgeted for, with the result, of course, that we are now hearing of hospital bed closures.

We were able to bring in a budget which kept the increase in student fees at universities at 5 percent, one in which social security payments are provided for and a meeting of previous years' deficits. We funded Child and Family Services at a much more reasonable level. We provided increases in funding to Winnipeg No. 1 which were not provided for in the provincial budget, partly by rolling back funding to elite schools and then by limiting funding increases for other private schools, independent schools, to the average increase for the province's public schools. We retained access to secondary and postsecondary education for disadvantaged groups. We did not interfere with collective bargaining, and there was room in the budget for the collective bargaining process to be allowed to continue.

In addition to that, we provided for a \$200-million job creation fund which would help the province rebuild badly eroded infrastructures in the city and which would give young people a chance by encouraging youth employment and by promoting early retirement, both areas that we feel have been badly neglected in provincial policy.

\* (1750)

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

We had provision for an alternative to the Core Area Initiative which would build up opportunities for aboriginal peoples in the core area and so on. None of these initiatives, of course, were to be found in the provincial budget, so while the Premier (Mr. Filmon) may believe that the Choices budget reflects the same priorities as the provincial budget, he is greatly misguided.

We do not provide for layoffs. We do not provide for abolishing collective bargaining. We do not provide for the attack on those in need which is to be found in the provincial budget.

Our reason for undertaking this exercise was to demonstrate in a very first flush attempt that alternatives are possible. This did, of course, mean that our budget required more revenue than your budget. Of course, this is to be expected, and using very similar figures to the province anyway, ended up with fairly similar revenue estimates.

We provided for a slight increase in taxes, and then we provided for a somewhat higher budget deficit in line with the arguments that you have heard previously for a responsible expansionary program by the provincial government. We introduced a special capital gains levy for those earning total incomes in excess of \$70,000, a small minority in Manitoba who pay virtually nothing on their capital gains, and we would have raised \$15 million from this.

We proposed a provincial surtax for those earning net incomes in excess of \$50,000 which is a fairly high gross income figure. This rate would vary with the level of net incomes starting from 1 percent and rising to 3 percent for those earning over \$100,000, and that measure would have brought in an extra \$45 million.

We proposed that the provincial sales tax be applied to professional services such as legal, accounting, consulting and engineering, raising an additional \$10 million, and we proposed a graduated increase in corporation capital tax which would have brought in an extra \$7.5 million.

We then proposed an environmental tax and a gas tax, both of which were introduced by the provincial government. We did not propose a tax on cigarettes, having considered it and ruled it as a nonrevenue generator, given the federal government's previous initiatives earlier in the year.

With slight increases in taxes, we felt that a socially responsible budget could be built up but, of course, had that kind of initiative been taken together with, in our view, a more responsible approach to the Fiscal Stabilization Fund, because we did not draw it down as much as the government has and a somewhat higher deficit, we could then fund this program and do so, of course, without necessarily or without certainly any consideration of interfering with the basic collective bargaining rights

of public sector employees. It is quite unnecessary to do that. The deficit would end up still being much lower than in all the years '81-'87, including the recession as a percentage of GDP.

We then projected our figures forward, with all the uncertainty that this has entailed—the government does that, we took it one year more—to demonstrate that with sensible procedures on revenue and expenditure, one could still maintain basic social programs, provide for some growth, not lay off any public civil servants, but, of course, in the meantime promoting efficiency where this was appropriate, and in the process, we could nurse down the relative importance of taxes, government spending, debt servicing and the deficit.

We would reduce the deficit by almost \$200 million with 1.8 percent of GDP to .9 percent by 1994-95. Total debt as a percentage of GDP would fall from 23.4 percent to 23 percent. The trend would be down. Government spending would fall from 21.3 percent to 19.3 percent, and the burden of taxation would also fall relative to GDP from 12.5 percent to 12.3 percent.

Debt servicing as a percentage of total spending would rise from 10.7 percent to 11.1 percent in the first couple of years but thereafter would fall, and we built into our approach this particular factor, a need to improve the efficiency of government spending as we went along.

We demonstrated that this alternative budget was sustainable. We are not particularly hung up on any one revenue measure and would be quite happy to substitute others for them. We had a whole slough of these which we could draw upon.

The point is that there are choices in government, and this particular government has chosen to attack the public sector. It has chosen to attack public sector unions. This, we believe, was entirely unnecessary. It fits into a pattern which is increasingly shaping the government's agenda and this pattern has the following characteristics: No. 1, it is intended to reduce the deficit as the No. 1 evil in the province and fits in with the preoccupation of the federal government that the deficit is the No. 1 evil nationally.

We now learn, of course, from Statistics Canada that what has been driving the deficit federally and which is also helping to drive the deficit here through transfer reduction has been failure of corporate taxes and taxes on the higher income levels to keep

up with GDP growth. We also find that high interest rates, the policy of deliberately creating unemployment in order to destroy living standards and keep wages down, that policy in itself has now become the motivator of the budget deficit, and that real spending on government services has actually remained pretty stable and, in some areas, has fallen significantly.

The provincial deficit, of course, is driven by different considerations and most of that deficit is actually a myth. Last year, for instance, the sum total of government capital expenditure was slightly higher than the projected deficit. We do not know what that was yet because we do not have the figures. Well, in most sensible fiscal regimes, investment is properly funded by borrowing. You would not ask a company to go out and pay for plant expansion bit by bit, boiler by boiler, window by window, truck by truck, furnace by furnace, from its current earnings any more than you would build your house brick by brick window by window, door by door, from your current earnings. Of course not. It is quite legitimate to borrow for capital expenditures.

In most countries of the world, capital spending is a separate item in the budget, and it is financed by borrowing quite legitimately. Once that adjustment is made—last year there was no deficit and this year there would be a deficit, but the importance of the deficit is relative to our earning power. It is relative to the increase in the strength of the economy, and it is relative to what happens next year and the year after. It is certainly not our intention to say that the deficit is something you can ignore.

We would argue that the history of governments in Canada, federally and provincially, is one in which deficits have been increased during recessions and have not been trimmed during the better times, and we would certainly not promote that thinking.

Our point of view is that the deficit is an ideological cloak, and it is used to bludgeon services and jobs which the majority of us feel are important in defining our quality of life. It is in this sense that we believe—well, we take the words of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) at their face value which is that the government's major preoccupation is a corporate preoccupation, but we believe that the theory underlying the approach to promotion of business in this province is faulty.

\* (1800)

Our reading of history in Manitoba is that the public sector complements the private sector, and as we heard earlier, Sterling Lyon and his government found this out in a particularly harsh way. The public sector does not crowd out the private sector in Manitoba. The public sector strengthens and promotes the private sector, and I think this is something which, if it is done sensibly in recessionary times, we can learn from. Why else would all of you governments so anxiously be promoting megaprojects if it were otherwise?

We believe that you are creating an ideological environment which says that deficit reduction is paramount, and we disagree with your interpretation of (a) the size of the deficit; (b) the theoretical importance of the deficit; and (c) the measures that you take to deal with it.

Secondly, we disagree with you that there are no options, and we have attempted to show that there are options. We will continue to do that, not just for this government, but for other governments which replace it. We disagree with you that the public sector is bloated and needs to be trimmed back into shape, and we are frightened by the remarks which government ministers have been making which seem to threaten our medicare.

You have already begun to implement cuts to medicare by deinsuring services which are not trivial, which are not unimportant. Especially your attack on psychoanalysis is a very retrogressive step, both in terms of its own substantive content and, more importantly, for what it represents which is the beginning of the erosion of an institution which, believe you me, Canadians will fight to preserve.

We do not share the implicit view that the public sector is unproductive, and we do not share the impression that you have created that the public sector is fair game and, therefore, can be trimmed back and cut back because there is support for this. We believe that the level of efficiency in the public sector is no lower in general than that of the private sector. We believe the level of bureaucracy in the public sector is no lower than that of very large corporations which we have very little way of assessing. The bottom line tells you nothing about the corporate efficiency of head office of Great-West Life, for instance. We believe that, by and large, civil servants are just pretty much like most other workers. They are pretty dedicated people. They work long hours. Some of us have had the privilege

of working for the Civil Service of this province, and we do not like the way in which the Civil Service is being used as a scapegoat.

We believe that, in the long term, the more you do this, the more Manitobans, as a whole, will suffer. I want to conclude by going back to the first point that I made about democracy. I want to come back to the way in which these meetings have been held and conducted. I am very pleased to have the opportunity to present to you, and I believe that this institution is important. I do not harbour any illusions that much will happen as a result in terms of the specifics of Bill 70, but I do believe that the broader public good is served by helping to explore the implications of what your neoconservative agenda actually is and how it will impact upon people's daily lives and that is why I am here.

I was horrified by what I have been seeing and by what I saw last night. This process, where you go on until five o'clock in the morning is not by anybody's definition democratic. You may feel that the public will say, well, look at these guys. I mean, they are really working hard, and they are earning their money and their allowances by staying all night and not getting any sleep, and is this not dedicated.

This is not dedication. The people are not fooled by this. This process is designed, of course, to wear out people who have something to say. When you have people lining up as they did last night for several hours into the early morning, you know something is wrong. You know that certain people cannot be there. You know that single-parent mothers would never make this kind of meeting if they have to come out late at night. You have them in the Civil Service. Should they not at least have the opportunity to speak, and if so, what arrangements have you made for tailoring the speakers list to deal with people's specific situations? Very little. There was half an attempt made last night, but by then it was far too late. At 2:30 in the morning, you strike a deal so some people can come back and spend another afternoon waiting to speak.

Last night, we were treated to the spectacle of members of the government sitting there reading newspapers as people were making presentations.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Mr. Loxley, we are here to be speaking about Bill 70 and not on how the committee and the process that has been established—the rules have been established for

the committee. If you want to deal with Bill 70 and try and be germane to the bill—and I have a feeling I am about to have Mr. Ashton's hand come up.

**Mr. Ashton:** Indeed, Mr. Chairperson, I am not questioning your rulings, but I think it is a fair comment. Particularly, I know that this presenter and others did sit here for a considerable period of time, and I do not feel there has ever been any real difficulty with members of the public commenting on the public process. I think not only is that in order, but it is also to be expected, and we have some concerns about the process ourselves as members in the opposition.

I believe the member was probably concluding his remarks talking about the process after having talked extensively about the bill itself, and I think we would be best advised to allow him to continue his comments. I think he has every right to express his views on what has been happening.

**Mr. Chairman:** If you will continue, Mr. Loxley, and try and keep it germane to Bill 70, I would appreciate it.

**Mr. Loxley:** I believe it is germane, Mr. Chairman. I believe that Bill 70 is simply a reflection of a broader problem of how your government perceives democracy working in this province. We have the spectacle not only of people reading newspapers but of sitting with their backs to people making presentations. Common decency ought to be part of the democratic process and people of course having their own private conversations when they show up.

\* (1810)

Last evening, in order to make my presence here, I was drawn out of a reception for three visitors, all professors of economics, all from eastern Europe: one from Moscow, one from Yugoslavia and one from Hungary, each of them involved in the transitions that had taken place in these countries—each of them heavily involved. They were appalled that meetings would be held in this way. They could not believe this was the way business was being conducted.

I believe this is part of a broader problem, not just Bill 70, but I think the way in which the Child and Family Services arrangements were handled demonstrates a complete lack of awareness of how you might structure organizations to promote public participation in a democratic fashion.

With those comments, I would end my submission. Thank you—oh, sorry, I did have one further point. I do not even know who you are, speaking of democracy. You know who I am. Last night we suggested that there be name tags or name plates or introductions. We have not had any of that. Mr. Chairman, I do not even know who you are.

**Mr. Chairman:** I introduced myself last night, by the way, Mr. Loxley. I am Marcel Laurendeau, St. Norbert.

**Mr. Loxley:** Thank you.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairman, seeing people want to talk a little bit about process, I would argue democracy has bounds. It must have. Mr. Loxley has just consumed well over an hour of time, which indeed is his right. We had 600 presenters. If they each had the same rights as Mr. Loxley, he was asking members of this committee to provide 600 hours of their times, in theory, to listening to the presentation on one bill. That in itself has to be equivalent to a month of hearings. That is one item. So I guess there are—

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Mr. Minister, I have to call you to order. I have got—

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairman, I am not going to be called to order when the other people have not been called to order.

**Mr. Chairman:** Mr. Minister, I am not going to allow this type of debate to carry on.

**Mr. Manness:** Debate?

**Mr. Chairman:** We are going off the subject. This is not what we are here for. We are here to ask questions of clarification. I understand things are not being germane—

**Mr. Manness:** Well, then, you will have to call them to order.

**Mr. Chairman:** I have been calling them to order, Mr. Minister. It is a little difficult at this time, but I am—

**Mr. Manness:** Well, I am going to make my point, Mr. Chairman. I will ask a question of Mr. Loxley, given then that he would obviously prefer 15-minute time limits on individuals rather than unlimited like we have chosen to provide in the sake of democracy.

First of all, Mr. Loxley, I have listened carefully to your presentation. I take the work done by your organization very seriously. Let me say so much so

that I looked at your alternative budget and analyzed it to some degree myself and caused it to be analyzed, and say to you that your methodology—with which I would of course take argument, but I will not here, we will save that for another time and another place—by my estimation at least, comes horribly short on revenue growth. That is just a statement. You can expand on it if you wish, or whatever.

Let me say that, firstly with respect to the fourth quarterly estimate of the final year end, we will be making that public within the next two weeks. Let me also say that, although you dislike budget versus budget comparisons, in the past when we have had budget versus preliminary year ends, we have received hearty criticism from the opposition for some reason.

Let me also say that I find it kind of surprising that a person like yourself would probably want to make sure that every fact and figure that you used was based on some certainty, would claim to use a newspaper article, for the most part, quoting Mr. Alcock as to what might be an increase in revenue, windfall. I find that extremely interesting, but particularly I find it interesting that—as someone said, it is so easy to operate government from afar. Someone once said it better: That person who throws the football so well and has never missed an open receiver would put his hotdog down and come out of the stands and play on the real field, they might find how difficult it is.

I say to you that, although obviously our ideologies are different, the choices that you choose to criticize, which is of course your right to do, were not made easily. Mr. Chairman, I think I have touched Bill 70 almost as much now as Mr. Loxley. I would ask Mr. Loxley whether or not there is ever a time or a place in a democracy for government, when it has in its view no other choices, to bring forward a bill of this nature compelling those people who probably require three out of five provincial dollars, to share over a period of time?

Could he ever conceive of any possible time in a democracy indeed when particularly a government like ours went to the polls promising people they would not increase taxes—the No. 1 plank of our platform—and were elected to govern, therefore it feels that of all the pledges it made, the No. 1 pledge that had to be honoured is it would not increase taxes? What possible alternative might there be given that is the pledge, given that is obviously in

disagreement with your choice? Is there ever a place for a bill such as Bill 70?

**Mr. Loxley:** Let me deal with the last point first. If I can quote you correctly, your No. 1 policy, agenda, policy pledge was that there would be no increase in taxes. My argument is and the argument of Choices is that the budget that you, yourself, now claim exists was partly created by your reducing taxes. If you had not reduced the employment levy and the income tax by \$160 million, there would have been no need to lay off workers or to get involved in this debate about whether there is a crisis or not. So I think you have put your finger on one of the main points, which is that you did indeed pledge not to raise taxes. What you have done is created a problem for yourselves by reducing them.

I go further to argue that your problems have also to do with expenditures in many areas. I had hoped that you had been listening to my presentation, but if you feel that my comments on Bill 70 covered only one sentence or half of a sentence, then I fear you have missed the drift of my presentation. I agree it lasted for about an hour. Usually at the university we talk in 50-minute, one-and-one-half-hour or three-hour slots, so I gave you a compromise between the first and the second, and felt that since I am speaking on behalf of 600 members, you know, that is roughly one-tenth of a minute each. I figured that was not excessive in the interests of democracy.

It may well be that sometimes issues are important enough for you to continue debate and discussion for a month in committee. We pay your salaries, we would not object to that. Debate it, discuss, get the thing done properly if you are going to do it. Some people come up here and they spend five minutes talking. Do you urge them to spend more time, elaborating, speak for an hour, speak for a half hour? No, I think that you cut your coat according to your cloth. I believed that what I had to say was relevant on behalf of our members, and I do not believe there was anything in there that was irrelevant to the issue at hand.

In terms of the budget, we would be very happy to receive your comments on our budget and to engage you in a debate about the budget. Perhaps the way for you to proceed is in your annual budget to put in both, budget to budget and estimated outcomes. It is only an extra column, it should not cost you much.

I was very careful when I quoted Alcock. I did not realize I was in fact quoting Alcock, to be honest. I was quoting a newspaper article, and I said that it is reported that.

Our own figures in Choices' budget did in fact show that federal income tax estimates from Manitoba were about 9 percent gross, slightly less than that. We used somewhat less than that ourselves for other reasons, which might explain why our revenue growth in some areas is on the low side. I simply ask you to let us know whether this figure that is being used is accurate, not to get into debate about whether I use—I use newspaper articles. I quote you all the time from newspaper articles, because that is one of the most important sources of information we have, and when you put in a retraction or a correction, I take that into account as well.

\* (1820)

Yes, playing on a real field is important. My own game is soccer, which I always find a bit more demanding because it flows more than football and is much more creative, and the outcome is usually much in doubt, and the scoring is somewhat lower, but I spend part of my professional life advising governments. So I know what a real playing field is. I have advised the Manitoba government in the past, and I advise governments for a living, partly, so I am not in the habit of concocting figures or simply making empty gestures.

It is important in the real world to be as accurate and as careful as one can be, this we know. Our questions about your budget are questions about whether or not there is slack in the budget which is to be announced later in time. If there is not, we would be pleased to hear that. If there is, likewise. I agree with you that choices are never easy, but we believe that you have made your choices not because of an objective, difficult situation, but because you have decided on a particular political agenda, and it suits you and your agenda to attack the public sector in this way.

**Mr. Ashton:** Just very briefly, I do commend Choices for some very detailed work and some very creative ways of expressing some of the concerns that are growing on a daily basis. I just wanted to deal very briefly though with the process, because you touched on that. I, incidentally, feel that the rules are fairly clear. You spent one hour. That is not in contravention of the rules whatsoever. I do

not know how many hours I spent in the Legislature, I must have spent five, six, seven hours over a period of six separate days, maybe even seven, I have lost track, debating the bill. I would be the last one to admonish anyone for speaking, in this case, for one hour.

I want to touch on your point about the process. I felt that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) was suggesting that one hour was somehow an extensive period of time.

**An Honourable Member:** It is a statement of fact.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, the fact whether it was one hour or 10 minutes, I think the fact that it was made—I think it was rather obvious that the minister found the presentation lengthy -(interjection)- Well, if that is the clarification from the minister, I accept it, but I want to go further. In fact, the point had been raised by the minister again about 600 presenters, are we supposed to have one hour per presenter; that is 600 hours. Is this committee supposed to sit that period of time? Your reaction, I think, was obviously that not everybody is going to spend one hour, but that the committee should take the time to listen to those who are interested.

One of the things that I have said that I thought would be a more logical way of dealing with this would have been to hold these committee hearings outside of the Legislative Session—perhaps to complete other matters that can be completed during that period, and then we would have had—since the Manitoba Legislature usually sits for about four or five months, six months perhaps, and then is adjourned for the remaining six months—if not the entire six-month period, we could have had the opportunity we had with the environment bill this past session, where committee hearings were held and we came back and completed the debate several weeks later, and that allowed for the committee hearings to take place.

**An Honourable Member:** Just like you used to do when you were in government.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Chairman, I am raising this in the perspective that this might be a more logical way. By the way, to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), when we were a government, I do not believe we ever had this many presenters on one bill. It is a unique bill. We certainly did not have this convoluted set of rules that led us to sit five o'clock

one morning, three o'clock the next morning, et cetera.

I am sorry, I digress. My question though was building on the statement of the presenter as to whether he would have thought it might have been more logical, because quite frankly I, as Labour critic for the NDP, have sat here through most of these hearings. I would be prepared to sit through all 600 people. I would be prepared to sit in any location in the province where numbers sufficiently demanded and had moved a motion to that effect, and so would our caucus. I am wondering if the presenter feels that might not be a more logical way to allow the hearings to be real hearings in the sense of not having time constraints or pressures put on people, because I find it is unfortunate when there is this sense of pressure being put on people if they do happen to go one hour.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. Mr. Ashton, I have allowed a little bit of digression here. I have allowed the minister after his dissertation, I am allowing you after your dissertation, but I do hope there is a question coming from this. I am waiting for the end of it then.

**Mr. Ashton:** I already stated the question, Mr. Chairperson.

**Mr. Chairman:** I am waiting for the end of it then.

**Mr. Ashton:** It was a postamble. I think this the training of the Legislature. Sometimes we may extend the question. The question really was straightforward. Do you feel it would have been better to deal with this out of session with less pressures? Perhaps, I will ask one follow up on that so as not to add a second question to it. Do you feel that people have felt constrained by the process that has taken place?

**Mr. Loxley:** If I could take the second question first. I want to make a point which I think may have been lost on members. That is that people on this side of the table also have commitments and time pressures. I have put into these hearings, if I tell you honestly, one hour of preparation. It might have required more, but I spent one hour. I spent from ten o'clock or 10:30 was it, last night, until 2:30. That is four hours; that is five altogether, and I spent from 1:30 till 6:30 now. That is 10 hours on this presentation.

My own view is that I have lots of things to do, and I am also a public servant in that sense. I think that anything the Legislature can do to improve the

efficiency of these kinds of hearings, ought to be done, because it is in everybody's interest. I do not know enough about the details of the pressures on the House to comment on that particular way of meeting this problem, but if it could be done, you know, in principle it sounds like a sensible thing to do to concentrate on the issue and get it out of the way, and in the process, accommodate people in a sensible fashion.

**Mr. Santos:** That brings to mind my question to Professor Loxley. Do you see any conflict of values between the value efficiency and democracy?

**Mr. Loxley:** I am not a person who believes that democracy can only reach its real limit when you are subject to market choice in the economy. I mean, we have a point of view which is now quite dominant, I think, coming from, particularly the U.S., that we have now reached the end of history. We have reached the end of history, because we have on the one hand the emergence of market economies in eastern Europe and elsewhere; and secondly, we have the fledgling parliamentary democracy. These two are somehow bound together hand in hand.

I think that efficiency need not be measured in purely bottom line profit and loss terms in all aspects of life, and ought not to be. I think that efficiency ought not to be the only sole criterion by which we judge one's activities. You would not do it to yourself when you are working in a community club or helping coach the local football team, or however you spend your time, so why should we do that in all aspects of life anyway?

I do believe there is a general concern in society that government has to be careful about how it raises and how it spends money, and in that sense, the public sector ought not to be immune from ways of examining how best to conduct its business and how best to save money where this is possible. As I say, I do not believe that efficiency defines the private sector either. As we know, it survives very readily on handouts and is often very monopolistic. We know from theory that this is not fertile ground for efficiency.

**Mr. Santos:** One of the public myths that is accepted generally in our society is that private sector is more efficient than the public sector. Do you agree with that?

\* (1830)

**Mr. Loxley:** More efficient at what? Delivering a health care system, picking up the garbage, teaching our kids? No, I would say not, and in other areas clearly they have an advantage so far over forms of state sector activity that we have developed. It is possible, I think, to develop co-operative forms that are equally efficient, and I believe that we have Crown corporations that are as efficient as most private sector businesses. I would think that MTS, with the odd fiasco excluded, is just as efficient as some of the big, private companies we have, which survive on state handouts.

I believe that we are served very well on the whole, in terms of the delivery of electricity and water. I believe the health care system in Canada is the best in the world and is worth preserving. It is public sector basically, at least it makes the predominantly public sector. I believe that our schools and universities in the public sector can claim to be equally productive in terms of the goals they set themselves, so I do not believe that we get very far by making those very crude distinctions, nor by denying that certain sections of the private sector are actually quite efficient.

**Mr. Santos:** I asked the question because the only justification that can be cited for privatization contracting out would be this assumption that the private sector is more efficient, otherwise why else would the government get involved in giving more money to private schools than to public schools? It assumes that the private school is more efficient.

**Mr. Loxley:** I think often what we are looking at is, we are confusing efficiency with being cheap. You know, if I accused you of being cheap you would not consider that necessarily, being efficient, so why should we do that when we contract out?

Contracting out is often a way of saving money because you can contract out to people who employ workers who are not as protected, who do not have the same safeguards, pension rights, basic benefits that you enjoy, for instance, as MLAs, and I enjoy as a university professor. Hence, contracting out is simply a way of saving money. Often the social costs of contracting out are not recognized. We have a long history in North America of closing down institutions which provide care to people, people with mental disabilities, people who are disturbed in one way or another.

We close down these institutions claiming that it is cheaper to put people in the private sector. The

supports are not put there for the people. The result is that they end up living under bridges and living in the streets, and all we have done is, in the name of efficiency, promoted an ideological campaign, and the suffering is of course borne by the people who were previously receiving the services.

**Ms. Barrett:** I will attempt to conform to the question format that we have in Question Period, and begin my very brief question with: Given that Choices has in its brief history been very supportive and very helpful and has provided all members of the Manitoba economy and social structure in addition to members of our caucus with some marvelous work and activities, which has been very amply shown in your presentation this afternoon, as always, Mr. Loxley, will Choices continue to do the work that it has begun and assist all of those in Manitoba who are attempting to bring a bit of sanity into this world in our efforts? Will you continue to the utmost of your ability to continue to provide us with that assistance?

**Mr. Loxley:** We function in a way that we do not have a clientele, but what we do is, of course, select issues on which we feel we have something to say and something to contribute. We try to make our analysis and our alternatives available to whomever would like to use them. We did indeed present our alternative budget to the opposition caucuses, knowing that it was being analyzed in Finance anyway, and we will continue to speak up to the best of our abilities. They are somewhat limited, although we do have lots of willing people and people eager, we do not have many financial resources. We have not been given any grants from the provincial government and we have not applied for any, but we are attempting to continue our work, and we will hopefully, continue to do so in future.

**Mr. Chairman:** Thank you very much, Mr. Loxley.

### Committee Substitution

**Mr. Chairman:** Is there leave for a committee change? Leave.

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture):** I would like to move, seconded by the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), that we put the member of Emerson (Mr. Penner) on for the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine).

**Mr. Chairman:** It is agreed, and that will be brought forward in the House on Monday.

\*\*\*

**Mr. Chairman:** We will now continue on. Number 10, Clarence Giesbrecht.

Hi, Clarence. Do you have a written presentation?

**Mr. Clarence Giesbrecht (Private Citizen):** No. I am speaking from notes.

**Mr. Chairman:** Just go right ahead, Clarence.

**Mr. Giesbrecht:** I am not a public speaker, and this process in particular has been quite anxiety producing for me. I find that the uncertainty of not knowing whether I will be bumped once or twice has been extremely difficult. I also find that after watching the parliamentary procedure over time, and occasionally out of the gallery and occasionally on TV, the adversarial content, the adversarial structure is very intimidating for me. I work in a context of co-operation as much as I can with my co-workers. Where I am in positions of power, I attempt to work co-operatively with workers, and that seems to be lacking in this kind of structure, even with one side being on side of the House and the other. The kind of antagonism we got from one chairperson last night was not conducive to public people coming forward and trying to say something about issues which we feel fairly deeply about.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

I am not a scholar like some of the previous people who have all kinds of data at their fingertips - (interjection) - Pardon? That is part of what I was talking about.

This government tells us that they are going to have public hearings and expects me to be up till five in the morning? I agreed last night to come back today so that we could quit early. I did not say I wanted to come here today, as the previous chairperson suggested. I agreed in negotiation with people outside the hallway that I would be willing to come back in exchange for closure at a certain time. At seven o'clock this morning, I had to make arrangements with my employer, who is sympathetic to my concerns, that I would not be at work today. So it is costing me money, and it is slowing down the particular production that we are doing.

I do think that this is an important issue. I have concerns. As a worker, I am not organized. My field is generally unorganized, so I am at the mercy of the various whims of the economy. This bill will

not affect me directly, but I see it as an attack, as one step in a process where workers are not valued in our society.

Looking back at history, going all the way back to serfdom and to slavery, workers have never been valued. Those who have capital have been valued. Our history books are full of men, mainly, who have made money, and these are our heroes. Workers who helped create that money for these people have hardly counted. Throughout history, workers have died because they were not valued and because they fought, in some cases for rights, and in some cases they worked in conditions that were incredibly unsafe because it made money for those with money.

So in the '70s—I am jumping a long way, but in the '70s, we had some administration that was at least somewhat sympathetic to workers in the trades, and we got better conditions, largely in the fields that I work in. I have benefited from that, but I have lots of friends who did not. I have friends who are raising children on \$4, \$5, \$6 a hour, on 20 hours a week. These people will all be affected by this kind of a bill and will not be affected directly tomorrow or the day after. They will not be affected directly when the particular workers, for the rest of the year, do not get that percentage raise, but they are clearly affected because it is another swipe at workers.

\* (1840)

In that context, I am really concerned that this bill not be passed because it is not good for workers. It does not value workers. Others have articulated much better than I could that there is money available, and it is people making choices with that money. In this case, the choice is to take it away from workers and put it elsewhere, and that concerns me.

I come from a family of poverty, where my father worked for people who were very wealthy, who were not touched by various economic—they were touched in the sense of figures on paper, but their lifestyle was not affected. They could still winter in Florida, even decades ago.

I was hoping that I and my descendants would not have to live in that kind of a society. Certainly with the kind of legislation that I think this is, together with the kind of legislations that we have seen in other areas, things will not be better for my descendants,

and that concerns me. So I see this bill as one cog in that whole process, and that is my concern.

**Mr. Ashton:** I just wanted to comment that I realize how intimidating this process is, and apart even from the problems in terms of timing of the committee meetings, even at the best of times, it can be a fairly intimidating process. I do commend you for staying as many hours as you have.

I see many other familiar faces from the last couple of nights here, because I think it is important, particularly for us as members of the Legislature, to get out of the bunker mentality of this legislation. I find governments, particularly, easily fall into that, and it is only by hearing from people such as yourself and people who are willing to question as well, not just make comments, but question everything, the bill, the process, that people are going to get that kind of perspective. Thank you very much. It was a very useful presentation.

**Mr. Edwards:** I want to congratulate the presenter for putting in the long wait and for presenting to us today. I found the presentation cogent and persuasive. I also wanted to indicate that I, too, am depressed by the spectacle of trying to go through a so-called democratic process at five o'clock in the morning. I think some people in a macho moment may suggest it is great to be up and working all night, but the truth is, to see politicians trying to listen intently and reflect intelligently on important legislation after being up for 20 hours, asking people who come before them to do the same, is ridiculous. Surely we can come up with a better system, and I welcome your comments to that effect. I certainly agree with them. I thank you for waiting and coming forward as you did.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Giesbrecht. The next presenter is No. 11, Rosemary Miguez. Ms. Miguez, have you a prepared presentation?

**Ms. Rosemary Miguez (Private Citizen):** No, I do not.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you. Would you proceed, please.

**Ms. Miguez:** I have a bit of a preamble which I am going to cover, and then I will get on to the bill.

This is my first time coming here and exercising my right to be heard. I have a couple of concerns that I would first like to address, and then from there I will go onto the bill. Unfortunately, I am not familiar with any of your faces because I am new to this. I

would have appreciated some nameplates, and because there are not any, is it a possibility to get people's names, quickly? You know mine. Just go around the room quickly.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** The names as we go around are: Mr. Reimer, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Connery, the minister, Mr. Manness, Mr. Edwards, Mr. Santos, Mr. Ashton, and my name is Mr. Penner. Proceed, please.

**Ms. Miguez:** Thank you very much. Last night I was here quite late also. I began to feel quite discouraged. I watched people read the Winnipeg Free Press sports section. I watched people read the Sun, and I watched people chat amongst each other. It made me really wonder, do you really pay attention to us? Do you hear what we say, and do you take into consideration what I have and other people have come here to say?

After watching your reactions to these people who have already spoken, I hope that you, the members who have been elected by the people of Manitoba, will share some respect to myself and to those who will speak after me, by listening and not showing any disrespect to us any more.

This is harder than I thought.

I am in opposition to Bill 70. I feel that, if this bill goes through, it seems to me that you are making these workers responsible for the economic deficit that we are now currently in. I do not feel that these workers are responsible for that deficit, so I do not feel that they should be made responsible for the deficit.

Looking at the news release, in quoting Mr. Manness: "The provincial government cannot provide the foundation for economic renewal of this province on its own"; and "Everyone must share in that goal."

Is everyone sharing in that goal when there are \$7 million in tax breaks to big corporations? Is that sharing? When there are large corporations and banking institutions that are getting tax breaks or paying no taxes at all, then I do not think everyone is sharing. I think that it is not being shared. Were these groups being asked, or are they being told? It seems to me that the people of Manitoba have been told to put aside their wage demands and again assume responsibility for this deficit.

To go on: "... we can continue to preserve and protect projects and services . . ." Preserving the projects when \$1.6 million has been cut to ACCESS,

\$1.7 million cancelled for student bursaries, \$3.7 million cut from students' summer jobs, \$5 million in dental care for children, this does not seem like it is preserving projects to me.

The services: I think that it is obvious with regard to the Child and Family Services, with the amount of reporting that has gone up to abuse, regarding physical and sexual abuse, workers who are already overloaded, children who are being left in unsafe situations because of this overload, how are the workers to keep their morale up and strive to do the good work when they have been told that they have to freeze their wages and they have no recourse?

A third point, further in the news release on, this is not a made-in-Manitoba problem, I feel that, if we comply with the five other provinces, we will be contributing to a made-in-Manitoba problem. If we are going to have a balance between the continuing need of services and jobs, and living within the means of the tax dollars, again, how about fair taxes across the board to the corporations as well as the people who are paying the taxes?

For that matter—I guess this is just a pin in my own side—the money that may be designated towards the arena downtown can be put towards Child and Family Services, and share it. That is all that I have to say.

\* (1850)

**Mr. Ashton:** I think the presenter's concerns are legitimate in terms of listening, and not just the act of physically listening as well because there are two stages, I think, behind any committee hearings. One is physically listening, and the second is, thinking of it, keeping an open mind on those issues. Well, the minister laughs, but I seriously believe there is a process involved here. I have said this before to individual presenters. It is a process, I have seen in the past, that can work. It is up to the government.

In our situation, within the NDP caucus, we are going to oppose this bill. It is a bad piece of legislation.

What would you say to the Minister of Finance or others who are here who might be keeping an open mind on this issue, concerning voting with their conscience instead of voting—the Party whip to persuade them? I do not mean in a formal sense, because that is one of the problems, I think, and the previous presenter indicated, this is a very adversarial process. It is a very antagonistic

process at times and not always conducive to that direct communication, but if you could put yourself in that position of talking to any one of the members here, trying to persuade them not to support Bill 70, how would you express that?

**Ms. Miguez:** I guess how I feel, I think I have pretty well said it, but in my own words, is that, fair taxation. I think that there are businesses, banking institutions, large corporations, that are not being fairly taxed. I think it can be shared, and I do not think that these workers should be made responsible for it.

It may not affect me right now, but it could affect me in a year, and those families and those single parents—and I happen to have been one for a great number of years—are affected by the imbalance in the tax structure. I just really feel that.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you. The next presenter is Zully Trujillo. Would you come forward, please. Ms. Trujillo, have you a prepared statement?

**Ms. Zully Trujillo (Private Citizen):** No, Mr. Acting Chairman.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you. Would you proceed, please.

**Ms. Trujillo:** I was planning to say "good afternoon," but I guess this is good evening already. Good evening, members of the legislative committee on The Public Sector Compensation Management Act.

My name is Zully Trujillo, and I am speaking as a private citizen against Bill 70. As an immigrant working woman of colour, I do not represent them, but certainly I must speak for most of them. I am astonished to see how this government, instructed solidly in that ideology and in the regard of all other considerations, is caving in to the pleasure of a particular interest group, namely, management.

This bill is a frontal attack to the workers that eventually will affect every other sector of the economy, even when this government is denying that that might be the case right now. There is an ongoing academic debate in the issue of collective bargaining. Some believe that it was a legitimate gain by the workers; some others regard that it was concession of the government.

I am not here to solve this debate. Rather, I am here to show my opposition for this regressive piece of legislation. In the last decade, with the revival of

the neo-Conservative agenda at the federal and provincial level, we faced two recessions. This fact is supposed to convince everyone that this trickle-down effect is fiction, that the strategy to taxing the poor while giving the break to the rich is not working. Each and every presenter to date can see this. How can this government not see it?

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), what else has to happen for you to be convinced that this strategy is not working? The vast majority of Manitobans are going to be affected negatively.

As an immigrant woman worker, I could tell you that we in this sector, we hold two, three jobs just to barely meet our needs. We cannot afford to have a fourth job because the day only has 24 hours. What else could we do just to meet our needs? I urge you to please put down this legislation and make a better name for the future. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Trujillo.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I would ask the presenter whether any one of those jobs are being affected by this legislation?

**Ms. Trujillo:** Some of our women's, yes.

**Mr. Manness:** No. Your job or any other.

**Ms. Trujillo:** My particular job, no, but most of my other friends, who are immigrant women, were hired on the affirmative action legislation, and at this point, they were the first who went out when the government come to power, so they were affected directly by the action of this government.

The other is, when they were hired, they were hired to a lower level, so they were the first to go, too, and they are the lowest paid, anyway.

**Mr. Edwards:** Thank you, Zully, for coming forward. I appreciated your presentation.

Numerous speakers have indicated they have two problems with this legislation. Many speak against the wage freeze as economically regressive. Many speak against the process in terms of the fact that the government went through a process. People went to arbitration, to final offer selection. Some people went on strike and thought they had an agreement, and then had the rug pulled out from underneath them.

Can you indicate which of those two bothers you most about this legislation or is that possible?

**Ms. Trujillo:** It is very hard to make a choice, of which one bothers you more. It is very difficult to see which one bothers you the most. Both of them are very, very detrimental to our rights.

As an immigrant woman, first of all, when I came here 15 years ago, I came the very next day that Mr. Sterling Lyon was elected. On that very day, I could see how the working class was over and over again bashed by this government.

At the end of his term, another government came and then I could see some kind of, making a comparison, what was before and after. At that point, I had the view and I had some optimism that this type of government will never come to power. Unfortunately, 10 years after, it happened. I guess, somehow, people have no memory, and we are paying the price for it.

Now is your chance, really, to make a good name for yourself, you people who are in the government. This is going to affect everyone of us, especially the working class who have the lowest pay. So it is up to you. History will judge you. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Trujillo. The next presenter is Janice Prairie. Janice, please come forward. She is not here. I call then Victor Dobchuk. Is Victor here? I call then John Peterson. Is John Peterson here? No. I call then Ed McColm. Mr. McColm, have you a prepared presentation?

**Mr. Ed McColm (Private Citizen):** Yes.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** For distribution? Mr. McColm, would you proceed.

**Mr. McColm:** Good evening. I am a journeyman lineman. I have been employed with Manitoba Hydro since 1973, and I am a member of IBEW Local 2034. I feel it is obligatory that I come in front of this committee because of the detrimental effect Bill 70 will have on this province in several areas.

I have other work experience in this province and outside this province, both in private and public, union and nonunion, and outside the province, seismic drilling in the Beaufort Sea, so I have had some experience other than the public sector I speak of.

\* (1900)

The first area that I would like to speak about is the absolute destruction of the bargaining rights that people in this country have fought for over the past

150 years. A collective agreement is just that, an agreement between two or more parties, jointly agreed to through the negotiation process. It is not a decree by government that this is the bottom line for everybody regardless of the circumstances or situations being experienced by both companies and unions, because what this bill does is it just stops everything; it does not allow anybody to deal with any problem whatsoever. You are going to have to live with what you have, and it does not allow any leeway for change that has to be made.

I see this type of action as the dismantling of Justice Ivan Rand's decision in a 1945 arbitration which has served as the basis for The Labour Relations Act in this country for nearly half a century. Certainly, the Rand formula is not perfect, but it has delivered, for the most part, the desired outcome.

I do not really know where this bill is going to take us, but it is taking us back past PC1003, and I just do not know how far back. I do not know what kind of response is going to come out of it because I think, I hope, this province is civilized enough that you do not need to see the likes of 1919, or maybe we will go back to 1830 and bargain by riot like the Irish did when they were building the canals in the Great Lakes.

I do not know, but this is totally headed in the wrong direction. I can see no good coming out of this. It can only create bigger problems in the future. It is an overkill. I mean, I had an ant problem in my folks' cabin a couple of weeks ago. Well, you have three choices: you find some way of getting rid of the ants, so I went out and I dug up the anthill—they are gone; they are disturbed—or you go out and you douse the anthill with gasoline, you blow the cabin up and, boy, this is fixed, no more ants. I mean, this whole thing has gone too far.

If you have a problem, deal with the problem, but to just say that is it for everybody, to fix one problem is going to create many more.

Bill 70 will impact negatively on more than just the 48,000 people directly affected by this bill. This bill will impact negatively on government and Crown corporations. I will speak about Manitoba Hydro, in particular, as this is the one I am most familiar with.

Any company, be it a private or public entity, must have the ability to serve its customer and do this in a competitive manner. These companies must employ dedicated and skilled personnel in order to provide the required service. There are a lot of

dedicated and skilled personnel within the ranks of Manitoba Hydro.

I, for one, have been in charge of running numerous line crews around this province, where we have worked two and three and four days without sleep. I am sorry Mr. Manness is not here, because I remember very well going into his constituency when a transmission line was torn down by a tornado a number of years back, and we worked three days getting that back up. It was not through my pushing of the people that I had; it was their desire to continue to work, because they recognized the relevance of that line to Manitoba Hydro's bulk power system and the revenue that line brought in. These people are not out there cruising around having a good time; they are hard-working individuals.

Manitoba Hydro possesses many employees of a highly technical and skilled nature. Manitoba Hydro or any other corporation experiences changes in market value for what they must purchase, be it labour or nuts and bolts. They must be able to respond to these market changes to obtain what they require to run their businesses.

Manitoba Hydro is already experiencing substantial shortages of linemen, technical operators, mechanical technicians and electrical technicians, to name just a few. This is largely due to their inability to retain people they have trained because of the wage rates which are substantially lower than comparable utilities.

Manitoba Hydro, with Bill 70, will be unable to correct these situations or others which may affect their ability to remain competitive. The Conference Board of Canada, among others, is predicting drastic shortages of skilled workers in this country by the end of the century. I would say, with Bill 70, we intend to lead the way—and not just a shortage of workers, but what comes with the shortage of workers is the utility no longer being able to perform its own work and, with that, brings contracting out of all kinds of work.

There are other utilities in this country that have gone that route, one on each side of Canada. For instance, Nova Scotia and B.C. Hydro have both taken that route, where the contractors come in, and it is no secret. They make very lucrative contracts for the utility. They come in, they do that work for a good price and then, when the utility lays off or is no longer capable of performing their own work, the

contractor has them over a barrel. They put it to them, believe me. That is the exact reason why both B.C. Hydro and Nova Scotia Power are back in the business of training their own people and getting their work force back up to what it was before they decided to embark on that kind of program.

You do not just take a skilled worker, in Manitoba anyway, and go buy him. You cannot buy skilled employees in Manitoba because you cannot get them here. Manitoba Hydro's rates are substantially lower than other utilities in this country. You need lead time to train these people, develop them. You do not go headhunting for—the only utilities where we have a more attractive pay scale is the rock, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia.

You do not entice people out of those two provinces to come and earn 60 cents or 70 cents an hour more when a neighbouring utility—or if one farther west is paying \$3, \$4 and \$5 an hour more. So once you experience these shortages here, you are in for a long-time shortage.

I am not standing here telling this committee that wage comparisons with B.C. or Ontario are appropriate because I do not believe they are. When a journeyman lineman at Manitoba Hydro makes \$18.85 an hour and the same individual doing the same job in the same city employed for Winnipeg Hydro is making \$20.10 an hour and has just negotiated an increase—SaskPower is advertising in last Saturday's Free Press at \$21.81 an hour, and TransAlta is nearly \$23 an hour—you are not going to retain experienced people.

You do not go out and pick up lock, stock and barrel and move away from your roots and your family and everything else for 70 cents or 80 cents an hour. Like the government, an employee has to be fiscally responsible as well. When employees in that utility say, well, it is not worth it for me to move for 80 cents an hour, that is probably a sound decision because what you are giving up is maybe benefits you have accrued, so on and so forth, but when I can go make \$4 or \$5 an hour more at other utilities, then I am not proceeding in my best financial interest by staying here. You are going to lose just hordes of skilled people out of this province on account of this legislation, and I sincerely believe that.

Manitoba Hydro will experience great difficulties with customer service, system performance, reliability and export of power out of this province.

These individuals, for many years, since 1958 when that particular local was certified, have taken, I am sure you have heard by now, a pretty realistic approach to negotiations. It has not been a real radical group, but you people are forcing them on that kind of path.

I am hearing this not out of the young guys that have a lot of years to go and say I am going to do what I can and really beat the drum. I am hearing this out of people who are coming out of our farm communities who have been part of those communities for many, many years. I am talking about little communities like Gladstone and Somerset. These individuals have been in that community for 20 and 25 years. They feel a responsibility to that community, believe me. When there are problems in those communities, they do not phone Manitoba Hydro. They phone the individual at home. That is the kind of relationship that exists.

From those people, and people, by the way, who are in the last five years of their employment with Manitoba Hydro so are very concerned as to what their pension is going to look like, those people are saying I have had enough, this is crap. That is the feeling out there, and we are headed in that direction with this kind of bill.

These problems can only be solved through negotiations, not the route Bill 70 will lead us on. Manitoba Hydro has the most attractive electrical run-off rate in Canada with the exception of the City of Medicine Hat Electric Utility, and I have the attached document which lists the Canadian utilities surveyed. You will notice that the Manitoba Hydro categories are all at the bottom of that particular document. We are a very competitive utility across this country and across North America and, in fact, around the world when it comes to electricity rates.

\* (1910)

With the loss of our skilled people with this kind of bill being passed, it is going to become more and more difficult to provide those kinds of rates to the consumers of this province. We have all heard the saying, would the last one out of Manitoba turn off the lights. Well, do not worry about turning out the lights, they will go out by themselves. There will not be anyone left to put them back on.

This has happened before in Manitoba Hydro's history. When I was hired in 1973 into the line trades, there was a drastic shortage of journeymen

linemen. The same thing had happened. The wage scale had dropped well below the market value for what other utilities were prepared to pay, and Manitoba Hydro experienced great difficulty in getting the work done around the province with the limited manpower resources they had at that time.

Hydro forecasts a number of—in their long-term forecast right up to the year 2003, there is one year there where there is a projected loss in the net revenue column. The next time that you start to see the net revenue column drop is in the year 2002, which I assume is likely their bringing on the financial expense of Conawapa when it is nearing completion. It is interesting to note that their reserve balance at that time is increased to \$1.5 billion from where it presently is at \$165 million. If this is how it is going to be obtained, by cutting wages and rolling and holding and everything else, I wonder what my wage will look like in the year 2003, but I know I will not be here because I am not hanging around to find out what is going to happen if this is the route this government chooses to take.

When you go into Manitoba Hydro's 39th annual report for the last fiscal year that it was released, although there should be another one out shortly, the corporation's head office is in Winnipeg, and 74 area offices serve the needs of its customers. Of the 2,400 members in the IBEW, 2034 Local, over two-thirds of them are outside the city of Winnipeg, and I believe there is over 25 percent of them north of the 53rd Parallel. It is not just big city or one lump, you are hitting people in small communities, remote communities, all kinds of places around the province.

The sale that this government negotiated, 1,000 megawatt-sale to Ontario Hydro commencing in the year 2000 and extending for 22 years is intended to generate \$13 billion at best estimate. That will certainly go a long way to increasing the reserves within that corporation.

When you start looking at things like the ratios of Manitoba Hydro, their debt-equity ratio presently is not good, but one ratio does not tell the story. When you go to interest coverage and other things like that, there is certainly evidence that indicates Manitoba Hydro is certainly chugging along at least as well as most other utilities in this country, including some of the larger ones like Hydro-Quebec and Ontario Hydro. The problem is when you start looking at utilities is that some of the ratios are basically impossible to do because there

is really no inventory, unless you start considering what water is in a lake because your product is generated instantly.

One thing I should say about the liabilities that Manitoba Hydro incurs, the costs that they put out, when they build things—a lot of corporations go out, they build something, they are looking at an asset that is used up relatively quickly. It is not the case with a lot of Hydro's spending. They are spending for—they believe the life-term of a hydraulic generating station to be in the neighbourhood of 40 to 100 years, of course depending on when it was built; the thermal-generating stations, 35-40 years; transmissions lines, 20-80 years and, of course, that would vary from whether it is wood to steel, and their distribution, 10-60. I tend to think 60 is a little high—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. McColm, with all due respect, I would ask that you direct your remarks to the bill and comments to the bill. I appreciate the information that you are putting on the record. It is extremely interesting. However, I think we have many presenters that would like to speak to the bill, and I would ask that you do the same.

**Mr. McColm:** Fair enough, Mr. Acting Chairman. I just wanted to highlight some of those things to indicate to this committee that Manitoba Hydro is not in dire financial straits. I hope to bring some light to that fact here. The members of this committee and others like you have been elected by the people of this province to govern in the best interests of the citizens of Manitoba and to formulate policies to guide us through good times and bad.

Yours is not a job I am envious of, nor would I want it, and I prefer to deal with the high voltage and the hazards it presents. It is my right and duty, however, to inform elected officials of this government of legislation which they are considering which is detrimental to the well-being of this province.

Bill 70 is not the answer. If there are inequities to deal with, do not create 10 problems to solve one. Negotiation is the only way to meet the demands and challenges this province will face in the next decade, and I ask you, do not support Bill 70.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. McColm.

**Mr. Edwards:** Thank you, Mr. McColm, for coming forward. I found your presentation very interesting.

Do you know if Manitoba Hydro, the last time they went before the Public Utilities Board—first of all, do you know when that was? Can you tell us when they went before the PUB for a rate setting?

**Mr. McColm:** The rates were—I believe the last time for the rates was the early part of this year.

**Mr. Edwards:** At that time, and I am not aware, did they set rates for the coming year? Is that what they do, to your knowledge, or do they set them for a couple of years? Do you know how that works?

**Mr. McColm:** I believe they asked for 4.5 and were rolled back to 3.5 which was the rate increase that came forward.

**Mr. Edwards:** I would assume, and I ask you to confirm this if you can, that when they make that rate application, set out their financial projections for the coming year and what revenues they are going to need to justify their rates, they would have included in that some speculation as to what salaries they would be paying.

Do you know if they included in that any assessment of increased salaries for their workers and built that into the cost which they put before the board? Are you aware of whether or not they did that?

**Mr. McColm:** Yes, I am sure they would have. They would have taken into consideration what increase they would expect to see in expenses. However, I should add to that—unlike what Mr. Manness has stated, where wages make up 80 percent of the cost of government expenditure, with Manitoba Hydro that is not the case. I believe our salary burden for the IBEW for the 2,400 employees is 15 percent of the operating expense.

**Mr. Edwards:** I guess, just in conclusion on that point, if they put that before the board and ended up getting this piece of legislation, that could presumably have altered their figures. They may have gotten a little more than they required, if the board gave them a certain percentage based on figures which were perhaps a little higher if they were contemplating wage increases. I just indicate that as the conclusion that I was looking to draw.

One other question I had, given that there are rate differentials, you have outlined them between provinces, you obviously like your job and are proud of the job you do. We have had others before us who feel the same way from Manitoba Telephone System, I recall, in particular.

\* (1920)

How is morale amongst your co-workers, now that they see not only are they behind, but they are going to get further behind, even within their own jurisdiction; that is, vis-a-vis Winnipeg Hydro, not just in other provinces, but even in their own city? What are people whom you work with on a daily basis saying?

**Mr. McColm:** Well, there is no doubt that it is affecting morale, but this is a problem that, I think, a lot of them felt would really be dealt with at this negotiation because problems like this do not happen in one year. It is an ongoing thing and it is a lag behind the market or a lead into the market. It is not all of a sudden, bang, something is wrong. I think that the individuals really—I mean, they have known for a period of time that they have been falling behind, and they really thought something was going to be done about it this time around, and this was dropped in their lap.

What I fear coming out of this is that next time around, even if a reasonable offer is presented, it will not be accepted because I think people are going to be just fed up and—I am going to show them something. What it is going to prove, I do not know, but I think that is the kind of result you can expect out of this kind of bill at Manitoba Hydro. I am sorry to say that because it was a trade that had a lot of pride in the work that was done and the job they were doing. Quite frankly, the people out there do not give a damn anymore. They are just saying, then to hell with it. That is their attitude.

**Ms. Barrett:** I appreciated your presentation and the wait that you have had in order to make it. I have a couple of questions, one for information. Earlier in your presentation you said something about PC 1003. Am I accurate? Could you tell me what that is?

**Mr. McColm:** It was a wartime Privy Council 1003. It was passed as a forerunner, I suppose, of labour relations. It was to settle disputes during wartime or calm them anyway.

**Ms. Barrett:** Thank you. I appreciate that.

Carrying on from what Mr. Edwards asked about morale in Hydro, I was struck by a couple of your comments. One was that two-thirds of the members of Hydro live outside the city in smaller communities, and you mentioned communities the size of Somerset and Gladstone.

The second was your story about the feeling of pride and ownership that the Hydro people had during the electrical storm in the constituency of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

My question is: What impact do you think that Bill 70 is going to have, not only on morale in these smaller communities, but on the communities themselves with Bill 70?

**Mr. McColm:** I guess two parts: First of all, with the morale, Manitoba Hydro, at least from my vantage point, having worked through the line trades, was always a two-way street. You know, you do a little extra for the corporation, it will do something for you. It worked well. There was always a good relationship.

If you were called Christmas morning, you went. I have gone to work Christmas morning. I have gone to work New Year's Eve, but that was to be expected. That was part of the job. Part of what I am seeing out there now is people saying, well, I am not going to answer the phone. They are not treating me fairly. I do not care.

As far as the effect on the communities, that is really disturbing. I spend a lot of time in rural Manitoba, and I do not want to see a chicken barn at Altamont have to wait to get its power back on because I know guys would always hop out of bed in the middle of the night, get right over there and do whatever they could—or pig barn or whatever it was, but, you know, they are just saying, I am beating my head against the wall here.

Those individuals are doing a hazardous job out there, and they do not feel appreciated. I am standing here telling you, a journeyman linesman is making \$18.85 a hour. There are a lot of people in this province that make less. I agree and I feel for them, but I also have to look at what I can do for my family elsewhere when I can make \$3 or \$4 an hour more at another utility. I mean, just driving four hours west of here, I can make nearly \$4 an hour more.

I do not know what the deal is. People have seen their friends maimed and killed. I have certainly been to a couple of funerals of good friends of mine that were electrocuted. I had the unfortunate incident of being at an inquest where a friend of mine was electrocuted. It does not sit well with you when you hear the individual that was with him testify that he could not really see what had happened because he could not see for the steam that was being

emitted from his body as he basically boiled in his own juices. That kind of stuff, you deal with it everyday. There is the possibility of risk but, I mean, that is part of the job. You are trained to do it and if you deal with it correctly, you do not get hurt.

As for the effect on the community, I think poor morale within, and I am not trying to snow you, but poor morale is becoming a problem, and it is not going to help the service that rural communities or urban communities get.

**Ms. Barrett:** Thank you. You stated that the workers at Hydro, since '58, I am assuming that is your union, have not been a radical group, and my understanding is that they are beginning to change. Do you have any ideas of the days lost to labour disputes since that time?

**Mr. McColm:** In our local? Zero.

**Ms. Barrett:** Are you suggesting that perhaps there might be? One effect of Bill 70 is not only losing—what you very clearly outlined in your presentation, about the loss of skilled workers which is something this government keeps saying it is trying to improve rather than go backward on. That is a real potential problem, but also it runs the risk of once the situation gets too bad, that instead of having one of the best labour relations records in the country, we could start to see some very negative labour relations, not because people want to, but because they feel they have been forced into it?

**Mr. McColm:** Well, when we went into negotiations this year, the local had every intent of bargaining with Manitoba Hydro as has always been the case. I mean, our local has negotiated for us over the years some big raises, some small raises, percentage raises, flat rate, but we have always been able to come to agreement, you know, somewhere in the middle with a reasonable outcome.

When the union came to us and asked for a vote to be taken on whether we would accept going to FOS after the zero and two had been brought forward, we still had a substantial number of our people, and over 300 members in our local said, no, we do not want to go to FOS. We do not want to use FOS. We want to deal with the company, and if we cannot deal with them, then let us use the normal course of relations.

I think that a lot of that vote was not the, if you want the radical or let us go on strike, bang, bang, bang. I think a lot of it was them saying, we want

control of our own negotiations. We do not want to have to go to an arbitrator or whatever.

The thing is, I do not believe there was any choice for the union in that it was zero which they had been told was unacceptable by the membership or it was FOS. If it was not FOS, then it was on strike for sure. They chose FOS to try and keep some kind of working relationship with the company and not have the animosities that are built by people walking up and down with picket signs on the sidewalk. That is why I believe we are where we are, not because they wanted to go FOS to get some kind of giant claim out of the government or out of Manitoba Hydro's coffers.

**Ms. Barrett:** I just want to say thank you very much. I have learned a lot from your presentation, and you have certainly given yet another view on this whole issue. Thank you.

**Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. McColm, as a vegetable grower and a person who uses an awful lot of hydro, I appreciate the importance of having hydro at all times. In our case, we can lose a shedful of a product very quickly, so we do appreciate the service that Manitoba Hydro gives us.

You were mentioning, though, on Christmas Day, people being called out. If somebody is called out on a special order on Christmas Day, how many times their normal pay do they get for a special—what are the rates for those kinds of situations?

\* (1930)

**Mr. McColm:** Double time.

**Mr. Connery:** There is no triple time that comes in after hours?

**Mr. McColm:** If the utility requires you to work around the clock without going home and going to bed which is quite often an occurrence in the summertime—especially you get weekends, say, the July long weekend, when a lot of people happen to be out of town, go away for the weekend—the individuals who are left behind on call, and you get a bad weekend where you have a lot of electrical storms and whatnot, that individual does not go to sleep. He does not go home to sleep. Basically, the guy is out working in the middle of the night or whatever—once he has gone around and worked around the clock, if he has not been to bed before he has to be back to work again, what was negotiated was a rest-time article which was a

penalty to get Manitoba Hydro to send that individual home to get sleep before he killed himself.

I am telling you—and I have alluded to it earlier when I was down in Mr. Manness's constituency and we were putting that transmission line up—when you have not been to bed for three days, you are not thinking too alertly, and when you work with a product that Manitoba Hydro produces, and you do not have all your faculties, you soon end up dead or seriously injured. That is where that was negotiated from, and that is the intent of what the rest time is.

**Mr. Connery:** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Ashton:** In fact, a number of us on this committee and many presenters having gone the last few nights without much sleep, I can just imagine the double jeopardy you would run into in dealing with something as dangerous as that, so I can really appreciate your comments about what is involved in that. Thank you.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I am sorry I missed the beginning part of Mr. McColm's presentation. I understand he made some reference to being in my riding, maybe even within my district, as far as restoring a line. There is no doubt I have seen first-hand the work of Manitoba Hydro workers and have come to have great respect for their toil.

Let me say that I listened to your portrayal as to the thought process that went through the minds of many of your co-workers. From what I have heard from my sources, that it is very accurate. I agree that you probably did not want to go to FOS. As a matter of fact, I was personally very surprised when the union leadership decided to go that way, but you explained the two alternatives and why it is they thought they had to go. I only hope that some of the Hydro employees will understand the great difficulty we had in not being able to set aside Hydro from the consideration of the bill.

When the nurses' strike was on, I went and talked to many nurses, and not one of them was particularly happy with the government. When they came to a point of fairness, because, of course, we always talk fairness during times of strife—(interjection)—That is right, fairness to whom, and I have heard Mr. Santos give many speeches on fairness. I know when we were involved with the nurses' strike and it came to fairness, they always pointed at the utility workers, the Hydro men and, of course, those working in the employ of Manitoba

Telephone System as the goals that they would like to achieve.

When we came to develop this bill, we wondered how we could strike a bill which dealt specifically with the Civil Service only and left off those who are public servants, those who work for a company that has a monopoly, and only has a monopoly because of the type of product that it deals with. That decision was very difficult because, again, I accept everything you have said with respect to how it is you have negotiated over the years and how it is you would like to continue to negotiate in the years to come.

My question is, and it is not directed to you as an employee of Manitoba Hydro, it is directed to you purely as a presenter tonight because the question has been asked of so many presenters before you by individual members of the opposition. It is on this case of morale. Does higher money directly correlate with higher morale? I do not pick on you but the question has been asked of so many presenters.

**Mr. McColm:** No, I do not think money does equate happiness totally. That is not the answer. I could probably best answer your question, though, if I could go back over your statement a little bit.

Nurses—I am married to a nurse. A nurse made roughly the same as a journeyman lineman when I married the one I did. That same nurse makes a little more than a journeyman lineman now, so roughly over the past 14 years that I have been married, we are in the ballpark, not something you are going to complain about, two bits here, two bits there. That is nothing. When you talk fairness, yes, what is fair? Who do you include or who do you not include? A tough question, but I think what you have to ask is, you are here to represent the people of Manitoba.

I fully believe, and I will get to the reason why, that this is going to impact negatively on Manitoba Hydro because it is going to cost them the skilled people they have running their business, and it is going to create animosity toward the government and to the corporation. There are a lot of people out there who do not realize that Manitoba Hydro is steered by the government. If there is anger to be had, it should be toward you, not to the corporation, but it is going to be deflected to the corporation through their perception of what actually happens.

Is it also fair to Manitoba Hydro to ask them to incur the costs that are associated with training and then losing, training and losing, and training and losing employees over and over again? It costs money to train people and have top quality people. Why should Manitoba Hydro be the breeding ground for linemen across western Canada, and the rest of the country for that matter? I have been out west to visit friends of mine who left the last time the market value got way ahead of what they paid here, and if you go to a staff party there it is like going to an old Manitoba Hydro Christmas party. I am not exaggerating. There are all kinds of our people out there and it is costing this province in a huge fashion.

Does money equate to happiness? If you are in the ballpark, you know—if SaskPower was making \$19.10, if Winnipeg Hydro was making \$19.10; no, there is no problem. I am making \$18.85, two bits an hour. I am working for a good company. I do not have a problem, but when I am not being paid even in the ballpark anymore, when I am as much as, you know, almost 25 percent behind some of these other utilities then, yes, you have a problem because the money is not there, because what you get is, they are really giving it to me. They are not being fair with me. Whether you agree with it or not, or like it or not, that is the perception that people get, I believe.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. McColm. The next presenter is Larry Stinson. Is Larry Stinson here? I see no movement. Is Marilyn Weimer here. She will be here tomorrow. Okay. Is Iris Taylor here? No. Is Laurie Hanuschuk here? Is Gladys McDonald here? Is Kathy McLean here? Is Marjorie Robinson here? Is Barbara Jones here? Would you come forward, please. Have you a written presentation?

**Ms. Barbara Jones (Private Citizen):** No, I do not, I am sorry.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you. Proceed, please.

\* (1940)

**Ms. Jones:** I would like to speak on Bill 70, first as a citizen, secondly as a single parent, and thirdly as a Crown corporation employee. I would also like to say, this is a very intimidating experience especially when it is a lesson in legislation which I wish I had never gotten.

I am appalled that Mr. Filmon is again attacking the low income and the average wage earning people. When is he going to start at the top with the

so-called fat cats? Mr. Filmon stated in his speech to a high school graduation class of 1988, shortly after he had won his first minority government, that the Progressive Conservatives would ensure that there would always be affordable education in the province of Manitoba for everyone, and that every child and student was entitled to a university education. Well, this year he cut funding to the universities, resulting in an 18-percent tuition raise, coupled with the GST on books and higher registration fees. Costs have risen to the point where the average family can no longer afford to send their child to university. If you freeze the wages of 48,000 government workers, how are we to send our children to school?

Student jobs have been cut this year due to a cut in funding, so most students are unable to find employment to at least assist with tuition costs and living expenses. Where is the incentive for today's young people in this province? If they are fortunate enough to get a student loan, which is harder and harder to obtain, they are starting their employment behind the eight ball because the cost of paying back their loan is ridiculous. How am I going to send my oldest daughter back to university this fall?

As a single parent in a clerical position I can no longer make the two ends meet. Under Bill 70 myself and thousands like me will lose what little we have managed to scrimp and save for. How are we to meet the increased hydro rates, gas rates, Autopac rate, tax increases and the daily rise in the cost of living if you are intent on freezing our already low wages? If we cannot meet our utility payments, now we will be cut off. Is Centra Gas going to accept the fact that our wages are frozen and leave us with our gas? No, they will not. In a one-income family, and that income coming from a clerical position, there is no way for us to survive. Why not freeze the hydro, gas, telephone, et cetera, if you are so intent on freezing our wages so that we may live and at least break even, not sink further into a bottomless pit of despair and poverty?

Daycare fees have risen out of sight, forcing more latch-key children or more parents quitting jobs, living on welfare, unemployment benefits in order to raise their children. Who pays for the welfare and unemployment but those of us left working? UI benefits have gone up 24 percent, lowering my take-home pay, but you want to freeze my wages. Banks, credit companies, grocery stores, et cetera, will not accept Bill 70 as a reason or payment. Do

we have to declare bankruptcy and lose everything to survive?

Mr. Filmon hired back to a Crown corporation the man who helped organize MTX which cost the taxpayers in excess of \$27 million in debt, and then gave him a \$20,000 raise because he had to take a pay cut from his former position. At the same time, he wants to freeze the wages of that Crown corporation's employees. Why is Mr. Pedde not biting the bullet and remaining at the already exorbitant salary of \$130,000 a year? You expect clerical staff, many of which are living below the poverty level, to survive on \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year, but Mr. Pedde cannot live on \$130,000. The wage increase from MTS would have come from its \$39 million profit of last year, not the government's pocket. The employees helped to earn that profit. If there is no money for raises at MTS, why did Mr. Pedde get a raise? Where is the justice in this? Again, you are taking from the poor and giving to the rich. Morale among MTS employees is at an all-time low. Where is our incentive to do a good job and a thorough job?

Mr. Filmon promised to deal fairly with all unions in collective bargaining and now wants to remove that right by passing Bill 70. We cannot get higher wages, better benefits, better working conditions or peace of mind because his government has consistently overspent to please big business and now must make the little guy pay it all back. Mr. Filmon, keep your campaign promises and go after the big businesses who are behind in their taxes, et cetera, and leave the average little guy alone. Start taxing the high income brackets and leave us low wage earners alone. We cannot afford to support big business if we cannot even support ourselves. It is called survival.

Mr. Filmon, do you feel that you only have to keep your promises if you have a minority government? Rest assured, Mr. Filmon, if Bill 70 is passed you will not even have that minority government. You will find yourself on the bottom of the political ladder as the smallest opposition party in the province of Manitoba. As one of the poor, I urge you to reconsider your actions and allow me the hard-won right to negotiate with my employer a fair wage. I want to be free to raise my two children in dignity not poverty.

Thank you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Jones.

**Mr. Ashton:** I really want to thank you for your presentation. I just have a couple of questions, because what I have been hoping from these committee hearings is that people have a chance to hear from people such as yourself about what impact Bill 70 is going to be on the people out there, because this affects a lot of people. We have already heard people come before this committee making \$21,000 a year working in a nursing care home whose wages are being frozen.

I am not trying to pry in terms of what wage you make or not, but I am wondering if you have had a chance to figure out how much this is going to cost you? I know in the case of the people who are here making around \$21,000 a year, some of whom by the way had 15 years seniority where they were working, they were the highest paid people in that particular area. They figure they would lose \$1,100, \$1,200 a year over what they would have got if they even got a catch-up increase to keep up with the cost of living. Would that be the kind of loss that you are faced with as an individual because of this bill?

**Ms. Jones:** Probably around that area, yes.

**Mr. Ashton:** So this bill is going to cost you approximately \$1,100. You are employed in a clerical position, you said. What kind of—and I do not mean to pry in terms of personal finances or anything like that—but how do you find it in terms of making ends meet on your current salary even without this freeze? Do you find that you have much available the end of the year? We have had people come in and say they are lucky if they have \$1,000 or \$2,000 to spend on anything beyond food, groceries, rent. What kind of financial situation do you find yourself in on that type of salary?

**Ms. Jones:** I live in what is called deficit financing. We live in an overdraft, and we never get out of it.

**Mr. Ashton:** So what this is going to do is push you further into that situation of having to rely on debt really to even just pay the most basic of bills.

**Ms. Jones:** That is right, it will. I will probably lose whatever I have now, what little I do have. I do not have savings. It is an unheard of thing.

**Mr. Ashton:** I am wondering if you could give us some idea of the other people you work with, because, you know, there has sometimes been the suggestion by some of the government members, including the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik), that

somehow many of the public sector employees are, in his words, happy to "share the burden." I am wondering what is the reaction of people in your workplace. Do they think it is fair that they have their wages frozen because of some government policy dictate? What do they feel? Do they feel it is fair or unfair?

**Ms. Jones:** They are very unhappy about the whole thing. I am in what would be considered a middle clerical field. There are those below me and a few levels above me. There are a lot of single parents working for MTS who are suffering now and are going to sink rapidly.

**Mr. Ashton:** You know, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am still amazed a government can make a move such as this without considering the impact it is having out there. I mean, people such as yourself being asked to pay effectively out of your pocket \$1,000 or \$1,100 or \$1,200 or whatever amount in dollars, money you do not have, to support some sort of political ideology or some quick fix solution that the government has come up with. I just want to ask you one final thing, because I think you have been very effective in speaking from the heart on that and telling us what is happening out there in the real world.

Maybe for some of the members in the government side—because obviously, we on our side in the New Democratic Party, we are going to oppose this bill and have indicated that right from the start, as has the other opposition party as well—what would you say as one final comment to government members who might be keeping an open mind or might be thinking of voting with their conscience to try and persuade them not to vote for Bill 70? It would only take one or two, by the way, one or two government members to either vote against the bill or even abstain and it would not go through. What would you say to them on a personal basis to change their mind?

**Ms. Jones:** I would probably ask them to look at the low wage income people. I cannot believe that nurses would be envious of utility workers. They are definitely not looking at the clerical end of it. They may be looking at the craft end, but the clerical end is not making a lot of money, and I would ask the government to look at those levels before they consider passing this into law.

\* (1950)

**Mr. Ashton:** Very well said, and I hope you will go back to people in your workplace, because I am sure many of them will not have the opportunity to come down here—I really commend you, by the way, because this is not an easy process; people have had to sit here for a very lengthy period of time—and indicate to them that some of us at least are recognizing what is happening. Quite frankly, I wish that all members of this committee would get out and see what is actually happening to people such as yourself and other presenters living on a very modest income before they pass a bill that is going to cost you that amount of money—money you really do not have. So thank you very much.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Acting Chairman, the sense I am getting is that a sacrifice is being called upon from among the segment of the population who are least able to protect themselves. Is that your feeling, too?

**Ms. Jones:** That is right.

**Mr. Santos:** Do you think it would be a little bit more fair if sacrifices are at all justifiable, that no one should be exempted at all, everybody should sacrifice?

**Ms. Jones:** If you have to freeze wages, then freeze everybody's wages. Do not just freeze the people who cannot afford to have it frozen.

**Mr. Santos:** If this affects morale and motivation for work and we are looking for a constructive solution, what alternative would you suggest to make this emergency, if it is an emergency, about the budgetary situation?

**Ms. Jones:** Go after big business. We do not need to change Oak Hammock Marsh. We do not need to build a new arena, as much as my youngest daughter will be very unhappy if she does not get it. We do not need that new arena. We do not need to change Oak Hammock Marsh. Leave those things until we do have the money, but do not penalize the workers who cannot afford to survive now.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Jones.

I call next Debbie Marantz. Is Debbie Marantz here? I call next, No. 26 Bev Nyhof. I call next, No. 27 Dennis Ceicko. I call next, 28, Elaine Ducharme. Would you come forward, please. Have you a written presentation?

**Ms. Elaine Ducharme (Private Citizen):** No, I do not.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Would you proceed.

**Ms. Ducharme:** My name is Elaine Ducharme and I am employed at the Manitoba Telephone System as a clerical worker.

I am here to speak against Bill 70 for the following reasons. I strongly feel discriminated against because I was not chosen along with the other speakers who are present to receive a pay raise as the higher income wage earners were picked. I feel nothing but a paralyzing fear as a single parent. I now will be unable to raise my youngest daughter, presently living at home with me, to be the doctor she is striving so hard to be.

I am ashamed to be a Manitoban under this present government. I feel we have been deserted and treated like we are the most unimportant part of our country, and we are no longer needed.

I have recently filed personal bankruptcy and have already financially fallen behind. As a result, my oldest daughter and myself and our three children share a home just to survive. We live under crowded conditions and, although we love each other and are family, we were not raised to live like this—poorly. If Bill 70 is passed, I will not be able to afford to work and will have no choice but to go on the welfare system, or I will have to leave Manitoba just to try and survive with my family.

I have severe arthritis. I have always managed to raise three children with dignity and pride and a good job, so far, but in this situation forced upon us, I strongly feel that the human rights have been taken away and mostly the right to have a decent home, the right to have good education, the right to put food on the table for our family and the right to have the freedom to have collective bargaining.

I can no longer justify any pride in Manitoba's government. I feel too ashamed, and I pray my words will be heard here. Thank you very much.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Ducharme.

**Mr. Manness:** Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Chairman. Ms. Ducharme, you say that you might have to move elsewhere and that you are very embarrassed because of what this government has done in bringing forward Bill 70. Are you aware that there are six other governments in Canada that have also brought in legislation very similar to this?

**Ms. Ducharme:** No, I am not aware of it, but I will find some other place to live. You can be sure of that.

**Mr. Manness:** Ms. Ducharme, do you believe that our tax is a big problem in Manitoba in your view?

**Ms. Ducharme:** I feel the cost of living is a big problem right now. If you bring in this Bill 70, what are we to do?

**Mr. Manness:** Ms. Ducharme, are taxes not a big portion of the cost of living?

**Ms. Ducharme:** I cannot answer that.

**Mr. Manness:** Thank you.

**Mr. Edwards:** Ms. Ducharme, did you say you worked for MTS? How long have you been working there?

**Ms. Ducharme:** Six years.

**Mr. Edwards:** Are you aware that the new executive director of MTS, Mr. Pedde, received a \$20,000 increase when he started his job and therefore comes on stream at \$150,000 a year?

**Ms. Ducharme:** Yes, I am.

**Mr. Edwards:** Are other workers at MTS aware of that as well in your experience, and if so, what is the feeling at MTS amongst the clerical workers about Mr. Pedde's rate of pay and the fact that he went up what is equivalent to 15.4 percent, from \$130,000 to \$150,000 when he joined the corporation at the very same time that Bill 70 has come in?

**Ms. Ducharme:** The feeling is very strong that we would like to have his raise instead of our wages, sir.

**Mr. Edwards:** Thank you very much, Ms. Ducharme. I sincerely hope your daughter becomes a doctor.

**Ms. Ducharme:** I am going to work for it.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I asked the previous presenter, because I want people on this committee to understand what people such as yourself are going through—

**Ms. Ducharme:** Excuse me, sir, but are we supposed to be laughed at?

**An Honourable Member:** Who is laughing?

**Ms. Ducharme:** You are.

**Mr. Ashton:** No, I was—

**Ms. Ducharme:** No, the minister, I am sorry. He is laughing again.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I am sorry, I believe if there was a chuckle from the minister, it was in response to a question I asked the minister and it had absolutely nothing to do with the presentation that was going on. I apologize for that.

**Ms. Ducharme:** Thank you.

**Mr. Ashton:** In fact, I just want to continue, the minister was talking about taxes. When I asked the presenter how much it was going to cost them out of their pockets, she indicated over \$1,000. Would it be safe to say that you are faced with the same sort of cost to yourself because of this freeze of \$1,000 or so?

**Ms. Ducharme:** Yes, it is safe to say that and more so. I do not know where to turn. That is why I am here.

**Mr. Ashton:** If ever there was a tax, in this case a tax on public servants, and if ever there was a tax that was unfair, it is this wage freeze. I want to ask you, because you have been very forthright in terms of this committee—by the way, have you had the opportunity to present to many committees in the past?

**Ms. Ducharme:** This is my first time.

**Mr. Ashton:** I really appreciate that because it has to be very tough to come before this particular committee and I really commend you, by the way. You have been very good. How do you feel having to try and explain to someone—and by the way we have people on this committee including the Minister responsible for MTS (Mr. Findlay) who presumably is going to be involved in discussions of this—how do you feel having to explain to someone the kind of financial pressures you are already going through with your income and how that is—where you are in terms of your own dreams in terms of your own family? How does that feel to have to come before a committee like this, the first time you have been to a committee, to try and persuade people to change their mind on this bill?

\* (2000)

**Ms. Ducharme:** It is a terrifying experience. It is a big fear. I do not know if anyone here has been in the situation of being a single parent for 20 years. It is hard. You wake up in the middle of the night and you are sweating; you are terrified. I would ask the government to please look at this Bill 70 and do not pass it through. There is no alternate for us. We are doomed, and I will not vote for Tories ever. I will guarantee that.

**Mr. Ashton:** You indicated, you are looking at leaving the province, and I know the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said other provinces are doing it. The NDP in Ontario is not. There are several other governments that are not doing that. You are seriously considering leaving the province because of the impact this is going to have on you?

**Ms. Ducharme:** Yes, I could easily go to Ontario. I have family there.

**Mr. Ashton:** I admire your fighting spirit in coming here and I really hope, and I know the pressures, but I hope you stay here to continue to fight for the kind of things that you have been talking about, because we need people like you in Manitoba, people who are willing to come before a pretty intimidating process such as this. I can assure you, your concerns are going to be raised not just right now this very moment, but we certainly in the opposition will be raising your concerns in the Legislature. I really thank you for coming.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Ducharme.

I call next No. 29, Steve Hamon. I call next Mike Lysohirka. I call next No. 31, Ronald Hinipe. I call next No. 32, Marj Decker. I call next No. 33, Peter Carroll. I call next No. 34, Paul Rogers. I call next Dahlia Rogers. I call next No. 36, Roy Rawluk. I call next No. 37, Bertha House. I call next No. 38, Frank Herin. I call next No. 39, J. C. Colbert. I call next No. 40, Mary Jane Lysohirka. I call next No. 41, Charles Sullivan. I call next No. 42, Junior Colbourne. I call next No. 43, Molly Burton. I call next No. 44, Mabel Humby. No. 45, Niel Karen; No. 46, Les Clark; No. 47, Ray Carswell; No. 48, Doug Boe; No. 49, Al Coze; No. 50, Ken Spilchuk; No. 51, Tim Thiessen; No. 52, Don B. White; No. 53, Annie Hudson; No. 54, E. Erickson; No. 55, Brian Dale; No. 56, Roland Lalonde; No. 57, Kevin LeBlanc; No. 58, Mel Johnson; No. 59, Mike Parsons; No. 60, Paul Decker; No. 61, Kevin Snouke; No. 26, James Westwood; No. 63, Brian Boycey; No. 64, Barry Renaud; No. 65, Bryon Skelton; No. 66, Ron Ferguson; No. 67, Murry Dunsmore; No. 68, R. Beswathick; No. 69, Ron Brown; No. 70, G. Proctor; No. 71, O. Laibeau; No. 72, Tim Lye; No. 73, B. Binding; No. 74, John Berger; No. 75, Mary Ann Seymour; No. 76, Coreena Saunders; No. 77, Tanis Berthardin; No. 78, Pat Comb; No. 79, Larry Putfled; No. 80, Norm Peddle; No. 81, Lorne Peddle; No. 82, Brenda Fenwick; No. 83, Sue Lauzon; No. 84,

Dianne Carroll; No. 85, Alison Herst; No. 86, Grant Ogonowski—

### Point of Order

**Mr. Ashton:** I just wanted to note that many of the individuals who were just called are virtually all from out of the city of Winnipeg, many from northern Manitoba, and that is why they have been unable to attend these hearings. I just want to register once again our concern that the hearings were not held outside of Winnipeg to accommodate them.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** That is not a point of order, but thank you for the comment.

\* \* \*

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Number 87, Buffy Burrell, and she presented, I understand. Number 88, Michael Alberg; No. 89, Marianne Hayden; No. 90, Betty Wilcox; No. 91, Archie Campbell, No. 92, Marlene Wylychenko, No. 93, Patrick Martin; No. 94, Rick Cadorath; No. 95, Joanne Maciaq; No. 96, Gail McIvor; No. 97, Dale Neal; No. 98, Steve Roznowsky.

Would you come forward please, Mr. Roznowsky. Have you a written brief that you might want to distribute?

**Mr. Steve Roznowsky (Private Citizen):** No, I do not. I have a couple of scratch notes on the back of—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you. Would you proceed please.

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Yes, sir. Honourable members of the committee and Mr. Acting Chairperson, I guess I have driven four and a half hours to be here. I am from the Parkland region. I am not only disappointed, but I am amazed that this committee hearing is not being held or was not even considered to be held outside the great wall of China, the Perimeter Highway around Winnipeg. Life does continue outside of Winnipeg, and we in the rural community want to bring that message to this body.

I am not a civil servant, though I do have a job in rural Manitoba at sort of wrist length with the government. If I can bring but one small little tidbit of information or relay a feeling from rural Manitoba, it is to pass on to this committee the fragility of the fabric of small rural towns.

You know, when government reduces anything, there is an impact. I do not have to go on ad infinitum on reiterating everything that was said

regarding simple economics or industrial economics. Simply put, if you cut spending, it does not matter what section of spending you are talking about, it rolls down to the lowest common denominator, the lowest paid, whether it be in rural Manitoba or here in the city of Winnipeg or any other cities in the province of Manitoba.

\* (2010)

These times are tough; we realize that all over Manitoba. In tough times people pull together. I mean, the right honourable minister Clayton Manness yesterday—or not yesterday, but I was here on Tuesday—said something about unreasonable demands from the Civil Service or some negotiation process, that there were demands around the 30 percent or whatever the figure was—

**Mr. Manness:** The judges, 43.

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Okay.

I mean, to reduce expectations you do not—I will build some imagery, and I will not take too much of your time. If you want to scare a monkey, you do not have to touch the monkey; if you want to scare a monkey, you kill a chicken. In terms of reducing some expectations from people at the bargaining table or people who have to rely on funding from government, what this government has done is, not only have they killed the chicken, they have cut the monkey at the knees.

What happens when this process sort of, when the monkey recovers, is the fact that people get motivated. I have never presented before. I have never been motivated enough to present at this format before, to feel strongly enough to drive over 400 kilometres to be here.

Basically, when you threaten, I guess, the democratic process of collective bargaining, whether it is cap in hand or collectively, you screw up a system that it takes not only years but sometimes decades to actually correct. In our jungle out there, I mean, we do not even have to talk about corruption in terms of people not—people here who have presented said that they are declaring personal bankruptcy.

When there is less of a pie to be divided, and I know the government is under some financial constraints, when the time gets tougher, what happens? People still have to feed their families, still have to live, still have to get the necessities of food, clothing and basic necessities in life and shelter. What happens is that if you cannot do it the

honest way, when people are pressed, when people are losing their homes, people are losing their jobs, people are losing their livelihoods, they will come after you and me, whoever has any value or worth.

That is the only message that I want to bring to this committee, that if you screw up a system that is working and in place, you motivate people to do things they normally would not do even in tough economic times. If people believe in your cause, they will support you no matter if they do not get a wage increase ever, if they believe in your cause and they can make ends meet, but you cannot kill a few monkeys and not have several apes come at you from that jungle, because that is basically what happens, you create a structure where you polarize one section of society against the other.

I actually have not even talked about cross-border shopping, shopping in the United States or going to other provinces to live or to survive. That is another infrastructure that happens when times get tough. We know that not only can you buy cheap cigarettes and cheap tobacco across the line, when people do cross-border shopping you also get goods and services that they do not buy in our small or rural towns or even the city of Winnipeg. We all suffer.

So from rural Manitoba I want that message—or that is the only image of a message that I can bring to the committee. I did not prepare any written text, and I apologize for that. I just wanted to not take up too much of your time.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, Mr. Roznowsky makes a number of interesting points. He says: if you come from rural Manitoba. I come from rural Manitoba, as you do, Mr. Acting Chairman, as do two other members along the side.

Mr. Acting Chairman, you, particularly, come from a community where there are many, many border towns that are feeling the full impact of cross-border shopping. Almost inevitably everybody will tell you the root cause of that is high taxes.

Sir, you started off and you say, when government reduces anything there is an impact. You are right. Would you also agree that when government increases taxes, there is a similar and devastating impact?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Everyone hates to pay taxes and pay more taxes. Taxes, of course, are necessary. That is a fundamental question that you can skate around and say, you know, you can increase taxes

until you are blue in the face and people will take it. Fair taxation to me means taxation not only for the working class, but it also means taxation for corporations, also means taxation for banks, for large corporations that do not pay any taxes at all.

Let us take the banks. When they invest in the Third World countries and lose their shirt or whatever else they have to lose, they can use it as a tax write-off. When they also make a profit in a Third World country, they can shelter it.

Items of that nature mean that there is not a fair taxation system that the working people can identify with or you can identify to. Of course, I know people do not want taxes to increase in terms of spending, but responsible fiscal spending, I do not think you could find a person in this room who would be against responsible spending if it was progressive, if it was well thought out, if it did not just point or benefit one segment of society. I think that you would have a support in that direction throughout this whole room and many of the presenters who have come before you.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I asked the presenter whether he thought taxes had an impact. I think he says that he believes they do but we should tax corporations. I would ask if he was aware that in Manitoba we have the highest corporate taxes in the land, that we have the highest levels of taxation on small business in the land, that we have the highest tax on banks in the land. I can tell him that every one of those people, when people come after me—he says that people are going to come after me.

I can tell him there are people coming after me right now, employees of companies where entrepreneurs, the owners, are leaving because of taxes, and the jobs are gone. So people are coming after me right now, and the issue is not freezing the wages, the issue is taxes. So I would ask him then, where else do I turn? People are coming after me right now.

\* (2020)

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Well, I am not an expert in the field of large financial economics of the province, and I do not profess to be. I know there is some taxation, and I am sure that you are much more aware of how corporate taxes are structured, but I know there are large corporations that do not pay a cent of tax. Whether they locate in Manitoba or not, I do not know that, but whether the businesses are

leaving the province, I think it is much more complex an issue than the corporate tax that scares them away from our province of Manitoba.

We do not have a large reserve of wealth, you know, in terms of oil or resources as some of the other provinces do. I know our tax structure is high because our population is fairly low in terms of the other provinces that are neighbouring us, but that does not mean that Manitobans cannot pull together in terms of finding innovative structures which—you do not have to kill those monkeys to get your physical point across. The fact of one segment of society to pay for issues that they have absolutely no control over, have no input into, is unfair.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I agree with what the presenter is saying. I did not want to kill monkeys. I guess I asked people voluntarily to take zero and two. I could not afford three, and I asked them to take it voluntarily. I guess I did not make the message—obviously I did not present the case well enough, would have to be your argument. You would say that under some circumstances Manitobans would come together if the message was spelled out clearly enough and it was understood.

**Mr. Roznowsky:** My only thought on that process is, if zero and two was there, zero and two is not a wage freeze. If zero and two was there, then probably he should have continued on negotiating, but that is much more of a complex issue that in this format to be able to solve that very complex an issue in terms of collective bargaining, I would imagine.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, to the presenter, I want to indicate as well, and I just mentioned previously on a point of order that we felt, in fact I moved a motion as NDP Labour critic on behalf of our caucus that hearings should have been held outside of the city of Winnipeg, and I appreciate the distance you have travelled. In fact, many of the people who were called over the last five, ten minutes were people from even further distance, in many cases eight, 10, and 12 hours, and that is why that did not occur.

I just want to ask you a question, though, as a follow-up to the Minister of Finance's question. He said, well, the employees were offered zero and two and he was disappointed that they did not voluntarily accept that. Now, we have used various analogies here, and maybe if I could state the way I read the minister's offer, and indeed when you look at the end

result, to my mind it seems to have been, here it is, take it or leave it.

In this case, when the people said, leave it, the minister said, well, if you will not take it voluntarily, you are going to take it involuntarily; we will force you to take it. Do you feel it is consistent with that kind of balance you were talking about, with any sense of bargaining whatsoever in that particular case?

I can understand if the minister had said, well, we felt we could not offer more and this is what we said and we realized when we said it that we were not saying anything other than take it or leave it. Do you see any voluntary—

**Mr. Manness:** That is what I said.

**Mr. Ashton:** Well, the minister says that is what he said. The minister basically in this case wanted people to voluntarily accept what they had no choice over. Do you feel that is consistent with the kind of balance you were talking about earlier?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Anything jammed down your throat is unpalatable. I mean, people make decisions all their life. Even the decision to accept a very low wage increase, if they have input into making that determination free to do that, that is much more palatable than to have any kind of gun held to your head and to make people do what your end result makes the other side the winner. That is not free and collective bargaining, as I see it.

**Mr. Ashton:** I want to go further because, in this particular case, the Minister of Finance has had a great deal of difficulty, he has expressed a great deal of frustration about the fact that one of the unions had opted for arbitration, which has been in place since the 1960s, as an alternative essentially to the strike mechanism and that others went to final offer selection which, once again, as somebody before had indicated, was an alternative in that particular case to the strike mechanism, both of which really involve a neutral third party in some way, shape or form in deciding a settlement where the parties cannot reach it themselves.

I would like to ask you just in terms of the general balance of fairness, that kind of balance you were talking about earlier, do you see any fairness in this particular situation where the minister not only has not gone to an objective third party after he said it could not be resolved, but has essentially now made himself, through the passage of this bill, the person who is determining the settlement? In this particular

case you have the management on the one side, you have the union on the other side, and management is sitting down at the table and then after a while saying, well, okay, we have not come to an agreement, I am going to tell you what it is going to be.

I would like to ask you as sort of a supplementary to that whether you feel that any private employer would ever be able to do something such as that, sit down with a group of workers and essentially impose in that sense a settlement, take a collective agreement and just basically say that this is the way it was going to be. I would appreciate your comments on those two points.

**Mr. Roznowsky:** What I get in terms of reading what is actually happening in the province of Manitoba regarding this situation is that the government of the day probably has some grave concerns about having any third party solving this dispute. My feelings are that those decisions and those determinations want to be held totally in the power in their hands.

**Mr. Ashton:** So, in other words, what you are saying out of the government's actions is that they are essentially afraid to have any influence from anyone other than themselves, whether it be an arbitrator, a selector in the case of final offer selection or whether it be the employees themselves, remembering that once again the minister said very clearly that he would like the people to have voluntarily accepted the government's position, but we have seen now in fact that he is forcing them with the passage of Biii 70.

You are suggesting, to my mind, that this is an element almost of—I hate to use these words—but sort of paranoia on the part of the government in attempting to be a—well, attempting—they are unwilling to let anyone outside of themselves have that influence.

I recognize, you know, that governments have to make decisions and have certain responsibilities; so do business people when they negotiate with employees. So do you see that as being a fair way of approaching public policy in Manitoba, when governments are attempting to dictate in this particular case to the parties involved?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Well, if I would be playing a game and if I knew I had the upper hand, I would not allow any other players inside, especially if I wanted to win, and if I wanted to win this particular case in

terms of—you know we talk about what the strengths of the unions are. We hear it in the rhetoric in the coffee shop type of atmosphere, and on the other hand you have how powerful majority governments are. So you get both clashing against each other.

\* (2030)

I mean, if you are playing this game to win, if there is a chance that one of them has a little bit better hand, it is always the principal player, which is the government, that can change the rules to be able to accomplish that win. That is my understanding of it anyway.

**Mr. Ashton:** One might say in this particular case that the government has all the cards as well as being able to determine the rules, because certainly that has been the impact, but I appreciate your perspective once again.

Well, the minister says the government can be changed. Indeed, we in the New Democratic Party will be working on that. I believe we may have some significant support, particularly from people affected by this bill, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

Indeed, it is called democracy, but part of democracy also as well does not involve democratically elected governments after they are elected working in the complete opposite to what they said before they were elected. That is why people are getting cynical about politicians, and we could talk about broken campaign promises, but I do not want to distract. I was merely going to complete my remarks by thanking the presenter.

I think the unfortunate fact of not having out-of-town hearings in this particular case is, I am sure there would have been many more people from the Parkland who would have registered. I notice some names here. There are a few people who have taken the time to register, but it is unfortunate that perhaps more people such as yourself did not take the chance to indicate to this committee their views. Thanks very much.

**Mr. Santos:** It is well understood by some people that if you cannot do it directly, then you can do it probably indirectly. If it is the case that this government, when courting the voters, promised not to raise taxes and then, in its attempt to live up to such a promise, it cuts the salary of the most vulnerable segment of the public sector, is that in your opinion equivalent to an indirect tax?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Well, when the take-home pay for any individual is lowered and you do not see it, I guess it is called like alimony, pumping gas into somebody else's car, if you do not see it.

Whether it is an indirect tax or not, I guess you could make arguments for and against that, but the bottom line is that if you reduce anybody's take-home pay, especially on the marginal segments of our society who live from pay cheque to pay cheque, single parents and maybe a full-family unit, which also requires just to get over the poverty line about \$27,000 a year to feed and clothe their family of two, or whatever the national average of families are. It does not have to be single parents.

Those concerns of having a modest salary—I do not know whether or not all the salaries of the people affected with the Bill 70, but I do not see that the sectors of society in terms of the Civil Service being in the overpaid range. I do not know how you would equate overpaid, but I do not think that they would be that much over the poverty level in terms of their situations. Many have second jobs and many have other ways and means to make ends meet, but I do not think we are talking about doctors, lawyers, Indian chiefs.

**Mr. Santos:** Do you feel, Mr. Roznowsky, that no one should be exempted? If anybody's salary or wages had to be frozen, everybody's should be frozen?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** In terms of the AIB from the late 70s, I guess, I do not think it actually worked either. They not only attacked wages, they were supposed to attack prices as well. The AIB, as the federal government in power imposed it onto the citizens of Canada, caused many inequities and did not really address very much in terms of prices, in terms of easing the burden. So in terms of whether everybody should be exempt or everybody should be included, I think that Bill 70 is wrong.

I mean, there are other ways. The analogy of scaring somebody into accepting zero, if the reality is there, if that cannot be accomplished in terms of making payments to the individuals, which the government has as its employees, you do not have to impose in terms of wage controls unilaterally to do that.

There are other alternatives, and I think some of the alternatives we have heard of the past several days in terms of, I believe, the speaker before me,

Mr. Loxley, had some interesting suggestions. Whether or not they were viable, I do know. I am not an expert in that field.

**Mr. Santos:** Given the double whammy of inflation and recession, do you think it is fair to just freeze wages without also freezing prices and rents?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Well, not only in terms of inflation, but you factor in the imposed GST and, in our ever so changing times where money is harder to find, jobs are harder to find, people are scared as well. I mean, if you have over a thousand people who are laid off just from the public purse, companies leaving Manitoba because of free trade and maybe a potential free trade agreement with Mexico, times are tough out there. People, when they get desperate, do really weird things. Those weird things I am scared of, because when rational people become irrational, that scares me.

**Mr. Santos:** Machiavelli said that it is better to be feared than loved. If the prince is to maintain his power, he will do everything to let the people fear him, because then he can influence their behavior better than when they love him. Do you agree?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** It is a good analogy.

**Mr. Connery:** Mr. Roznowsky, would you then say we should have the increases in the salaries and then raise the personal income tax of everybody? Is that a viable alternative to you?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** I am not exactly sure on how the tax structure of Revenue Canada works, but if you have direct input into Revenue Canada where you can tell from a provincial level by raising salaries of a certain segment of society that you may have to raise your provincial income taxes, if that is the route, that is a decision that this government would have to make.

\* (2040)

There are other impacts in terms of what I alluded to in cross-border shopping and people who do not shop in their own provinces and not in their own communities. The fact that professional people who are trained—and I think the speaker before me from Hydro said that people have trained to be professionals in this province, and the province has to pay for them because the province wears the burden. If they leave the province, we have been stuck with the bill.

My niece just graduated from the B.N. program from the University of Manitoba. She is seriously

looking to go down to the States to get work—and there are other individuals in small, rural towns—because the jobs are not there, of course, who are looking elsewhere to go to other provinces. That creates a bigger financial burden. In terms of whether you increase the salaries of people paid under the province's purse, whether that would directly impact on income taxes—if I was a private citizen who was asked to pay more income tax to support an individual to stay in the province of Manitoba and work and carry their own weight, I would rather pay to do that instead of having that individual go to welfare and not have the self-worth of actually working at a job.

**Mr. Connery:** The NDP philosophy was to spend money and then, of course, as you know, in '87 the 2 percent flat tax came on to everybody and their personal income tax before any deductions, which everybody had to pay.

You keep mentioning people going to other places to shop and cross the border. That is a very serious thing for us and I wonder how many union people go across to Grand Forks to shop. Our cost of doing business, as the minister said, is so high in Manitoba that people have to ask more. We talked to the gas companies—believe me, I have had a lot of discussion with the gas companies. They say it costs more money to do business in Canada, the corporate taxes, the wages, everything is higher, so they have to get more. We have people making a higher salary but then running across the border to shop because the goods and services there are cheaper, and we are in a no-win situation.

Eventually, we will not have a medicare system here if people go and buy all of their goods in the States and then come back to Canada for their open heart surgery and all of their other things and their education. We will not have a province. So the small businesses say, the taxation is so high in Manitoba. As the minister said, we are the highest taxed province.

Businesses are like people. People go where they can get the best salary and I do not blame them. They shop where they can get the best value. Businesses look where they can maximize their profits. That is the way the system works. We have got ourselves so highly taxed. So I really appreciate your comments, in spite of what the Liberal Leader said—there is nobody bright in rural Manitoba. You have made a darn good presentation here tonight, and I appreciate your coming in. Anyway, I would

like to hear what your comments are on this cross border again if we keep on taxing.

**Mr. Roznowsky:** Whether or not any segment of society that we can pinpoint, whether or not they go across the line, you would have to do that central poll yourself because I do not think you can actually put together a segment of society. I am not a sociological wizard or psychology major to be able to tell who shops across the border.

People do that when times are tough, when actual funds are tight to individual families. Whether or not civil servants do that impacts onto the province. It probably does, but they are part of society, and I guess if we have to address the cross-border shopping, it will not be just Civil Service that you are wanting to stay and shop in Manitoba. You want all of society to shop in Manitoba. Shop in your own rural location.

When times are tough people go from small, rural towns to bigger centres because they can buy a better selection, they can probably get a sale or a little bit better shopping. What they forget is that rural towns and small cities in rural Manitoba are very fragile. You screw them once or twice, they are out. They go out of business and then you have to drive to Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson, The Pas, or wherever, to get your services because they will not provide them there for you.

**Mr. Edwards:** Just to clarify what the member for Portage (Mr. Connery) said and the Liberal leader (Mrs. Carstairs) said. What she said was, there was no one from rural Manitoba in the Legislature who was too bright.

In all seriousness, I want to thank the presenter for driving in four and a half hours to visit. I gather from his comments he had done it once before, at least, and that is appreciated by the members of the committee.

We had hoped, given the government's stated commitment to decentralization, they might decentralize democracy and have taken the process to rural Manitoba, but unfortunately democracy did not rank for decentralization. That is unfortunate.

May I just ask you, sir, you have left us with some graphic analogies, and I think between the monkey and the chicken and the pumping gas into someone else's car it has been a colourful presentation. We appreciate that. -(interjection)- The member for

Thompson says, putting feet in the mouth. He knows well about that.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, for the presenter, you have mentioned two aspects, as I see it—it has been consistent with other presenters—that you have highlighted about this bill. One is the process, and you gave us the chicken and monkey analogy, and you spoke about that. The other is the result which is lesser wages for workers. By the way, I think it is instructive that people come, like you, who are not directly affected by this, but come to present to us.

I think it tells us that it has a broader concern than just the 48,000 directly affected civil servants.

Can you indicate for us which of those two concerns—if you can choose one that is more regretful, in your view, that is, between the procedural bad faith on the part of the government, or the result which you also view as unfortunate? Can you tell us which of those is more important or strikes you as more deserving of voting against this bill?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** What I said before in my verbal presentation is that when you target any segment of society unjustly, you create a sort of an undertow of not only bad feelings in terms of inequities that are created between private and public, black white, whatever colour, analogies you want to put together. When you screw around with something that is actually working, and you halt one segment of society or one part of the work force or the movement as it relates to other people in the province or even in Canada, if you unilaterally do that to one segment of society, that scares the living daylights out of somebody else and sets a precedent.

You almost do not have to do anything else to the private sector because the private sector will say, hey, we do not have to pay. The government of the day says you do not have to pay because you are competitive right here. You do not even have to negotiate. If you want to go, leave our enterprise, go to work for the Civil Service. So virtually you do not have to kill any more chickens to scare any more monkeys. You have done so. Actually, you have accomplished to do whatever it takes in terms of—and I am not fearmongering, I am speaking out of just having limited knowledge of what goes on.

The private sector rides on the back of the public sector because they are usually the forerunners. Private enterprise can get into what—we probably

all know that people in the private sector have the mobility to leave the Civil Service probably, and make some good money sporadically, but people in the Civil Service, more than likely, are sort of career oriented, career pathed. You leave a segment of the Civil Service and you have to go down to the bottom as we noticed in these committee hearings—if you are called once you go to the bottom.

So you cannot leave, make your money and come back in, and that is what creates the unfairness. When you screw with anything that actually works before, once the wheels start rolling again—what happens if we come out of the recession, we start making money? Those people will still be underpaid. That is what creates an inequity.

\* (2050)

**Mr. Edwards:** I think you have been asked a lot of questions and I want to ask one more. I think one of the reasons you have, is that you do represent someone who has driven in from out of town, and I think we, unfortunately, have not heard anywhere near the number that we could have had we decentralized the democratic process, but the government has stood in the way of that.

I wanted to ask you whether or not you think rural Manitobans in your experience, your community, your area, do they really buy this, that the Civil Service of this province should be the scapegoats for the economic woes which, however they were created—of course, I think this government had a lot to do with it, and their cousins in Ottawa—but are they really buying the "bash the civil servants" approach that this government is taking and politicizing, do you think?

**Mr. Roznowsky:** We kick anybody that is down. It is unfair. People realize if you do anything regressive to any segment of the population—reasonable people, not the ones who say it does not affect me, I am sort of safe, phew, have escaped the cut or it did not happen to me—when people see that it is unfair, individuals in the province of Manitoba, rurally probably even more so because rural communities are probably more tight knit, and people from the rural community can probably attest to that, reasonable people know that if you kick somebody when they are down, or keep kicking at them, it is unfair.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I would suggest to the committee that the offer is wide open

from the community of Hochstadt to hold all hearings in Hochstadt from now on.

Thank you, Mr. Roznowsky. Next presenter is No. 99, Robert Dewar. Is he here? Number 100, Brian Hirst; No. 101, Dave Pexhler; No. 102, B. McWilliams; No. 103, Carl Martz; No. 104, J. Webb; No. 105, M. Emberley; No. 106, C. Scott; No. 107, John Sasi; No. 108, Tibor Polgar; No. 109, Jeri Kostytra; No. 110, Mike Roberts; No. 111, Bob Bayer.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I would invite you to continue to read as you are. However, I think that probably tonight we will stop the list at somewhere around 170, but then we will ask those who are still here that have not presented to make presentations in the order that they were listed before. So if you just continue to read.

**Mr. Connery:** If we hear the ones that are here, then why can we not just keep going through the list after to see if any others have come in? Those that are here, I agree we should hear, and then just continue on to see if others come in.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** We will take that into consideration when we get there.

**Mr. Ashton:** Just one other thing, as well. There were a couple of people I know who were in the hallway when the names were called and missed their names. Perhaps if we just clarify that if they do stay, we will hear them as well. Okay, if that is agreeable?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** It certainly is agreeable that those who are in the hallway, or those who are waiting, we will attempt to hear all of those who are currently in the room after we have hit the agreed number which is, as I understand, 170 or 175, I believe. The next one is 113, H. Gudmundson; 114, Jocelyne Poirier; 115, Connie Verdonck; 116, Ray Bouvier; 117, J. Bouvier; 118, Debby Neufeld; 119, Bryan McMillan; 120, Yoshi Msakki; 121, Susan Carmen; 122, Elly van Meisto; 123, Wayne Andon; 124, Bob Carmichael; 125, Carmen Carlson; 126, Randy Kilpatrick; 127, Brenda Lesyk; 128, Robert Gilmohr; 129, Tony Sproule; 130, Bernie Ewers; 131, Ben Ewers; 132, Brian Gay; 133, Maria Gay; 134, Beth Halbrook; 135, Len Kilton; 136, Don Plowman; 137, Ian Hedgelock; 138, Phil Mandzuk; 139, R. Les Roope; 140, Michael Welfley; 141, R. Dwaliwal; 142, Earl Black; 143, Bob Manwaning; 144, Peter Tartsch; 145, Jane Ricketts; 146, George Fisher; 147,

Flando Siebert; 148, Odefey Jungen St. Andrews; 149, Anthony Doyle; 150, J. W. Nidrof; 151, Doreen Plowman; 152, Linda Geary; 153, Dan David; 154, Dwane Babe; 155, Daniel Cutforth; 156, Murray Huska; 157, Glen Kaleta; 158, Bill Milner; 159, Carl St. Goddard; 160, Peter Swintak; 161, Robert Yaciuk; 162, Margaret Day; 163, Bill Comstock; 164, Esyllt Jones; 165, Larry Brown; 166, Ed Madden; 167, Larry Wright; 168, Gerry Berard; 169, Kerry Kruger; 170, Delores Waletzky, and 170 was the agreed- to number.

Okay. We will hear then those who are currently in the room. Is there a list of those names? We have number 217, Karen De Groot. Is Karen De Groot here?

**Floor Comment:** She left at about, let us see, what time was it?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Okay, not here. Number 218, Robert De Groot? Robert De Groot is here? Would you come forward, please? Robert, have you a prepared presentation?

**Mr. Robert De Groot (Private Citizen):** No, just a few notes for myself.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you. Proceed.

**Mr. De Groot:** Just let me get these in order, if you do not mind. I would like to thank you for this opportunity to speak to you on Bill 70.

Before I do that, I think one thing I have to speak on is the operation of this committee. It has been spoken on before and I hate to repeat things that are being said but I took real exception earlier tonight when Mr. Enns stated that even though you MLAs must be here to allow us, the public, to speak, you are under no obligation to listen to us. That is an insult. That is an absolute insult. You are an employee of the public. You have an obligation to listen. You can do as you wish afterwards, perhaps, and you will be judged accordingly at election time, but you have to listen. You are an employee.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I call you to order, sir. I will ask you as I have asked others, and very courteously, to please direct your comments to the bill at hand. We are hearing a representation on Bill 70, and I would appreciate if we could retain our comments and direct them towards Bill 70. Thank you very much.

**Mr. De Groot:** Well, I have to admit that I do feel that is pertinent because it was said during hearings

of this committee which is dealing with Bill 70, but I will move on.

Because this is the hearings of Bill 70, I also appeared at the hearings on FOS, and the organization of that committee hearing was such that it enabled people to attend more readily. It gave people three opportunities to attend and speak, although it did limit time. It limited to 20 minutes.

\* (2100)

Now most people I know are not in a position where they can just leave work and come here during the day. They have responsibilities, as has been said by other people. The way that this has been set up to me is a deliberate attempt—and I can hear you, Mr. Manness, stating no, do not let him speak on this because this is irrelevant, but you have spoken on it yourself, and you continued to speak. -(interjection)- Yes, you did, and we can debate this all night, but we will not. I will move on to the bill.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I am sorry. I am not going to allow a debate to ensue. I would suggest that we move on and retain our remarks and direct them towards the bill, please.

**Mr. De Groot:** I am glad we got the point. Okay, now as I feel that this is a direct affront to democracy in the way it has been presented, I want to just say one little point, and then I am going to move right on to the bill and how I think things are being approached in terms of it. If you refuse people their democratic right to speak by maneuvering around the letter of the law rather than following the spirit of the law, they will remember it. Come election time, they will remember it, and that is just a little word of advice, and it goes to everybody here. We are here to uphold democracy which means everybody gets their opportunity to speak and then we abide by a majority.

I have to confess I have been a supporter of workers in their right to bargain collectively for a number of years, and by the way, this bill denies that right, outrightly denies that right to collective bargain. As it follows, I am also a believer in unions and the labour movement. One thing I must admit, however, is that neither I, nor my friends, have been able to find a way to unite workers under a single cause, but I really have to thank this government for giving us that method.

All you had to do, and it was really quite simple—answers are not always complex, quite

often they are simple. All you have to do is attack workers on every front so that they have no other choice but to rebel, to fight back. It has been stated by other speakers people are getting their backs against the wall. When you back them against the wall, they have no other choice, and that is what is happening.

I can elaborate a little bit on some of the fronts in which people are being attacked. We can look at the obvious ones, the wages, the benefits; others are services, some of which are required by people in our society. They are not frivolous or things they do not need, things such as health care, education, both primary and post-secondary. We are seeing cutbacks right across the board on all these things.

We can look at things like highway maintenance. Highway maintenance is being offloaded. It is a responsibility that the provincial government had and they have offloaded it to the municipalities some of which, I might add, will not be able to afford to maintain these highways. This is related to Bill 70 because it relates to the attitude, the attitude and the impetus behind Bill 70.

You have openly criticized the federal Conservatives for offloading on health care and offloading on education, and you know something? I hate to admit it but I have to agree with you. I criticize them on that, but I cannot really understand the hypocrisy of it. You criticize them and then you do it yourself.

**An Honourable Member:** I admitted it.

**Mr. De Groot:** That is right, but does that help? That does not mean it is right, though, does it? If a murderer admits that he killed someone, does that make the action right?

We can look at cutbacks you have made to the bursary programs, cutbacks to university funding, as well as cutbacks to job creation in the summer for these students. Many people cannot, and will not be able to return to university. I happen to go to university myself part time, as well as working, and I will tell you right now that some of my fellow students are saying they will not be back. They cannot get a job, or they cannot get one that pays decent wages. I know, that is too bad, right, Mr. Manness? I think that is what you said. -(interjection)- Well, I am telling you what is happening to some other people maybe you have not talked to.

We can look at what is happening with our provincial parks. Some campgrounds are being sold, others are not maintained because staff has been cut. We can look at lifeguards being eliminated. Last year we had a tragedy over at one of beaches where a child drowned, and we are all aware of that. It was a tragedy, but it does not mean that we remove the lifeguard simply because they were there and they did not solve the problem. So what the heck, maybe they were not necessary. Just remove them and hope it will not happen again. It has not happened for a while—one incident, too bad. I think that this shows what kind of attitude this government has got towards the average working person, the workers of this province.

These are some of the threats being felt by workers at this time. It is basic standard-of-living types of issues. Not only workers who are directly affected by Bill 70, but all Manitobans, and further along with the attitude, I think where it is coming from, because I think we have to lay ground work here to establish why things are happening, this Tory government—I refer to you as Tories because I am not a member of your party and I will never be a member of your party, although I have to admit, I did consider it once—is like any other Tory government.

I remember distinctly last summer when Mr. Filmon said, what you see is what you get. We will be the same as a majority, as we were as a minority. I consider this to be one of those famous play on words, like medicare is a sacred trust. I remember that statement; I am sure many others do.

Now we move directly on to Bill 70, and I will equate Bill 70 and the Filmon government with Mulroney and the Free Trade Agreement and the GST, all actions that were initiated and put through by force without regard to the people they are going to affect. The truth is not given out to us when these initiatives are put forth. An example of that would be with the Free Trade Agreement. Mulroney and the federal Conservatives said we would not have a net loss of jobs, we would have a net increase of thousands of jobs. I am still waiting for those jobs. They also stated that water is not mentioned in the Free Trade Agreement.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I am going to ask you to restrict your remarks to the bill. I think you are off on the Free Trade Agreement and some other aspects, and I think they are interesting subjects, sir, but at the right time. I would suggest

that we are hearing presentations on Bill 70, and I would ask you to keep your remarks to Bill 70.

\* (2110)

**Mr. De Groot:** As I tried to state, I am trying to lay groundwork to why I think this bill has come forward, but in regard—

**Mr. Edwards:** I am sorry to interrupt, but I did want the speaker to know that I do not agree that his comments are not entirely relevant. I think that he is discussing the principles behind the bill. I think it is entirely relevant, and I just want him to know that I would hate him to think it is the consensus of the committee that what he is saying is irrelevant. I think it is.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Well, Mr. Edwards, I suppose I would thank you for your remarks, but I would ask, I suppose, whether you in fact intended to challenge the Chair, and if you do so then I would ask you to state that clearly.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, in response, I did not understand you to make a rule. I understood you to express a caution. That caution came in the context of statements which the presenter was making, and I think the indication from that caution could be that comments he had most recently made were not particularly relevant.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** That is correct.

**Mr. Edwards:** He may have been coming to relevance which may have been unknown to you at the time. My only comment was if that is a ruling, I would like an opportunity to debate it, because that was not the impression I got. However, given that it was only a caution, I simply wanted the speaker to know he is free to continue, in my view, in the same vein and illustrate the relevance, which I am sure he will.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Edwards, I think I was very clear in asking the presenter to direct his comments and remarks to the bill and to try and restrict his comments to the contents of the bill. I would expect that all presenters do that. Thank you very much. Proceed.

**Mr. De Groot:** Thank you. I will follow through to the point then, skipping other examples that I had jotted down. The only possible explanation I can possibly see for these initiatives, including Bill 70, whether they are driven by an ideological agenda,

and because Bill 70 is provincial—I think we also have to look at the attitudes of the provincial ministers and the provincial government as to why they have brought this forth. I shall make this very, very brief, because I am sure that you do not want to listen to all this.

Now, as it has been stated numerous times, not necessarily here, although I have heard it here a couple of times, on November 6 last year, Premier Filmon stated: The fact of the matter is, there is no club and there never will be a club from this government. We will act in good faith at all times in the free collective bargaining process, with all of the employees with whom we have to negotiate.

These are noble words, but within the collective bargaining process there are many tools, tools such as conciliation, arbitration, strikes, lockouts, and until very recently, FOS. From the action that Mr. Filmon and his government have taken by introducing Bill 70, to me—and this is my perception and I think it is shared by a number of other people—Mr. Filmon has shown his true colours. This action, the introduction of Bill 70, says to me that he will say anything anytime to get his way. With this one act he has shown us twice that he does not believe in free collective bargaining. He has not only suspended collective bargaining for 48,000 government workers, but he has also shown his dishonesty in regard to the deal on the expiration of FOS. With unmitigated gall he has even applied this bill retroactively to workers who already have a signed agreement.

The Casino workers, it is my understanding, and correct me if I am wrong, had an agreement. The only people that it was not applied to were the ones—The ones who had received money, it did not apply to them.

We can get into some of the questioning that has gone on in the House, because I have been listening to Question Period. I try to pay some attention to the events that are going on. We get different stories from this government as to exactly what this bill says. Mr. Praznik, who is the Labour minister, has stated that the intent of the bill is not to extend beyond one year but it might be done if it is necessary. The Minister of Finance, Mr. Manness, stated that the bill could not be extended, it was only a one-year bill. This is quite a variation in interpretation in a bill which came out of the same caucus, and I know, from doing a little negotiating on my own, the importance of knowing exactly what

is written in a contract, because it can be interpreted many ways, and if you do not know exactly what is there, you should know that you are in trouble.

Later, a legal opinion was tabled by Mr. Manness which stated that his opinion was false. I realize that you will get a legal opinion on one side and you will get a legal opinion on the other side, and you will not know unless you go to arbitration for a final opinion, and even then you will get different opinions depending on which arbitrator you go to.

My contention here is that Mr. Praznik is a lawyer by profession and therefore should know how to write legal documents. I am sure he could have asked him for help if he needed it. I am not saying he did not. Maybe you have in your bill what you intended to have. I hope so, because I am sure of what you have in that bill, but I would direct you to look at Regulation 9(1). It is abundantly clear that this bill is not restricted to the public sector but can be applied to any group of employees by an Order-in-Council, because I have a copy of a bill and I have read it. As you said, Mr. Manness, it is open to interpretation and different opinions. The only way we would find out, as I stated, would be to take it for a decision before arbitration.

I consider your denials either that you do not know what is there, or you are not telling us the truth. That is my perspective. I am entitled to my perspective just like any of us are entitled to our opinions.

Mr. Praznik, I know, has repeated time and time again, and I do believe other ministers as well, that he has received no calls complaining about Bill 70 and that all the workers he has talked to understand it and are willing to support it. I think this shows the extent to which he does not understand the average working person in Manitoba. Does he really expect people who rely upon their jobs, these jobs being government jobs, to speak out against this bill, after the massive layoffs in the spring?

I know there are varying accounts as to how many, 400 and 900, 1,000, regardless, if it was 100 and it was in my sector, I would seriously consider whether my job was next, and if I have children and dependents I am going to consider it doubly seriously, because I care about those people and my job directly affects their standard of living. Another reason I said people would not come and speak to you about the bill, because I happen to know people who were affected by decentralization and the word there was do not say anything or you

will not have a job. This is from the workers. Maybe it is their perception, but it is the perception they put forth to me.

\* (2120)

All I can say is, Mr. Praznik, Mr. Manness, government ministers, please listen to the people. I do not expect that they will really tell you the truth, but if you listen really closely, you will hear that they are against it. They are against this bill.

Now, to me there are some problems with this bill other than just ideology. To me it is not functional. Anybody who has negotiated contracts for bargaining units knows that while there are differences within the contracts applying to different people within that unit, the contract applies to all the people in that unit. You cannot negotiate for half the unit while the other half the contract remains the same, and that is what this bill does, because it splits units. If you were to try to do that, what you would be doing is creating a double standard for each group, the ones included by the bill and the ones excluded by the bill. I have to admit that I think that this government does support double standards. I do not. I do not know of any negotiators for any unions that do, but I feel this government does.

I can move to example, one that has been brought up before, of a double standard, that being the one of Mr. Pedde, with a \$20,000 increase because he was taking on the position of CEO of MTS. The previous CEO was making \$130,000; to attract him to this position, it required an increase of \$20,000. Now if everybody else was getting increases, maybe it is justifiable, but with everybody else not getting increases, I cannot personally justify this.

I know it has been stated by Mr. Filmon as well as others that if you want to attract qualified people, in reference to Mr. Pedde, you have to pay competitive wage rates. I agree, you do. If you want qualified people you have to pay competitive rates, but how can you apply one standard to Mr. Pedde and one standard to the rest of the working people? Give him a \$20,000 increase, which I do believe it was stated earlier tonight is a 15-point-something increase and expect everybody else to take a freeze. It is not fair, and I am sure that subject of fairness comes up again and again and again.

I am sure that even if we decided we had to address the deficit with some type of wage freeze, the most equitable way, in fact the only fair way, if a wage freeze could ever be considered fair, would be

to institute a freeze that would freeze the wages of not the lowest-paid workers but the highest-paid workers, for it is these people, the highest-paid workers, who are best able to afford a wage freeze. I have to commend the MLAs for taking a wage freeze—very exemplary. I think it was something that had to be done, but the other examples of Mr. Pedde versus public sector workers and possibly others, because it is clear it can be applied to other people, other groups, as dictated by an Order-in-Council—as I was saying, the highest-paid workers are the ones who are most able to afford a wage freeze. It affects basically their savings or nonnecessities, whereas the lowest-paid, what it affects there is food, clothing, shelter. To me, those are things you do not compromise on. If you are looking after all of the people, those are the people you have to support and not impose wage freezes on.

Mr. Manness, I was listening to you tonight, and I have to admit my presentation was a little shorter when I got here, but after listening I could not resist adding a couple of points.

You said you felt you had no choice but to impose this bill because workers would not accept the wage freeze voluntarily. I would, in fact I do, suggest that one reason for the lack of volunteers to accept your offer is that a feeling of fairness was not felt in regard to the treatment of various groups by this government.

I might indicate that other governments in the past have negotiated zero percent increases. It has been done before. Why could it not be done this time? Employees, the workers, are reasonable people. If everybody is being treated fairly and equitably I am sure an agreement could have been reached, but when one group feels that they are being treated unfairly and discriminated against in favour of another group, you are not going to get co-operation. Co-operation comes from a feeling of being treated fairly. I cannot press that point strongly enough.

Another example of this unfairness—which is included within this bill by the way, it is not just the enactment of the bill but what is inside the bill—is the exclusion from the bill of incentive bonuses. This is unfair. It is not the lower-paid wages, once again, who would get these and therefore are eligible for them, it is the higher-paid workers, employees who are eligible for incentive bonuses, who would still get these bonuses.

So, not only do you exclude some higher-paid employees from this bill, but you exclude the bonuses for some of these as well as some others. This is totally unfair; it is not right. By these actions this government is proving again and again that it represents big business interests. We have heard this before, with corporations are not paying, and I know, Mr. Manness, you say yes, they are paying. Well, it is a debatable fact as to whether they are actually paying, or whether it is deferred or what the situation is. I assume you have a better grip on it than I do, because I do not have a look at the books, but, of course, we all know, as my dad used to say: Figures don't lie, but liars can figure. That is a direct quote from my dad.

\* (2130)

**An Honourable Member:** I never heard of it.

**Mr. De Groot:** No? Think about it.

**An Honourable Member:** Your dad must be really smart.

**Mr. De Groot:** I have to admit I think he is rather smart myself. I thank you for that compliment. I will pass it along to him.

At times like this, when we have record numbers of small businesses failing and record numbers of personal bankruptcies becoming evident—of course, I have to admit it is contrary to your ideology, Mr. Manness—what we do need is a circulation of money and increased buying power of the consumer to support businesses. If nobody can buy the products and services of businesses, they cannot prosper, and the economy does not move upward out of where we are right now in this recession. By not helping people to have the ability to buy goods and services, we are moving them, as was stated before, into cross-border shopping, and we are not helping the small businessman, which further typifies this government's favouritism towards large business.

If we look back—excuse me, I lost my place there for a second. I will move on right here. If we want to have this business that the business is a small business, I am sure we all agree that small business is really what drives the Manitoba economy. We have to have investment by the public sector, being government, because investment is crucial to our economy. If the private sector will not do it at times like this during a recession, then government does have to invest to create jobs. If you do not create jobs, you have people on welfare. If you have

people on welfare, it costs more than most of the jobs you will be creating anyway. If you create jobs you are getting income tax back.

I am sure it is no surprise to you, because it has been well advertised. In case you have not been reading the papers, Mr. Manness, our economy is not functioning quite right. In fact, we are in a recession, perhaps just coming out of it. Maybe we are, maybe we are not. That is still being debated. It is times like this it is most important to remember that a government is elected to represent, as I stated before, all of the people, not just one specific group. With this government, I would conjecture that is the upper income group. In fact, I would put forth that Conservative policy had not changed much since the thirties.

Yes, Mr. Orchard, it is funny, is it not? In the thirties, when there was a depression on, people were starving and the government was not helping. It just happened to be a Conservative government. Is that not amazing and comical? I think it is funny, too, coincidental as well. When Prime Minister Bennett took his hands-off approach to the economy, I remember how it turned out. I also remember that when—

I am not sure if Mr. Orchard is here to be constructive or crack jokes or—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Are you, Mr. Presenter, still speaking on Bill 70?

**Mr. De Groot:** Yes, I am.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you.

**Mr. De Groot:** The reason I say I am still speaking on Bill 70 is because I am just getting into the ideology aspect of this in terms of labour relations. Yes, and you honour your collective bargaining agreements, Mr. Orchard. Absolutely.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** I did with the nurses.

**Mr. De Groot:** I happen to know some nurses, and they do not particularly like you.

**An Honourable Member:** I know some who do not like you.

**Mr. De Groot:** Some of them do.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Order, please. I am going to bring this debate to an end fairly quickly if we will not continue discussing Bill 70.

**Mr. De Groot:** Thank you very much. With the imposition of Bill 70 it makes we wonder where we are going. We have watched since 1988 a pattern being created. WHMIS was attacked, which, by the way, is Workplace Health and Safety legislation. We are now watching the dismantling, the changes to Workers Compensation. We have watched the elimination of FOS, the imposition of Bill 70, and I worry, as have many other presenters, as to just where this government is taking us with this continuing trend and this bill being the most recent in a series.

Previous to me, people have mentioned Privy Council Order 1003 which was brought in in 1944. This was the forerunner to our present labour legislation, and really all it did was to establish a more civilized labour relations climate and gave workers the right to organize. This was followed by a few other things, pieces of labour legislation which were progressive, not regressive. I submit that this government is on an agenda to eliminate any and all labour laws which are put in place to control the harmful activities, not the good and productive activities, but the harmful activities of large business.

I am just going to finish this one thing, very short. I remember at the end of the election last year, once it was apparent that there was a majority Conservative government, Mr. Filmon, quite ecstatic—no one could blame him because he had won—said a majority is a majority is a majority. The arrogance of that statement is becoming ever more clear with each day. Thank you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. De Groot. Are there any questions? If not, I want to thank you for your presentation and call the next one, No. 263, which is Gary Graves. If not, I would call 266, which is Maggie Hadfield. Would you come forward please? Have you a prepared text for distribution? I am sorry, I have just been advised that you have spoken once to the bill.

**Ms. Maggie Hadfield (Communications and Electrical Workers of Canada):** No, I have not. I was out of town when my name was first called, and so I was not here when I was called the first time. This is the second call for my name.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Proceed, please.

\* (2140)

**Ms. Hadfield:** My name is Maggie Hadfield. I am a national representative for the Communications and Electrical Workers of Canada. I represent approximately 2,250 employees at Manitoba Telephone System and was in negotiation with Manitoba Telephone System at the time that this bill was introduced. The people I represent are basically clerical workers and telephone operators. They are a predominantly female group of workers and, contrary to the opinion of this government, not highly paid public servants.

You have had the pleasure of hearing from a couple of my members this evening, and I am sure you are more aware now than you were before of how highly paid they are. The clerical group fall into Grades 1 to 8, the majority falling between 4 and 5, Grade 4 and 5 Clerk, and their wage rate ranges from \$18,000 to \$22,000 from the lower end to the high end. An operator earns approximately \$18,000 to \$22,000, and that \$22,000 range is reached over a four-year period.

The women and men who work in these categories fall into a number of categories. They are predominantly self-supporting, single employees, one-parent family set-ups or part of a two-income family. A Clerk 4 or 5 earns approximately \$572 clear take-home pay every two weeks and, as you heard from my two colleagues tonight, some of them are supporting three and two children, raising families on that kind of a wage, and certainly cannot be considered to be a rich and highly-paid public employee.

In fact, in talking to a Clerk 5 recently who was looking at what she could expect to earn in pension after working 30 years for MTS, she found out that her pension would be \$964 a month. I would hardly call that highly paid. In fact, she cannot take advantage of the early retirement package because she could not live on that amount of money.

The employees at MTS have been told that they are part of a team of public employees, committed to outstanding customer service, and they are part of that team that is committed to give this outstanding customer service to all of the public of Manitoba. This team together worked and generated \$39 million in profit for MTS in 1990 and over the last three years generated over \$100 million of profits. It is from these profits that their wages are paid and not from the tax dollars of Manitoba which your government is supposedly taking care of and protecting.

Now it is time to pay the team, and we have been in negotiation since September of 1990. This government, on the pretext of saving the taxpayers from an increase, put a freeze on negotiations and a freeze on this team that has generated the profits for the Manitoba Telephone System.

They are confused about your message, and rightly so, and so am I. If you think that because I am employed by the union to protect the interests of my members, then let me share with you a letter that I received from a Clerk 5 just this week. She is part of a two-income family, and this is what she had to say. I asked her why she did not come to the public hearings and tell you herself, and she said, I am just not a good public speaker. I am not a particularly good public speaker either, but I have had a lot more exposure than she has, so I told her that I would share her thoughts with you, if you will allow me to do so. She said, and she addressed this to the Filmon government:

I am writing to inform you about the effect Bill 70 will have on more people than you care to imagine. As you read this, put yourself in my place, and I invite you to do so, everyone of you. Our family is a supposedly two-income family. My husband's job is strictly commission. Need I say more? My job is one of those of which you must consider well paid, because I would be directly affected by Bill 70. You obviously think we do not need the extra dollars, otherwise why would you freeze our wages and give other highly paid positions 15 percent to 20 percent in raises? Those poor souls must be starving in order for them to need so much.

We do not spend frivolously, nor do we indulge ourselves in such luxuries as movies, dining out or expensive clothes. We have no major expenses, but we do try to save some for our retirement, since CPP probably will not be around for us in 20 to 30 years. Our two small children have not been a great financial burden since we were fortunate enough to receive a lot of hand-me-downs. Yet trying to make ends meet is getting more difficult every day.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Excuse me, I wonder, is this part of your presentation? Because if we are going to read all the letters or put on the record all the letters that are written on this issue we are going to be here a long time.

**Ms. Hadfield:** I have one letter, and this is it.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Okay, thank you.

**Ms. Hadfield:** When was the last time you considered taking out a loan to feed your children? Mine was this May 1991. Our income tax return paid for our property tax, leaving a bit to hold us over but not for long. The pathetic part is in comparison to many, we are doing well. So if our family has it rough, how can the others survive?

It is easy for you to freeze our wages and raise our taxes. Why do we have to pay a person so much more to do a better job? If the person is incapable at the present salary, then what amount of money is going to make them better? These are tough, tough times for us, too, remember. Why does someone who gets paid so much get more, while people who have no extra to spare get nothing?

Those few overpaid people are not going to get the economy moving. It is the millions of overtaxed citizens that make the difference.

There is a lot of money wasted on streets that are needlessly repaired. A few small bumps on residential streets will make our street safer for little children. If a car gets damaged, the driver is obviously driving too fast. How about garbage pickup reduced to every two weeks to encourage curbside recycling? To boost spending, why not try a tax-free day, or putting through legislation penalizing the merchants who do not pass along to consumers the GST was supposed to benefit? Start a major food drive and/or cash collection among yourselves and all your well-paid-by-the-taxpayers political friends and give Winnipeg Harvest a boost. There are a lot of hungry families. Either show us you care about the people or step down and join the unemployed. I am a concerned citizen, taxpayer and voter, she signs herself.

I thought it would be really important for you to hear from someone who is living as a taxpayer, as a citizen of Manitoba and as a worker in a Crown corporation that in your opinion needs to have a freeze on wages, because she is living with that reality.

I have just gone around the province talking to our members about Bill 70 and the effect it is going to have on bargaining, and I can tell you that the morale out there is extremely low. It is at its lowest ebb that I have ever seen it. I have to go to Brandon next week and to Portage to find out how they are feeling about it, and I do not expect to get any

different feedback there than I have done from the North or from the eastern part of the province.

Our members feel that negotiations have purposely been dragged out to accommodate the introduction of Bill 70, and I am not so sure that they are wrong. I have been in a couple of other sets of negotiations but never, ever have we met three days a month to negotiate a contract. We have a member on our bargaining committee who travels from Flin Flon to participate in negotiations at a very high cost. She has left her family behind for a number of days every week to participate because, you see, collective bargaining is believed in by the people who work at Manitoba Telephone System. They thought that was a right that belonged to them and the only way they could improve their lot in life, and that has been taken away from them.

Our members in Brandon and Minnedosa and Thompson and The Pas and Flin Flon and Steinbach and Portage also want to know why they are not given the opportunity to speak to you at public hearings held in their town. They feel they are part of this province, that Bill 70 has a diametrical approach to them, too, and they would like to talk about it to you. They would like to know why they cannot.

\* (2150)

Our members are very discouraged. They are disappointed and angry about the actions of this government, particularly when they read in the Free Press about \$1 million interest-free loan given recently to Royal Trust, one of the wealthiest banks in Canada. I am sure that our two people who were here tonight to talk to you about one of them having to resort to personal bankruptcy and the other one seeing herself going in the hole daily would very much enjoy an interest-free loan to pay their mortgages on.

At the same time, they see people like Mr. Pedde, whom I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet—and this is certainly not a dig at Mr. Pedde per se but rather at the actions of this government in hiring him, when his increase of \$20,000 is almost as much as what some of our members are living on and raising families on in a whole year. Earlier this evening one of the ministers—I could not see who it was who was asking the question—mentioned about how he had asked us to take a zero and a 2 percent. Well, we were never asked to do

any of those things. We were not given the opportunity to refuse.

I can remember, though, a couple of negotiations ago, when the NDP were in power, that the minister called management and labour together here, I think it was probably in this room, to talk to us about the tight squeeze that the government was in financially and the need for us to all take a share in the burden, and asked us to consider a 3 and a 3 for a two-year agreement. Now, we did not like that either, any more than we like what you are saying, but at least we were given the reasons why. They showed us what the financial picture was and their reasoning behind their decision. While it did not make it all that much better, it at least made it understandable.

We have not been given that right this time around, nor have we been given the right to decide whether we can accept zero or 2 percent. You see, we had not even finished the nonmonetary issues in bargaining when Bill 70 was introduced, so we had not even talked about monetary issues at that time.

I also heard some comments made to one of the presenters tonight about, did higher wages equate to a higher morale? Perhaps the question should have been rephrased and asked, does lack of wages equate to lower morale, and I would say, yes, it does. People who are struggling to survive should not have to. When they are working 37 hours a week and putting in a good day's work, they should at least have enough to survive on.

I was interested today, when I was driving to work, to hear them say on the radio that it was Mr. Connery's birthday, and I wish him a happy birthday. I want to share a story with him.

**Floor Comment:** Two hours to go.

**Ms. Hadfield:** Two hours to go? Well, I am a bit previous, but that is all right.

I want to share a story with you about a man I know, who on his birthday each year gives a gift to all his family and friends—and I invite you, Mr. Connery, to give a gift to the working people of Manitoba, on your birthday, by voting down Bill 70, by helping these two women who are struggling for a mere existence. I leave you to think about that as I finish my presentation.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you.

**Mr. Ashton:** I thank you for coming forward, Of course, we have known each other for many years,

going back to when you were a resident of Thompson, and I appreciate the comments once again about the people you represent. One thing I also appreciate is speaking as you did for those who do not feel they can come before the committee for whatever reason. It is important that their story be heard, as indeed the two previous presenters and also with yourself, so thank you very much.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you very much.

**Mr. Edwards:** I want to thank the presenter for coming forward as well. We have heard from a number of people from MTS, and it is quite interesting that that Crown corporation has produced, at least the time I have been on the committee, more presenters than any of the other Crowns. You have talked about some of the feelings amongst the employees and, in particular, to the situation at MTS with Mr. Pedde and other things. Can you tell us how that affects the workplace on a day-to-day basis? Is morale low, in your view? How does that affect the operations of MTS?

In fact, I guess, what I am wondering is, I listen to people who speak for Hydro and MTS, if this is not a false saving. If the saving today is not really going to be worked out either in future negotiations, which will be much more difficult, much more hostile, much more aggressive, but also in terms of employees not necessarily not doing their job but just maybe being disillusioned about it, maybe not going the extra mile, maybe not doing what they can to promote the corporation they work for in the community—because, a lot of people feel a lot of pride for the corporation, or used to, in any event—maybe not coming up with that extra idea which might increase efficiency, that type of thing. Is that, in your view, likely to be a reality or a reality today in terms of the morale of the work force at MTS, from what you know?

**Ms. Hadfield:** It produces a number of different emotions, including in myself. I have been doing this job now for about eight years. I was a telephone operator once upon a time, so my heart goes out to people who struggle daily, and I talk to those people daily. Throughout the time that I have been working with the union and MTS, tried to have a harmonious labour relations with the management of MTS and feel that there has been some success in that area.

In fact, when Reg Bird came on board, after all the scandal which was very demoralizing for workers at MTS, who do have great pride in their work and great pride in working for MTS, they took a beating because even their own family members looked at MTS in a different way when all the scandal was brought out by this government about the Saudi Arabia incidents. Mr. Bird came along, and he did a good job, in my view, of putting back the morale into the company and building a team of workers who felt that what they thought and what they did had some meaning. We were beginning to see a different atmosphere develop. Then, of course, Reg left, and now this has happened.

We have been, as I said, in negotiations for over eight months, and our members are expecting something. When they see this kind of thing happen, naturally, their feeling of commitment, their feeling of being part of the team takes a kicking. It takes a beating because now they are saying, and quite rightly so, to me and to anyone who will listen that this is just lip service. We are just here to do the work, and we cannot get any compensation. We did the outstanding customer service. We have worked really hard. We have done a good job, and now, when it is time to share some of those profits with us, we are no longer a part of the team.

The only people who get compensated are people like the new CEO officer who has just come on line, has not been around to generate one cent of the \$39 million, and he gets 15.4 percent. Now, our members were not expecting anything like 15.4 percent, but they were expecting something as part of that team.

**Mr. Edwards:** You mention Mr. Pedde. I am sure it must have had some impact, especially because the timing was so close, and it seemed hardly a coincidence that they should happen so close together. Were you aware, or did you know if people at MTS were aware of the Minister of Finance's (Mr. Manness) defence of the salary paid to Mr. Pedde and the increase when he came, which was to the effect that you had to pay if you wanted to get the best.

Can you tell us if that had any impact on those employees who have just been told they get zero? The message, clearly, that I read into that was that the Minister of Finance thought everyone else is second best—if you are saying you are going to pay 15.4 percent to get the best, but you are telling everyone else they get zero, not negotiated by law.

Is that what you read into that defence that the Minister of Finance gave, because it is certainly what I read into it?

\* (2200)

**Ms. Hadfield:** Well, no. I read that message, and my members read that message. What are we? Chopped liver? What does zero percent buy you? Garbage? See, I know my members, and I know how hard they work. I know how committed they are to good customer service because they give it every day. An operator takes approximately 1,200 calls for her shift every day in six and a half hours, so that tells me that my members are hard-working, committed individuals who are in there for the long haul to give the outstanding customer service that they have always given. What they do feel, though, is that they are cheated out of their part of the money that is made as a result of that labour and that good, outstanding service.

I do not know how that will shake down. I do not know if they will be as committed, if in fact Oz Pedde can convince them to be part of that team, that winning team. I do not know if he can do that. As I say, I have not met him yet. I have an appointment with him at the end of the month. I do not even know what he is like. I do not know what he even looks like, but he must be some kind of an individual if he can turn around the minds of our members and all other workers at MTS who have been treated in this high-handed manner.

**Mr. Edwards:** Just on that point, finally, are you saying—I mean, the government obviously has high hopes from Mr. Pedde. I think we all have high hopes that anyone who is an executive officer of any one of our Crowns is going to do a good job, build morale and run a team operation, a successful operation. Are you saying, and I hear from your comments, that he is really starting behind the eight ball? He is starting with a heck of a task, given that he comes in these circumstances where his 15.4 percent increase is directly contrasted to a zero percent for everyone else. Are you saying the government has in fact put him in a very difficult position as he comes to try and take on his new duties with the corporation?

**Ms. Hadfield:** I would say he is in a very unenviable position right now, because the members are upset and rightly so. He has been put in a vulnerable position, really, and I would say that he is going to earn his 15.4 percent over and over again because

his lot in life will not be an easy one, given the climate that has been arranged for his welcome into the company, if you will.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Hadfield. I call next, 301, Emile Clune. Is Emile here? Would you come forward, please. Have you a prepared statement?

**Ms. Emile Clune (Private Citizen):** No, I do not.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Okay. Thank you. Go ahead with your presentation.

**Ms. Clune:** My name is Emile Clune, and I also work for Manitoba Telephone System. I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity of appearing before you to speak on Bill 70, but before I get into my comments on the bill, I would also like to speak briefly on the way these hearings are set up.

It reminds me a little of my children, when they were small, who, when they were given games for Christmas, after they had read the rules, conveniently lost them, and for the rest of the time we played according to their rules, which constantly changed, depending who was winning.

It is very difficult for workers to attend these hearings on something that is so very important to them—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Might I just interrupt for a wee second? I think you are reflecting on the committee, the operations of the committee and how the committee is structured and hears presentation.

I would ask that—the structure and the hearings process has been in place for a long, long time and is traditional, and therefore I would suggest that you not reflect on the makeup and the operations of this committee, but would you direct your comments to the bill, as we are here to hear you on.

**Ms. Clune:** I will direct my comments to the bill, Mr. Acting Chairperson, but I really think that this committee then must be—

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, not just for this speaker but for others who are in the audience, I think that it was the subject of debate in this committee as to whether or not we would meet out of this particular venue, what our hours would be, whether or not we would put time limits on. Those things were the subject of debate.

Others have commented on it, as you know, in these hearings, even this evening, that they do not

like to be heard at five in the morning or 5:30 in the morning. I have made that known and members of the other opposition party have made that known.

I do not find it untoward that this presenter should comment on that, and I do not think it is a reflection on the committee, something we should take offence at. It is a statement, a representation, that people do not want to be heard at five in the morning. We should take it in that light, as a recommendation perhaps for the future of this committee, for the future of other committees. I do not find that in any way offensive, and I would ask—and I do not intend to challenge you, sir, but I would ask that you consider those comments, and what other presenters have said, just as that—as representation.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Edwards, I thank you for your comments. I would like to, however, remind you, if you have ever made a presentation before a committee such as this, that presentations have been made at all hours of the night.

I have certainly been here in my prior life making presentations before a committee such as this at 2 or 3 a.m. in the morning, under previous governments. That is quite in order and therefore is reflective of the operations of a committee and the hearing process that is going on here now, Mr. Edwards.

**Mr. Edwards:** The comments she is making, whatever the history of the committee is, is that that is wrong. I agree with her; it is wrong. We should not be trying to hear people at five in the morning; it does not make sense. It is an embarrassment, frankly, to all legislators I think, that we meet people at five in the morning. We ask them to stay until five in the morning to hear them. It is crazy. She is making that statement, and I happen to agree. It is a representation, let us let her speak.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Edwards, for your comments. Would the presenter please proceed?

**Ms. Clune:** Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman. My comments regarding—

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

**Ms. Clune:** Are you all finished arguing? Can I continue? Okay. My comments are not directed as a criticism to the actual committee, but it has been very difficult for us to present.

Now, I am not a seasoned committee speaker. I have not presented to many committees, but I have at some. I have found that what happened—an example was the deregulation, the hearings on telephone deregulation, and I have also been a presenter at other ones—was that though you could not be given a specific hour to speak, you were given prior notice as to the dates the committee hearings were going to be. You were also asked what day you wanted to present on, and you were also given an a.m. or a p.m. time. Yes, if you took the p.m. time, you might very well be here late in the night, but I think that if we take the trouble to come here, we are willing to stay late.

This time I started off as No. 18. I was not even aware the hearings were on. I called late last week to ask if they were, because I had commitments Monday and Tuesday of this week. I was told no, and I ended up being bumped to—(interjection)—Just a moment Mr.—

\* (2210)

### Point of Order

**Mr. Manness:** On a point of order, Mr. Acting Chairman. I fully understand what the member is saying, but this—on the point of order, these are the rules of this Legislature, that have been set down in stone for years. The committee refers, after passage of second reading, bills to this committee or other standing committees, and sometimes those standing committees are called that day, sometimes the next morning, and people are contacted and hopefully are at home and given notice.

That is the way this Legislature has worked for years, and until the rules are changed, will continue to work. It is not like a travelling committee going across the province and giving a month notice; it is a completely different system. I would just—I think I have to state that for the record, because the process that was followed in this committee is no different than in any other standing committee of this House when it considers legislation, and it has been this way for decades.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Minister, for clarification. Proceed with your presentation, please.

\* \* \*

**Ms. Clune:** I thank you for your comment, and perhaps because I have never presented to this type of committee hearing before, I am mistaken, but I

would suggest to you that nothing is set in stone, and that given the problems we have had with this committee—through nobody's fault, just simply because there were so many speakers and we all work—that perhaps you should also take a look at these rules and see if they can be revised to be more accommodating to people who want to speak. Okay, are we finished now on this debate?

Normally, when I have made presentations at committees, because none of us are great orators, I do write out a brief, and I have copies for the committee. Oddly enough, every time I try to sit down to write something about my feelings on Bill 70, I found myself unable to do so. In fact, I became so outraged—and that is not my way of being, it takes a lot to get me angry—I found that I could not put words to paper, and in fact became so annoyed that I would have to leave the house and go for a long walk. So in the interests of my health and considering my age and weight, I decided that I would just make a presentation verbally.

I, however, did give some consideration as to why I was so outraged, because as I said, I am not normally outraged by these things. I deal with things as they come along. I realized that a lot of it was to do with the absolute, gross interference in our democratic rights.

I am not born Canadian. I was born in Ireland, as you can probably tell. My country was oppressed for hundreds of years and, before my time, they had to fight to free themselves from the heel of an oppressor.

Canada has always been, and I hope always will be, a democratic society. Since I have come to Canada, I have become very proud living here, and though I will always have a certain loyalty to Ireland, Canada is now my home.

Excuse me, I have to put on my glasses here; this is another of the problems of growing old—you cannot see. I have listened to and read about the government attempting to justify their reasons for bringing down Bill 70. I have to say that there is no way that you can justify such an attack on the democratic rights of the people you are elected to represent.

Bill 70 benefits no one. You talk about high-paid civil servants, but Bill 70 does not touch high-paid civil servants. Provincial judges are high-paid civil servants. Doctors are high-paid civil servants. Premiers of provinces, I guess, are high-paid civil

servants and so are their staff, but I do not believe that the staff have been touched by this wage freeze.

The chief executive officers of Crown corporations are high-paid public servants and you have heard a lot said here this evening about the \$20,000 increase that was given to Mr. Pedde. I was going to comment on that too, but in the interests of the late hour, and that you have heard about it already, I will just be very brief in my comments.

We earn, as Maggie Hadfield, my national rep told you, between \$18,700 and \$22,000 per year. So it is a little difficult for us to understand or to have sympathy with the reasoning of a government who thinks it is necessary to give the chief executive officer of our company a raise that is as much as some of us live on for a whole year.

I heard you ask questions as to what we thought about taxes, or how revenue could be generated, and these are very valid points and valid questions. I would invite you and the government to sit down with some of our people who bring up families, who live dignified lives on such small salaries, and see if perhaps they cannot give you suggestions as to how to cut the fat out of budgets and perhaps save the taxpayer some money.

The thing that makes it even more difficult for us to understand why we are being given zero percent increase, and why our negotiations had to be cut off midstream, is because we are not really costing the taxpayers of Manitoba any money at all. We are a Crown corporation who, people have told you already, generated a \$100 million in profits over the last three years, and over the last year generated \$39 million. This profit was generated, in a large part, by our work. So we wonder what the justification is in saying that we are costing any money to the taxpayers and, therefore, we are part of the wage freeze.

It was interesting, and I picked up this comment earlier. I think it was when the presenter from Manitoba Hydro was on—some comment that—I think it was Mr. Manness who had said something about monopolies. Well, MTS is a monopoly and all of you are well aware that we are faced with competition in that monopoly. That is a subject for a different time and a different place, but monopolies are not always bad.

It makes me wonder, given the profit that we had over the last three years, and given the fact that our wages are frozen, what the intention of the government is as to how these profits will be used. Are they going to be used to reduce the debt of MTS, to make it a far more palatable and interesting proposition for someone to come in and privatize it and buy it out? If that is your intention, let me tell you it will not be to the benefit of the people of Manitoba.

You will have to excuse me for skipping, but I had some of the things that other people had said, and I do not want to hold up your time going over them again.

When I heard about Bill 70, I was not in Manitoba. I was in Ottawa attending our convention, and I did not really quite believe it. I really thought that I was getting wrong information because I could not believe that any government would launch such an attack on a section of Manitobans, the people they are supposed to represent.

I am here to tell you that such interference in the bargaining process is unacceptable. This is a democratic society, and we have a democratic right to belong to a union. We also, I thought, had the democratic right to bargain with our employer. No government has the right to impose on the population legislation which gives you such sweeping powers, to override the rights of the people of a province or a country. This is Canada, not Romania, and we will not stand still for such an undemocratic action.

\* (2220)

I heard an earlier presenter make a statement something to the effect that they had tried to mobilize people, and it was very difficult to do so, but that he wanted to thank the government because through Bill 70 you had helped them mobilize. I guess we also should thank you because like all unions, we have our activists and we have a majority who really only come out now and then. Thanks to Bill 70 our members are mobilized. Our members are mad. Our members are saying, how much longer do we have to put up with this government? Thank goodness they only have a three-seat majority, et cetera, et cetera. You will answer for this eventually, but that is probably three years down the road.

The other thing I question as to the provincial government's right to interfere with our bargaining

and to impose a wage freeze on us, though I am not sure if what I am going to say is true, would be of any benefit to us. Come September, thanks to the noninterference of the government of Manitoba, Manitoba Telephone System will probably come under federal jurisdiction. If we come under federal jurisdiction as to certain aspects of the corporation, how then can you impose a freeze on us, though perhaps we will be asking to come back considering what the federal government are doing. So, I question that, if that is even legal, that you can impose this freeze on us.

**An Honourable Member:** Because we own the Crown.

**Ms. Clune:** You own the Crown. Well, why did you not put up a fight for the Crown? Why did you allow us to go under federal jurisdiction? SaskTel is not under federal jurisdiction. I add that by us going under federal jurisdiction, you are well aware that there is proposed deregulation of the telephone system and that it will be privatized and sold off. So the only conclusions that we can come to is that very likely this makes it easier to privatize and sell off. The \$39 million that some of which should have come to us will be used, as I said earlier, to reduce the debt to make it more choice—what is the word that I am looking for—a more, a better proposition for proposed buyers. However, I guess we will find that out as time goes on.

When you talk about interfering in the bargaining process, you are interfering with something that did not just happen overnight. Overnight people did not just get the rights that they have under unions. It took a long time. We all know the history of the labour movement, and our people were killed, how employers fought to prevent unions coming in. Indeed nothing has changed too much except now instead of clubs and guns, they use psychology and other lawyers and other nonviolent methods to suppress us, including legislation.

But you have no right, in my opinion, to propose with a stroke of the pen, the removal of the rights that we have fought for years to put in place. We are prepared to maintain these rights by fighting for them, if necessary. The members of our union across the province are furious. We have some who voted for you in the last election and, not only are they furious, they also feel betrayed.

Those of us, including myself, who did not vote for you are angry, but we are not surprised. Surely,

there is someone in this government who is willing to listen to the people of Manitoba, who does see that this bill is just an abhorrent piece of legislation, who surely have some concern for their constituents some of whom are living at or below the poverty level. If these people exist in this provincial government, I urge them to come forward and tell their party that they have overstepped their authority and that Bill 70 should be scrapped. Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you very much, Ms. Clune.

**Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa):** Thank you very much for your presentation. Earlier in your presentation you mentioned the high salaries, and you mentioned like the Premier and the ministers. I just wanted to give you a little information. I do not know whether you were aware of it, but the Premier of Manitoba, on the scale of one to 10, among the premiers of 10 provinces, he is No. 10 in salary in Canada. The members, the ministers who are here at the table may not say it, but their salaries have been the same since 1979.

**Ms. Clune:** What are your salaries, if I may ask?

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe the minister's salary is just over \$20,000.

**Ms. Clune:** How much of it is tax free, and surely you do not do this for \$20,000? That may be a basic salary, but there are other things that you get—

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes, over and above the MLA's salary, and then the MLA's salaries were also frozen.

**Ms. Clune:** You have expense allowances. You could not possibly do—if you were willing to do what you do, I mean politics is not an easy game, and if you were prepared to do what you do, and probably take the amount of abuse—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Order, please. Mr. Reimer, are you finished?

**Mr. Reimer:** I was just pointing it out to the presenter.

**Ms. Clune:** Yes and I thank you for the information, but some years ago, a minister, when we were discussing this very same thing, a similar thing, where managers had been given a raise and workers had not, I was told by that government official that I should have sympathy for the managers because their raise had put them in a higher tax bracket. So it is hard to generate

sympathy from us. I know that may be your basic salary, but I am positive it is not what you earn in a year. I thank you very much for the information because I really did not know.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Ms. Clune.

**Mr. Santos:** As a general proposition we can say that no person can take away what he does not give. If what you said is that it is not the government who gave the organized workers the right to bargain collectively, and by a stroke of a pen they are taking away what they did not give, do you think they have exceeded the bounds of legitimate political authority?

**Ms. Clune:** I am sorry. Did I think what?

**Mr. Santos:** Have they exceeded the bounds of legitimate political authority?

**Ms. Clune:** Oh, I would consider—yes.

**Mr. Santos:** We know that hearings like these rarely reverse decisions of a majority government. I am now interested in your perception as an individual. Do you think this kind of proceedings will—what is the probability of affecting the outcome of the passage or nonpassage of the bill in your opinion?

**Ms. Clune:** These hearings? Well, I would like to think that they would, but having watched some—not necessarily the people in the room now—of the members of the provincial government at these hearings, I am not sure if they are really hearing us. I think that it is very important that you do listen to people. A closed mind is a bad thing to have, and so I would hope that we are going to have some impact and that you will all understand that our concerns are sincere.

\* (2230)

We are not here—and we have not sat here all day—just to have ourselves speak. We are here because we are concerned.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you.

**Ms. Barrett:** I also would like to thank you for your excellent presentation. I would like to ask your opinion of the fact that while MLAs and the Premier took wage freeze this year, it was done through discussion and dialogue and agreement by all parties that this was an essential and a necessary and an acceptable thing to do. I wish you would compare that process with the process that was

undertaken by—or is in the process of being undertaken by Bill 70.

**Ms. Clune:** Well, of course, there is no comparison. I was interested in the comment and I think Maggie Hadfield commented on it, too, about zero and two percent. We were never given an opportunity to sit down and discuss why we would be expected to take something like that. We have had something imposed upon us. I think it is very necessary for governments or anyone who is proposing to make sweeping changes like this to at least consult the people who are going to be affected by it and perhaps they might get some input that would perhaps change their minds or make it a little more palatable.

**Mr. Edwards:** Thank you for coming forward with your presentation. Yet again, another person from MTS. It is amazing to me how you talk about your workers being mobilized; we certainly see evidence of that here at this committee and have for some time.

The question I had—and you touched on the uniqueness of MTS and other Crown corporations and those that are given monopolies. It used to be that it was a privilege to serve the public and work the Civil Service or a Crown. It was a form of vocation for public service, and we have heard some discussion from other MTS people that there was a pride at MTS about what they were doing and the quality of service they were offering. We have heard that from linemen; we have heard it from clerks; we have heard it from others.

What effect do you think this breach of faith with the unions, the bargaining process, which I consider it to be—and I think you have indicated you feel it to be—will have on morale at MTS? What effect will that have on the way MTS goes about its business? Of course, it relies on its workers to meet the public, do the job. Is this going to have an effect on the operations of MTS?

**Ms. Clune:** I believe it will have a very detrimental effect. We have, those of us who have worked for MTS—I have worked there for 23 years—and it has always been drilled into our heads that we are there to serve the public, and we have done so willingly.

We find now that people are saying: Why should I bother? Not only are they saying, why should I bother, but they are asking, when can we strike? So I would say that kind of—and this is from people that if you mentioned strike, they just disappeared. So I

would say that if people are thinking that way, that certainly morale is not high. How can it be?

**Mr. Edwards:** Flowing from that, would you say then that the supposed economic gains of this particular legislation this year may be eradicated by future negotiations in which there may be a lot more hostility, a lot more willingness to strike, hold out for higher wages, as well as just a general loss of morale amongst members of the corporation, which does have an effect on the desire to maybe put in the extra mile, maybe increase productivity just that extra little bit, which over the course of a year may amount to a lot? Would you say that the supposed economic gains may in fact be fictitious?

**Ms. Clune:** Yes. I think it will have a very bad effect generally. Like I said earlier, people who really have not that much interest in unions—and we know in any organization there are these people who have not much interest in anything—have now become very angry, would like to have been here. As a matter of fact, as you were going through the names, many of these people were our members who, because they had to leave to go to work, because we provide 24-hour service, were not able to stay here. So they are angry. They are disillusioned.

Bargaining is never an easy process. We have been bargaining since last September on nonmonetary issues. Anyone who has bargained knows that it is stressful. It is a total commitment. You have the concerns of your members' interests at heart, and you are trying to buy them job security, et cetera, plus it is a costly process, and suddenly in the middle of it all we have had to walk away. Now that does not leave a very good feeling, as I am quite sure you can understand.

**Mr. Edwards:** Maybe if you can comment—you have obviously been involved in the bargaining process. I assume that you would have been bargaining primarily with the bargaining agents of MTS, that is, people in the corporation who negotiate with the unions. Do you know whether or not they support this? Are they feeling embarrassed about this, or are they remaining tight lipped? Is there any indication that you know of from MTS management as to what they think this is going to do, whether or not they think this is in the best interests of the corporation?

**Ms. Clune:** I cannot comment on how the MTS bargaining committee feels because, of course, I

have no idea. In bargaining there always has to be a certain amount of integrity. You have to build trust. Though it is an adversarial process, you have to build up a measure of trust. I think we were doing that because we are dealing with new people this time around, but I think we had built up a measure of trust. I do not know how they feel, and they did not comment, but I do not think they were the happiest people in the world when bargaining was terminated.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you very much, Ms. Clune. The next presenter will be 310, Gary Ewen. Is Gary here?

Gary, have you a prepared presentation for distribution?

**Mr. Gary Ewen (Private Citizen):** No, I do not. Just some speaking notes.

I am pleased to be finally recognized. I have come from Brandon today to speak to the committee. I have been here since two o'clock. I notified the Clerk when I came, and it was my understanding that we would be put on as soon as possible. If this is as soon as possible, I will have a long drive home tonight.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I must apologize to you, Mr. Ewen. It is my fault that you were not recognized sooner. The main list does not identify you as an out-of-towner. The short list does, and I apologize for that.

**Mr. Ewen:** It is with mixed feelings that I address this committee tonight—I said on my notes this afternoon, but it is well into the evening now. I have been involved in the free collective bargaining process in this province for over 20 years. I have worked under collective agreements all that time, and no union I have been a member of has failed to attain a contract under free collective bargaining.

I think this is a sad day for the labour movement in Manitoba and for Manitobans as a whole that it has come to the introduction of this Bill 70.

I was employed by the Province of Manitoba for 17 years until last week, and I really have no regrets about leaving my employment with the province. I taught at the community college in Brandon for seventeen and a half years, and I have heard the members ask questions on the morale in the Civil Service. I can state right now that it has never been worse in the last 17 years from where I worked.

Please do not think that I am getting off the topic of Bill 70. The morale in the college in Brandon where I worked for seventeen and a half years—first we get hit with a colleges' act which the government ramrodded through a secret report to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). Next the employees get hit with a zero and two wage proposal, then massive layoffs, then the taking away of their right to bargain.

Mr. Manness, in a Manitoba government new release on June 3, stated: The provincial government cannot provide the foundation for economic renewal of this province on its own. He went on to state: Everyone must share in that goal. By asking those groups employed by the people of Manitoba to put aside their wage demands for one year, we can continue to preserve and protect jobs and services that Manitobans need without putting the burden on the taxpayer of today and tomorrow.

With the introduction of Bill 70, Mr. Manness is not asking the groups employed by the people of Manitoba to put aside their wage demands for one year. He is legislating away their right to collective bargaining. He is telling them, not asking them.

It was clear from the outset of negotiations in mid-'90 with the MGEA that this government was not prepared to negotiate in good faith. It was clear to everyone at the bargaining table that the negotiators sent by Mr. Filmon and Mr. Manness to negotiate a collective agreement with their employees had no mandate to negotiate an agreement with the MGEA. Public servants work very hard for the people of the province and deserve better treatment than this government has shown them by the introduction of this Bill 70.

\* (2240)

In the press release, Mr. Manness stated the bill does not affect nurses. He stated, in recognition, that they are a unique case and have received settlements higher than other members of the public service consistent with the government's commitment. It is plain to see that the nurses' unique case, referred to by Mr. Manness, does not apply to nurses directly employed by the Province of Manitoba and represented by the MGEA and other unions.

This bill takes away these nurses' rights to free collective bargaining. In Brandon we have nurses working in the mental health centre, as a previous presenter talked about the mental health centre at Selkirk. Attendants, we have public health nurses

in the employ of the Province of Manitoba that are affected by this bill. -(interjection)- Pardon me? What is wrong?

Other groups that this bill does not affect are university employees. I am not advocating in any way that it should affect them, but when tuition fees at universities that our children and the children of your employees attend go up by 20 percent a year, and the employee's right to negotiate a fair wage increase with their employer is taken away, there is a big problem.

It is ironic at a time in history when many countries of the world are arising out from under dictatorships that this government would introduce a bill that takes away workers' rights to free collective bargaining.

I am not going to go on and on. I have a long way to drive before I put my head down, but I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to address you. Thank you.

**Mr. Manness:** Sorry for interrupting the presenter. I did so when he said that nurses—he read from the press release June 3, I believe. If he read from page 2, it says: "Nurses, in recognition that they are a unique case and have received settlements higher than other members of the public service consistent with the government's commitment."

I took that and I expanded on that to say: All nurses in the employ of hospitals and in the employ of the government directly are excluded, and there will be regulations made to that effect as soon as this bill is passed.

I am sorry, Mr. Acting Chairman, I should ask the question. I only thought it was important I state that.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you very much. I will accept that for clarification. Now, are there any other questions?

**Mr. Ewen:** Could Mr. Manness run that by me once again, please, just for clarification?

**Mr. Manness:** I read from the second page of the press release that I think you were quoting from a little earlier on, and as I said, nurses there were clearly indicated as being exempt. The legislation itself does not provide for that, but the regulations that will flow from this legislation will provide exemption for nurses who are employed by hospitals and those employed also directly by the government.

**Mr. Ewen:** You are saying then, Mr. Manness, that the public health nurses, the nurses who work in our

institutions who are members of the MGEA will not be affected by your Bill 70?

**Mr. Manness:** I am saying all nurses who were covered by the settlement reached after, by the way in my view, pure collective bargaining in the month of January, will receive their increase whether they employ MGEA or not. We have stated that. We have told the nurses union that. We have also told Mr. Olfert that. We have told anybody who has ever broached the subject.

**Mr. Ewen:** If I may speak, what I am saying is—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I am not going to allow a debate, Mr. Ewen. The minister has clearly indicated what the provisions are and will be provided for under regulations, unless there are any questions of Mr. Ewen.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am going to ask Mr. Ewen if he wanted to further indicate what he was talking about, clarify his comments which he was just about to do.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Edwards, I had clearly indicated that I would not allow a debate between the minister and the presenter and I will not allow a debate between the minister and a presenter. The minister has clarified the position and so it will remain. Is there a question of Mr. Ewen?

**Mr. Edwards:** To the presenter: do you have any further concerns about nurses in Brandon?

**Mr. Ewen:** I have concerns that—the minister stated that nurses in general are a unique situation, and he seems to be trying to say that all nurses will be looked after. I am saying that many nurses are represented by the MGEA—public health nurses, whose wages are effectively frozen by this legislation, Mr. Minister.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I am the author of the bill. It is my bill. I know who I have covered and who I have exempted. As I said in the press release, the nurses are exempt and regulations will be brought in to exempt them. Thank you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I take the minister's comment to include the MGEA nurses. I think he did mention MGEA once before and that is what I take it to mean. So that seems pretty clear. We will hold him to that. Do not worry.

With respect to your presentation, you have mentioned community colleges and the low morale at community colleges. Was your community college directly affected by any of the layoffs which came just before Bill 70 was brought in?

**Mr. Ewen:** Yes, it was.

**Mr. Edwards:** You have talked about the colleges act as well, and then the layoffs and then Bill 70. What effect will morale have on the workings of that institution? Can you express in your own words how that is going to affect what you try to do there, which is educate Manitobans? How will that affect that college's ability to do that job for Manitobans?

**Mr. Ewen:** Mr. Edwards, it will not affect the way I do my work there because I mentioned that I had just severed my employment with the Province of Manitoba, but it will, no doubt, have a great effect on the service to the young people in southwestern rural Manitoba.

**Mr. Edwards:** Thank you, and I just want to say thank you for coming in. We had hoped that we would decentralize this democratic process and would have taken it to Brandon and other centres. That was not agreed to by the government. So I am particularly thankful to you for making the effort to come in, sir. Good luck with your retirement plans, whatever they may be. Thank you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Ewen. I call next No. 311, Mr. Sidney Green. Mr. Green, have you a prepared presentation for distribution?

**Mr. Sidney Green (Manitoba Progressive Party):** No, Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not have a prepared presentation, but I do have some material which I believe will be of some value to members of the committee because it deals directly with the subject of free collective bargaining.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I will ask it to be distributed. Thank you, Mr. Green. Proceed.

**Mr. Green:** Mr. Acting Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Sidney Green. I appear here as Leader of the Manitoba Progressive Party. The Manitoba Progressive Party is a party that was founded basically because the principle of free collective bargaining was being departed from, and we wanted to have at least one party in the province of Manitoba that would fight for, and believed in, and would stand for free collective bargaining. So I could not very well not come to this committee meeting to make a presentation, since that is almost

the basis upon which our party was formed. Although there are other aspects to it, I would say the catalyst was a fight for free collective bargaining.

\* (2250)

I might say to members of the committee that, effectively, I have been here since three o'clock, with a break for dinner. I blame no member of the committee for this. I do not blame anybody for having done this. I recall having done this to people myself when I was involved in setting up committee meetings. It seems bizarre to the people who are coming, but it is the only way it can be done. I said that when I was in a majority, and I said that when I was in a minority, and I say it when I am in nothing. It is the only way, given the basis that you are proceeding, for you to continue.

Now, that does not mean that I am entirely in favour of the process. The Chairman has admonished other people from going into it, but then Mr. Edwards has permitted the door to expand. I will deal later with the process because I think it confuses a lot of people who think that they can come here and get legislation, which has been agreed to in principle, changed by a show of force.

I remember we had at least 400 briefs in opposition to public automobile insurance. If we would have had 4,000, we would have enacted public automobile insurance, and we would not have permitted a minority group to come to a committee and upset the majority position of the Legislature.

Now, Mr. Acting Chairman, I say that in opposition to this legislation, because this legislation infringes, in a dramatic way, on the principle of free collective bargaining. I say that the legislation is defective for three main reasons. One, that it is in principle defective. It takes away free collective bargaining from both employers and employees and tries to substitute a system which, I suggest to you, will not work and which will run in the direction, the opposite to which the government would like it to proceed.

Secondly, I say the bill is unnecessary because everything that the government wanted under the bill could have been accomplished if they really legislated free collective bargaining. If there was free collective bargaining—and I now want you to imagine an absence of all of those statutes which have prevented free collective bargaining and which are now in the legislation. If there were none of those statutes, if you were engaged in true free collective bargaining and you did not want to raise

wages, when the union came in representing the employees and sat down with management, the union would say we would like an increase, management might say we would like a decrease.

Ultimately, management, which you say wants to freeze wages, could under free collective bargaining, if they were right—and I make that qualification, and in the case of what you are doing, you would certainly have been able to do it. Just say, we are not increasing wages. The rights of free collective bargaining are sustained. You have a right, as representing a group of employees, to say that we will not work if we do not get wages, and the government has the right to say we will not employ you unless you work for the wages which we are putting to you. That is free collective bargaining, and I am sure a lot of people here misunderstand that. They think free collective bargaining means they get an increase. Free collective bargaining could mean they get a decrease. That is bargaining. Therefore, Mr. Acting Chairman, the bill is unnecessary.

So, first of all it is wrong basically, and I sort of expect that from Conservatives, although I thought we had come a long ways together on this point, and I will describe that in a minute. Secondly, it is not necessary and it should be a primary rule of every Legislature: you only put something into a statute if it is necessary. If you can do it without the statute, you do it. You do not legislate, and you do not have to come before these committees and sit through 700 presentations. You govern the province of Manitoba, and you say to the people that you are negotiating with, we cannot give you an increase this year. They say, we want an increase this year, and you fight it out.

Given current conditions, Mr. Acting Chairman, there is absolutely no doubt that in the areas that you are talking about a freeze on, you would be able to negotiate a zero increase in wages, under the system of free collective bargaining.

One could probably forgive No. 1 and No. 2. It is wrong in principle; well, we all have different principles, and we are the only party that has pushed for free collective bargaining. Two, it is unnecessary, but maybe you do not see that. But, three, it is such terrible politics and that is something I cannot forgive a political party for doing, because by doing what you are doing, you have given an opportunity to the most vicious and effective assassins of free collective bargaining to come in as

its champions. There have been no greater assassins of free collective bargaining in the province of Manitoba than the NDP and the Manitoba Federation of Labour. What you have done is said to them, we are going to give you, again, an opportunity of being the pretenders of free collective bargaining.

Mr. Acting Chairman, a lot of people have come up here and told you where they are coming from. It is interesting, the reaction it has on the committee. A person says, I am a student and the committee says, Oh, what do students think?—as if this person suddenly becomes the spokesman for students. Or, I am from Brandon—What do the people of Brandon think? Or, I work for the Telephone System—What are the people at the Telephone System thinking? Well, I cannot claim—maybe I can say that I grew up on Selkirk Avenue, so maybe I can say, by virtue of that, all of the people who grew up on Selkirk Avenue are now being represented by myself. If everybody ever lived on Selkirk, and that may be many, many people, perhaps you want to regard me as a spokesman for those people, but I am not.

I speak for the Manitoba Progressive Party; it is a very small organization. It does not have any political success, but what it has successfully done is maintain the principle of free collective bargaining throughout. I have heard people talking about free collective bargaining before this committee as if I was in another world, that it sounded to me like Alice in Wonderland.

I want you to know that this is where I am coming from. I grew up in the north end of Winnipeg. At the age of approximately 16—because it was 1945 or '46; I cannot remember exactly which—I went on strike and carried a picket in front of Oretzki's department store. I do not remember exactly all of the things that were involved in the strike but I remember that what we ultimately achieved is that instead of working from 9 in the morning until ten at night, on Saturday, in the summertime, we got it from 9 in the morning until 9 at night. We got an hour off on Saturday, which helped some, because somehow they could still get out to Winnipeg Beach on Saturday night and enjoy Sunday there.

What I knew when we went on strike was that we were going to walk out that door, and we were going to try and tell people not to buy from Oretzki's, and we were going to tell people not to go in and take our jobs. Every single one of us knew that maybe

people would go in and maybe people would take our jobs, and that if we lost the strike, we would have to look elsewhere. Therefore we had to be very, very sure that we had a good case, that people who saw our pickets would support us, and that other people would not take our jobs. If we did not have that kind of a case, then we could not succeed. That was free collective bargaining.

What Mr. Oretzki knew is that if he was made by us to look very bad, people would stop shopping at his store; and, since we wanted to work, and he wanted to have the store open and, if we were right, other people were not going to scab us, we would reach a collective agreement. We did reach a collective agreement, and we went back to work.

Following that, Mr. Acting Chairman, and I was on strike—there are lots of people here who seem to know what collective bargaining is, who talk about it in a way that I have never heard of before.

\* (2300)

I then went to university and I learned a little bit about labour law. I was the lawyer for the Manitoba Federation of Labour. I was the lawyer for almost every—let us not exaggerate—for most major trade unions in the province of Manitoba. I was the lawyer for most of the building trade unions in the province of Manitoba. I taught Manitoba Federation of Labour seminar courses at the University of Manitoba. I was hired by them as their lecturer. I appeared for the Manitoba Federation of Labour and other unions before all of the courts of this country. I was a lecturer in labour law at the University of Manitoba Law School. I was the labour spokesman for the New Democratic Party when we were in opposition. When we became the government, I was the principal person involved—and, of course, in the Stalin school of falsification, all of this is no longer acknowledged—I was the principal person responsible for drafting labour legislation. They used to call The Queen's Bench Act—we are the only province in North America where a judge cannot, by law, enjoin a picketer, no matter where he is, secondary, tertiary, wherever he is—we are the only province, Manitoba, where, by law, a judge cannot order a person to go to work.

Those things, the legislation, and you can check with Ray Tallin, were drawn by me. The government wanted to put it in the labour act. I said: This is not a labour law; this is a law for citizens, all citizens, that no citizen can be prevented from

walking with a sign saying what he believes about a certain person, as long as it is not defamation; that no person can be ordered by a judge to go to work. It does not apply to a trade unionist; it applies to everybody. It was referred to, until about 12 years ago, as the Green amendment. Suddenly, it is no longer referred to as the Green amendment because the Stalin school of falsification has tried to indicate that this person had nothing to do with that amendment.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I have passed out a document, and I want to indicate—and by the way what I am telling you about free collective bargaining is the same thing that was supported by every one of those groups, the New Democratic Party, the Manitoba Federation of Labour, all agreed with the concept of free collective bargaining that I am now enunciating to the members of this committee, and it is contained, fortuitously, in this pamphlet on labour, which was published in 1976. It is a speech that was made to a New Democratic Party convention—not a convention, a seminar.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I was surprised to learn that there are no time rules here. When you have no time rules, you run a big danger when I am at the microphone. I was astonished, and by the way, that is absolutely wrong.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I will ask you, Mr. Green, to indulge very briefly. I have been accused of trying to stifle periodically, and we did not want to stifle the debate, and we are not going to stifle your debate tonight.

**Mr. Green:** Mr. Acting Chairman, let me tell you this, that if you say that you are going to govern in that way and that you are not going to stop anybody, then there will be 3,000 people at this microphone. You will prevent yourself from legislating. I do not want this bill passed, but I have some belief in the democratic process, and if you say that you are not going to legislate a certain bill if people come and stand at this microphone, by God, as sure as night follows day, there are going to be people at this microphone.

So I suggest that you rethink what you are doing, not because I want the bill, but because I have some respect for the process. Let me say this: Nobody would have been able to ring the bells indefinitely if I was the House leader to stop legislation. They tried it when I was in government and the House leader. They tried to stop legislation by walking out

of the Chamber and ringing bells. I will tell you something, those bells did not ring long, and we passed the legislation. If the opposition did not want to be there when it was being passed, that is their tough luck, and the people would be on our side. The people would not say that the democratic process as such, that a minority can prevent a vote of the majority by not appearing. That is absolutely incredible. Ten-year-old kids at a boys' club would tell you that is stupid, but that happened in this Legislature.

Mr. Acting Chairman, here is what I said then and what I have said continuously. My good fortune is I said the same thing when I was not an MLA. I said the same thing when I was an MLA in opposition. I said the same thing when I was a cabinet minister in government. I said the same thing when I was an MLA in opposition again. I am saying the same thing now when I am a nobody. At least it is the same thing, and it was approved, and it represents what I know about free collective bargaining by Jimmy James and Bob Russell and the people who fought for that principle in the labour movement. It was not what is now being suggested.

Now, Mr. Acting Chairman, here is what I said about free collective bargaining, and I go to page 10. I have a written brief: "... should be borne in mind by both employers and employees relative to their respective bargaining positions.

"It is an essential to free collective bargaining that the employee may choose not to work or the employer may choose not to hire, and that each of these positions should not be encroached upon by the state.

"Every employer should be made abundantly aware that every form of social and economic ostracism is available to his employees in the event of either a strike or a lock-out; that the exercise of these measures can put him out of business, and that the state will not take any steps to inhibit his employees from obtaining such public support.

"Employees who choose not to work in support of their position must be made well aware of the risk that they are taking with respect to either losing the strike and/or losing their employment. Any attempt to mislead the employees in this connection or to suggest that they will be protected by laws or by the government will detract from responsible collective bargaining.

"Employees who are of the opinion that the law protects them in making demands either in the public or private sector should be made aware that if their demands do not marshal public opinion in such a way as to cause them to succeed, they will certainly lose the strike.

"There are many areas of service, such as the maintenance of generating stations, hospitals, where the public has demonstrated an unwillingness to consider the discontinuance of services during an employee exercise of their right to withdraw services and has reserved to itself the right to attempt to maintain such services during an existing strike."

I can tell you that these were the principles that I learned constituted free collective bargaining in all my early years. They were the principles upon which I defended trade unions in this province. They were the principles that were in full adoption of the New Democratic Party from the years 1966-1977. Then something happened to free collective bargaining. Some of you might remember what it was.

The biggest catalyst was a stupid strike called in an irresponsible way at Griffin Steel, where people walked out of Griffin Steel—

\* (2310)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Green, would you please repeat what you just said, for the record? I think the mikes—

**Mr. Green:** Did not hear it through here, through the mikes?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Yes, please.

**Mr. Green:** Okay. It was an irresponsible strike called at Griffin Steel. The employees walked out. The employer would not settle and the employees were in big trouble because they were not going to be able to get their jobs back because they were wrong. The employer would not settle that strike.

Then a whole bunch of loyal New Democrats came and said, pass a law saying that the employer has no right to hire other people when there has been a strike, pass a law to help this union. That was free collective bargaining. We said no, we will not pass a law to help the union. The union is engaged in free collective bargaining, let them bargain.

Then these loyal people walked into the Legislature with signs saying: One, two, three; one,

two, three; we've been screwed by the NDP. The following election they were cabinet ministers in the NDP government. That is how they made their way in life.

In any event, from 1969 to 1977 we changed labour laws. By and large—and I have to admit there were some things we did which do not follow the principle—we undid the right of the state either through Legislation or through the courts to interfere with the free collective bargaining process. We made the process closer than it had been to free collective bargaining.

The demonstration that we had been evenhanded and that we had maintained free collective bargaining occurred during 1977 to 1981 because the Lyon administration, which was a Tory administration, changed barely a word of that labour legislation.

If legislation is equally fair so it could be passed by a labour-supported government and continued by a management-supported government, there must have been something good about it. The unions no longer wanted free collective bargaining. In particular, Mr. Christophe, who had a strike at SuperValu, and other people, said we have to make it that free collective bargaining means that the employees never lose and, therefore, we will pass a law that if they go on strike and they do not win, they can say, strike is over, blow the whistle, strike is over, you have to take us all back. You have been standing outside my plant for 60 days. You have been calling me names. You have been calling people who have walked in names. You have told the public to boycott me. Now you say, here we are, take us back to work. Those people who worked for us during your tough times, they are out on the street. That is free collective bargaining. That is a new concept, nobody, nobody—Mr. Douglas and Mr. Blakeney were in Saskatchewan with CCF governments for years—nobody except the assassins, and I say the assassins, the people who drove the nails in the coffin of the free collective bargaining system were the NDP and the MFL.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I want to show you how you could have got by without this legislation. First of all, you pass a law saying that the MGEA no longer is the bargaining agent for all the employees. They never got that through free collective bargaining. They never bargained their way into being the bargaining agent. It was done by statute. The

statute declared the MGEA the bargaining agent for all those employees.

Let those employees select a bargaining agent in the same way as any other employees select a bargaining agent. So you repeal the legislation that says the MGEA is the bargaining agent, and you let them establish bargaining rights in the same way as bargaining rights were established by all the unions between 1919 and 1945. There were lots of them. They all established bargaining rights and they signed collective agreements. That was free collective bargaining. You then pass a law wiping out the first contract legislation.

First contract legislation is a law that says if you cannot bargain collectively and get an agreement you go to the board and they impose an agreement, so you wipe that out. You have apparently wiped out final offer selection, so you have taken one small step, but, Mr. Acting Chairman, there are numerous provisions of The Labour Relations Act and you should take every one of them out that deems something to be in a collective agreement which has not been agreed to by the parties. That is free collective bargaining.

Even the arbitration clause, which is deemed to be a part of every collective agreement, should be negotiated between the parties. Certainly the checkoff should be negotiated, and that is the one area that I regret from 1969 to 1977 that we passed that should be—there were lots of checkoffs, lots of union shops before the checkoff was put into legislation. How was it obtained? By free collective bargaining.

When I spoke to the first contract legislation and I spoke to the final offer selection legislation, I still brought this same book, and I said the trouble with this kind of legislation is that once you encroach on the free collective bargaining system you make that the order of the day. Then what happens is all you are arguing is not whether it should exist or not but what parts you are going to change.

When you have a labour-oriented government, they will interfere with free collective bargaining by passing laws which are designed to deal with their friends who no longer need to be responsible bargainers because you have put it in the legislation for them. When the Tories come in, they will pass a wage freeze or something just the same. When the NDP comes in, they will do the opposite, but there will be no free collective bargaining. Is that not

what is happening here? We are not dealing with basics. Free collective bargaining is out the door already. We are now dealing with how a particular government is going to interfere with it, and the whole principle which gets people behind it is gone. That is proven, Mr. Acting Chairman, by what is happening here.

I mean there are 500 names on the list or 600 names on the list. Those are not names on a list; those are names that they urged to put their name on a list and come and make a speech and say something against it. The basis of the process has disappeared because the employee knows that he is not involved in free collective bargaining. He knows that the government has passed a law that if you cannot reach an agreement—you know there is one clause that shows you when you pass this kind of legislation the regulation sections become grotesque, and it is true. It says that you are able to define any term used in this act not defined in the act, and you have had to assure a man that you are going to do something by regulation. What if you do not? They will call you names, but it is not the law. I was going to say they will call you a something, but they will call you names.

You have reserved to yourself by regulation the power to undo everything that is here and that always happens when you go to legislation. Whereas if you did not have the legislation and you bargained freely and collectively, you would not have to say that you are going to define a word to mean the opposite of what it is. Do not think that is so unreasonable.

\* (2320)

The NDP passed an act that says something is the opposite of what it is. They passed an act saying that when you do not agree, it is an agreement. Have they not? Is that an exaggeration? They say that if you do not agree, you will go to the board and they will give you a first agreement. It is an agreement. They go to the board. The management does not agree. The union does not agree. You go to the board. They impose it, and it is an agreement.

So an act makes an agreement a disagreement, and you can do that at least to give credit to the NDP. They at least came out and did it in an act. They were forthright. You want to do it by legislation. You want to say that a woman is a man or vice versa. I do not wish to leave out anything, because I do not

want to discriminate on the basis of sexual preference which is now a law that I have to be very careful about.

So, Mr. Acting Chairman, you have kept it. The Tories are responsible. The Tories have a government. I do not happen to believe that people should have to contribute to a political party in which they do not believe. I used to donate freely and voluntarily to the NDP. Now they passed a law that they pick my pocket if I do not want to give them money. You keep it. You have kept it. The Tories have kept it. We have to pay for the political parties of this province whether we believe with them or not. The Tories have not changed the law with respect to collective bargaining. They have taken out one section, final offer selection, and it took them a long time doing. There are many, many more aspects of The Trade Union Act which are infringements of the principle of free collective bargaining.

The Liberals, the Tories and the NDP, they have not changed it. They say that this society is broken down into males, females, homosexuals and lesbians, and they recognize that as legislation. They are leaving out some, by the way. There are sexual preferences that are not included in those four. We say that they are men and women. You have kept it. So I blame this Conservative government because here was the chance. Here was the chance to get the unions coming in and saying you are doing us an injustice.

You are legislating free collective bargaining, and what you have done is given exactly the opposite opportunity to come in as pretenders because it is the last 10 years that this has been undone, and it has been undone by the Manitoba Federation of Labour and the New Democratic Party. You are giving them by this legislation the opportunity of coming in here and saying you are opposing free collective bargaining. It is so unnecessary, Mr. Acting Chairman. You want to bargain at zero? I mean, you might be worse than I think you are. You might want to bargain at minus two percent; why say zero? Some people in these areas may want to give a decrease. You have frozen them at the present rate.

Now I am not advocating a decrease. I am not advocating an increase. I am advocating free collective bargaining, and you can go through all of the legislative journals, Mr. Acting Chairman, all the years that my words were put on the records of Hansard, and I was not a quiet person. You will find

that I am not changing my position, that is the NDP and the trade union movement that abandoned free collective bargaining, not myself.

Now, Mr. Acting Chairman, I have heard a little while ago that—I think Mr. Santos asked—should this not be enshrined in a Bill of Rights, a Charter of Rights, this free collective bargaining should be enshrined in the Charter of Rights. That opens the door, Mr. Acting Chairman, for me to say that in 1981, thereabouts, I addressed the legislative committee on the question of a Charter of Rights, and I said at the time that anybody who believes that they want to legislate things, that they are seeking power for the purpose of accomplishing something, should be adamantly opposed to a Charter of Rights, because if they get in and tried to legislate they are giving an opportunity to nine unelected judges to stop their legislation. The NDP said, well, that is Green again. He is against rights; he is against this; he is against that. It took them 11 years, but at their latest convention they now say, hey, that notwithstanding clause, that is necessary. We need that; we do not want to give that up—right at the convention this year.

So, Mr. Acting Chairman, my penalty was that I was 13 years ahead of them—excuse me, that is an exaggeration, it is 10 years. What I said 10 years ago there and am saying now, I say, no, do not enshrine free collective bargaining in a Charter of Rights. The one thing—I think it was somebody here who said, I think maybe it was Mr. Loxley who said that what has not been given cannot be taken away. Well, there was some sense to that. You did not give anybody the right to collective bargaining. They had it before it was nullified by the Legislature. There was no law against it under common law.

**An Honourable Member:** Fought for it.

**Mr. Green:** Fought for it and it was not legislated, but now if it is legislated, the corollary to the statement is that if the Legislature giveth the Legislature can taketh away, and the Legislature giveth the MGEA certification. The Legislature had given all of these infringements on free collective bargaining, and I say the Legislature can take it away.

Taking it away will not be taking away free collective bargaining. It will be restoring free collective bargaining from the impediment that had been brought on it by all three political parties in this province—the NDP most guilty, the Conservatives

also guilty for not undoing it. and the Liberals for supporting it, for supporting those clauses because the difference between the Liberals and the NDP is that the NDP are in the pocket of the trade union movement, and the Liberals would like to be. That is the only difference. They would like to have it and they do not.

That is what they have been squirming around for, to try to not offend the trade union movement. Let me tell you, Mr. Acting Chairman, that the year after this final offer selection was legislated, the next election, if you are worried about votes—and I always was and I suppose every politician should be. I have never criticized a politician if somebody said, oh, he is just looking for votes. There are some that do not look for votes? I have always looked—I am complaining I did not get as many as I wanted, but look for them? I looked. In that election, after Pawley legislated final offer selection, they lost the labour vote virtually in the north end of Winnipeg. They lost in Inkster. They lost in Burrows, after giving this great prize to these workers.

Well, the workers are a little smarter than that. They know they do not want to substitute from employer bosses to labour bosses and have to be beholden to their organizer. They want the same freedom that free collective bargaining gives them and not to be tied so an organizer can say look, we are going on strike. We will take a strike vote. You do not have to worry, because if the strike vote is passed and the employer does not give in, then we can ask for final offer selection. We do not have to bargain. All we do is hire a lawyer to appear before the Labour Board—we have a friendly board and they did have when they passed the legislation. They better worry now. Mind you, the legislation is out.

\* (2330)

On first contract selection, we do not know what the board is going to be. I would not put a worker's wages or my wages or a doctor's wages into the hands of a labour board or the state to say how much I am going to earn. The trade union movement did it. They put it into the hands of an arbitration board and said, in the legislation, if final offer selection is requested—only by one side, by the way, because you know they wanted heads I win, tails you lose. Only one side had the right to demand it. Then they said that if final offer selection is requested, you have to do it and your right to strike is denied. If that

selector happened to give them a minus 5 percent, they could no longer go on strike.

That is what they gave up, to be put into the hands of third-party arbitration. That is what the trade union gave up, not to Vander Zalm who passed almost the same legislation except both sides could ask for arbitration, but by their so-called friends the NDP, who I repeat, Mr. Acting Chairman, were the assassins of free collective bargaining in this province. You have made them the heroes of it again for no good reason.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I said I would say something about the process. I am not sure, but we are one of the only Legislatures that after first reading in principle we have the public come. Are we the only one? Can we not figure it out that something must be wrong with us?

First of all, it is not the public who comes to speak on Law Amendments. When it was Autopac, it was a drummed up Autopac group. If you have no rules, well, you will not be able to sustain that. If you have no rules—if we had no rules on the Autopac debate, there would have been 2,000 people here. They could have prevented Autopac. Here is an anomaly: they could have left us in government for 10 years without passing Autopac because all we would be doing is sitting listening to them. That is true. It would not be hard for them.

If you, on Meech Lake—the notion that you were going to put Meech Lake to anybody who wanted to come, all you did was say to the opponents, here is the way to stop Meech Lake. If you now say, if it gets around that it does not matter how long you take, how long you speak—one person can stand at the microphone for eight hours, we can stop this legislation.

I will tell you something, Mr. Acting Chairman, this legislation is not that important anymore, because the principle was destroyed seven years ago, or during the Pawley administration. Therefore, those things which cause men to fight or women to fight for something, namely the things you go to war for, the right to freedom and the right to something that is very, very important to you, we have declared those things to be not important about seven years ago.

I have sat here for seven hours. At least we thought—you know, what does a legislative committee now do? It permits members to feed their questions to a person standing at the mike.

With all respect to that person, why is that person so important—because he happens to be at this microphone?

I want to tell you something. I only got 570 votes. The guy who is sitting in here from Kildonan, Chomiak, he is much more important than I am. All of a sudden, everybody who walks up here becomes an expert whose opinion you need in order to deal with this legislation. It is just not so, Mr. Acting Chairman.

I believe in public participation. I believe there are ways of getting public participation. I do not believe that public participation should be able to stifle an elected majority, because I am hoping, even though it seems ridiculous—it has always been my aspiration to be in power. What is the point of getting to power if I then set up to the opposition the way of preventing me from doing anything? Go all through the work of getting elected and then say, I cannot do anything because I have to sit and listen to Sid Green for an hour or an hour and a half.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Green, as Chairman I am going to fairly soon exercise the suggestion that you have made to us and impose a limit on the discussion. I would ask you to draw your comments to a conclusion, if you could.

**Mr. Green:** The MLA from St. James will help me out. He will ask me a question. He will say, Mr. Green, did you have anything more to say? Then Mr. Santos will say, do you not agree that everybody is entitled to an education? I will say, yes, I agree. Mr. Santos will feel good because he has made a point through me. Why does he have to make a point through me? He is a sitting member of the Legislature elected for a seat. I am nothing, but he wants to make a point through me.

I say to you, Mr. Acting Chairman, this process is wrong. We have gone along with it, but it is wrong. If you insist on doing it, which I say you should not, I say that Law Amendments or a legislative committee should perhaps limit itself as they do in Ottawa to hearing from—and I do not want to be snobbish about it, they do not have to be experts. They could be representatives of organizations or something. Even that I do not agree with. I do not agree that the public is better represented on this side of the table than on that side of the table. Why is it that the elected representatives of the people are the last ones who get up here and say, you do not speak for the people?

I heard a new concept today, not only freedom of speech but an obligation to listen. Obviously, you are not free not to listen. I do not believe what I am saying has to be listened to. I hope it will be, but I cannot charge a member of the Legislature: you shall listen to me, you are obliged. I am responsible to my electorate and I hope to go back to them and see to the—now, we are in the process.

I do not wish to insult anybody. I believe the people who came up here were sincere people who made meaningful presentations. I think they have been handled in the way I expect, the way we used to handle them. It is not very meaningful and it poses great danger and wastes a lot of time. You are going to be on this thing for several days, all of us knowing that hopefully the Liberals are going to get somebody who is going to support their point of view and the NDP is hoping they are going to get somebody to support their point of view. Look, Mr. Acting Chairman, these tables have not been occupied since I have been here. Who are we talking to? We are talking to ourselves.

If the fourth estate is not involved, you do not have a legislative process. They are not involved because nothing is going on in here and they know it. Is that what happens? The press stays away from a hearing on what is the most important piece of legislation that is coming out of the government? They are smarter than we are. They know nothing is happening here, and they are staying away. What you should be doing—and each of you has been elected by a majority in your constituencies. You should be reflecting that, dealing with your constituents and dealing with everybody else who you feel, on a public basis, but do not set up a system.

Mr. Acting Chairman, if I was in favour of Meech Lake, I would say that the Province of Manitoba committed a criminal act, that they deliberately set up a system whereby Meech Lake was not passed, which might have some effect, if I believed it, on the unity of this country by making it impossible for it to get passed. Once you tell the public that we will not pass it unless each and every one of you have the opportunity of being heard, you are telling them that it will not pass, it cannot pass. The people who are in favour are not going to come because that would be counterproductive. They would be preventing the legislation if they came. The people who are against are told that, although you have no power, although nobody has elected you, you have the

power to come in here and stop democracy. They make that a principle of democracy, the power to stop the elected representative of the people.

That is my submission.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you very much, Mr. Green.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, let me say that I have been looking very forward to your presentation, Mr. Green.

I do not have many or any questions to you, but let me say that I have learned an awful lot from your presentation. Now I more fully understand what Mr. Ashton meant when he said on page 4402 of Hansard: "It is fundamentally different from arbitration which stifles, which freezes the bargaining process, because the incentive under traditional arbitration is for parties to put in extreme offers . . . ." He was talking about FOS.

Mr. Green, I enjoyed your presentation very much. I know there will be other questions from our side.

\* (2340)

**Mr. Green:** Then let me just say, Mr. Manness, I do not disagree with final offer selection if the parties want it. I do not believe in state-imposed—and the NDP gave it to be understood that this was done in other places and it works. It was done in other places by the agreement of the parties.

**Floor Comment:** The University of Manitoba had it for awhile.

**Mr. Green:** They are entitled to it if they want it.

**Mr. Ashton:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, indeed if the minister had cared to continue the analysis in terms of arbitration and indeed in terms of the bargaining positions, that is true. He would also, I am sure, recognize that one of those extreme positions has been forced through, through the application of Bill 70. I can get into the debate on that, but if the minister wants to quote various aspects and get into the debate, I would suggest the time is more appropriate in the Chamber.

I thank the presenter again. I missed the first part of the presentation. I was in the back actually—

**Mr. Green:** It was the best part.

**Mr. Ashton:** So I hear. You always bring a different —(interjection)— I am sure. I know we have sat through many a committee hearing in the past, and you always bring a different light. We may

agree on some points, and we may disagree on others, but I must admire your continuing dedication to public issues in the sense that I know very few people who have had as long a career in the Legislature who even set foot inside this building after they are out of politics. I think the fact that you come to these committee hearings gives at least some hope that this process means something, even if it is to say that it does not mean all that much in your opinion. I appreciate that.

**Mr. Green:** The reason I come, Mr. Ashton, is that still, way back, I think maybe I want to be sitting where you are.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Green, it is a pleasure to hear your presentation. I want to take advantage, though, of a matter that you touched on, which obviously has become more troublesome to all governments, and that is the conduct, the manner and proceedings of this committee, which is, indeed, unique to the Canadian scene. In latter years, I acknowledge and confess, and you have experienced, different governments, different political groups, have used or abused this process. It particularly rung a bell with me when you reminded us that legislation coming before this committee has already been approved in principle by the duly democratically elected representatives of the people. There ought not to be a question—this is really the question I want to examine with you, as we perhaps out of this experience move to re-examination of our rules for this committee—

**Mr. Green:** You could ask them for amendments.

**Mr. Enns:** Well, I would like to just use your legislative experience. You will acknowledge that in many instances you have experienced, certainly I have experienced, representations made to this committee or indeed discussions among committee members, where very common-sense amendments had been made to legislation that have been drafted by our legal counsels, our legislative counsels, representatives of groups upon whom legislation impacts upon—it could be professional groups, it could be farm groups, it can be manufacturing groups, who come not to thwart or stop the legislation but, because it is their business or it is their association, make the kind of helpful suggestions that make, in some cases, poorly drafted legislation better legislation.

Would you consider as a suggestion to current legislators that that concept should be adopted? In

other words, that recognition that bills appearing before this committee cannot be argued against in terms of should it be passed or not.

**Mr. Green:** Mr. Enns, once you get a citizen of the public before this committee, all of those arguments about relevance and stopping will take more time than hearing the man out. There were several times that somebody said, we are going to stop you because you are talking about it not relevant. All of a sudden, there was an argument about relevance. You are going to find that the members of this committee rightfully are trying to make a political impact.

The way they will make a political impact is to try to use that particular person at the microphone to get their point of view across. They are not seeking the point of view of the guy at the mike. Mr. Santos asked four questions. None of them had to do with anything that the guy at the mike was talking about. It had to do with something that Mr.—I am not criticizing you, Mr. Santos. I am saying that your attempt was to get something through and hopefully hear that this person agrees with you. Do you believe in a right to education? That was your first question on this bill. He said, yes, everybody has a right to education. You have a right to primary education. There were others of that nature.

Once you set up the structure, it is not as if, when you set it up, people are going to behave reasonably. People are going to behave with the opposition trying to unseat the government, which is their job to do, and the government trying to sustain itself, so the best-laid plans of mice and men is not going to produce a better situation.

I question the need for these public representations. I really do not want to appear not wanting to hear from members, but there are 57 MLAs. If there was no committee, surely the people who are at this mike would find an MLA. He would meet with him, and he would say, look, we would like you to put this point across. Then he would come to the committee meeting, and he would say, look, here is a point that I think we should be dealing with. I think that is an MLA's job, and by the way, we did not get paid for it when I was here. You are being paid to do that now. You have offices; you have much more financial assistance to do that type of thing.

Once we get to the forum, the forum is the entire process. The forum is the government trying to

sustain itself and the opposition trying to get rid of the government and become the government. Why am I here? Do I really think I am going to change your legislation? I am here hoping that somehow it will get across that Green and his group still are fighting for free collective bargaining; maybe there is some currency in it.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Green, I will try once more. I am a democrat, not a New Democrat, an old democrat. I hope to be one all my life. I have great difficulty in not acknowledging that nonprofessional or members of the general public, and particularly people who are impacted by legislation that is passed from time to time, do have and can have a constructive role in making legislation better. I simply have some trouble in believing that all the wisdom is housed by the legal counsel or by ourselves.

**Mr. Green:** I do not disagree with you.

**Mr. Enns:** I am just wondering whether you could not narrow it down. Representations to this committee are acceptable if those presentations are willing to accept the bill. If they are opposed to the bill, like we have had on this bill, I agree with you that it is a waste of time in the sense that the presentations have all been simply calling for the government to drop the bill. Well, they can tell that to their MLAs. They can vote in certain fashions. They are not attempting to make better legislation of this bill. They are asking us to drop the bill.

You have heard groups come forward. I can recall your government passing legislation on how farm implement parts should be sold. You suggested that in critical seasons it should be available on a 12-hour basis. Then we had to hear from the manufacturers, from the dealers who said, in certain circumstances because of the depot arrangements, that was not possible. Canada Post could not even bring them in 12 hours. They had to come from Regina, so you amended the bill, your Minister of Agriculture did, to 48 hours. They did not come in to oppose the bill.

I agree with you. The allusions that you suggest to—when this same committee heard from hundreds and hundreds of people who opposed the government of the day to introduce public automobile insurance, that was a meaningless operation. When this committee has been used by my governments that I have been part of in a similar way or when the Pawley administration brought in a

constitutional resolution, it was used in the same way: simply to oppose it. That is what I am trying to get at.

If that could not be established at the time that the committee sat and at the time the public was invited to present, there had to be an indication there was an acceptance of the bill in the first instance, recognizing that the bill had been approved in principle.

**Mr. Green:** Mr. Acting Chairman, if you are seeking my advice, I suggest you appoint me as a consultant to deal with the role of legislative committees and whom they will hear and whom they will not hear. I think there may be some intervening position. Knowing politics as I do, the people who came to this microphone today—I will go back over the briefs, I did not hear them all—I would say 60 percent of them were not even here just to oppose the legislation. They were here to get the government kicked out. That is fair game, if you call them. If you call them and you give them the box to stand on and you say you are going to be able to talk as long as you want to and say anything you want to—and if there is an objection as to relevance, do not worry one of the opposition guys will help you out. If you call them—then I came to legislative committee to try to hit the government, because I think it was an issue on which to hit them. I came to legislative committee when Mr. Roblin was in government because I was trying to get him out of there. We did succeed. Legislative committee was one of our assistants.

I do not consider—by the way, you have to have some rules. The one thing I cannot see tolerated, I do not believe that the government should set up any mechanism whereby the elected majority—because that is the way I think: I think in terms of majority, not minority. If I had a majority, I would want to do something. That is why I sought power. If I had the power, then I would not have a mechanism, whether it is bell ringing or citizens appearing or demonstrations, that said we can stop the legislative majority. I would not do it. I would be a fool to seek power on those terms.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Green. I am going to call the debate back to the bill. I will only allow questions that are pertinent to the bill. I will only allow answers that are pertinent to the bill.

**Mr. Green:** You would be surprised what I can do with an answer.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** You would be surprised at my rulings.

**Mr. Santos:** I do not want to disappoint Mr. Green in his self-fulfilling prophecy. I would have risen and defended his right to speak, especially if he is speaking in disagreement of the government.

If there is any great wisdom in our political system, it is the right—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Santos, I am going to call you to order and ask you to address the questions, directly to Mr. Green, to the bill and that the question remain pertinent to the bill, not the political system that we are under today.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, do you think it is the right of the citizen to disagree with any legislation in a public forum such as this, such as Bill 70?

**Mr. Green:** Absolutely. I would get an auditorium. I would put an advert in the paper and I would say I am going to hit that government. I have done it.

**Mr. Santos:** I could imagine—

\* (2350)

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Santos, I will ask you one more time, for the last time, to address your question to the bill.

**Mr. Santos:** I just referenced the bill, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Okay.

**Mr. Santos:** If I cannot speak in here, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think this is a prostitution of democracy.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Santos, you may speak and you may ask the question that is pertinent to the bill, of Mr. Green. Proceed.

**Mr. Santos:** With respect to the bill and with respect to the presentation of Mr. Green, in relation to Bill 70, I would like to ask Mr. Green, since he said that the citizen—I picked it up, maybe I misinterpreted what he said—should have no right to disagree with the right of the majority to make a decision.

**Mr. Green:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Santos:** I ask him whether he recognizes, nevertheless, the right of the minority to have a say before the majority makes the decision?

**Mr. Green:** Absolutely.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, if vigilance is the price of freedom—

**Mr. Green:** Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

**Mr. Santos:** The price of liberty—and liberty makes freedom. -(interjection)- No? Okay. Whatever the distinction is.

**Mr. Green:** In any event, it is eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

**Mr. Santos:** Ultimately, in relation to your presentation, with respect to Bill 70, Mr. Green, do you accept the fact that the ultimate choice in our democratic system resides in the populace, in the people?

**Mr. Green:** Yes, and that choice is reflected by what we call responsible government. Responsible government means that every—not only do we do it every certain period, but any time—and you have the most reason to know about this—that the representatives of the people do not like the government under our parliamentary system, they can get rid of it. And, fortunately for all of us, about five years ago that happened.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Edwards.

**Mr. Santos:** I have not finished, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

In relation to your presentation and in relation to Bill 70, that is possible only when the citizens are given the possible magnitude of freedom to express their sentiments, good or bad, particularly so if it is in opposition to the will of the majority, which they think is morally wrong. Is that correct?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** It would appear to me, Mr. Santos, that we are drifting away from the bill, the intent of the bill, and I would ask you to address your comments or questions to the bill.

**Mr. Green:** I will answer the question, if I may, Mr. Acting Chairman.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I will allow this. I will not allow the questions to proceed in the direction that they are.

**Mr. Green:** Mr. Santos, the only reliable way I know of measuring the will of the populous is through their elected representatives.

People used to come into my office and say that we are the people and you are our servant. I say,

why am I in a lesser role, because I got elected and you did not? Are you telling me that I have more status to say that I represent the people than you have, just because I am standing at this microphone claiming to be one of the populous?

The only reliable spokesman who you can take as speaking for the people is the person that the person elected, because he is responsible to them. If he does not say what they want to hear, they will throw him out at the next election, whereas I do not know that somebody walking up to this table is the people. I know that he is Sid Green who lived on Selkirk Avenue.

What you consider the people to be is anybody who comes up here and speaks against the government, because those are the ones you agree with.

**Mr. Santos:** If there is any meaning to the freedom of expression, it is the freedom to disagree. Regardless of the basis of such disagreement, I think that is the right of the people to say so.

**Mr. Green:** I do, too.

**Mr. Santos:** May I ask another question?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** You may only ask a question if it relates directly to Bill 70. I will not allow another question unless it relates to Bill 70.

**Mr. Green:** I will not answer one.

**Mr. Santos:** Whether it relates or not, this will be the last question, Mr. Acting Chairperson. This is directly on the presentation. I do not see why I am so limited in my leeway to ask questions.

Gaetano Mosca, the man who experienced life and then wrote a treatise called *The Ruling Class*—I am going to read it slowly.

**Mr. Green:** *The Ruling Class*?

**Mr. Santos:** Yes. Quote: When we say that the voters choose their representatives, we are using a language that is very inexact. The truth is that the representative has himself elected by the voters.

Do you agree or disagree?

**Mr. Green:** No. By the way—I will give you an answer.

I believe that our system is very imperfect. I believe it does not do exactly what should be done in every case. Like Winston Churchill, although our system may be terrible, it is the best one I know of. I do not see anything in your quote other than a

negative view of what an elected representative is without any suggestion that there is a better way, that perhaps we should be ruled by plutocrats, perhaps that we should be ruled by intellectuals, perhaps our government should be chosen by superior beings.

Our system works like hell. I know it works like hell. Look who it has elected. It is the best way, and I accept the results of it.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Edwards.

**Mr. Santos:** I said I will have one more question, but I did not say I would not make any more comments. I would like to make some comments.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am sure Mr. Green and Mr. Santos can carry this on. Mr. Green has been here this long. I am sure he will meet with Mr. Santos if he has one more question.

**Mr. Green:** Do not be too sure.

**Mr. Edwards:** He may want to ask you about education.

The question which is related to the quote you gave us is one of the principles. You indicated, there are many areas of service such as the maintenance of generating stations, hospitals, where the public has demonstrated an unwillingness to consider the discontinuance of services during an employee exercise of their right to withdraw services and has reserved to itself the right to attempt to maintain such services during an existing strike. You also told us about destruction of free collective bargaining.

\* (0000)

As you know, we now have this arbitration provision, whereby civil servants apparently—and I do not pretend to have the section in front of me, I have read it—have the right to go to arbitration in some form or other. Can you give us the history of that? I do not know what the history is.

**Mr. Green:** Maybe the government and they agreed to arbitrate. If two people agree to arbitrate, then they can arbitrate. By the way, I do not know how long such an agreement can continue. One could say, I do not want to arbitrate any more.

By the way, in the quote that you read, Mr. Edwards, I want to make it clear that, although I said those things about essential services, I would never pass legislation—and this is one thing, I was there for eight years—I would never pass legislation

prohibiting a strike or legislating those people back to work. I would somehow get the service maintained, but I would not legislate people to work, never did.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am led to believe that there is provision in The Civil Service Act for a right to arbitrate and that is how we got to the position we were, where the minister felt they had to bring in Bill 70. He says they had a right to arbitrate. I do not know when they got that. I was hoping maybe you could tell us.

**Mr. Green:** No, I cannot tell you. I do not know the specific section you are referring to. If we did it, I find it very difficult to believe. I believe they could strike. They were going to strike on us. I remember they were going to strike—the guards in the prisons were going to strike.

**Mr. Edwards:** There is no question they have the right to strike. The question is whether or not they also have a right to go to arbitration. I think they have it.

**Mr. Green:** To demand arbitration?

**Mr. Edwards:** Yes, they have it under The Civil Service Commission Act.

**Mr. Green:** I did not know that.

**Mr. Edwards:** One of the—

**Mr. Green:** Anyway, if they do have they should not have.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Order, please. I am going to ask you to wait to answer and to ask questions, to be recognized properly by the Chair, because Hansard is going to have a very difficult time trying to put some order in the recording of this debate or discussion.

**Mr. Green:** They always had a difficult time with me.

**Mr. Edwards:** I was under no misapprehension as to how you would feel about that clause. I just was wondering if you were aware of it.

With respect to those particular areas, what should be in place for those areas, those essential services? Do you say—and let me just illustrate there are two I know of, at least. There is the mandatory arbitration, binding arbitration of some sort or, in the case of the nurses, we had essential services contracts. What would you suggest?

**Mr. Green:** I would suggest free collective bargaining. I would say to the nurses, if you go on

strike, do not get the notion that your job will be waiting for you. That is the problem with the strikes now. The nurses get the impression that the government cannot do anything.

I would say those who wish to strike, strike. Those who wish to come to work, come to work. Those who do not come to work—when the doctors were going to strike at Selkirk, I said the patient is going to be looked after, but I am not going to force that doctor to work. I would not force anybody to work. I would not force nurses to work.

When they know that a strike could mean they are looking for work elsewhere, it is not that we can say, final offer selection and blow the whistle, and after the strike is over you have to take us all back to work, which is what the legislation now says, then you do not have free collective bargaining so you have strikes.

I do not believe the nurses would have struck under a free collective bargaining system. Maybe they would have. Maybe I am wrong. If they would have, I would have had an obligation to maintain the service, and I tell you I would have maintained the service. It might have been that I would have had to give in. That is part of the free collective bargaining system.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Edwards, is your next question going to be pertinent to Bill 70?

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am talking about the Civil Service. I am talking about ways to settle disputes. That is what Bill 70 is all about. I think I am completely in line. Let me ask the next question, and you can be the judge of that.

Given that this government has brought in Bill 70 in the way it has, in the fashion that it has, you have expressed disagreement with that. I look at your paragraph, you have referred to us. It does not say, should do something, as the prior four do. The fifth statement here states a conclusion of fact that there are areas of service the public does not want to have the withdrawal of services, essential services. Are you saying there are no circumstances, there are no essential services ever, even given the conclusion you have drawn at page 10, in which you would countenance an alternative form of dispute resolution?

**Mr. Green:** I personally, Mr. Edwards, would never say that a person is impelled to work under the threat of breaking a law. I was able to sustain that position

in eight years of government and no services went undone.

I know there is a notion that the only way you can get people to work is to say that, if you do not accept arbitration, it is illegal and you are going to go to jail, or you are going to be fired. I would say: you do not want to work here? That is your business; you can go on strike. I will figure out a way.

In my view, freedom is the best ingredient in settling industrial disputes. Once you put the state into it, one way or the other, you undo the best resolution. I am not saying that under what I am proposing you will have perfect industrial peace. You will have, in my view, the best way of achieving the best situation, and that no other system—it is just like I said to Mr. Santos on democracy. It may not be perfect, but it is the best system.

**Mr. Edwards:** We had a dispute with doctors, and doctors have been raised in this debate extensively. What if the doctors all withdrew their services, people started to die, and we could not find new doctors? What should we do? Pay them whatever they want?

**Mr. Green:** Mr. Edwards, I would not pay them whatever they want. I am satisfied that under a free system, which we do not have, by the way, for doctors in the province of Manitoba—strangely enough they have probably been undone with respect to bargaining rights more than anybody else, more than labourers. They have the worst situation.

A labourer can go and work for somebody else if he does not like what his collective bargaining agreement says. No doctor can render medical services in the province of Manitoba except under the rules that are established, even if he does not want a cent from the government. If the doctor and the patient both agree—we will not go to medicare—the law is he must treat that person, if he treats her, for the fee that is set out in medicare, in the regulations. He cannot make any private arrangement.

A fireman can make a private arrangement. You can hire a fireman and say, if my house burns, I will have an alarm at your house, so you will come and put it out. I will pay you so much money. You will also be entitled to the fire department. There is nothing to prevent you from hiring a detective to guard your property. You cannot hire a doctor,

except under the regulations—the only person that I know of.

You are asking me a hypothetical question. What if there is a general strike in Canada like there was in Russia? I cannot give you an answer except to say that I believe operating under a free collective bargaining system, and that freedom in other areas, is the best guarantee against the disasters that you are posing. I cannot make an ultimate guarantee, but if you will look around the world you will see those things have not happened where there has been freedom.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you very much, Mr. Green.

We will call the next presenter, which is 225, Ted Yorke. Is Ted Yorke here? Ted, would you come forward, please. Have you a presentation that you would like to distribute?

**Mr. Ted Yorke (Private Citizen):** No, just some brief notes.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Would you proceed, please.

\* (0010)

**Mr. Yorke:** I am appearing before the committee to voice my objection to Bill 70, The Public Sector Compensation Management Act, an innocent enough looking bill, affecting so-called, over-paid public servants, but sitting in this committee room—and I made a note, “seven hours,” but I think that was four hours ago—it is certainly, in my opinion, the majority of them are not overpaid.

The suffering that some of them go through, trying to earn a living, is something not everyone can relate to. If you have a job, if you are a two-income earner, if you do not have young kids and suffering the costs that you do, if you are fortunate enough to have a well-paying job and to be under a system of collective bargaining, where the rules are not changed on you in midstream, you may be more fortunate than some of the public servants.

I consider Bill 70 to be a direct attack on myself and others like me. Over the past year I have had my costs of living increase substantially, much of the increase being the result of actions of Conservative governments, both here and in Ottawa, and certainly being affected by the friends of governments who, at every turn, seem to increase their prices on everything I have to buy.

The infamous GST is one example that everybody is suffering under. It is an example that costs will be passed down, taxes will be passed down, but where do you go for the money if you cannot go to your employer? I am convinced that my personal cost of living has increased more than the official 6 or 7 percent that StatsCan claims. I know I certainly cannot afford to buy or do many of things I used to enjoy. Now you want to impose legislation that will rule out any possibility of getting enough of a raise to get back at least a little of that lost ground.

Conservatives certainly would never expect their business friends to absorb increased expenses they encounter. Business is always using increased costs as justification for raising the prices that I have to pay for the goods and services. I am sure this government would never ask them to absorb cost increases of the size that the majority of Manitobans have had to face lately, without the opportunity of increasing their income.

I think it is extremely unfair that this government is asking for a majority of the citizens, a majority of their own workers, to bear a greater burden of restraint than any business would be prepared to do. I also have to wonder why the government has singled out public sector workers to be the people who are expected to carry most of the burden of fighting the recession.

Over the past few years, wages for public sector workers have generally risen less than the wages of workers in the private sector. Yet, this legislation seems to be making people, public sector people, the scapegoats, and blaming all the problems of the recession on them instead of looking at themselves for better management.

The government always says that they want to create a favourable business climate. Yet, by using Bill 70 to cut wages and force Manitobans, approximately 48,000 of them, to spend less—they are spending more on their personal necessities at home, dealing with their families. They are obviously going to be out less. It is safe to say that businesses will be hit hard by declining sales, and more and more businesses will be forced to close their doors.

Perhaps some of the Conservative members of the committee could explain how reducing the volume of business companies do, and forcing some into bankruptcy, is creating a favourable

business environment. I cannot really see it. I am really angry about how the government is trying to further reduce the standard of living with the imposition of Bill 70. I am also very sorry for the rest of the Manitoba population.

Look at the work that the people, who are paid by the public sector, do. Many of the people in the union I belong to, the Food and Commercial Workers, work in hospitals and personal care homes, and other facilities intended to help people in need. These are critical services and in many cases essential services. Bill 70 can only hurt the level of service the public will receive from such places.

People who are dissatisfied with the working conditions, who are worried about how they will meet their expenses that month, cannot do the best work they are capable of doing, working less efficiently. Now, with the imposed legislation facing them, certainly they do not see much optimism in the future.

When facilities such as hospitals, personal care homes and other health care facilities are hit by a work stoppage, many of the workers are designated by the government as essential and required to continue doing their job. That shows how important even the government thinks these people are. Bill 70 could force many workers to stop doing the work.

We have heard a number of presentations saying that people are ready to leave the province. It is a sad state that they have to face, that the government is imposing conditions on them that they cannot get out of. By their training, by their career aspirations, they became civil servants. Through no fault of their own, they are being asked to shoulder a higher burden than the average Manitoban.

The government, enacting this legislation affecting approximately 48,000 people, is singling out and possibly discriminating against a vast majority of people with the stroke of a pen. It is interesting that the government is trying to promote Bill 70 as a way to fight the recession and deficit, but they never provided exact details about how Bill 70 would accomplish that. They are never saying, well, we are going to save this much money and perhaps put it to more hospitals or by freezing the wages of the public sector that the deficit will drop so many millions of dollars.

I have never heard them say they will use the money to open more beds, to provide more nursing

homes or a sweeping cut of the taxes. I really question whether or not they will in fact save enough money by freezing the wages of public sector workers to make any significant differences to the government's financial picture. If they do, what will they do with the money, since there is no indication that it will cut the deficit, result in improved public service or produce tax savings. I can only assume it will be used in the same way as millions of other government dollars have been used recently, and that is pouring it out to more businesses that support the Tories.

Bill 70—I have not found it a very lengthy document, but it is really a scary document. It does not affect just public sector employees. I think the title was used as a smokescreen to cover up whom it might affect if certain unions perhaps led the way in collective bargaining and bargained for substantially higher wages. They define a collective agreement as any collective agreement. They define an employer as any employer and a union as any union under The Labour Relations Act.

Clearly it is a bill that is designed that if needed to go further, at the stroke of a pen could go further. The private sector has very much to be in arms against this bill as the public sector is. Perhaps the most frightening thing about the bill is it becoming retroactive to a certain date after negotiations have been completed with the various other unions. I believe it was the operating engineers and the casino workers at the Hotel Fort Garry. Certainly, when you think of public sector workers, you do not think of them as being overpaid.

I find Bill 70 scary and typical of the Tory government and its approach to labour relations. The bill and the government does not even pretend to seek input and co-operation from labour. It seeks only to give the government dictatorial powers, to give the government total and absolute control over labour relations. It would prevent employees and employers, even if both sides wanted to, from discussing any issues of common concern.

Bill 70 removes the right of employees and employers to negotiate the terms and conditions under which they will operate. It is an extreme case of eroding workers' rights, a piece of antiunion legislation that should never be tolerated in a country and a province that are supposed to be democratic.

\* (0020)

It must be realized that this bill does much more than just freeze wages of workers, as some people think. It freezes all the terms of a collective agreement. It makes it impossible for a union to even negotiate such things as better sick leave provisions, improved pensions, long-term disability benefits, et cetera, things that would not cost the employer or the company one thin dime in the short term.

It is scary that this bill will give the government broad powers that will reduce the standard of living of nearly 48,000 Manitoba workers. What is even worse are the clauses in Bill 70 that give the government the power to extend the provision of the bill to thousands of other workers, perhaps every worker in the province.

This could be done or the length of time the bill will remain in effect extended without any public discussion by the Conservative cabinet at closed-door, back-room meetings. The scope and duration of Bill 70 can be expanded without legislation, debate or public accountability on the floor of the Legislature. Even the committee meetings are typical of the way the government likes to do things. If the government had any choice, it is clear they would prefer not to have them at all.

Since the government must have them, they have tried to make it as difficult as possible for the average person to give a presentation. People sitting in the room—the room has thinned out quite a bit—were waiting for hours and hours. As we have heard through the history of these committee meetings, I guess it is the process. Certainly the average working person and a lot of the people who are directly affected by this bill could not be here during working hours.

If there is any lack of interest among the workers of Manitoba in these hearings into Bill 70, it is because they have learned from sad experience that this government does not really want to listen to what they have to say. It is clear that the government members of the committee do not come to this room looking for ways in which Bill 70 can be improved or to seriously consider the possibility that the bill should be scrapped entirely. They attend only because they feel it is part of a meaningless ritual that they have to participate in.

The government members may pretend to listen to myself and other members of the public, but in the end I fear they will do whatever they please,

regardless of what has been said. We just went through almost two hours of listening to that happen.

Even if this government does not extend the restrictions of Bill 70 to other workers beyond the 48,000 it already has, something I am convinced they have every intention of doing later this year, I know that this bill will have serious financial implications for me when my union collective agreement comes up for renegotiation. It is a safe bet that my employer will try to use the arguments that I should not ask for any improvements in my wages or benefits because the public sector workers are not getting any improvement in theirs.

Employers will probably even try to use the argument that workers cannot have wage increases because business is poor. Why is business poor? One of the reasons is, undoubtedly, because there are 48,000 Manitoba workers who are having their wages reduced by government order. People who have their wages cut obviously have less money to spend on the products and services Manitoba companies provide. You can reason out that the people are spending less because they are paying more. When they do not get increases in their benefits, when they do not get increases in their pension, the money has to go somewhere and it is basic necessities. They are not out buying big ticket items.

Bill 70 is not fair to public sector workers, and it is not fair to private sector workers since it freezes all the terms and conditions found in typical collective agreements. All the health and welfare benefits certainly are going to deteriorate. If a company is not required to increase contributions to group insurance and dental plans to keep pace with rising costs, the benefits provided by those plans will have to decrease. That in turn will effectively reduce the wages of workers even further because they have to devote a bigger and bigger proportion of their income to pay for the benefits they used to receive through their employment.

It is also safe to say that Bill 70 will produce an increase in already high unemployment rates since there will be 48,000 Manitoba families with less money to spend. Many businesses will experience a decline in sales, and I am sure some businesses are with the anticipation of these employees holding back from their big purchases. This will in turn lead to fewer people being hired by the companies and perhaps more layoffs and closures.

I can only sum up by saying that the more people who will appear probably tomorrow at the committee hearings, and any thereafter if they are allowed to put their names on the list, are doing so because they feel directly affected by legislation specifically designed to take away their bargaining rights.

If there is anything that would promote free collective bargaining—we have seen various terms used here, what is free and what is not. I do not think any free collective bargaining is free. You are always giving up something for something. There would have been ways to achieve what the government wanted to by not imposing this legislation, but by sitting down and coming up with creative ways to ensure the workers their jobs, to ensure that the costs are not unreasonably being forced onto all Manitobans as a whole and that legislation affecting a vast majority of workers would not come into being as a knee-jerk reaction to the government not being able to deal with mismanagement or rising costs. For example, there was the high salaries paid to the head of MTS. Clearly, the government in my opinion has a double standard when the average Manitoban is not getting high increases and now is looking at possible legislation that would wipe away any increases that had been negotiated freely and collectively.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Acting Chairman, just one question. MGEA—Mr. Olfert on behalf of his members asked for 30 percent over two years. Is that a reasonable request?

**Mr. Yorke:** I do not know if that was a starting request, but certainly we have asked for—in the union I sat at negotiations with—asked for a 10 percent increase every year knowing full well we were not going to get it. It is a position that you take before you go into negotiations. You give up something to get something.

**Mr. Ashton:** We will ask the other side of the coin. Is zero percent, which the government has not only offered but is now legislating—do you feel that is a reasonable offer?

\* (0030)

**Mr. Yorke:** No, I certainly do not feel zero percent is a fair position. It is a ridiculous position to even start from. The cost of living has gone up far greater than zero percent. You are looking at 6 percent or 7 percent overall in one year, let alone if you are stuck to an agreement that is three or four years

long, you are falling way behind. In my opinion, no, zero percent is really unfair.

**Mr. Ashton:** I appreciate your comments on that and other issues. What I really want to do is just add a comment that I have noticed you have sat through, as you said, pretty well all today's sitting, and it has been eleven and a half hours worth of committee. This has actually been the longest committee day, I believe. I commend you for sticking through to the end of the presentations and still being able to come forward and express your views as well as you did.

Thanks very much.

**Mr. Santos:** You have stated, Mr. Yorke, that the government did not say how the freezing of wages of public servants will save enough money if it will, and, if it will, how that money will be used. Do you think then that Bill 70 is simply a pretext of this government to take away collective bargaining rights?

**Mr. Yorke:** I feel very strongly that it is a first step, if not a first step in this session. FOS was probably the first step in the last session, that legislation that was designed to stop violent confrontations between labour and management and let them come to the table and bargain and see both sides of the coin. Certainly if management or any employer is having trouble with their operation, it offers an opportunity for both sides to look at the books and see how things could be done better.

**Mr. Santos:** If it is the case that once collective bargaining rights under the freedom of contract is taken away, along with it goes the right to arbitrate, the right to negotiate, the right to strike. That will also be taken away. Is that correct?

**Mr. Yorke:** I believe that is a fair assessment. With the stroke of a pen, if your bargaining rights are taken away from the public sector, is it not reasonable to control the private sector under the same legislation? This legislation, I feel, is open-ended enough that it can do that.

**Mr. Santos:** If what happened to the casino workers and to the operating engineers is an example, do you think this will deter the other unions in opposing this legislation or speaking against the action of the government?

**Mr. Yorke:** I feel very strongly that all the other unions are seriously looking at the legislation. If they all could sit in this room and listen to the previous presenter, I am sure they would devise another way of doing it. If the hearings are not going

to change the way the government thinks, and obviously it is not, then the only other way is collectively to get the unions together to help vote out the government.

**Mr. Santos:** If it is the case that the right to collective bargaining is not handed as a prize by this government, it is not given by it, and it is the product of decades of fights and struggles of the labour union from the time when historically even the right to organize was considered by the old judges as conspiracy in the olden days. This is the product of those struggles in order to make our industrial relations reasonably stable in terms of settlement of disputes rather than resorting to violence and other strikes. Do you think it is a mistake on the part of the government to take away the peaceful collective bargaining process?

**Mr. Yorke:** Yes, it certainly brings to my mind in this province we have been free of the major strikes and confrontations that they have had in other provinces. I only hope that it would not lead to the confrontations that have been happening in Alberta and years ago in British Columbia. Workers are getting angry that at every turn the government seems to be attacking their contracts, encouraging the employers to take them on. It certainly is a more confrontational attitude while the unions have been trying to devise other ways of coming to good reason, coming to the bargaining table open to discussion, willing to look at employers' books if need be, willing to come up with various ways to both work together, because if an employer is not in business, a worker does not have a job.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, even if you feel, Mr. Yorke, that the government majority has already made up its mind, do you see any utility or usefulness in public hearings like this for the purpose of preserving our democratic system?

**Mr. Yorke:** I feel the importance of having speakers speak out, no matter what group they represent, is a fundamental right. I am not sure if we are supposed to have this right. According to Mr. Green, other provinces do not have this right at this level, so I guess we are not supposed to either. That is his democratic way but I feel that should people, as they become aware of the implications of the bill, wish to speak out, that certainly this is the best way of having them address the committee members and the government responsible for drafting the legislation. Sure.

**Mr. Enns:** Just one question, Mr. Yorke. I am intrigued by your comment, if I understood it correctly, that you acknowledged that you probably will not be able to stop this bill through this process. If I understood you correctly, the other option is for the unions to get together and get this government out of office. That would seem to apply that you helped get us into office.

My simple question is, did you help this government get into office?

**Mr. Yorke:** No, I did not specifically help this government get into office, but indirectly I probably did by not seeing the implications earlier that I should have been out maybe talking to some more of the workers in the plants as enthusiastically as I should have been.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Yorke. The next presenter will be Mr. Paine. Is Mr. Paine prepared to make a presentation? Would you approach the mike? His brief has been distributed. Proceed, Mr. Paine.

**Mr. Harry Paine (Private Citizen):** Thank you. Let me begin by saying something which may surprise you. I have been here since one o'clock. I guess I got here right on time, and I have actually enjoyed this process. It has been a pleasant day for me. I think that is because I am an old campaigner much like, I guess, Sid, who was up before me and is a tough act to follow, I guess is the only thing I can say.

I have been a supporter of the NDP and of working-class politics for almost 40 years. I do not really have much faith in democracy. I do not really believe we have a democracy because I believe that democracy is bought and sold on the market in much the same way as any other commodity. It is bought and sold by whoever is the highest bidder, whoever has control of the media, whoever has the most money to spend. So I do not believe that it is the best system, as Sid says.

So saying that, I do believe the reason I am here is because I have never had this process before. I come from Ontario and we have never really had this opportunity to present this. I am a person who never misses an opportunity to say the things that I believe and that I feel and to try in some way to influence whoever and whomever I can. Saying that then, I will read the presentation that I prepared before coming here today, although there are a lot of things that I would like to have taken up. I can

make one suggestion to Mr. Enns that if he wants a better way of doing this procedure, a more democratic way of getting the feeling of the people, his government could resign and go to the people on this issue. That would solve the problem.

**Mr. Enns:** We did a year ago.

**Mr. Paine:** Okay. To members of the committee, I moved to Manitoba from Ontario four years ago to escape the deterioration of life in that province, this after having spent 35 years of my life in Toronto which I had considered one of the finest places in the world to live. From 1975 I have attended and volunteered at the Winnipeg Folk Festival and had come to know and love both the people and province of Manitoba.

By 1987 I had realized that many of those who I worked and lived with in Toronto had undergone a considerable change in their nature. The mad rush to find enough money to pay the ridiculous rent and mortgage costs, the increasing insecurity of a job market forced so many to lose much of their basic human decency. People who had been long-time friends lost many of the qualities that had endeared me to them for so many years. Manitoba was where humanism still existed. Friendship was not just a slogan on the licence plate to attract tourists. It really was the way of life of Manitobans.

Winnipeg for me was where my real friends were and was the place that I wanted to live. It was also the place where someone with a good idea, some skill and the will to succeed still had an opportunity to get help and make a contribution to society that was of some value. It would seem to me that all that is going down the drain and I might just as well have stayed in Ontario.

I would just like to supplement that by saying being here today and listening to Manitobans voice their opinion and to hear what has gone on down here today, I would take that back and say that I am still proud to live here amongst these people.

\* (0040)

Bill 70, a symptom of desperation—the question in my mind, and I suppose many others, is why is this happening? Why is it just accepted that there is a recession and therefore no money to provide many of the basic necessities for a decent life? I am not a trade unionist at the present time, although at one time in my life I was a business agent for the Teamsters Union. So I am not without sympathy for the cause of unions.

I have no axe to grind in this area and nothing to gain or lose one way or another as a result of the passage of this bill. I am poor now. I have been all my life, and I expect to be. For me, I see this bill as a further attack on the living standards of all working people of Manitoba and part of a desperate effort and attempt on the part of the government of Manitoba to pass on to working people their inability to administer the province efficiently.

Who is at fault if there is a shortage of money and a recession? Canada and its provinces has, under a succession of different administrations and many decades, aligned itself with the so-called free world, that is the noncommunist or capitalist form of economic development. We have always been led to believe that this was the most efficient from the point of view of profit, production and distribution of the wealth of this great land. We have fought wars to defend this system of production and many have been the deaths of Canadians in this cause.

We the working people have given great sacrifices for the maintenance of this economic system. We built the factories, laid the roads, fought for our rightful share of the products of our labour. We laid out the fields and planted crops, suffered the rigours of a hostile climate and made this country one of the richest in the world.

We were forced to establish our own political and social organizations to win and defend what should have been rightfully ours. Nowhere in the world is this obvious contradiction between production and distribution more apparent. Human labour has been applied to the natural wealth of the world for thousands of years, and we have created finally the conditions that should enable us all to live without want.

Whose fault, then, is it this great wealth and knowledge that we have accumulated cannot seem to be distributed equally? Is it the farmer who for year after year sows his seed only to find that the price he gets for his wheat does not even cover the cost of his mortgage? I think not. Is it the fault of the factory worker who puts years of his life into doing the best job he can only to get his pink slip and be cast out in the street when profits are down? I think not. Is it the fault of women who only ask they be treated with the dignity of human equality in a society that has done little to change their second-class status, women who appeal in vain for some protection against increasing violence? I think not. Is it the fault of the children of this land,

our only hope for the future and the most valuable natural resource that we have, children who enter the school system full of idealism and who have only unemployment to look forward to unless they move to another province or country? I think not. Is it the fault of the first peoples, whose land, language and culture we have stolen and systematically destroyed? The Government of Canada, with the collusion of the provinces, has made life on the reserves intolerable, forced the Native population into the city and then poisoned them with substances and starved them with unemployment. What is the basic difference between the government of today and the Indian agents of the 1800s who used typhoid-laden blankets and whiskey to solve the Native question?

The record of capitalism. Capitalism was a progressive system for the first few hundred years of its existence. It took us out of the barter system and land-based economy and laid the basis for the great scientific discoveries that will eventually free and provide for us all. Like slavery and feudalism before it, it has outlived its usefulness. This is the key to the crisis we are facing today, and no one seems to want to look at that possibility. One recession after another, one monetary crisis after another, and nobody has drawn the obvious conclusion that capitalism does not work anymore.

Since the turn of the century, economies have only been able to survive by waging massive world wars with one another and continuing to destroy the natural balance of the earth's ecology. Profits no longer come logically out of a system and have to be wrenched in prolonged confrontations with the workers who produce them. Scientific advancement does not benefit the human population but rather is used to accumulate greater profits and generally results in layoffs and hardship for workers in a particular industry.

The Second World War was described as being the war to end all wars. Yet, after it was over, the world was divided between east and west. For more than a generation the possibility of a nuclear holocaust was held over our heads and more than half of the world's population were as so-called enemies.

Blood, violence and death have been so commonplace on media that almost two generations of youth have grown up believing that is the normal way of life. It translates in the streets with massive crime waves, homeless children

forced into prostitution, drugs and alcohol. Wife abuse in the home, women not feeling safe to walk at night, all are considered just the way things are.

Governments appear to be helpless in the face of this deterioration of social organization and yet are able to mobilize vast resources to build nuclear weapons or fight wars for the preservation of the profits of oil companies. This is only part of the record of capitalism in this century.

The failure of capitalism. Any economic system that can only survive by inflicting such pain and suffering on the world and its population is obviously not working and needs to be replaced. The evidence is clear. Not only is all of the above part of the nature of the present system, but even by inflicting such hardship on the world and its population the result is not successful.

Bill 70 is only one small desperate attempt on the part of one small Conservative government in one small part of the world. It is part of Conservative governments' systematic drive against the hard-won gains of working people and farmers everywhere. Unable to solve the inherent problems of the economy, capitalism and its supporters in government are offloading the crisis to those who can least afford to pay for it.

Their logic makes no sense whatsoever. Commodities are usually produced for sale. If the result of increasing production technology and competition is more unemployment, then who is going to buy the goods that are produced? That part of the world that was previously known as the Soviet bloc is entering the marketplace in a big way and presumably will be competing for the same markets that the West has always had hegemony over. This will only increase the already fierce competition that exists between the Asian producers and Euro-United States.

The only answer to this competition, as far as capitalism is concerned, is to lower production costs by cutting labour costs. This can only mean one of two things, either layoffs or rolling back wages. Either will result in the inability of the producers to buy back that which they produce. More and more people are thrown on the welfare rolls and local governments have less of a tax base to meet these rising costs. It does not take a Ph.D. in economics to see how stupid this system is. This is the real situation that exists in most of North America.

Bill 70, while it is directed at civil servants, is actually only the thin end of the wedge. Everyone hates bureaucrats. The mental picture of the fat civil servant playing with people's lives is carefully cultivated in order to make these workers more vulnerable.

Government workers tend to set the standard for private industry, and so they should; for if there is one way that a government can influence the private sector to pay decent wages, it is in setting an example. For the government to take away the right of its employees to bargain collectively equally sets an example for the private sector to go ahead and ride roughshod over its unions. Workers in the private sector who have no unions have no protection and can only take what is handed out.

\* (0050)

This bill, then, is especially onerous because while it appears to be directed against one sector of the work force, in actuality it will affect everyone. Again, I must make the point that this bill, the centralization of Family Services and many other cutbacks in services to the community are an admission of failure on the part of this government to intervene in the economy with sound policies that will ensure future prosperity for Manitobans. It is also an admission that the economic system, which this government so vigorously defends, is also a failure and should move over and make room for some other economic form.

Manitobans, like many other Canadians, are being flimflammed into the idea that there is a recession and we all have to make sacrifices, that corporations are not making profit so workers should help the poor owners by not asking for wage increases. What does it mean to say there is a recession? Are there not millions of people in the world who have need of the goods we can produce? Is there not land sitting idle and factories underproducing? Is there not a shortage of hospitals, daycare centres? Do we not need more theatres, cultural outlets? The need is there. We have the skill and the will. Why are we not producing at full steam?

That which stands in the way is profit, the holy icon of capitalism; because someone cannot make profit, these needs are not being met and Canadians are forced to pay the price. There really is no recession and we are not willing to make further sacrifices. We have sacrificed enough.

Capitalism or Socialism: These two systems have been counterposed to one another for well over a century. The Soviet Union has been held up as an example of the inefficiency of socialist planning, and the recent demise of the Communist parties throughout eastern Europe has been applauded throughout the western world.

Capitalism has won the cold war, so we are told, but what kind of victory is this? In one short year since the tearing down of the Berlin Wall, we see the real evidence of the free market system; mass unemployment, national civil strife and the rise again of a mass Nazi movement in Germany.

The term "socialism" has come to mean something ugly and unwanted, with some justification. The crimes of the Soviet bureaucracy had nothing in common with what the early socialist pioneers saw as a future society.

There is no doubt that we need a new form of economic structure and what we call it is irrelevant. We in this society have no need and no right to impose our terminology on future generations. They will decide for themselves what structure and form their government will take.

Our duty is to do as little harm as possible to this world we live in and not destroy it beyond repair. The past record is not very good, and in spite of a growing consciousness among the population, very little progress is actually being made.

As long as there has been oppression in the world there have been those visionaries who were willing to fight it, those who believed in the inherent strength in human nature to overcome.

Since Spartacus led the great slave revolt against Rome, they have been known by many names; rebels, rabble, revolutionaries, roundheads, socialists. Their spokespersons were Moses, Marx, John Loxley and that diverse, but they all have a common goal. They cannot tolerate those who would hold back the progress of history by enslavement and oppression.

Government after government down the eons have tried to pass laws that would stop them and have failed. They are here in this room. They are in the Legislature and in the streets. They more often than not do not understand their destiny, but nevertheless they will play their role when called upon.

Let all those who stand in their way beware. They have the power of history on their side, and to

borrow someone else's words, "There is nothing so powerful as an idea whose time has come."

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Paine.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Paine, I heard you say that you do not think we have a democracy and that you do not believe in democracy. What then is the best system in your opinion?

**Mr. Paine:** I do not believe in your definition of democracy, or I do not believe in the generally accepted definition of democracy. I believe that democracy means first of all a full stomach, the right to a job and the right to send my kids to school and to university and those kinds of rights first. Those kind of rights have to be met first in a democracy. Those are the rights that human society went through. Before we could have legislators and philosophers and people who could sit around and think about things, the first thing we had to do was satisfy our basic needs. We are not satisfying our basic needs. Let us do that first and then we will talk about democracy.

I believe that we could institute such things as immediate recall. We could bring democracy like this where there would be forums where people would listen to us and where we could have continuous discussions. There may be many forms. I do not think that the present form of what we call democracy is the right one. I think there are new ones that could be developed and will be developed by future societies.

**Mr. Santos:** In the olden days, Athenian democracy, Greek democracy, that was the time when the police were the state. It was a very small community, a very manageable number of people. Jean Jacques Rousseau even dreamed of people sitting under the oak tree and deciding how they should be run, simply because of numbers. When society had such a number of people that it was no longer possible for people to directly rule themselves, naturally they invented a system of what we call representative democracy. That is what we got, Mr. Paine. Do you reject this system?

**Mr. Paine:** I do not think that this is representative. For instance, it just happens that I am lucky enough to live in Wolseley, and I have Jean Friesen who represents me in this Legislature. I believe she does represent me, but previous to her I had a Liberal, and he did not represent anything that I believed in. When I lived in Ontario I had a Tory who

represented me, and he certainly did not believe, or she, in this case, certainly did not represent me in any way.

**Mr. Santos:** Do you think the representative should do what his constituent wants him to do, or do you think he should do what his conscience tells him is good for society?

\* (0100)

**Mr. Paine:** I think that he or she should do what they believe, by their conscience, to be right, but I believe also that there should be in society that eventually we should develop a system of immediate recall.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Santos, I want to remind you that I would like the questions to be asked in regard to Bill 70.

**Mr. Santos:** I am being relevant. I am addressing what he addressed. Why did you not rule him out?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I will listen very carefully to the question.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I want to abide by the rules, but there is one rule for one group and another rule for another group. I disagree.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Santos, I believe I have been very fair with all the questioners and all the presenters at this table. I intend to be fair, but I also expect that same respect from the members of this committee as well as the presenters.

**Mr. Santos:** The presenter, Mr. Paine, said that laissez-faire capitalism is bad. If it is so, how comes we are witnessing now the failure of Communism in the U.S.S.R., in eastern Europe? How can we now explain the desire of the Soviet people to accept the capitalist market economy?

**Mr. Paine:** I thought I answered that actually in my presentation. It seems to me that the lure of blue jeans and colour TV—I can best illustrate this with an example. I have a friend who just returned from Czechoslovakia. She has lived there for a year. We had a discussion about what she found there. She told me that she tried to talk to the people in Czechoslovakia about the kind of conditions that exist in Winnipeg, the kind of conditions that exist in north Main Street, the kind of conditions that exist on the Native reserves and the kind of conditions that people live in generally in North America, in the slums of New York and Los Angeles.

She could not find one single person in Czechoslovakia who would believe her, simply because of the fact that she said that they had been lied to by their government so much over the years, and when their government had told them these things about North America they did not believe them then and they do not believe them now. Their lure for the free market system is because they see the glitz of North America but they do not see the underbelly. They do not see what Professor Silver referred to, I think it was today, as the Third World, which is New York, Los Angeles, Chicago.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Mr. Enns.

**Mr. Santos:** I have not finished, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Oh, yes, you have. I told you before that I would recognize only the questions that were relevant to this bill. You are not abiding by that and neither is the answerer.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I am somewhat intimidated, because I want to certainly abide by your rulings. I did understand the presenter to express, earlier on in his brief, some consideration or concern indeed for the farmer, in his efforts to try and get a reasonable return for his labour.

**Mr. Paine:** Can I just stop you for a minute. I am having trouble hearing you. Do you mind if I—

**Mr. Enns:** Oh, I am sorry. I listened with care to your brief and you did express, earlier on in your brief, concern about the farmer and his ability to get a fair and equitable return for his labour, whether he is a wheat farmer or, as in my case—I am a cattle farmer. I do not think you are paying me enough for the beef that I raise. What can I do about it? Should I get government to make you pay the price that I think is fair for my product, for my labour?

**Mr. Paine:** Yes, I think that there is not enough attention paid to the crisis of the farmer in this country, and I hate to say it, but I am afraid that I believe that is true of all of the governments that have existed in Manitoba. I was appalled when I came here from Ontario; I felt that all of the governments here had no real program for the farm community. It seemed to me that political parties decide their priorities on the basis of geographic locations of their likely elected MPs. I am a long-time member of the NDP, but I must suggest that I believe, that I hope that the NDP will change this situation, but I believe that they did not. They

had not developed a good program for the farm community.

So, having said that, I do not profess to be an expert on the question of the farm community, but I believe that we have to develop the farm community in Canada in such a way that the farmer can enjoy, not only the kind of lifestyle that for generations they have been proud of and they have nurtured so wonderfully, but they should also be able to enjoy the fruits of a good education, and cultural events in the city.

So we need to somewhat take a look at the way we structure our cities and farms and make those kinds of things accessible. I believe that everyone—farmers, workers, Natives, everyone in this country has the right to a good standard of living and wages that are commensurate with living that lifestyle. How a farmer goes about getting that, I think society has to solve that problem. If it means paying you more for your beef through some government subsidies program, then I am for that.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Thank you, Mr. Paine, for your presentation.

**Mr. Paine:** Thank you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** I would like to call next No. 95, Joanne Maciag. Is that the right pronunciation?

**Ms. Joanne Maciag (Private Citizen):** Yes, sir.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Have you a written presentation that you want to distribute?

**Ms. Maciag:** No.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Proceed, please.

**Ms. Maciag:** First, I would like to state that this is my first time that I have ever spoken at one of these things and the reason I am here is because I am angry. I am angry as a worker, and that is why I am standing here to protest this Bill 70.

I would first like to add a little comment of my own. From watching these hearings, I would like to state that, as a citizen of Manitoba, I am actually quite disgusted with the contempt that government members have shown to the people of Manitoba while they are sitting here and speaking. There has been talking going on at the table, and whispering and laughing, and I think it is contemptuous that they would disregard the rights and feelings of the citizens of this province.

The Filmon government has effectively tried to cut our right to the free collective bargaining process. They have taken our right away for arbitration, killed final offer selection, our right to strike, and I could go on and on, about what I think is on the list of this government's hidden agenda of the rights that they are going to take away from us workers in the future. I could give you a list, but I do not want to give you guys any more ideas.

You are blaming the workers—the people out there that have been working their lives, that just want to make a decent living—for government mismanagement and waste. Anybody that works for the government, that has worked there for years, can see this mismanagement and waste daily—and how the offices and the corporations are run.

You give tax breaks to corporations; you are funding the private sector schools; and daily we see patronage appointments in the newspaper. You are targeting the low-paid government employees, while allowing exemptions to different groups such as lawyers, judges. The legislation talks about merit increases. They are allowable; sure, they are allowable. Who gets merit increases in the government? The management. Most people that bargain collectively are not getting merit increases on an individual basis. That is a bunch of hogwash. -(interjection)- Well, they certainly are not coming down to the workers. Pardon me, I am speaking. Thank you very much.

For the past few years government employees have been accepting wage increases below the rate of inflation. They have been bargaining in good faith, exchanging wage increases for no-layoff clauses. Now our no-layoff clauses are running out, or ran out, and what do you do? Freeze our wages. That is good faith bargaining.

How does this government expect that cutting wages is going to foster economic recovery? It is going to further entrench this recession because everybody knows that wage cuts will create more unemployment, because the money that the workers are not making, they are not spending. The decrease in demand is going to affect other sectors of this economy.

This government proclaims to be, or is, a business government, but what are they doing to small businesses by decreasing the demand that is out there for their goods and services? I really do not think that there is much else I can say. From

watching this process today, I do not believe that anything I am saying is sinking in anyway. So thank you for your time.

**Mr. Edwards:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I want to say to the presenter two things. It is your first time that you have come forward and we thank you for doing that. It is not an easy thing to do. We hope you will do it again.

**Ms. MacIag:** If you keep this up, I will. Thank you.

**Mr. Edwards:** Secondly, you have waited a long time. So we thank you, I am sure, on behalf of all members, for putting in the effort and for staying until this hour to present. I think your points were made and they were certainly listened to, for my part; I am sure for other members as well. Hopefully, we have not treated you with contempt. I hope that you know that your comments have been listened to. Thank you.

**Ms. MacIag:** Thank you. The comment I made was not for every member at the table.

**Mr. Santos:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would like to say that I listened intently to all the presenters; I did not have any intention at all of ignoring what they say. I honestly believe that ultimate decisions should reside in the people. There might be some defect in our system, but as the former Minister of Labour Mr. Green said, it is the best system that we have, and what we can do is to improve the system as far as we can because there is no other alternative that I see except democracy. If we can really live up to its true tenets and not deceive the people, I believe that the ultimate legitimacy of government resides in honesty and morality and the will of the people if they are truly expressed, and no matter how defective our proceeding in a thing like this, I think this is the only system, I believe, in all of Canada, and I admire Manitoba for institutionalizing such a system, to hear its own people first before the majority makes up its mind, makes its decision, and hear all the people. Thank you.

**Mr. Ashton:** I just wanted to note as well, I think you have a legitimate point in terms of the process. Part of the problem, I think, in terms of what is happening with committee members, is to do with the process itself, a process I incidentally do not agree with. We sat until five in the morning two nights ago, and three in the morning yesterday. I was there to the end both times. It is now one o'clock in the morning; this committee has been sitting for 12 hours. I do not believe in legislation by

exhaustion, whether it be members of the public or committee members, and I think some of the less than desirable things that have been happening are a direct function of that. I say that, not by way certainly of explanation, although I think to be fair to committee members, regardless of their views on this issue, that may be part of it.

I think your point, though, stems from that, and perhaps in the future we need to look at having some rules to make sure we do not have 12-hour committee meetings and we do not have meetings that go until one, three and five in the morning for the purposes of the committee members so that they can be more civil perhaps in relations with members of the public, and vice versa, as well, because I know a lot of people have gotten up and have been very frustrated by the process. I remember a number of people yesterday—about two or three in the morning we had some very good presentations, but we had some other people who said, what do you expect at two or three in the morning other than to be frustrated and not be able to think straight?

\* (0110)

So I think we should start listening perhaps in terms of your comments and from now on in try and change the process so this does not happen again.

**Ms. Maclag:** If certain people were not so much in a hurry to push things through, maybe you people would not be as tired.

**Mr. Ashton:** Yes, I agree with you.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Are there any questions or comments? Thank you, Joanne; we appreciate it very much.

Mr. Connery, I understand you have some . . .

**An Honourable Member:** No more presenters?

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Are there any other presenters?

### Committee Substitution

**Mr. Connery:** I move, seconded by the member for Niakwa (Mrs. Dacquay), that the composition of the standing committee be amended as follows: the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) for the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), with the understanding that this substitution will be moved in the House on Monday.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner):** Is that by leave? Agreed.

Committee will reconvene tomorrow (Saturday) at ten o'clock.

Committee rise.

**COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 1:15 a.m.**

### WRITTEN SUBMISSION PRESENTED BUT NOT READ

Presentation to the Committee  
of the Legislature Regarding  
Bill 70 The Public Sector Compensation  
Management Act

This presentation is made to you by a worker, taxpayer, mother and grandmother.

Once again the popular pastime of Civil Service bashing has come to pass. This government has found an issue which, under the guise of saving money, is indicating to the public that once again the "fat cat" civil servants are at the trough. The "big lie" is being used by a government so bereft of ideas that it feels it necessary to bludgeon its own employees.

However, I am one of those "public" people who is not fooled or taken in by this propaganda. The fact is that there are few families in this province that do not have someone working either for the government or for a Crown corporation. We know those who are making barely living wages. They form the bulk of the Civil Service. These are not management, bosses or appointees, but those souls who are struggling along with the rest of us to pay the never-ending taxes we are burdened with plus all those other frills like rent, food and clothing.

The real agenda is not to control only civil servants but to control everyone's wages by effectively driving down incomes for large numbers of people. It then behooves the government to lean on the private sector to follow suit. We know the consequences of wage controls in the early '80s when wages were controlled for workers but prices were not. This government does not even make a vague attempt to govern prices but blatantly gives the private sector free reign to charge what they like.

Another important factor is being played out as well. This is a many-pronged attack on not only wages and benefits but on the collective bargaining rights of workers. Not only are wages being taken away, but the right to have a collective say in this process is being denied. Workers are being sent back to the days of 1919 to fight over again for this right. The

right to decent wages, living conditions, child care, education, health care and a dignified old age is being eroded by a cynical government whose only interests lie with profit. One should remember the consequences of 1919 and learn from it. Not only were lives lost and a semi-police state imposed, but the city never fully recovered from the events of that time to regain any of its past glory as the centre of commerce in the West.

The fact that wages are being cut is a serious issue, but the way they are being cut is another. Whenever rights are taken away in one area, we can expect that we will lose something in another. The Tory agenda is being played out, and we will all suffer the consequences if this act is implemented.

Leona McEvoy  
Winnipeg, MB

~~193~~

193 (R)