

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

8:00 o'clock, Tuesday, April 30, 1974

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MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we closed discussion in the afternoon I was just . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has 18 minutes.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Was going to say that I was in the process of inquiring of the Minister the degree and nature and kind of planning and management organization and procedure that the Provincial Government should or is now following in respect to the development of an urban transportation policy. And I would like to emphasize that the importance of that organizational approach towards, or the methodology of the approach towards urban transportation should not be overlooked because I believe that depending on the kind of method and approach one uses determines in a large part the end result.

I think it's been fair to say that certainly in this province and in provinces throughout Canada up until very recently the unquestionable priority in public policy on a provincial level and on a municipal level has been directed towards a transportation system geared towards the activity of the automobile. Let me state that the automobile for most of us has been and still is a wondrous invention, one of great convenience, of great mobility and great freedom, but I think we are now beginning to recognize that it carries with it increasing burdens and increasing dangers in terms of pollution, in terms of cost, in terms of the potential effect it has upon the energy supply. I think the estimates are that close to 30, 40 percent of our petroleum supplies are consumed in some way or other through the automobile or automotive industry and when we're facing in the period of the next 10 or 15 years a basic shortage of petroleum supplies in Canada to the degree to which we're not even sure where the next few barrels will come from after that, it would seem very important for us to begin assessing the role and position that we want the automobile to play in our cities. And this comes back to the priority placed by the Provincial Government in the kind of program and the kind of approach it uses. Because I think what is required now is that the balance has to be re-righted; that we now have to begin in a sense bending over backwards to re-right what has been an overburden or an over-concentration on transportation systems devoted towards the automobile and begin to look very seriously at what we can do in the whole range of public transit. This is the essential difficulty we now face.

As an urban area there is no expectation or security of what the Provincial Government is going to do next in the transportation field. That it's always a last minute, last ditch ad hoc effort as to whether money will be applied to arterial roads, how much - in the last month or so of experience, the on-again, off-again position of the Minister of Finance in relation to how much are you going to give? And without being able to apply a very basic set of priorities and attach to those priorities a funding formula that will properly orient provincial government programs towards support of a public transit system for the City, then we are going to have to rely increasingly upon the city decision makers and policy makers simply to go ahead as they have been doing making decisions again on an ad hoc basis. And the consequence of that I think is very obvious. That ad hoc decision making simply results in more of the same, that we simply end up as continuing along the same route. I think that is one of the most difficult and important problems is the requirement of this Provincial Government to in many cases simply copy what is now being a responsibility undertaken by other provincial governments and to take a major position of setting forward major priorities to establish programs of public transportation in the urban areas and to re-right the balance vis-a-vis the automobile and to provide a different set of priorities than have been the case up to now. And this means that rather than simply providing the capital for the arterial road, bridge and so on system, the same should be true for the major capital work in the public transportation.

The Member for St. James was talking something about monorails and so on. Well, those are not the only forms of public transit systems that can be applied. There are many many others and I think it's wrong to simply take the monorail and put it up as sort of a straw-man and attempt to knock down the idea of public transit, because in fact it probably is one of the more extreme and futuristic, and perhaps not applicable in Winnipeg, but it doesn't in any way take away from the fact that we have many other kinds of public transit systems that should be available.

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(MR. AXWORTHY cont'd)

I would like to make this particular point, and again really raise a question with the Minister, about the nature by which he and his department and this government intends to go about the planning of transportation. One thing that we should have learned in the experience of the last four or five years in this city and this province is that you can't trust the experts; that transportation planning, as they used to say about wars, is too important to leave to the experts; that we've botched up things like railway relocation and WATS plans and freeway plans too often to know that you simply can't rely upon their particular priorities or their objectives. When the Member for St. James recommends that what we should do is get a joint committee between the province and the city, I would say that we should take a few steps beyond that and begin consulting perhaps the people who are most concerned and who are the least consulted, and that is the public.

Now I know that there are members on this other side of the House, and I've heard particularly the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources speak strongly against any idea of major consulting with the public. He says responsible government is being elected every four years and then doing what you want in those four years and if they don't like it they'll throw you out. Well, Mr. Chairman, I suggest that a really responsible government is a government that attempts to acquire the best information and the best knowledge available about the kind of programs that should be applied, and the best way to get that knowledge available is to consult the people who are going to be affected by programs. And you can't do it through the kind of a raw mechanism of an election at all times, because no election is able to cover all policies and all programs. What it does require is a very concerted effort to work in a variety of communities that exist within the urban area, the metropolitan region of Winnipeg, to find out what are the transportation concerns of a suburbanite; what are the transportation concerns of a Downtown person; what are the transportation concerns of the old and the young, so that we can find out from the users of the service what in fact their requirements are and how they can best be implemented. And that has not happened up to now.

Transportation planning has been the prerogative of the closed room; it's been the prerogative of the planning that is undertaken by the professional engineer who brings to bear certain biases from his own profession; it brings to bear the bias of certain administrators. And I don't think it really reflects what people want. And it certainly doesn't reflect or doesn't result in the kind of transportation program that would be able to reconcile and find out common areas of agreement between the representative of a suburban area whose concern is to get people from a suburban area downtown faster or more conveniently, at the same time to reconcile that with the interest of the downtown person who doesn't want to see his community cut into various kinds of ribbons or little islands, bisected by bridges and arterial roads, because the fact of the matter is that this has been the direction that we've been moving in and it's going to continue. I would only point out that in the City of Toronto there has now being instituted a joint program by the provincial government and the City of Toronto and the Metropolitan Corporation of Toronto, where they've established what they call the Transportation Review Board, which is a joint undertaking which over the past year after the fiasco on the Spadina Expressway, went to first develop proper bases of information and then conducted a series of consultative meetings and dialogues in a variety of areas within the Toronto region, to find out what are the different perspectives and the different points of view and how those can be reconciled into a transportation program that would meet the needs of everybody in that total Metropolitan region.

The same thing is being done under the initiative of the British Columbia government where they set up the Greater Vancouver Regional District to undertake the same kind of consultative process with the consumers and users of transportation in the Greater Vancouver region, again, sort of a - - and it was the provincial government that helped pay for it, helped set the system up, helped operate it and was prepared to sort of respond to those kinds of questions. Because, as I said, you can't develop a transportation policy which is simply the sort of narrow range perspective of a small group of people sort of meeting in closed rooms reflecting the biases of their own professions or administrations. The evidence is that it hasn't worked in the past, and unless this government is prepared to take some initiatives to set up a more effective planning of transportation, then we are going to continually be making the same kind of mistakes that we have witnessed over the past three or four years. And that's why I think it's important for us in this House to know full well what exactly is the strategy and

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(MR. AXWORTHY cont'd) objective and priorities of the provincial government, and, more importantly, how do they propose to undertake the implementation of that strategy and the execution of that strategy. Is it something that they -- something where they closet themselves sort of together in their own catacombs, or do they take the suggestion of the Member of St. James and get together sort of with the professionals and the City government? Or are they prepared to widen that planning process to include the wide range of interests that exist in the urban area, and outside the urban area, people who live in the adjacent zone, where they have as much a vested interest in knowing what's going to happen with railway relocation, with the development of a highway extension into the city and with the arterial road system? Are they prepared to utilize and consult and work with a variety and range of community interest so that we can get the full sense of values and the full sense of perspectives and get a transportation policy that reflects that?

Those, I think, are very important questions that the Minister should try to answer because upon his answers really depends whether in fact we can conclude or assess whether we're going in, heading in the right direction in terms of developing an effective transportation system in the City. I just think it's no longer possible for us to be throwing off sort of high . . . ideas to sort of, you know, having mayors and councillors and MLAs and Ministers of the Crown digging into their back pockets to come up with their favorite panacea or their pet solution. I think it requires a much more sort of intensive and comprehensive approach to it than that, and also an approach that means that we can learn from the past mistakes, the mistakes that we have committed as a community, the mistakes that other communities have committed, to come up with the kind of transportation system that will ensure that all interests are being cared for and guarded. And this is particularly, I think, one of the responsibilities that would be for the provincial government, to set up a system where proper impact studies can be done about highway and urban transportation systems so that that kind of consultative process which I would hope would be implemented would be able to rely upon . . . information about the impact of proposed bridges or proposed arterial roads or proposed overpasses, because again, the lessons that should have been learned in the last four or five years, is that you can't judge a transportation simply by sort of engineering or technical standards. You must look at sort of social standards and physical standards and how it affects surrounding communities; let's look at the questions of environment and pollution, because all those add to the cost of a transportation system, and when you start adding up the dollar cost, end up being very counter productive, and I can recollect that last year in a study that was done on WATS Program and the Railway Relocation Program, it was found out that in order to speed the passage of one suburban commuter from Assiniboia to downtown Winnipeg, to speed that up by three and a half minutes was going to cost literally hundreds of thousands of dollars per foot to build the kind of proposals the City of Winnipeg was making under its WATS proposal. Now that was the kind of foolishness that we were engaged in then and would have gone through with if there hadn't been a major protest from a variety of areas within the city. Well, I'm suggesting that we could avoid those kind of protests if we would undertake sort of some anticipations of planning that's required, and I think that the responsibility for that is to set up a planning system that will be able to comprehend and utilize the variety of perspectives that we now have.

Finally, I would just like to make a point, Mr. Chairman, about the question of subsidies. The one major demand that we receive from city government, from the municipalities continually is to have the provincial government provide ever-increasing subsidies for both road systems and for public transit systems, and I think that concomitant with that, is that it simply shouldn't be a question of applying a subsidy without also looking at the efficiency or effectiveness of the system itself. And again, road planning in this province and road planning throughout Canada has been really retarded to the degree to which it really goes about assessing full value for dollars spent in roads, that we have attempted in the way bygone past to use them as political plums. Now we use them almost on the will or whim of the professional experts and engineers who design them. I think we should now go back and begin asking what is the total cost to a community, and that's got to be measured in terms of how the road -- not only the simple cost of the road in terms of the cement and the gravel and the physical facilities accompanying that road, but the costs that it will create in terms of damage to the surrounding areas. That's the real way of going about assessing costs, and those are the kinds of questions we have to make.

So I would simply say that when we ask the Minister to tell us, as the Member for St. James

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(MR. AXWORTHY cont'd) was asking, as I am asking and I'm sure as other Members will ask, about what the Provincial Government intends to do in the field of urban transportation, that they will take in mind that the first and major issue at this stage is how are you going to do it - not what are you going to do, but how are you going to do it, because it's going to be very important, the "how" is going to be very critical to what eventually results and will be a very major determining factor in the kind of transportation systems we're going to need if this city continues to grow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Souris-Killarney.

MR. EARL MCKELLAR (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a few words on the Highways Estimates, and on checking over I find that with the estimates that were supplied to us, current estimates, and then the supplementary estimates, we're spending a total of \$70 million this year, and I find that after checking the revenues from gas tax and motive fuel tax and motor carrier licences and automobile and driver's licences, the total is \$73 million; and I don't know, but I think the priority should be a little higher on the Highways Estimates for road construction and maintenance. And after driving over the roads on the weekends, I never saw the roads break up like they are this spring. I don't know why this is happening, but I'd like to know from the Minister if the engineers can give -- because I never the saw the roads break up and the condition - There's holes in them a foot deep on Number 3 Highway between Boissevain and Killarney and also on the road between Number 2 and Ninette on No. 18, roads that the last few years haven't given any trouble at all. This year they're all going to pieces. Is it frost boils or what is the reason? Is the water level table up so high that it's affecting the surface of the roads, that I can see great problems of maybe major reconstruction jobs of digging out frost boils, and that's going to be a major job this summer just patching the roads to get them in shape again.

But I mentioned in the last session I thought the government should be doing more seal coating and I am more convinced than ever. The seal coating is the greatest protection, the greatest insurance that you can have for the roads of the Province of Manitoba, and I know that we have huge piles of chipped stone that's all in preparation on No. 2 Highway for the seal coating this coming year, but I think this seal coating job has to be done a lot more oftener. I know that it's a high cost, seal coating the highways, but I think it's just like putting shingles on your roof and I think this is very important if you want to protect the roads rather than have to have a major reconstruction job every so often.

Now I don't have to tell the engineers of the province because we've got two of the best engineers right in front of me and they know how to build roads. They built more roads than any one of us will ever drive over, I guess, in a lifetime, and they know a lot more about it. And I'd like to congratulate the Department and especially the engineers who are out doing the day to day jobs in the Province of Manitoba for the work they do on behalf of the people of Manitoba and all the tourists who travel over the roads during the year, because this winter they had one of the toughest jobs I think they ever had on the snow removal and trying to keep the roads open for not only the highway traffic but school bus roads on provincial roads, and I'm sure their job must have been pretty tough trying to answer the phone every morning when the roads were blocked, many of them were blocked. They did an excellent job at all times, especially in the month of March when the roads were at their worst and the snowbanks were about eight, ten feet deep on both sides of the road. I don't know how the snowplow man did keep the roads open during that particular month.

Mr. Speaker, there are two things I'd like to speak on here. One of the things that I often wondered about, trucking, I understand in Ontario now I think they're up to 90,000 pounds and we're up to about 80,000 pounds, somewhere in that neighbourhood. I was just wondering, mention was made whether the highways would stand that particular tonnage - you're talking about 80,040 tons - but I just wonder, do the provinces get together to decide on an equal -- like what tonnage we're going to permit the truckers to haul, the main and provincial truckers, because it must be a problem when they go from province to province trying to keep within the laws of each given province, and I was just wondering what are you planning in the coming year? Are you planning on going to 90,000 pounds? What tonnage are you expecting the truckers, the maximum tonnage the truckers will carry during the coming year?

Now, another one of the greater problems, and I know that this may be through the Minister of Finance, the municipalities in the Province of Manitoba are having a real problem

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(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) financing this year. One of the reasons is because of the high cost of snow removal this past year, and in the municipality in which I live I understand the municipal tax is going up by seven mills. Much of this is going to have to be for the improvements and maintenance of the roads during the coming year and their roads have suffered to the same extent as your provincial roads and trunk highways have suffered, and I'm sure that most of the municipalities are in the same boat. Now, other municipalities where they're in high -- where the water runoff was excessively high this spring, they have a goodly number of bridges and culverts washed out, but that isn't to say I don't -- in my municipalities I don't think I'm affected to that extent but they do have a number of bridges that are weakened to the extent that they're going to have to replace them. So this is one of the problems of the municipalities. Now I realize that doesn't come under Highways, that this assistance will have to come likely through the Minister of Finance on grants to municipalities, per capita grant or some other grant, flood relief grant or something like that, but I thought I should express this comment at this time.

Now in checking over the highway program for the coming year, I don't find that much but I never was critical of the Highways Minister because I know he's got a big job trying to cover the province and it's a problem that each Highway Minister has trying to keep everybody happy and I know there's no way you're going to keep everybody happy. But I was glad to see that a start was made on 258 from Glenboro south on base coarse and seal coating, and I'm glad to see that even though five miles is not very far it's a start, and I know the other 28 miles, I think, or 33 miles to Cartwright, and eventually maybe in a couple of years' time that this road will be -- and I'm sure that the American tourists will be happy if this road ever gets a dustproof road because they would make much use of that heading north to the northern part of Manitoba, coming through Cartwright up to Glenboro, Neepawa and on to Dauphin and on up that No. 10 Highway. It's a shortcut. Actually the original 281 Highway was proposed but because there was never a dustproof road they eventually relocated the 281 Highway around by No. 10 Highway, and we're hoping that some time at a later date when we get the road up in shape that they'll reverse their decision and come up through Glenboro, Neepawa and Dauphin.

Another road which is of particular interest here, and I don't know and I want to ask a question on here, it's on 346. The road goes between Nesbitt and Ninga and most of you maybe -- the engineers will know where that is. I guess I've got the wrong page here; I've got -- here it is here. But on this particular road, I would like to say a few words on this because I read here on this one mile, and it's through Souris River Valley, a location study. I'd like to say to the members here that that Souris River Valley there, there's a particular bridge and it's named McKellar Bridge, not after me but after my family, and I'd like to say the former Deputy Minister of Highways, the late George Collins, built this bridge, and I thought I should give this bit of information to the members here, because that's twelve miles south of Nesbitt on 346 and it's a most beautiful drive through that valley, the Souris River Valley, for those people that maybe have never gone on that trip, and up that horseshoe bend there, then up and they end up in the village of Margaret on 23 Highway. But the late George Collins built that bridge back in the early -- well 1922, I think somewhere in that neighbourhood, after the First World War, right at the start of his career and from there on he went and became Deputy Minister of Highways. I thought I should give that, but I'd just like to know, when you're talking about location study, are you talking about taking that horseshoe bend out of there, or what's the study going to be? Is it straightening out some of the -- I would imagine you're taking that horseshoe bend out of there and trying to straighten the road out. Also, I see there's a mile and a half on the north side of the river, too, that likely you're taking another few more kinks out of the road, but I'd just like to know; maybe you could relate that to me when you're replying.

Now there's another road in here, the road from Shilo to Wawanesa, 340. This particular road has gone over the Treesbank Ferry, they use the Treesbank Ferry, and a new road was proposed and a bridge was proposed, and the bridge wasn't ready to go when Mr. Borowski became the Minister of Highways. Mr. Borowski worked for the Criddles just north of the ferry there one time, and he said there wasn't enough people in that area to use a bridge and Mr. Borowski cancelled out that bridge and that was the end of that. Now I'm hoping that this Minister hasn't worked for the Criddles or anybody else in there, and that he realizes there is a considerable traffic from Shilo, to Wawanesa, to Killarney and Pelican Lake. They use the Pelican Lake area, the Souris area, the Killarney area, the people at Shilo, and now that the Germans are

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(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) there at Shilo training, there's a lot more people there to be using our tourist facilities in Manitoba and I'm hoping that this bridge will be planned maybe in this next winter, I'm hoping. And I understand the bridge at Wawanesa which was planned for last year's estimates, you decided not to go ahead with that and I'm hoping that the money that was allocated to Wawanesa will be put over on the Assiniboine there just about 8 miles away anyway.

I also suggest to the Minister that he use the town line between the Municipalities of South Cypress and Ocha (?) the town line, directly south of Shilo, the road straight directly south of Shilo. The engineers will know where that is and I think that would be the road that would be used the most, the most direct road from Shilo south, because Shilo's right on the town line; Shilo is the town that separates the camp and the residential area of Shilo and this road is directly south of Shilo.

Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to say a few words on transportation. Mention was made of taxis this afternoon and I ride in quite a few taxis in Winnipeg, and I will admit that there has been a change here. I don't know what the change -- taxi drivers won't tell you too much but some of them are happy and some of them are unhappy. Some of them are unhappy because they paid \$10,000 and got an old car and their maintenance costs are excessively high. Other ones are happy because they're their own boss, and so I wouldn't say that they're all unhappy. But I think the thing that bothers most people, that many of these men who are independent taxi drivers now in their own right, are finding it difficult to hire employees, their extra taxi drivers on the second 12-hour shift, and I understand many of them rather than put on -- they drive their car, they drive it one shift 12 hours and then they put their taxi up for the night. This is what they do. They decide whether they're going to drive from 6:00 to 6:00 or start at noon and go to 12:00 at night, and this is where the problem lies, there's a lot less taxis on the street simply because they can't find drivers to drive that extra 12-hour shift. And one of the reasons why they can't is because up to the raise in the taxi fares they couldn't pay the kind of money to attract the right kind of people. This is another problem they have. So they've got their problems, they've got plenty of them, and I only hope that something works out for these particular independent operators because it's going to take them about six years to pay off this taxi you understand, at least six years. They're paying it off on a daily basis; it's going to take them a long while. I only hope too many of them don't go broke before they get their taxis paid for, and during that time I imagine they'll wear out two or three cars, so they have their problems.

I don't know whether you could ever get enough taxis but I want to say to people, no matter what city you go to, what city you go to, it doesn't matter in North America, it's difficult to get a taxi when you want it, and one of the reasons is because you can't have enough to meet the demand at peak times; you can't have enough taxis because in the off times, say at 10 o'clock and 12:30 in the morning or some time like that, you would have too many taxis sitting idle, and this is one of the problems is trying to get enough. I can understand their problem trying to satisfy everybody, but I don't think the service is quite as good and I will agree with the Member for Fort Rouge. And one of the reasons it isn't as good is because the former owners, they had everything to gain by keeping their taxis on the road; they had everything to gain. The independent operator hasn't got as much to gain by keeping his car on the road because he might be losing money on a given shift from 12 o'clock at night, from 12 noon or whenever his shift starts, so they won't take the chance the same as the former owners.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to say a word about transportation in Winnipeg, and I don't live in Winnipeg very much other than about four or five months of the year. I'd like to say that something is going to have to be done in here because with prosperity you have one person to every car, and I watch them going by the hotel in the morning, at 8:00 o'clock in the morning going to work. Now you're not going to build enough streets, but I was wondering with all the railways you have in Winnipeg, C.P.R., C.N.R., why there couldn't be a system of day coaches put on there with an electric motor on them, and pick them up in Fort Garry and take them right down to the C.N.R. Station here, something like that, or from Charleswood out there. You've got a railroad track, you could run them downtown here, and that way I think - you're going to take them off the streets. But something's going to have to be done because you're not going to be able to buy enough streets; property's going to be too expensive and it's going to be impossible -- people will get so frustrated trying to fight the traffic morning and

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(MR. McKELLAR cont'd) night that they'll give up eventually and they'll be mental wrecks, and something's going to have to be done.

Toronto solved their problems a number of years ago, twenty years ago; part of their problems at least. Well, Mr. Minister, you mightn't agree, but I tell you Toronto wouldn't be alive today. That's what made Toronto was that subway. It made Toronto. As far as I'm concerned it made Toronto what it is today. They opened it up in 1952, the first subway. I was there when they opened it up and I tell you, as far as I'm concerned it made Toronto. I don't think a monorail would be any good to Winnipeg but I do think you've got railroad tracks that are not being used to their full capacity. Put some day coaches on there, bring them in, bring them in from Charleswood, bring them in from Fort Garry, bring them in from the West End, the Northwest Winnipeg with CPR, and bring them down, then have buses coming off from there. But something's got to be done because I'll tell you, you're going to have the biggest headache about five years from now that you ever experienced, if you're still Minister - I don't know whether he will or not - but you will have, trying to satisfy everybody in the Metropolitan area in Winnipeg. You are. If everybody lived in my little village, we've got 35 people; you've got no problems at all. You get a half million people all going to work at the same time, all going home from work at the same time, and the city's population is expanding, getting bigger, because everybody wants to live in one area in Manitoba; the problems are going to get pretty difficult. I don't know what you're going to do. The City of Minneapolis is putting in an expressway, 60 miles an hour anywhere right downtown. I don't think you could do that here. You haven't got that kind of property unless you take over the CNR or something and get a freeway going north and south or east or something, but that's the only way. You've got to get people there in a hurry. People will not fight traffic any longer than half an hour morning and night and they're having to do that now, but five years from now they won't get to work in half an hour, I can assure you that.

Now these are a few of the things that -- I wanted to speak to the Motor Vehicle Branch but I don't see the Minister there. The one minister is there but the other minister isn't there. He's the one I want to get at; he's the one I want to get at. I wish he was there. He said he -- What?

A MEMBER: Right there.

MR. McKELLAR: Where? Oh here he is. Here he is. Very good. Well, I'm going to say I didn't notice him over here. Get over there where I can look at you. I don't know whether he's the man that dreamt up the idea of putting all the increased demerit points, surcharge everything, but since he became minister all Hell's broke loose on the highways. Practically now, with the surcharges, you could run up as high as \$700.00 for a driver's license; \$700.00 -- \$325.00 plus your driver's license, and all you need is about five accidents in a year, four accidents in a year, 50 percent responsible, 50 percent responsible, and this is the way they're all being assessed - 50 percent responsible. It could run up as high as \$700.00 - six or seven hundred dollars.

I tell you, I mentioned the revenues we're getting out of here; we're not even building, the Highways Branch are not getting what we're taking in revenues from the gas tax, motor fuel tax and licences - and this is what I'm getting at - even though you're collecting all that money, that extra money in your department, the Motor Vehicle Branch. I say that something's got to come to a halt. You've taxed everything you can tax, taxed everything to the point of no return. I don't know what you're going to tax now. You've . . . the surcharges I mentioned this year, something you never did before. You condemned the insurance companies for doing that before; everybody condemned the insurance companies because they were guilty; so you opened up the surcharges this time; you got at the public. Demerit points, insurance companies could never do that. They could never assess a tax on demerit points. You're collecting more -- I know of people that have got 39 demerit points, 40 demerit points, some higher than that. You're going to be collecting money on demerit points like you've never saw anything like, because it only takes three speeding tickets and you're bang! You're paying \$75.00.

Mr. Chairman, this is the Minister that says he's saving money for the taxpayers of Manitoba. He's saving money for them. You don't have to tell me, Mr. Chairman, he's saving money. I tell you he's the greatest tax collector that ever was invented, the greatest tax collector.

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Public Works.

HON. RUSSELL J. DOERN (Minister of Public Works) (Elmwood): Mr. Chairman, on a point of order. I think the member is being allowed excessive latitude. He's debating another department.

MR. McKELLAR: Mr. Chairman, I'm on the Motor Vehicle Branch. I'm on the Motor Vehicle Branch. Does he not know what the Motor Vehicle Branch is? I'd better give that Minister a lesson. All he knows is how to build washrooms and close them up all winter. But he doesn't even open up for the tourist trade, they're laying on the grass over there. They usually open up the washrooms. I haven't got much confidence in that Minister. I'm going to tell him when his estimates come up. Very little confidence. I wouldn't be around here 16 years if . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. Order please. Proceed with the Department of Highways.

MR. McKELLAR: Mr. Chairman, I was interrupted there by the Minister of Public Works. I was just trying to remind him of his error of the day. I haven't got much more to say because I'm going to make a speech at 9:00 o'clock on Autopac and I want to save a little for that. I'm going to save quite a bit for that, twenty minutes worth. So I'll just say, why don't we have one minister responsible for the Motor Vehicle Branch? It would make it so much nicer. I don't care which minister, whether it's the Minister of Highways or the Minister for Autopac, but for the life of me I can't see why we need two ministers to operate the Motor Vehicle Branch, so give it to one minister or the other so we'll know what department of the Motor Vehicle Branch we're going after. I can understand why there's a division out there but the division shouldn't exist as far as I'm concerned. Give it to one person.

So that's all I say, Mr. Chairman. I wish the First Minister was in here at the present time because I would suggest that to him, and I hope this gets back to him. Give the responsibility to the Motor Vehicle Branch. The branch was doing a good job because they got a tough job out there; it's a real tough job trying to deal with people, trying to deal with people. So I say, in closing, you tell your First Minister that I said to give the responsibility of the Motor Vehicle Branch to one Minister; it doesn't matter who.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BOB BANMAN (La Verendrye): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a rule, highways are of great concern to me and I must say is one of the largest concerns to my constituents because they have to travel on them every day to get from one place to another. I think the Minister of Highways realizes that the highways in rural areas are the mainstay of that rural economy, and that our industry, secondary industry, and farming community depend very heavily on the railways.

The other day, my colleague from Lakeside made several observations with regard to the way budgets are drawn up and the way the moneys are doled out to the different departments, and I think I agree with him when he mentioned that we are diversifying, we're going into mineral exploration, we're going into different avenues, and what is happening is that the pie is being divided and I think the slice that the Highways Minister is getting out of that piece of pie is getting smaller all the time. I notice when we look at the capital construction of provincial roads and trunk highways, it's only a four percent increase over last year, which means that that doesn't even cover the increase in inflation for that period of time. I have several beefs but I also have some bouquets, so to balance them off a bit do you want the good news or the bad news?

No. 1, I'd like to say that I welcome the location study and functional design for an expressway along the No. 12 highway, the 11.8 miles between Steinbach running through Ste. Anne and to the Trans Canada Highway. It's a much-travelled road. The traffic counts on the traffic on there indicates that the road, I think, is required. Travelling that road myself very frequently, it becomes quite frustrating when you want to pass somebody and you have to follow somebody at 15, 20 mph for quite awhile. So, as I mentioned previously, I welcome that study with great enthusiasm and hope in the Minister's three-year planning that next year they will go ahead and acquire the right-of-ways, and the year after that probably go ahead and build that road.

I have mentioned this before and I would just like to bring it up again, that I feel that the right-of-way purchasing, maybe because people want more for their properties or it's becoming more difficult to buy certain properties, the right-of-way purchasing seems to be holding up

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(MR. BANMAN cont'd) some of the projects in Manitoba. I mentioned this under the estimates of the Minister for Public Works and I hope that this minister will go ahead and work together with the Minister of Public Works and try to speed up the land acquisition. I don't know if there's more staff required for that particular branch, but speaking with different engineers and different highway personnel, they mention that this is one of the problems that they're having.

The three-year highway policy which I think the Minister is implementing is a good one, whereby they'll do the planning one year, the acquisition and tendering another year, and then the last year do the construction. I think that's something in the right direction; it gives us all an insight to what the future planning of the department is.

One of the questions brought up to me very frequently is the frequency of maintenance of some of the provincial roads. I know in my particular area with the hog and dairy and poultry farmers the loads being carried on these roads are more, and as a result more frequent. I realize this is putting a pressure on the roads that wasn't there before, but in the same instance I think this could somehow be avoided by possibly a little more frequent maintenance, and I realize this again costs more money and that the Minister will require more money, but I would encourage that type of thing, because some of the roads are not being maintained in a way that they should be. I think by sending a maintainer over them a little more frequent we would have some better roads, and it would be easier on the machines and also facilitate better moving of produce to the market places.

Another thing that probably should be brought up is some of the smaller municipalities do have equipment. I would urge the government to possibly review their rates that they are paying for maintainers at present, and use the facilities of these people with regard to snow clearing, to patrolling of certain PR roads. I notice there's one - well, there's two municipalities in my area that do rent out their grader or their maintainer at certain intervals to the government, and I think possibly that if the government would have a look at this and utilize some of the machinery and some of the manpower that these municipalities have they could possibly build up better machinery reserves and also help the government in that respect.

A final word about highway safety. I notice that the accidents are up quite substantially from '72 to '73, and just to bring up one point, I had a meeting the other day with the Manitoba motor dealers. They are concerned about safety problems with automobiles on the road, and I would urge the Minister to meet with these people. I understand that they're trying to get an audience with the Minister, and I would urge that he would see these people, have a talk with them and listen to their suggestions. They're interested in road safety and I'm sure with co-operation and some of their expertise, the Minister could possibly provide some safer vehicles on the road and maybe help cut down the accidents, and possibly help cut down the Honourable Minister of Autopac's deficit for this coming year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. J. PAUL MARION (St. Boniface): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose that the best way to start talking to the Minister about some of the things that he is doing well and not doing well, is to remind him of a story that was told to me by the Major of the City of Winnipeg when Highway Estimates were being discussed many years ago when he was in this Chamber, and the Minister, as was the rule then, was having a hard time from the opposition on the condition of the roads --(Interjection)-- I'm sure I haven't talked 30 minutes - or 20 minutes yet, Mr. Chairman. During this debate, all of the opposition members were really having a go at the Minister, so --(Interjection)-- I see that the Minister of Labour finds it rather humorous that I should sit down two seconds after standing up. However, with respect to my story, it then got to be the mayor's time to stand up and partake of the debate and he didn't know how he was going to put across to him that the roads were really in terrible shape, because all of the other guys had mentioned a whole number of highways by number and by name, that were full of potholes, so he said, "Well, frankly, Mr. Minister, I don't know how to tell you this, but all of the roads I travel - and I travel all of them - have all of the holes that can be found on any of the highways in the province." This was a polite way of saying that "all of your roads are nothing but a pothole." Mr. Minister, I'm not insinuating that your roads are in that bad a shape. They've come through a very harsh winter with rather flying colours, but I think that no doubt in the amounts that you've set aside for maintenance you will find large sums to fix those potholes that are not imaginary, that I ran over during the past weekend.

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(MR. MARION cont'd)

I'm pleased to see that we're working assiduously on the Trans Canada Highway to complete those four lanes going east. I'm sure that once that project has been rushed through to completion we will then be able to look on the western side and make sure that four lanes are also completed to the Saskatchewan boundary, and then everyone will be happy in the movement of traffic, because surely these highways really get loaded during the summer peak period and they are very hazardous trails to follow.

I think that would be the extent of my contribution with respect to the highway system in this province. I must admit that I don't travel extensively on the other routes. Perhaps 75 should have some of the Minister's attention because it also is a problem and one that I'm aware of. I travel on that north-south one as well. But I think that by and large I would like to look at some of the problems that maybe the Minister can help the City of Winnipeg solve. I think that my colleague from Fort Rouge and the former colleague on City Council covered a number of the points. I might be repetitious, but I think that it is by repeating that perhaps we can impress the Minister on some of the importance of the programs that the two gentlemen and I will announce.

I think that the cost-sharing program with the City on main arterial roads is one for which, or on which I have heard absolutely no complaints by the city fathers when I was on council. I think that the cost-sharing agreements are valuable; they're equitable and they're appreciated; but I do think that there is a problem or a hesitancy by the Provincial Government to accept that many of the roads not now classified as main arterial or regional arteries, we have difficulty in reclassifying them. There's a great deal of hesitancy by the Minister to accept that they become part of the cost-sharing agreement between the City and the Province. I get a big smile by this, and of course I suppose it's reasonable that the Minister should hesitate parting with large sums of money, but I do feel that I lived through a particular case in 1972, right from the departure in the new experiment called for by Bill 36 when Tache Avenue, which was an absolute mess brought about by the erosion of the river bank and had been a main arterial road under the cost-sharing formula but for some reason or other had been removed, we then found that the City of Winnipeg had to fund a quarter of a million dollar project that really should have been shared by the province. I will get an answer to this, but I'm pretty sure that there was no funding here, there was no funding here at all, and it was really a worthwhile cause and there should have been some funding on this road. I remember heading a delegation to the then Minister for Urban Affairs, requesting that this become part and parcel of the cost-sharing arrangement, but I'm afraid we didn't have all the success that we had hoped we would have.

I think that everyone has alluded to the Winnipeg Area Transportation Study and has said that by and large it has been done away with. The plan itself, the original concept, is one that is not now being followed, and I say to that "amen". I'm particularly pleased because some of the environmental impact that would have occurred had the WATS study been implemented - and again, I'm sorry if I'm a homer, but particularly in my area we would have destroyed an extremely viable 35 acres of property and we would have turned it into nothing but a concrete jungle, so I'm indeed very happy to see that we abandoned that particular area. And I know that the story is the same in many many other areas where the . . .

A MEMBER: Build a wall around the place.

MR. MARION: I'm being heckled by someone close to St. Vital. It was indeed a godsend that the city fathers realized that they were not going to serve the community by carrying out the study that was made way back when some of the people who were in charge of the study, notwithstanding the fact that I think they were competent people, were tackling the problem with respect to Winnipeg transportation as you would in a megapolis like New York or Chicago, and surely I think that this was not at all required and gladly it has been dropped.

We still have a couple of contentious transportation problems that will have to be dealt with. The Inner Beltway, although still presently in great doubt, has some worthwhile aspects to it and I think that it will probably be given a further serious look before being completely abandoned. I think that the fact that the province has said it was not favourable to any expressways will probably have a great deal of effect on the decision that will be taken by the City because, in essence, if it cannot get cost-sharing by the province, I'm sure that the Beltway system will also have to be dropped. Personally, I don't think that this again will be a loss because of the fact that it is so far ahead of its time with respect to the City of Winnipeg and

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(MR. MARION cont'd) its requirements. It is true that we are choking the downtown area because all of the traffic moving north, south, east and west are by and large funnelled through this area, but with a properly implemented grid system and with good provincial funding with respect to the necessary river crossings that an efficient grid system would require, I am convinced that for the time being this can serve the City of Winnipeg in no uncertain terms. I think that it can provide the relief that the downtown . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. I am finding it very difficult to hear the honourable member because of the noise in the House - and elsewhere. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface may continue.

MR. MARION: I thank the Minister for helping me in delivering the words of wisdom that I have to deliver a little easier. -- (Interjection) -- You mean I can't carry on. I won't then.

But I do feel, Mr. Minister, that this will alleviate the downtown choking problem and permit the development of the downtown as it is now taking place, without any duress with respect to the traffic problem. I think that the First Minister had said that - and again I'm relating this to the downtown development plan which will very definitely by its nature produce itself a great deal of traffic. It will be interesting for the City of Winnipeg to take up the First Minister on the offer to provide experimental money on the transportation systems that will be required by the downtown development plan.

And there are a host of transportation systems that can be looked upon. A point A to B main thoroughfare type of transportation, with collection routes along the way, and I think that for the downtown area - and I have discussed this with my colleague from Fort Rouge - I think that this is probably the most advisable of the inner downtown transportation facilities. I think that the City of Winnipeg are now studying the advisability of using abandoned rail lines. This has also been talked about - and I'm thinking of the Fort Garry to downtown area. This makes a great deal of sense, and again, perhaps some funding can be obtained, serious funding, on the experiment that could be conducted. I think that this would become really a rapid transit kind of transportation system that would serve a large population and would move it from point A to point B, and I think that really this could become a very viable experiment that could then, if it proves successful, be introduced for the east-west route and the north to centre route.

I think that we've talked, and I remember being in on some press conferences with respect to rapid transit, I don't think that this should be abandoned totally. I think that there are very definitely some areas where maybe this is the kind of transportation system with a less environmental impact, and I'm not willing to condemn it. I think that here again more statistical information should be obtained, and there are presently two systems that operate from which a great deal of experience could be assimilated without necessarily having to shell out any money, and there have been some offers of these rapid transportation system people, there have been some offers that have been most interesting, that are almost self-liquidating, and perhaps the province could give the encouragement to the City of Winnipeg that's required to bring that into being in its proper order. I think that there are criteria to be followed and it does not necessarily have to be the first. I would think that the grid pattern that is a pattern that exists today, with the exception of course of the sufficient bridges or river crossings that would make it fully a properly flowing pattern, I think that this is probably the top criteria to start with.

I think that those are some of the points that I thought I would like to throw at the Minister. I also noticed from the budget that he is also the area from which we take the transit system help that can be obtained, and I must say that the first trend of help that was obtained by the City of Winnipeg in the new format was one that I did not find very palatable when we are told to accept a \$300,000 gift which later became half a million dollars, but we were not given the opportunity to get competitive bids, that we were not really on a bid system. I found that a little unpalatable. I would think that these are the kinds of situations that don't help understanding between two governments. I thought that perhaps.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order. The Honourable Member will have 15 minutes to continue at the next sitting of the committee. Before I call in the Speaker I would just like to remind members that today is the last day for studded tires. Call in the Speaker. Committee rise. Mr. Speaker, the Committee has considered certain resolutions, has asked me to report same and asks leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Churchill, the report of the committee be received. (MOTION presented and carried.)

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: First item Tuesday night is Private Members' Private Bills. Bill No. 35. The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. BILTON: Stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Stand. Bill No. 39. The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 40. The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING (St. Vital): Stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 23. The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: Stand.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 31. The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. HARVEY PATTERSON (Crescentwood): Stand, Mr. Speaker.

RESOLUTION NO. 22

MR. SPEAKER: Private Members' Resolutions. Resolution No. 22. Order please. Order please. I haven't recognized anybody, I was just checking to see who's spoken, first, last and before. The Honourable Member for Riel.

MR. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, it's fortuitous that this resolution should come to the fore at the present time, particularly since today was the final day of the hearings of the Public Utilities Committee, which entertained and received the report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. The resolution that is before us must certainly have been testified to in glowing full colour in the last few days of the session here and in the activities of the committee this morning.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Portage has introduced this resolution and I think it's a stab in the right direction of trying to provide a degree of continuity and a degree of legitimacy to the operations of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. At the hearings this morning the Member for Portage asked the question that I thought was probably a very revealing question. He asked a question of the General Manager of the Manitoba Autopac, Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, and the Chairman of the committee said, that can't be referred to the General Manager, it has to be referred to the Minister. Well Mr. Speaker, a question was asked in the House yesterday, or the day before, of the Minister, and the Minister said that can't be asked in the House, you have to ask it in the Committee. Mr. Speaker, that is the position that we're now in. If the members of this Chamber ask a question in the House on Autopac it's referred to the Committee, and if it's referred to the General Manager, who is the chief potentate of the Autopac, it's referred not to him, Mr. Speaker, not the head of the corporation in its operations, but to the Minister who sits as chairman of that committee. So, Mr. Speaker, --(Interjection)--So what? The question, Mr. Speaker, begs itself, is this resolution legitimate or otherwise, because the resolution says that if a Minister is going to be Chairman of a corporation of the province that's doing, not \$50 million worth of business, Mr. Speaker, but in excess of \$60 million, because we know there's going to be a \$10 million deficit, should not that Minister have to report estimates to this House? Well, Mr. Speaker, well Mr. Speaker, --(Interjections)--

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, if the Minister is reporting Estimates to this House he's hiding his light under a bushel, because the entire effort of the committee this morning was to attempt to find out what the estimates of budget were for the Autopac. Mr. Speaker, we found out that the rate structure was going to bring in \$51 million Mr. Speaker. Fifty-one million dollars just also happened to be the figure of the expenditures of Autopac for the last fiscal year. So, Mr. Speaker, we were also advised, and we're supposed to somehow go in and deduce by the fact that the accident rate, not the accident rate but the claims rate is up 22 percent, and the cost per claim is escalated above that, but they cannot tell us that the costs of Autopac are going to be up.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's their statement. The cost of Autopac by their information given to the Committee in a very reluctant and very piecemeal basis, indicates, Mr. Speaker, and we all stand to be corrected on this side, but indicates that the losses for Autopac in the coming year, the current year, Mr. Speaker, will probably exceed the losses in the previous year. The losses in the previous year was that unfortunate hailstorm that occurred last summer, started out at \$8 million, when the report came out, ended up at \$10 million, and now we find

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(MR. CRAIK cont'd) that the cost of the hailstorm turned out to be one or two million dollars.

A MEMBER: How you do like that?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, this is how we get information. This is how we get information as elected members. Mr. Speaker, the reason we got Autopac, the reason we got Manitoba Public Insurance, that that corporation was going to be responsible to the elected people of Manitoba, and the people of Manitoba were going to know exactly what happened, and no more of those ripoff artists were running the private corporations, Mr. Speaker, in excessive terms, Mr. Speaker, but essentially what we got. So now we have a demonstration of nepotism, a demonstration of nepotism, Mr. Speaker. A member who's elected to the Legislature is made head of one of the largest corporations in this province. Mr. Speaker, that reaches the consummate of the argument of some people on the government side who say that if I am wrong, I will be "de-elected" from this House, and that's all you have to do, Mr. Speaker. So they take an elected member, make him a Cabinet Minister, and make him head of one of the largest corporations in this province, doing over \$50 million worth of business. Mr. Speaker, what other corporation in Manitoba does \$50 million worth of business? Does Bristol Aircraft--(Interjection)--I'm talking about Manitoba Corporations basically that make their home base here. Perhaps Imperial Oil does. I don't know. But I ask the government to name a corporation. Does Inco? Does Sherritt-Gordon?

A MEMBER: Yes.

MR. CRAIK: Ah, Great West Life does.

A MEMBER: Inco does.

MR. CRAIK: Do they do it in Manitoba?

A MEMBER: Yes. Fifty million easy.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, if you can name on your hand, if you can name five corporations that do \$50 million worth of business in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, than I stand to be corrected. I ask you Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation stands among the largest corporations in this province. Mr. Speaker, in cash flow as one of the largest corporations of this province. And is there and is justified, and justified by this government because it's going to be responsible to the people of Manitoba.

Well the Member for Portage stands up and he says, I would like to ask, I would like to ask the general manager of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation a question and the Chairman said, you can't do that; you have to ask it to the Minister.

A MEMBER: To the Chairman.

MR. CRAIK: No. The Minister. The Minister. The Minister is the Chairman. The Minister as the Chairman is asked a question in this House and he says, ask the committee. Well, Mr. Speaker, we go to committee and do we get the answers?

A MEMBER: No way.

MR. CRAIK: I have never seen a more wet sponge approach to a committee as has ever happened, as it happened in the Autopac Committee. That has to be just about the worst demonstration I've ever seen. Mr. Speaker, I'll give credit to the Manitoba Mineral Corporation that presented its report the other day because it gave answers, Mr. Speaker, in a roughshod, direct way. Mr. Speaker, the performance of Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation is one of the most dismal performances that has ever been performed in front of a Legislative committee. Mr. Speaker, if the public of Manitoba could see the fashion in which a \$50 million corporation is being run in this province, they wouldn't stand for it. But Mr. Speaker, the public of Manitoba do not know, and they cannot know, Mr. Speaker, because there's not enough room in that Room 254 for them to see that consummate performance of abject incompetence. Mr. Speaker, that's what it is.

And this government justified that move on the basis that they were going to make public all these things, make public how this performance was. Well what's happened, Mr. Speaker? They present rates in their own reports. They congratulate their chairman who was an elected minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, in complete contradiction again to the philosophy of this government which has been that a minister will be congratulated or otherwise at the polls, that will decide. But they can't do with that, Mr. Speaker, they have to write it on Page 9 of the report.

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MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose we could look forward to the day with this government when we can find many more corporations, perhaps the Inco that operates in the Thompson. . .

A MEMBER: They'll have that too.

MR. CRAIK: . . . and the Great West Life, who are all subject to takeover. There's absolutely no reason on God's green earth why Inco wasn't taken over before the insurance business was taken over because it's more inherently a part and parcel of the product of Manitoba, it's a natural resource company. We can look forward to that day too, and is that the performance we're going to get, that performance we saw in the Public Utilities Committee. My friend from the Interlake can sit there as head of his \$50 million corporation, and he can smile, Mr. Speaker; he can go on his ego trip, he's the president of one of the largest corporations in this province. And they love it, and they love every minute of it, Mr. Speaker, because that is their philosophy, the consummate of the philosophy of the NDP is 15 cabinet ministers, Mr. Speaker. That's it, and if you reach that position as one of those 15 cabinet ministers, you've made it. You're going to have the Minister of Mines and Resources stand up, and he's going to say, ah ha but they're responsible to the people of Manitoba, because the people of Manitoba can go to room 254, and they can ask any question they want to, and, Mr. Speaker, they will get those answers. Well did they? I ask you? Has anybody, has any member of the public ever gone to 254 and got the answers he wanted to hear? The last time I remember was the potato, the vegetable growers, and that's the only time I can recall when democracy was ever exercised in room 254. I've never seen it exercised, Mr. Speaker, on Autopac insurance. I've never seen a dissatisfied claimant come before the committee in room 254. Mr. Speaker--(Interjection)--No, no thanks, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm willing to bet. I won't say that; it's unparliamentary. I'm willing to suggest that almost every member of this Legislature has had calls, one call, two calls, half a dozen calls, more calls on Autopac claims, Mr. Speaker. I've never heard one of them registered in room 254. Never heard one. Never heard a complainant come before the committee in room 254 and present his case.

But that is the argument. That's why we have Autopac. They're going to appear there, and the people are going to come, and there will be democracy, Mr. Speaker. Now the government is going to bring in fire insurance, and they're going to give the people all those rights that the people that have Autopac now have, because they can go to 254. All those people that are complaining about their fire rates are going to be able to go there, too, and solve their problems, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there should be no doubt about it, that the democratic process has certainly demonstrated that the government should take over all those industries like that. Mr. Speaker, the general manager said at the last meeting of the committee, oh well, he says, you know, it's only a cash flow problem; it's \$10 million, Mr. Speaker. It's only a cash flow problem. Are you writing it off Mr. General Manager? Well no, we're not writing it off but we're not a regular insurance company, Mr. Speaker. We've got a \$10 million deficit, but it's only cash flow, you know. There's \$50 million here, and we took in 40, we're short 10, but we're going to catch up, you know. It's not amortized, Mr. Speaker. Last year in the Autopac report - I get your message, Mr. Speaker. In the Autopac report last year we had no amortization of start-up costs. They show it as an asset. If they are going to sell the company, Mr. Speaker, it shows up as an asset. Three million dollars in start-up costs, and they're going to show it as an asset because some day they're going to sell the company like they're a private company.

Well this is the sort of argument, you know, Mr. Speaker. You work both ends for the middle when you're a socialist, eh? You take all the rights of a private company, you take all the powers of a legislature, and you put the two together and you do what you damn well want to do. That's exactly what these fellows are doing. Besides that you take a young fellow that wants to be a cabinet minister and you put him on an ego trip. --(Interjection)--No I wouldn't say that. I said simply that you take a young guy that wants to go on an ego trip, and that shows you how great the powers of democracy are. He doesn't have to work his way up to the top; he has to have no special competence in the area he's in, but you simply make him the head of a \$50 million a year corporation, one of the largest in the province of Manitoba.

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(MR. CRAIK cont'd) Then, Mr. Speaker, you nail down and you pin your hopes on that great philosophy we've heard so frequently, if we're doing wrong, Mr. Speaker, the public will "de-elect" us. That's it. But where do you get your checks and balances? Where do you get your checks and balances in a system like that, Mr. Speaker? Your ultimate goal, your ultimate goal, and the ultimate goal that the government philosophy leads us to, is 15 cabinet ministers. The ultimate of society, you've got to be a cabinet minister, because you get a big salary, you get a free car to drive, you get all that power, you get \$50 million in cash flow. Who can beat it? So, Mr. Speaker, the ultimate of society becomes to get yourself elected and by all means end up in government, cause there you've really got the power.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to get back--(Interjection)--No, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, my lust for power I must say is not greatly whetted by watching the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. But it does puzzle me to some extent to see hundreds of people, thousands of people, Mr. Speaker, that I see walking around the streets of Manitoba who do not aspire to be the head of that fifty million-dollar corporation, but would like to plug into society without having to go to the polls to do it, to be elected. And that's surely what the debate boils down to here, is whether or not those people can reach an ultimate in professional performance, whether it is as an insurance man or an architect, or whatever you have, without getting elected to be a cabinet minister. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's disappointing to see the promises that were made when Manitoba Public Insurance Company Corporation was brought in to be responsible to the people of Manitoba and get the answers that we got at committee when legitimate questions were asked, Mr. Speaker, --(Interjection)--reluctantly answered, and most of them, most of them not not really answered, Mr. Speaker.

A MEMBER: Never will be answered.

MR. CRAIK: They may have been answered to Terry Roberts of the Tribune last week when he got in and got a personal interview - something that no member of the Legislature is gifted to get - but when the former Minister in charge of Autopac replied to him, the reason, Mr. Speaker, that it was not known before the last election that there was that size of a deficit was because nobody in the Legislative Chamber asked the question. Mr. Speaker, can you imagine that, after all the trash last year in the Legislature over insurance, when the Minister this year stood up. You know, what degree of intellectual dishonesty do we have to stoop to, Mr. Speaker, what degree of intellectual dishonesty do we have to stoop to to achieve a philosophical goal. Because, Mr. Speaker, this government has stooped just about as low as you can go, and the answers that we're getting are just absolutely inadequate, they're an insult to their philosophy, they're an insult to the intelligence of the people of Manitoba. So why don't they stand up, Mr. Speaker, and say what the real performance of Autopac is. At least this resolution takes us a long way towards that happening.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member has said that he doesn't have a particular lust for power, that he is not seeking to be a cabinet minister, or doesn't have a particular drive to get over on this side and, Mr. Speaker, we can tell that by the way in which he is behaving that he does not have that particular drive, and probably has no prospect of being over on this side of the House, and we understand his thinking in that connection. But let us understand, let us understand, Mr. Speaker, that that is his thinking. He said that this morning he saw one of the most dismal performances that ever took place before a committee. Well, Mr. Speaker, I saw the dismal performance too, and I saw the fact that there have been people who have said that there should be a committee on Autopac; that the chairman of the committee should be there; that the program of Autopac should be gone into; that the annual report of Autopac should have been gone into; that members of the Legislature should be able to ask questions on everything relating to Autopac. And, Mr. Speaker, the committee met this morning. Where was the Member for Riel? And they say we met and gave answers reluctantly. First of all let us recall that this is the second time that the committee met, and, Mr. Speaker; let us recall that there is no legislative stipulation for such a meeting, and I will not use that at all, because once it was suggested that we meet, the government despite the fact that there is no stipulation that it should meet, despite the fact that there is no committee that it should report to, said immediately, yes, that is a good idea, regardless of whether there is a stipulation, regardless of whether there is a requirement, there will be a meeting and the chairman will be at the meeting and he will have his staff there in order that

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(MR. GREEN cont'd) every question that is put will be answered.

We met once--(Interjection)--I'm not saying that he shouldn't. The fact is that he was there, Mr. Speaker, when the committee met at 10:00 o'clock. The member who just talked about the dismal performance was not there. The Leader of the Opposition was not there. We sat there, Mr. Speaker - the honourable member says we met reluctantly - we sat there for an hour waiting for enough opposition members who are yelling that this meeting should be held, who are yelling, Mr. Speaker - Mr. Speaker, there were five government members there . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. GREEN: . . . it requires two opposition members to form a quorum. We could not get a quorum, Mr. Speaker. On several occasions the chairman of the committee came up to me to show how reluctantly we were there and how reluctantly we answered questions, the chairman came up to me on several occasions and said, should we call off the meeting? And I said no. There's an indication that they are coming. They wish to discuss Autopac, and we will wait. Mr. Speaker, that was the dismal performance. The dismal performance was on behalf of those who said that they were so anxious to ask - particularly the Member for Riel who did not show up until 11:00 o'clock, and by that time the meeting had only --(Interjection)-- 11.30! Well, Mr. Speaker, by that time the meeting only was held because of the determination of the government to stay there until a quorum arrived. The honourable member knows that, or should know it. We had to wait until 11:00 o'clock before the leader and the other members of the committee, including the General-Manager of the Corporation, including the staff, stayed there and waited for the Leader of the Opposition to arrive so that we could start a meeting.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was the dismal performance--(Interjection)--for five out of the seven. Five out of the seven.

A MEMBER: One hour late.

MR. GREEN: One hour, so that the meeting should start, so that the meeting - well, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member says that somehow there has been a reluctant compliance, that there is a refusal to answer questions. Let's put on the record what happened, and the honourable member knows. The Minister was asked in the House during the question period a question concerning the Autopac program. He answered that the committee will be meeting tomorrow; it would be better if the question were put at committee. It wasn't a refusal to answer. And then he also, he also answered, but indicated that the committee would be meeting tomorrow. The honourable member chooses, because he has such a weak case, and he wouldn't do it if he didn't have a weak case, chooses to indicate that that is a refusal to answer questions. During the question period he was asked a question, indicated the answer to the question, and also indicated that the committee would be meeting tomorrow. Now if the honourable member had a good case he would not say that the Minister was refusing to account.

When the committee met the Minister answered the questions that were put to him. The Minister also indicated that where the General Manager's assistance was required, he would answer. All of the members' questions were answered. If the honourable member feels that some were not satisfactorily answered, he will be able to deal with that. He will be able to account to the people. Mr. Speaker, the honourable member - the budget was indicated that they were - well, Mr. Speaker, this is what I heard - and I will make a wager with the honourable member that it is on the transcript - that they have raised the premiums in order to realize approximately \$51 million; that they have hoped that the claims would plateau and that the pay-outs would equal approximately that figure, that that was the way in which they budgeted this year's operations. And, Mr. Speaker, that will appear on the transcript.--(Interjection)-- No, Mr. Speaker, no, I do not wish to answer a question unless at the end of my remarks there is still time left.

Mr. Speaker, those questions were answered. Anybody who wished to be there could ask; any members of the public--(Interjection)--Mr. Speaker, they were asked the other day, they were asked that day and they were answered, they were asked this day and they were answered--(Interjection)--That is not the point of it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, that is not the point of it. The point . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I will again wager with the leader, the House Leader of the Liberal Party, that on no occasion did the Minister refuse to answer the question; and

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(MR. GREEN cont'd) Mr. Speaker, if I am wrong, I will buy my honourable friend a drink; if he is right - if he is wrong, I ask that he do the same. We will go over the transcript together.

Now what really happened is that the honourable the Member for Fort Rouge did not like the answer, or he said that you are evading the answer, or he did not feel that the Minister was answering as much as he would like to have answered. But at no time did the Minister refuse to answer. And, Mr. Speaker, that's accountability. If the Minister behaved badly, then the Member for Riel, the Member for Portage la Prairie, will be able to go back to their constituents and to other places in the Province of Manitoba, say to the people of the province that the Minister appeared; they will say, I presume, that he refused to answer even though I don't accept that as a true statement, that is their interpretation, that will be their electioneering. They will try to show that the people who they say have been hoping to become cabinet ministers so that they could drive a new car - you know, the Honourable Member for Riel should know better, because I could drive a better car if I was not a cabinet minister, and that is a fact. But the fact is that if he feels that these people have not done a good job, that he can go back to the people of Manitoba and show the very things that he has said and try to hold them accountable.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member doesn't like that. He said that they will go through this New Democratic Party philosophy and say if we have not done a job "de-elect" us, and he said that that is a terrible thing. Well, Mr. Speaker, why does he say that that is an unsatisfactory type of procedure? Because he knows, Mr. Speaker, that what he is selling will not be bought by the people of this province. And, Mr. Speaker, that is really his, that really is his fear with what he calls, with what he compliments us as being, the philosophy of the New Democratic Party, and that is, Mr. Speaker, that what we do we hold ourselves accountable to; we try to do a job, and we hope that when we go back to the people of Manitoba that they will commend us by re-electing us, and asking us to continue to act. And he calls that a New Democratic Party philosophy. I always thought that it was a Conservative philosophy. I always thought it was a Liberal philosophy. I thought that they too feel that what they do commends themselves to the public and that they are prepared to be answerable to the public.

But now I find that they are not prepared to do that. They are not prepared to say that we will stake our position on the support of the people of Manitoba for us. And they have very good reason, Mr. Speaker, especially the Member for Riel has very good reason for not trusting that philosophy, for not trusting the philosophy, Mr. Speaker, that the people will endorse you if you have served them well and they will throw you out if you have done a bad job. Well he has very good reason for not trusting that philosophy, because they threw him out. He feels that if by that philosophy he is thrown out and the Member for St. George, the Minister in charge of Autopac, is elected to office, it must be a bad philosophy, and therefore he has now abandoned it. At one time he thought it was a pretty good thing. When he was elected as a Minister it was a good thing; when he sits in the Opposition he said, this is not a satisfactory way of doing things.

Well we will continue, Mr. Speaker, I hope, to base our consideration and policy on it being a position to which we are willing to account to the people of the Province of Manitoba and accept the verdict of the people of the Province of Manitoba. We will continue to behave in that way and I hope that as a result of behaving that way we receive the support from the people of Manitoba that we have received in the last two elections. If we don't, Mr. Speaker, I will accept it, but I do not see anything inherently bad about the position which we are taking.

The honourable member says that we said that people would appear in Room 254 to talk about automobile insurance. Nobody on this side of the House said that. We said exactly what the honourable member said. We said people, because they know that the government is responsible to them for the administration of the automobile insurance policy, will get in touch with their MLA, and they will know that through their MLA they could exercise some degree of pressure, of impact on the automobile insurance program, that this was not available to the people of the Province of Manitoba before. But nobody said that claimants would come into 254. But I want the honourable - the honourable member says there never was a claimant in 254. I saw a claimant in 254. He was there with one of the whiplash collars on his neck. He came to 254, Mr. Speaker, he came to--(Interjection)--Oh then you did see him too. Then you made a mistake. You did see, you did see a claimant.--(Interjection)--Well you apparently

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(MR. GREEN cont'd) missed him 15 minutes ago, because he came to 254, Mr. Speaker, during the Autopac debate. He complained about the way in which he had to buy automobile insurance. He was there, Mr. Speaker; he was a claimant.--(Interjections)--Well the honourable members they don't like to remember that. You know it's like the Premier says, they have amnesia. He does not remember that claimant, because I remember very clearly what he said. He said, Mr. Speaker; that Harley Vannan, head of the General Insurance Bureau, had said that the Manitoba Government is seeking to purchase, is seeking to underwrite automobile insurance for the people of the Province of Manitoba, was looking for a license to steal - that's what Mr. Vannan said. And this claimant said, how does he know, because he was then holding the license and did not want to transfer it to the people of the Province of Manitoba. He knew very well what the license was, because that's the way insurance was carried on by the insurance industry prior to the public deciding to underwrite their own insurance. I didn't say that, that's what Mr. Vannan said. And what we said was that give this plan an opportunity of going into existence and serving the public of Manitoba, and within a very short number of years, Mr. Chairman, all of those terrible things that have been said by the people of the Opposition, including the question of accountability, despite the fact that they are terrible, will find favour with the majority of the people in this country.

What has happened now since then, Mr. Speaker, the Province of Saskatchewan publicly underwriting their own insurance for the last 25 years; the Province of Manitoba started underwriting its own insurance in 1971; the Province of British Columbia now underwriting its own insurance, and, Mr. Speaker, within five years it will not be three provinces, it will be five or six provinces, and in a very very short period of time it will be all of the provinces of this country, and then, Mr. Speaker, it will also encompass--(Interjection)--Pardon me? Well, Mr. Speaker, you know I will admit, Mr. Speaker, I will admit that it will give me some degree of satisfaction when the program which was pioneered in the Province of Saskatchewan, subsequently undertaken by the people of this province to become ourselves the underwriters --(Interjection)--Yes fire insurance. Mr. Speaker, fire insurance, possibly life insurance, I'm not certain, but I say that I will have some degree of satisfaction when the people of this country and of this province have a greater and greater degree of being able to be the decisive decision-makers in the matters affecting their economic future. I will be more, I will be happier and have some degree of satisfaction in my participation in politics. Why should that be something which I'd be embarrassed with? That's what I went into politics for and, you know, and having achieved it, would the honourable member expect me to be less than satisfied? What he is aware of, what he is aware of, Mr. Speaker, what he is aware of, and which apparently makes him very sad, is that what I'm saying is correct, that the reasonableness of the position will so commend itself to the people of other provinces, regardless of the political or the formal political status of their administration, will be endorsed by other provinces and become the normal throughout this country.

Now I think that he is aware of that and I think that as it gives me some satisfaction or, as he would say, makes me happy, it makes him sad, you know, and I respect the fact that he doesn't want it and I do. That's why he's on that side of the House and I'm on this side of the House. But, Mr. Speaker--(Interjection)--Well, I really meant, Mr. Speaker, I will accept that. That is why we are on opposite sides of the House. He will accept that. That we are on opposite sides of the House because we believe in different things insofar as what role the citizen takes within the democratic process, both as to his economic and political future, and we have different ideas on those points. But, Mr. Speaker, because we have different ideas does not mean that we have to falsify a position in order to advance our argument, and if one does have to falsify a position in order to advance his argument, then he has a pretty weak argument, and the position that the honourable member took when he was making his remarks that we do not account, that the Minister refuses to answer questions, that we have not given to the House a full accounting of the administration of Autopac, is just not a correct position. And if he has to pursue those arguments in order to make whatever political advantage or political mileage he wishes to make - and by the way, I have no criticism with political mileage; I think that that is what we are here for - but if you have to advance false arguments, then I say that you are in a very difficult political position, and I say that's when you become resigned to the fact of saying that it's some type of nefarious philosophy to say that you can go back to the people and be endorsed for what you have done or rejected for what you have not

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(MR. GREEN cont'd) done. I don't find that to be a nefarious position. -- (Interjection) -- Well, the honourable member has identified it. You know, after calling us down to the dregs he has identified it somehow as a New Democratic Party position. Is it not a Conservative position? Is it not a Liberal position? Is it not the position of anybody who believes in the democratic process? And if it is a New Democratic position, and that's the way the honourable member identified it, then I say that he has lost a great deal of confidence in coming to the conclusion that what he is doing will not, or what he is advocating does not commend itself to the people of this province. Now I guess there's reason for that. I mean, what he was advocating was rejected in 1969, it was rejected again in 1973, and maybe he's getting frustrated. I say, don't give up on the process. Continue to believe what you believe. Continue to advocate it, and maybe it will commend itself, but if it commends itself it will not be on the basis of the kind of drivel that you had to use in order to try to advance your position today. -- (Interjection)--

Well, Mr. Speaker, the deficit was reported, the deficit was given -- it was given in the annual report of the corporation. Mr. Speaker, it was given in the annual report of the corporation. There is nothing - you know, there is nothing, Mr. Speaker . . .

There is no government expenditure which cannot be or which can in any way not be reported to the people of Manitoba through the legislative process. You asked when. When the corporation presented its report. -- (Interjection) -- Well, I can't remember when the corporation . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, if the honourable member cannot remember, but the date is on the report. If he can read better than he can remember, he will have the date.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the report was not ready last June . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister's time is up. Would the Honourable Member for Swan River kindly contain himself, or if he wants to he can have the floor now. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. FRANK JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I can't help but rise on this debate, or this resolution, at this time, after what I have heard said tonight, and strangely enough, one of the points I was going to bring up from the person who's doing the talking at the present time . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Member for Radisson kindly contain himself or else leave.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, because I really didn't ever expect I would hear the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources get up and make a defence on the basis of whether a meeting was well attended or whether the members were on time for a meeting in this Legislature, and the comments that I would like to make, that I'm told in the Economic Development Committee, the Chairman, who happens to be the Member from Radisson, arrived half an hour late one time and they had to wait for him, and when they wanted to ask for an extra half hour to have the meeting go, the Minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member state his matter of privilege.

MR. SHAFRANSKY: I have never arrived late. Any time that I've come in, it is because I was waiting for members opposite who are members of the committee to be there so that we could form a quorum. There have been periods of time when -- there was one period of time when the Honourable Member for Brandon West . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek. The honourable member has something?

MR. MINAKER: Yes, if I may be recognized on the same point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I didn't recognize it as a matter of privilege, I recognized it as an explanation, a personal explanation, but it was not a matter of privilege. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, on the same personal explanation, I attended a meeting of the Economics Development Committee where we waited some half hour for the chairman to arrive. It's approximately two weeks ago and I know that we had our members there all full waiting for the chairman to arrive.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

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MR. F. JOHNSTON: So you see, Mr. Speaker, the little exchange that we have just had in the House absolutely proves the weakness, the stupidity that they've gone through about was somebody on time for a meeting or weren't they. Most of the meetings that have been held this year have been well attended. Some people are late for some of them, as we have proven; some people are on time for some of them, as we have proven; and the Minister decides to make a big thing out of the fact that some members did not arrive on time for a meeting. Now we're getting to a very bad and low situation in this House and I would never have expected a defence, a defence like that, from a debater with the calibre of the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources. Quite frankly, it doesn't become him and it certainly doesn't go over with the people.

Mr. Speaker, I never have seen, this year, any estimates of the Manitoba Autopac \$50 million worth of expenditures we have in this province. We have a Minister. Oh no, we have no detailed estimates, we have a Minister who's the chairman of the Corporation, and this is what we were trying to say, that he does not have to report the operation of his ministry to this House in the form of presenting his estimates. Oh yes, Autopac so much money. One or two lines. Come on now - you know better than that. In fact, if you don't know better than that, I don't know what you're doing there as Minister or Chairman of the corporation.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister and the government at this time makes the statement, you know, that the government was elected on their policies, etc. I'm just looking at a paper April 26, 1974, "Autopac had early warning of deficit. Ed Schreyer told the Legislature in March, 1973 it was doing so well in the auto insurance field it was worth considering using it to insure the ships using the Port of Churchill." And they probably, if they got into that, would probably lose \$100 million. And of course there was an election just after that. You know, when we got -- as the Minister, the members from the other side turfed out, as they call it -- we were turfed out, we went down with our heads up, because the people knew. We never hid anything. Now we turn around and we have a -- oh, oh I know; we didn't, we didn't -- the government is going to say that oh, we didn't have the reports on the corporations that we have; we didn't have this. You know, I don't know. I wasn't a member back in those days and I certainly ran in an election, I certainly ran in an election, and Mr. Speaker, when we ran in the election, and I ran in 1969, I found that there was a lot of things people knew that the government now says we never reported at all. Strange. Strange.

I don't know how those things happen because they certainly were going on and being said during the election, but here we have a situation where we have a \$10 million loss, which is really \$16 million, and if you take a look at the estimates of the Highways Department and the increase in the costs of licensing, which are up something like \$2-1/2 million, Autopac is costing the people a tremendous amount of money, and before the election there was "nothing wrong," you know. Oh, it's pretty nice to win on those bases when you don't tell the people that you're going to be out 10 million bucks and you knew it all the time. Mr. Speaker, the reasoning that we got from the Minister of Agriculture one time was "we never did, we never did lose \$10 million, it's in the repairs of the fenders of the people of Manitoba." You know, investment in dented fenders is what we have, and that's what we have as the explanation of a \$10 million loss.

The Minister of Autopac the other night on television, he said, "You know, when your expenditures are more than your income, naturally we have to take a look at the increase in premiums, etc., we have to take a look at them." You know, I wonder what school of business he went to to learn that. I don't ever recall having to learn that because I always knew that when I spent more than my income that I was in trouble, and he seems to be quite amazed at the fact that the Corporation's in trouble because they are spending more than they're taking in. He's all of a sudden just learning that fact.

So, Mr. Speaker, why would the government be so excited when we asked for an explanation or a detailed estimate like we go through with all the other ministers to ask them about their departments. Why don't we have that on Autopac? You know, it's a logical question. We asked that there be answers given to us in Committee when they met and this committee was formed. I haven't been at one of them, I'm not on the committee, but it's fairly obvious that those answers are not forthcoming as best as they can. The Member for Portage seems to be disappointed the way they're getting answers. I would imagine the Autopac Committee's a little like the Economic or the other committee - I would say that those committees, members that are appointed to those committees by the NDP are really Saul zombies. When he moves, they

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(MR. JOHNSTON cont'd) move; and it's fairly obvious in this committee when the Minister of Mines makes a move, they all move the same way in this committee. The Chairman and the Minister doesn't really have too much to say at any time. So, Mr. Speaker, for the government to stand up and fluff its feathers on the basis that they won an election with the people knowing everything, they didn't know about the northern co-ops; they didn't know about the Wabowden affair; they didn't know about the \$10 million loss by Autopac; they didn't know about the . . . , and, you know, the Minister gets up and he says the philosophy of his and mine or why we are on opposite sides of the House, I guarantee him I'm opposite to him, and he knows that. I don't think that his system is going to work. I would say that he -- and for a long time when Autopac -- I remember, I remember the Autopac debates clearly . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Very clearly do I remember the Autopac debates, Mr. Speaker, and all we would get was a, you know, "every province and every state will be in it in the next couple or few years." You know, they're still saying it. The only ones that have ever gone into it are the ones with the NDP governments. -- (Interjection) -- There we go, you know. They keep saying, "There'll be more. There'll be more." Let me tell you, after this performance, after this performance they certainly will be very slow in coming, let me tell you that -- if ever. They'd be nuts. Any other government would be nuts. So all of a sudden we have the philosophy again that "we say the people, the people are in control. The people -- we're responsible to the people." He doesn't like to say the government is responsible.

He talks about -- You know, Mr. Speaker, I don't know of any people that ever get any decisions or are ever given the chance to make any decisions, that's the way it is, when a Socialist government is in power, and that's been proven over the years. Oh, Mr. Speaker, You know, the man that said "nuts" is the greatest dreamer in this Legislature. He just floats on a cloud. When you mention the word "socialism" he just rises up like somebody mentioned the Almighty name. He wouldn't believe, he wouldn't believe that it could fail. He's just as -- he's just completely closed. You know, I'm not even as closed-minded on my philosophy as he is on his. Absolutely. And, Mr. Speaker, that's saying something. That is saying something. Mr. Speaker, the philosophy of the people having something to say through the elected government, that they, if the government owns the business then the people are running it. You know, I don't quite see that. I don't quite see that because the people -- and neither do the government members because they keep saying, every time we hit at them they say, "We were elected. The people gave us the opportunity to make this decision. We're going to do it because we were elected and we're the government," Nobody is going out and asking the people -- they're saying, "Well they can kick us out if they don't like it." And, you know, all their talk and all their election promises is. "When we get elected, the people will have a say and we will give the people more say in what's going on, and we will discuss with the people." They go through this Marxist program that people have been going through for years A, B, C, and they sell it to the people, but when they get there they say, "Oh, we were elected the government. We're the guys that are going to make the decisions." And they do.

Mr. Speaker, nobody -- (Interjection) -- Well, that's another one, I didn't mention that. Unicity pushed down their throats with a 54-page report. So, Mr. Speaker, I would only ask that, first of all, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that the Minister not get quite so excited and have some consideration for members who might not make a meeting on time for different reasons. I don't know -- I would ask the Minister if he went to those people who were late and said: "You have a good excuse." But no, he was ready to criticize them without knowing, just so he could defend the Autopac people. -- (Interjections) -- Well no. You know, when I was late for school the teacher at least asked me why. -- (Interjections) --

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON: That's right. And if a man wants to be and has to be a little late for a meeting in this Legislature, it's a little different than school. But you expect -- we're treated like school boys in this Legislature. That's what you ask for from the government. Right. That's what it's all about. In other words, if you don't do it my way if you don't do it my way. . . .

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if the honourable members would do it according to Hoyle and get back to the debate before us, all of them.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to apologize for addressing myself to a member instead of the Chair, but -- (Interjection) -- Actually I don't know how he can apologize, he really isn't up on his feet speaking; but that's up to him.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have now decided, or it has been indicated by the government, and again we ask for something reasonable. Like we asked for a committee to be set up on one occasion, this is the same type of thing we're asking for here. That committee was asked to be set up to study the impact of sales tax and provincial taxes on the people of Manitoba and see what we could do to alleviate those problems with the people of Manitoba, and that government over there stood up and voted against that resolution to set up the committee to study the impact of taxes. Now we have a resolution from the Honourable Member from Portage la Prairie which is asking that Autopac, the Minister, and he's chairman of the Corporation and a Minister who sits in this House, to place before this House a set of estimates like everybody has to, the other Ministers, to have them examined on a 50-million dollar Corporation that is in the red approximately \$17 million, or it's costing the people, that has cost the people that much money in the Province of Manitoba. And you know, you know, Mr. Speaker, I'd be willing to bet right now that they'll vote against it -- (Interjection) -- You heard the words. Somebody over there said, "Sure we will." They've already decided. The teacher has told them to vote against this resolution. So as I say, you know, we've got that situation.

And another thing in the committee system that we have here, the government has the majority in the committee -- (Interjection) -- and -- No, no. No. Mr. Speaker, and the quorum, the quorum, Mr. Speaker, of each committee is the majority plus one. So therefore there must have been, if all the government members were there, there was no reason for that committee not to start. There was a quorum there, if all the government members were there, and the Minister gets up and criticizes or seems to indicate that that meeting couldn't start because a couple of the members of the Opposition were late, as if they had never been late in their lives; and because we didn't report into the teacher that we were late and that we didn't make an excuse to the teacher as to why we were late, we get criticized in the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The honourable member will have two minutes the next time we get to this resolution. The hour of adjournment having arrived, the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon. (Wednesday)