

TIME: 8:00 p.m.

## BUDGET DEBATE

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

**MR. ENNS:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise with some pleasure to participate once again in a Budget Speech debate. I have made it a practice to, in the course of my years in this legislature to, whether prepared or not, but to speak. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, in the tradition of that honourable gentleman whose seat I now occupy, the former Member for Lakeside, from the seat of my pants, and without the aid of too many notes, and often not as prepared as a person might ought to be when he rises to speak.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to you, Sir, that I'm speaking directly to you, because you, Sir, of course are the most important person in this Chamber, and it bothers me not a little bit, that as we've experienced throughout this particular Session, the vast row of empty benches of honourable members opposite, we recognize that they have more pressing things to do, such as like worrying about the next election. So we've become accustomed to the fact, whether it's in Committee rooms where it's the opposition that has the five or six members present, but failing to find the quorum, the government has to scurry around to look for negligent members to fill that quorum. As I view the many empty seats opposite tonight it doesn't bother me in the least to make those particular comments that I think are worthwhile making, and that despite the comments of my honourable friend, the Minister of Mines and Resources in this House, to the everlasting credit of my former leader, Duff Roblin, who introduced the Hansard into this House, — we had a little argument about transcription proceedings in this House, — let it be known, Sir, that it was the Conservative administration under the leadership of Duff Roblin that thought it was worthwhile to have whatever we say transcribed for posterity in this House, and so, Sir, to that silent audience, I am quite prepared to make my few remarks.

Mr. Speaker, let me say one other thing, that things and times do change, and I'm the first one to recognize that likely we will not see this House in its same light again, that we will not see it cast in the same role again, that individual members will be cast in different roles and the whole complexion of this House will in fact, be different. I just make that as a passing comment for those members of the fourth estate that from time to time deign us with their presence to view the proceedings of this Chamber. I simply want to make that comment, that what we see today will not, what we see during the Session will not occur again ever, ever.

So permit me to make a few introductory comments that I would like to get off my chest, for instance, as a rule I feel better motivated if I have the opportunity, as I've had on the odd occasion in this Chamber, to follow, for instance, some stirring remarks and speeches by the House Leader, the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources, that have a tendency to have you know, my adrenalin to flow a little faster, but I recognize this change, and I'm breaking that pattern. I am now following the intense remarks of none other than the Attorney-General, which I haven't had the privilege of doing too often in this Chamber. Before I leave my friend, the Honourable the House Leader, let me be among the first at least, to congratulate him on what I believe he is achieving as a result of this Session, namely that he will achieve a long held desire, a goal that he has never lost sight of, that of becoming the Leader of his Party. He will of course become so, as Leader of the Official Opposition, but nonetheless, I think he will be an excellent Leader of the opposition. I see in his behaviour and his action during the course of this Session, indeed his restraint, now I can't really attribute that to the Ottawa program of the AIB program. He absents himself from committee meetings where he is prone to get involved in violent arguments because that really doesn't help his image when he is, as he has never ceased to fight the battle for leadership of his party. He has become a very moderate "small c" conservative within the NDP, and deserves Party and will undoubtedly to become the next leader of that party and I, Sir, wish to go on public record as being among those, among the first to acknowledge that and congratulate him because, Sir, while the First Minister has made some commitment about maybe staying around for a while should his government win, he has made absolutely no commitment as to staying around if they should lose.

**A MEMBER:** That's right.

**MR. ENNS:** There are a few of us on this side of the House that have some commitment to making sure that they will lose. So, therefore, I think my remarks are not entirely out of keeping. As a matter of fact, I think that they are close to being dead-on or, as the Member for Churchill would say, "Right on."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal really with several issues tonight. The latitude that is extended to me under the rules of the debate that we are now engaged in, which are as wide as those that we enjoy under the Throne Speech Debate, has become patently obvious, Mr. Speaker, that the position that we will face as we move towards the election, whenever it takes place, that the response from the

government, to whatever we say on this side, to whatever we say on this side, will be "It's part and parcel of the 'big lie'." It's the "big lie" technique that is being attributed to us, to whatever position we take and, in particular, to whatever position my Leader takes.

**A MEMBER:** They should know.

**MR. ENNS:** Well now, Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, possibly there is the attempt being made by honourable members opposite to paint us in a particularly hypocritical position as to statements made by my Leader and positions taken by my party.

Well, let me deal with that latter question first. Mr. Speaker, the question of hypocrisy. You know, the other night, Sir, when the Honourable Member for St. Johns — who is not present, I wish he were because I do not like to speak of any member in his absence but I cannot be faulted for that if he is not there — when he indicated to us and attempting to create a degree of divisiveness within our group about, beginning to extol the virtues of my immediate past leader. Well, Sir, that has to rank among the heights of hypocrisy.

**A MEMBER:** Sick. Sick.

**MR. ENNS:** It really has to rank among the heights of hypocrisy. Sir, the time is not that far distant that those of us opposite remember the kind of scorn and abuse that was heaped upon my immediate past leader and, I might add the Leader of the Liberal Party. I will even go one step further, Sir, the kind of racial abuse that was heaped upon us when the First Minister referred to them as shyster lawyers, barefoot boys from River Heights, gold-dust twins, this kind of garbage. Now, if you want to talk about the height of hypocrisy coming, emanating from one Honourable Member for St. Johns, now extolling the virtues of the Member for River Heights as that great leader that we once had, then, Sir, surely the heights of hypocrisy have been scaled. Have been scaled. And not by us, Sir, but by honourable members present.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I want to, to those few members here and to you, Sir, let you in on a little secret that us Tories have always known. In fact, some members opposite will recall, it was a social occasion, a gathering that we had not so long ago, sponsored by the Hotelmen's Association, I believe, or some such event, where I took the occasion in the levity of the evening to point out some of the differences, you know, recognizing that there is sometimes difficulty in recognizing differences between Liberals and Conservatives. So I pointed out some of the well-known differences. For instance, Conservatives always clean their paint brushes, Liberals read all the books that are banned by everybody and Conservatives form committees and read them as a group and went on to a few other things like, Conservative boys tend to marry Conservative girls but want to date Liberal girls because they feel they are entitled to a bit of fun first and this kind of thing. But the real test that us Tories have always known and it's a sure-fire test of immediately establishing a Liberal, it doesn't matter what walk of life you want to walk into, the immediate test is — it can happen to a casual cab driver or bellhop in a hotel, or just a casual stranger. You will identify yourself to him as a Conservative and he'll say, "Well, you know, gee, you know, we think you fellows have really got a good thing going for you but, mind you, you've got to do something about your leader." You know, that's always the true test of a Liberal and the Liberals have successfully attacked successive Conservative leaders over the past 40 years and have been fairly successful at it.

Now I must add to that grouping namely the NDP who have now obviously adopted that technique as a campaign strategy in terms of my leader. It grieves them, Mr. Speaker, to recognize that despite the fact that maybe they were rubbing their hands with some glee or enjoyment about difficulties that Conservatives get themselves into from time to time, recognizing that it isn't easy to change leaders mid-course, it leaves scars — we hope that most of them heal and they are healing. But I am sure that what is really bothering honourable members opposite is the recognition, and it was apparent even last session when the Honourable Member from Riel was our acting leader in this House, under the leadership of our present leader, it is more apparent today that the honourable members opposite for the first time in some years are facing a cohesive opposition group, are facing a group that stands fully, squarely behind their leader and, Mr. Speaker, when the Honourable Member for St. Johns recognized that in his comments, he says, "Now, Mr. Speaker," and I quote from Page 2423 of Monday Hansard last, "Now, Mr. Speaker," . . . Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to find the place. . . "And that's the difference, there is a difference between the two indeed," and he's speaking about the two leaders, "the present Leader of the Opposition truly reflects his own caucus." Well, Mr. Speaker, what better situation could you have. What better situation could you have, to have a leader truly reflecting his caucus. What better hope, what better ambition is there for us to recognize that we are, in fact, walking in tandem as caucus members and with our leader. —(Interjection)— Oh yes, we are very delighted with . . . we are very delighted, we are very delighted.

Mr. Speaker, what is concerning honourable members opposite is that all of a sudden they recognize that my leader has quietly but firmly taken control of the party, has the support of his party and of his caucus and, obviously every week, every month, the increasing support of thousands of Manitobans. Thousands of Manitobans. And that, Sir, is not an idle boast, that is a statistical fact as borne out by the growing membership of our party. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, I am not trying to

convince myself.

The Honourable Attorney-General, as he was speaking, prior to the supper hour adjournment, made a few statements that I would like to now take some issue with and that deal with the questions that I wanted to raise during the course of this debate. He made a kind of philosophical statement, which I always appreciate coming from a fellow politician because I believe that in this Chamber we do spend too little time in sorting out the differences of philosophy and too much time in worrying about administrative procedures for which we assume he hires people and is charged with staffing the department, competent department to do those administrative things. But surely it is our job here to sort out our philosophical differences and to so present them to people, come an election time, that they can make an intelligent choice.

Mr. Speaker, the Attorney-General indicated that one of the greatest satisfactions that he had in public service was that it gave him an opportunity to direct — I don't think he used the word, but I will use it with the license that I have — to impose on our people a goal, an objective that he has in mind or that his party has in mind. Now, Mr. Speaker, I must tell you one of the greatest satisfactions that I have in political life is that I have absolutely no desire to impose on the people that I represent specific goals and objectives that I may have in mind and that is a fundamental difference, that is a fundamental difference. Because you see, Sir, that means that my position and the position of the Conservative Party will constantly evolve as time dictates, but I don't have a doctrine tied down to some specific date. I don't have a doctrine tied down to some particular dogma. I don't have a doctrine tied down to some pre-conceived conception of what I think the world ought to be and what I think society ought to be. It is a fundamental difference. I don't see that as a failing and I welcome the opportunity at any time to make that difference known to honourable members opposite during the course of an election.

Mr. Speaker, let me just deal briefly with the Honourable Attorney-General. He used — and the Attorney-General ought to be a little more cautious about this because he is the Chief Magistrate of this province, the Attorney-General of this province. He, for instance, calls it a big lie when we say that our personal income taxes are among the highest or the highest or were the highest as of last Friday in the Province of Manitoba as compared to the rest of Canada. Well, let's examine it. Is it a big lie? Now, he went on to say, "If you take in Medicare, if you take in this, if you take in that." That is coincidental. Does it make the fact that personal income taxes in Manitoba are the highest — (Interjection)— No, but you're calling it a big lie. And for somebody coming from outside and looking at the province from an investment point of view and taking the Table of Income Tax Deductions, and they see that they're going to have to pay their employees 10 percent or 6 percent or 8 percent or 15 percent more than anywhere else — (Interjection)— They may not, if they take the time as the Attorney-General does and looks at some of the benefits the state bestows on them in the Province of Manitoba, as well they should. I'm not arguing that. I'm only making the statement, Mr. Chairman, that it is not right. It is not fair — to use a statement that the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources likes me to use from time to time, "It's not fair." It's not fair to call my Leader, to call my Party promoters of big lie, when we state the simple truth that our personal income taxes are among the highest, if not the highest in the country. It happens to be true.

That's fine, but now you're saying, "Okay, but what are we doing for you?" — (Interjection)— Okay, but I'm not saying that. If you want to call us for omission that's something else. If you want to say we're not giving you the full picture that's something else, but why I'm telling you it is not true. The fact of the matter is our taxes are the highest. — (Interjection)— I'm sorry. Well, as of Friday by two-tenths of a point, fine. That's fine.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The Honourable the Minister of Mines.

**MR. GREEN:** When the honourable member reads Hansard and hears his statement again, "Our taxes are the highest," will he understand what this side has been complaining about? Because that is what is referred to as the "big lie."

**MR. ENNS:** You'll have to try it again. That's fine. I'm simply stating that the statements that appeared, whether they appear in newspaper ads or whether they appear in election material.

Well, Mr. Speaker, our personal income taxes are the highest.

Mr. Speaker, I simply say that therein lies certainly a difference; certainly a large difference.

Mr. Speaker, when honourable members opposite like to rehash history and like to suggest that there was, you know, not just a smidgen of compassion for the human condition existing prior to 1969. You know then let me tell you that there were thousands of Manitobans that had free Medicare in 1960. There were thousands of Manitobans that had Pharmacare in 1960. There were thousands of . . . — (Interjection)— Right. Okay. We are talking about the degree. It then became incumbent . . . — (Interjection)— They want to say dragged in and yes, because it wasn't planned to our liking. It wasn't planned to our liking. — (Interjection)— No, we said people under certain income didn't have to pay. Didn't have to pay, right? But then, don't say, as the former Minister of Tourism and Recreation, now the Minister of Consumer and Co-operative Affairs, likes to bleed all over us once in a while and say that his grandfather was bereft and lost everything because he couldn't pay a medical

bill. That happens to be utter garbage and utter nonsense.

Mr. Speaker, the question of Autopac that the Attorney-General likes to challenge me on, let him challenge me on that position. I believe that we have said that within minutes of passing of the bill, that the particular change-around could not and would not occur. One doesn't unscramble an egg.

We have also said, and we will do as Premier Bennett is trying to do in British Columbia, introduce the element of competition into Autopac, not as the Attorney-General likes to ascribe to us in his "big lie" tactic, not the "big lie" tactics that you are spreading around the province, saying that Autopac will be abolished, that Medicare will be abolished, that Pharmacare will be abolished, that is the "big lie", that is the "big lie." But if you think for one minute that I will not try, as one member, to reduce' because I am paying 80 percent more for Autopac now than I've ever paid in my life. Ever paid in my life. And I, as a rural resident, that has to spend 48 hours to get a fender fixed, where before it never took me two hours. —(Interjection)— Yes, it does. Yes it does. —(Interjection)— Oh, oh, oh . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. ENNS:** . . . you know not whereof you speak. After all, from time to time . . .

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. ENNS:** . . . Mr. Speaker, it has been known that I have run into slow moving freight trains, and I've had my tires fixed. I didn't have to take a day off from the farm to bring my car in. I just got it fixed and phoned my agent, so if I ascribe forty or fifty dollars worth my day, I'm suggesting that I'm paying a great deal more for Autopac than I've ever paid before. But, Sir, that's fine, we're not suggesting, and I must also indicate to the Honourable Attorney-General, he is possibly right, it's very questionable, it's very questionable because this is part of the scrambled egg, whether any private insurance company would want to come back into the business, on what, a four year basis?

**A MEMBER:** Who in their right mind would want to . . .

**MR. ENNS:** Who would want to come back? But don't accuse us of the "big lie", don't accuse us of changing, you have so altered the situation that some things are irrevocable, and this is likely one of them. So, Mr. Speaker, for us simply to recognize that, for us simply to recognize it, if you want to call that hypocrisy, if you want to call that change for political . . . then go ahead and do that.

Mr. Speaker, let me deal with the most major and the most serious charge that honourable members opposite, aided and abetted by none other than the Honourable Member for Radisson on a daily basis, let me deal with the "big lie" of Manitoba Hydro that is being levelled against us. Mr. Speaker, first let me tell you, there is no lie. What there is is a very serious division of opinion. —(Interjection)— That's fine. That's fine. I accept that. I just want the Honourable Minister of Renewable Resources to know that led by people like Mr. Bateman and others, they sat in my office for two years, for three years, saying, "Harry, there is only one to go in South Indian Lake, that is for the high level diversion. Every hydro engineer that I have under my command," this is Mr. Bateman speaking to me face to face, "Every hydro engineer," — and he went with me, he toured with me, spent two days with me at South Indian Lake, we spoke to the people, explained to them why we had to go for a high level diversion, that was February of 1969. —(Interjection)— That doesn't matter. What I'm saying is, that was the considered credible integrity-riddled advice that was given, the unswerving opinion, as the Member for Brandon West says, that was given by every hydro engineer in 1969.

**A MEMBER:** Changed their minds now.

**MR. ENNS:** In 1969. Right? And in fact, so pressed, Mr. Speaker, so diligent, were senior hydro personnel and management about that position, that they impressed upon me the importance of bringing into this Legislature a bill, and I now admit that it was a mistake bringing in that bill, because that put a different question to people here, but Sir, —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, it was not my decision. It was not my decision to flood South Indian Lake or ask for licence at 869 (?) it was Hydro management that asked for it. Hydro management, today headed by one Mr. Leonard Bateman, who was second or third in command at that time, of the planning division. —(Interjection)—

No, this happens to be fact, gentlemen. Okay, the ball game changes, politics get mixed up into it, and we now have a new government come in, and they place different conditions and different constraints on the considerations to be taken by those same engineers. Mr. Speaker, there has been no attack on the integrity of those engineers. These engineers have faced a different set of circumstances, and have come up with a different plan, have come up with a plan involving Lake Winnipeg Regulation. Now, Mr. Speaker, the difference is this — that we contend that had a different sequence of development been followed, there would have been X number of savings.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to invite honourable members opposite, they can call my Leader "the big liar", they can call us the "big lie", but I want you to know that as you're doing it you're also calling one D. L. Campbell a liar, a scurrilous scoundrel, and I want that statement, I want an NDP'er to stand up on every platform —(Interjection)— No, you're saying it. No, no, I'm sorry, it is the First Minister that called D. L. Campbell a scurrilous scoundrel, a liar and a bastard. —(Interjection)— Yes, yes. I want to assure honourable gentlemen opposite, if there is reason for confidence radiating our faces, it's because we see, radiating to us, that 10 percent of the Liberal vote just automatically sliding over to

us, and sliding away from you. Mr. Speaker, I wasn't part of the government at the time that the administration changed, and Sir, the one thing that my predecessor in this seat, the Honourable Mr. Campbell most certainly has left an indelible imprint in the minds of Manitobans, is that (a) that he had . . .

**A MEMBER:** Forty-seven years in this House.

**MR. ENNS:** . . . a tremendous amount of integrity in terms of spending the public dollar to the point that we believed it took a young fellow and a new opposition under the leadership of one, Duff Roblin, to bring Manitoba into the 20th Century in terms of spending and expansion of government, as members opposite are prone to point out from time to time. And the Member from St. Matthews at least nods his head and recognizes it.

But' Sir, I want the honourable members at least to acknowledge this one thing. You see this is why we kind of chortle with a certain amount of glee every time the Member from Radisson gets up to attack us on the question of the big Hydro lie. He is attacking D.L. Campbell.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Mines state his matter of privilege.

**MR. GREEN:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. The matter of privilege is since my honourable friend made a point of mentioning it, and a point of suggesting that it was some reflection on members here, let it be noted that there are more New Democrats in the House than there are Conservatives.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside. —(Interjections)— Order please. Order please. The honourable member has five minutes.

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, it's a moot point. If once during the course of this Session there are in fact more New Democrats in this House than Conservatives, then surely I will give the Honourable Minister every occasion to make honourable mention of it. Because, Sir, it has only happened once. It has only happened tonight. That's because my friend, the Honourable Member from Minnedosa, had a damn good turkey dinner on.

However, let me get back to the big lie techniques that honourable members opposite are talking about with respect to Hydro. —(Interjection)— That's fine. We're not suggesting that it is a big lie. We are suggesting that there was an alternate course of action available to you. —(Interjections)— But you're saying it is a big lie. Well —(Interjection)—

**A MEMBER:** No, no, no. You can talk later.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. ENNS:** Mr. Speaker, you know the Honourable Minister, the First Minister particularly, likes always to divert us. And there is some justification in it when he talks about the changing energy values not only in this country but around the world. And certainly, Sir, a lot of that took place with the event of OPEC, when all of a sudden overnight energy values tripled from \$3.00 — you know, a crude barrel to \$10.00 and \$12.00 a crude barrel.

But now, Mr. Speaker, if anything, nothing has been said today. If the decision was made back in 1971-72 about balancing the resource values that had to be sacrificed to produce that energy, can honourable members opposite tell me, can the Minister of Renewable Resources tell me, that that scrub pine, that marginal timber has tripled in value, that fur has tripled in value, that fish have tripled in value? Certainly those resource values have stayed there. If there was a question in 1969-1970 as to what can we do, what can we sacrifice in terms of ecology and resources for the sake of cheap power? I admit there was a serious question there. You made your decision. You said, "We can't afford to raise the level of Southern Indian Lake more than 847, 850 maximum." All right, that's a decision that you made. All the suggestion that I am making today is the rationale for making that decision, if anything, has weakened since the event of OPEC.

Now that we are now looking and you are now comparing our Hydro rates with Prince Edward Island, where they shovel coal, or they import every gallon of oil from abroad, from Arab countries, in fact, our forestry prices have gone down. Our fishing prices have gone down. And furs other than a volatile industry is dictated by fashion. All I'm saying is the rationale for the full utilization of the Churchill River Diversion is greater today than it ever was. Not because I am saying it, but because of the energy situation in the world, because of the cartel that is created by OPEC, because of the prices that we have to pay for imported energy.

Mr. Speaker, honourable members opposite want to talk about the big lie with respect to Hydro. I want to welcome them to it. You have managed to replace that monthly poll tax Medicare premium with a Hydro premium, and if you want to slur, if you want to call my former predecessor in this House the big liar, if you want to ridicule him as a high school mathematician, go ahead and do it. You're welcome to it. You're welcome to it.

If you want to convince curling clubs that are closed for six months of the season with barely a 60 watt bulb burning, but they're basically paying a \$500 or \$600 Hydro bill every month during those closed months and you can convince them that they are not paying any more for hydro, go ahead and do it. You know, you fall into the most — because essentially you are all bureaucrats at heart, you are all bureaucrats. I just sat back in utter amazement as Hydro bureaucrats were explaining this to us. You know, I quite frankly wanted the Honourable Member from Minnedosa to withdraw his

resolution on the question. I don't want to talk about it in here. There is enough talk going on in every coffee shop, in every town, in every community, in the Province of Manitoba. The more you tell us that Hydro rates haven't changed, that's fine, that's fine, that's fine. No, that's part of the big lie, that's part of the big lie, that's part of the big lie. You just tell my little community in Warren, and I have the figures. Last July the community skating rink in Warren paid \$18.43 in July for Hydro rates. They are going to be asked to pay \$546 this July. Now, if you think, and I'm positive the Member for St. Matthews has a similar understanding, if you think that you are going to get that past those hard-nosed farmers in Warren and say that that's fair, then you want to fight that election on that basis — (Interjection)— Fight it! Only bring it on, bring it on now, bring it on, because it is unbelievable. As I said before there is imbued in you a lemming-like desire to defeat yourselves and you are doing it. You are doing it. And the suggestion of the big lie simply isn't washing. Because finally the chickens are coming home to roost. You see because, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't just yesteryear that we talked about this. It was over years that we have talked about it. But now the bills are coming home to roost.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member's time is up. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

**MR. A.R. (Pete) ADAM:** Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The honourable member who has just spoken always amuses me in his very articulate way. He is a very articulate and prolific speaker. Unfortunately, he didn't say an awful lot but nevertheless be that as it may, I would like to begin my comments, Mr. Speaker, by referring to you, Sir, and to this Assembly a matter which I consider to be of extreme importance. It is important, Sir, not only to the people who are directly affected, but to the province as well. It effects my constituency and some of the people, quite a few people, who are earning their livelihood from what I wish to discuss at the moment.

Mr. Speaker, the production of food has always been of very prime importance to this nation and it is rightly so that is it should be. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, over the many years that we have been a nation there have been millions of dollars, millions of dollars have been spent on research, programs, subsidies, in our constant quest for cheap food, economic food, to feed our population. And, of course, I am referring to agriculture, which is one of our very basic industries. It is certainly a very important industry to our nation in our balance of payments and for the income and a generation of economy in this country.

However, Mr. Speaker, there is one sector in our food production in our economy that, in my opinion, has been totally or almost totally ignored. I wish to refer to our fresh water inland fishing. This has been a neglected industry for as long as I can recall.

Mr. Speaker, I believe I grew up in the business. I grew up in the fishing industry. As I said, Mr. Speaker, it is a neglected industry. This industry, which is an important part of Manitoba's economy, I believe would not be in the situation that it is if even only a fraction of the amounts of money that have been spent on agriculture, and no one I believe will begrudge this. If only a fraction were spent on the fishing industry, I believe that it would be in a much better and more viable position. It is true and I must congratulate the Minister of Renewable Resources for his efforts to bring about some betterment in the fish production of this province, the fresh water fish. But, Sir, it is food production and it should be of national concern. It should be of national concern. Much of the production in the western provinces is exported and it also affects our balance of payments. I believe that it is time that we looked at the fishing industry in the same way or the same light that we look at agriculture. It is a basic, primary production; we should look at it in the same manner as we look at livestock production and agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, for instance, what has happened to the fish production on Lake Winnipegosis? It has decreased to an all-time low which necessitates drastic action on the part of the Department of Renewable Resources in the form of some kind of a . . . to try and find a solution on how to increase the production, some form of action which amounts to a partial closure. Mr. Speaker, a decision was made back in the early '70s — I believe it was 1973 — in an effort to try and assist the fish population to repopulate and increase in that Lake, a decision was made to increase the gill net mesh size from 4-inch to 4-¼ inch in the hope that this would allow more fish to mature and spawn and in that way, with other measures, to bring about a higher population of those more valuable species and thereby increase the income to those people involved in that industry, more income for the Province of Manitoba, more production for export, more export for our balance of payments.

Mr. Speaker, I was involved in some of the discussions with the fishermen, with the Minister of that particular time, and at one of the early meetings that I attended, Mr. Speaker, I suggested that if this were necessary — I realized that something had to be done — I suggested that we should have a five year phasing, a five year phasing-in of a period for the introduction of the larger mesh on that particular lake. My position on this point has not changed. I still hold to this position today and I am still hoping that this method of phasing-in will be adopted rather than changing over in the period of one year because I believe that a complete changeover would create a very financial hardship for the fishermen involved in this particular fishery. I feel that if it is not possible to have a five year phasing-in period, then I would submit, Sir, that we will have to look at or come up with a program for some

type of compensation for those who will be deprived of their income. I would expect, Sir, that in that event, the Federal Government would participate, or should participate, in such a program because, Mr. Speaker, I certainly condemn the Federal Government for their lack of concern for the — not only in this province — but for all fresh water inland fishing in the western provinces. I think that this is one of grave concern to not only myself but to Manitoba and to many fishermen who derive their livelihood from fresh water fish.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard the tirade from the Member for Lakeside and I would like to turn my attention now to my honourable friends in the Conservative Opposition. You know, Mr. Speaker, they would have us believe that unless there is tax relief for some Manitobans, our provincial economy is on the verge of collapse. That is what they contend. Mr. Speaker, we agree. We agree that there are Manitobans who do need tax relief. We believe that those with relatively low incomes need tax relief but, as usual, Mr. Speaker, for the Conservatives it is too little and too late. It's business as usual for the Conservative Party.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we agree that there is need for tax relief. We have known that for quite some time and therefore, we enacted the Property Tax Credit Plan as a form of tax relief based on income. This program will affect the income of almost 100 million for Manitobans this year. The program relieves 72 percent of the old aged pensioners from all school taxes last year. The program this year will relieve almost 40 percent of our pensioners of all property tax this year but it should be clearly noted — I know that the people of Manitoba have not forgotten, I have mentioned it every year, I have even named the members who voted against this program every year, I don't intend to give up of my time to mention their names again but it should be clearly noted that every Conservative, every Conservative in 1974 voted against the Property Tax Credit Program. Every Conservative in the Legislature voted against it, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, we did this in spite of them; we did this in spite of them. They are now saying Manitobans need tax relief. Have they changed their minds? Have they really? Would they offer tax relief to low income earners, would they? — (Interjection) — Yes, would they? I ask you. A year ago, the acting Tory Leader announced in the House that a Conservative government would immediately abolish the Property Tax Credit Plan. And it's there in the record for any Manitoban to see. It is there.

**A MEMBER:** That's not in the record.

**MR. ADAM:** In fact, Mr. Speaker, not only did he say that they would abolish the Property Tax Credit Plan, but it would be a matter of first priority, that would be one of the first things that they would do.

**A MEMBER:** It's only a vote getting gimmick.

**A MEMBER:** That's like biting off your nose to spite your face.

**MR. ADAM:** However, Mr. Speaker, one might assume that the new Tory leader, or should I call him a church mouse from Souris-Killarney or the monkey from Souris-Killarney. I know that he uses those words in this house freely and gets away with it but I don't think I should do that, Mr. Speaker, because I have more respect for his constituents. I have more respect for the constituents of Souris-Killarney than to refer to the Honourable Leader as a monkey or a church mouse or a dog or a son-of-a-dog or anything else.

However, the new leader tells the people of Manitoba that he now accepts such socialistic ideas as Autopac, he accepts that very socialistic program such as premium free Medicare; he accepts Pharmacare now and we just heard the Member for Lakeside say, "Oh, we're not going to do away with it, no way. No way." He might even accept our Cost of Living Credit for low income earners although he hasn't said it. He accepts our Critical Home Repair Program. Whatever did we do — I know we're good, Mr. Speaker, we're good — but I didn't think that we were that good that we could take, what I consider and what the Conservative Party considered was an ultra right-winger and make him almost now a left-winger. We must have a great deal of influence. I say, Mr. Speaker, how shallow is this position? Yes, they have finally found some people who need tax relief and who are they, Mr. Speaker? Yesterday, the Tory Leader told us that he a Conservative Government would provide tax relief for those who have estates worth more than \$500,000.00. That is the people who are his priority. That is the people they think need tax relief. A Conservative Government would provide tax relief for those who receive gifts valued at more than \$6,000.00. Those are the ones that they would zero-in for, yes sir. I see that I have got them cackling now, Mr. Speaker. They would provide tax relief for mining companies. That's a must, that's a must according to the Conservatives.

Mr. Speaker, in some years during 1960 when the Tories were in office, it cost the taxpayer of Manitoba more to provide services and incentives to mining companies than they got back in taxes.

**A MEMBER:** That was really a good program, wasn't it?

**MR. ADAM:** That is the people that they say should be getting the tax relief. I would like to know who was picking up the taxes, who was picking up the tab to provide these incentives and these concessions to the mining companies. We are now collecting more than seven times as much revenue from the mining companies as the Conservatives did in 1968. The companies and their Tory mouthpiece have decided that that's too much, that's far too much. So a Conservative government

would give tax relief, they would give tax relief to the mining industry, Mr. Speaker, in plain English, even so that a Conservative would understand, is that some people would be taxed so that that tax money could be given to mining companies. That is the philosophy. That is the people they are speaking for when they say that there should be tax relief. We finally have the truth. We finally have found out the truth. The rich will be relieved from paying taxes and the poor must.

**A MEMBER:** That's the old Conservative position.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. ADAM:** Mr. Speaker, they would take us back to 1968 when Manitoba had the highest income tax in Canada. We now have the fourth lowest. They would take us back to 1968, when we had the second highest Medicare premium in Canada, today we have none. The third highest sales tax in Canada, today we have the lowest, and the third lowest hydro rates in Canada, today it is the second lowest.

Mr. Speaker, CFI, not only did they force international rip-off hardest on the taxpayers of this province, but then they turned around and they say, "We did not do it." Now they turn around and say, "We did not do it." That is the depth, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the other day we had a visitor. We had a visitor on our farm. I don't know if I have his calling card. It's a blue card, his calling card. We had a visitor and we were absent at the time and so he left his calling card, and he said, "I dropped in to ask for your support." The first step forward to a common-sense government in Manitoba. Let's hear it. That's good. Right on. The first step forward to a common-sense government.

Mr. Speaker, I have already outlined to you the common-sense approach of the Conservatives. I have already given you some indication of how common-sense their approach was to the problems when they were in office. —(Interjection)— What is commonsense, I ask you, Sir, to enter into an agreement with a bunch of international swindlers, highway robbers, and a leader, one of the main participants in that deal, sits there at the front of that bench over there — he's one of the main participants who signed the original document. Is that common sense, I ask you? He was one of the masterminds behind that deal. Was it common sense, Mr. Speaker, for the Conservative Government to charge \$204 for Medicare premiums, a head tax for a family, was that common sense? —(Interjection)—

Was it common sense to recommend the reduction of the farming population from 36,000 to 20,000? Was that the common sense they talk about? Is that the common sense that they were talking about? I'm talking about your TED Report Bible. That's what I'm talking about. Your Bible, which you kneel to.

**A MEMBER:** Haven't you read it?

**MR. ADAM:** That's the altar you kneel to. And you would do it artificially. They would do it artificially if it didn't happen by itself.

**A MEMBER:** No, he's not a member of the Tory Party. He doesn't kneel to . . .

**MR. ADAM:** Is it common sense to ignore the serious needs, was it common sense to ignore the needs for extended care homes in rural areas of this province? Was that a common-sense approach? —(Interjection)— No. No way. What about senior citizens' homes. There wasn't one in my constituency. —(Interjection)—

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. ADAM:** Mr. Speaker, was it common sense not to provide a provincial pension supplement to the aged? Is that common sense? That is what they stood for. Was it common sense to ignore the disrepair of the housing stock in this province? Was that co Program on sense? What about the PEP that has enabled many recreations to be built in rural communities. Was it common sense to ignore that? —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, was it common sense to ignore the dire need for housing? Not only senior citizens' housing, but family housing. And there are some also out in my constituency and practically every constituency in Manitoba today. Was it common sense to ignore this?

What about remote housing? Was it common sense for the Conservatives to ignore the north, to ignore it so badly that the late previous member of the riding of Churchill left their party for that reason? Was that common sense? Was it common sense that the Member for Rupertsland did the same thing, and voted for us in 1971 and 1973? —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, is it a common-sense approach for a group that would mount such a tremendous opposition to public auto insurance, and now, today, they have the gall to stand up and admit that we were right. They admit that we were right in bringing in this program, Mr. Speaker. They admit that we were right with the critical home repair, with the Medicare without premiums, with the critical home repair. Now they admit that we were right, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, is it a common-sense approach to have an in-House document that suggested that the government programs for the constituency should go in to those constituencies where those programs would have the most political impact for the government of the day, such as the road construction in this province, for the eleven years that they were in office.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.



**MR. ADAM:** Mr. Speaker, they have neglected the human rights legislation. Was that a common-sense approach? What about Legal Aid? They forgot about that. What was wrong with those people, didn't they have any ideas? — **Interjection** **What about aid for recreation at the present time and in the past years?**

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. ADAM:** Mr. Speaker, what about aid to agriculture? I said over the many years much had, in research and stabilization programs and assistance, had gone to agriculture, but what about the Conservative Government of this province for eleven years? Where was the common sense there? What did they do for the beef industry? Where were the diversification programs? — (Interjection) —

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please.

**MR. ADAM:** Mr. Speaker — oh, I'm sorry, the honourable member is offended and he's leaving. Mr. Speaker, just when I was going to read from an article from the Free Press, 1968. Please go and call him back. You know the headlines here of March 8, 1968 — I think he's just behind the door anyway — "Manitoba Economic Stagnation Getting Steadily Worse." 1968. — (Interjection) — We'll be the government in '78. I assure you. I assure you, we'll be the government in '78, but we were not the government in '68. You were. In years ahead, who would ever believe that the Free Press would say that about the Conservatives. You look in today's headlines if you can find a similar headline as this. — (Interjection) — "Manitoba Economic Stagnation Getting Steadily Worse." — (Interjections) — Want to read it?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The Honourable Member Member for Ste. Rose has five minutes.

**MR. ADAM:** In '78 we will be here. Manitoba economy is not only stagnant, it is the only province whose relative position has been steadily though slowly worsening over the past 50 years. — (Interjections) — Who was the government of the day? Who is the government today with all that ingenuity, all that imagination? Where is all the commonsense? Where is the commonsense, Mr. Speaker? Where is the common sense?

It now rates fifth amongst the lowest provinces west of Quebec. Manitoba ranks sixth amongst provinces in average weekly wage and salaries. The *per capita* income, Mr. Speaker, in 1968, was eight percent lower than the national average. — (Interjections) — In 1968. Common sense, common sense, Mr. Speaker.

In 1975, it was two percent lower than the national average, a marked improvement, Mr. Speaker, a marked improvement. I say to those people over there, I suggest to them that on this little card that their candidates pass around instead of saying, "The First Step Forward to a Common-Sense Government for Manitoba," they should put, "The First Step Forward to a Nonsense Government — Vote PC."

I assure you, Sir, that the people of Manitoba are not without intelligence. I have a great deal of admiration for the intelligence of the people of this province. I assure you that if and when there is an election called, they will return the New Democratic Party government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

**MR. GRAHAM:** Mr. Speaker, if no one else wishes to speak, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Morris, that debate be adjourned.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable House Leader.

**MR. GREEN:** Mr. Speaker, I wonder if there are any bills that the members are ready to speak on. — (Interjection) — There's a bill ready to be spoken to?

**MR. SPEAKER:** Well, I'll read them down and . . .

**MR. GREEN:** Well, Mr. Speaker, it might be just as easy if I told the honourable member — No. 14. : We'll hear from the Member for Wolseley, and then the Minister of Labour will introduce the Bill No. 15.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES — SECOND READING

### BILL (NO. 14) — AN ACT TO AMEND THE LANDLORD AND TENANT ACT

**MR. SPEAKER:** Very well. The Honourable Member for Wolseley, second reading, Bill No. 14.

**MR. WILSON:** Mr. Speaker, having reviewed the Minister's comments pertaining to the changes in this bill, we can't help but think that during law amendments, there has to be a real examination of this bill because of the fact that in the past many headlines, and many stories and many accusations of lack of clarification and intent, have certainly been charged by all sides, and I will welcome that opportunity in Committee after hearing from many representatives from the Landlords Association and from many tenants that I have talked to, to come forward and tell their side of the story pertaining to some of the problems that they have had with this particular bill.

It is interesting to note that the Minister yesterday said in ten days from now we will have a clearer picture of the rent control in the Province of Manitoba. The headline in the papers says, "Manitoba Stand on Rent Controls to be Clear in about Ten Days." I believe it's now nine days. So anyway, I can

assume the Premier speaks for the Minister of Consumer Affairs, and I look forward to the Minister finally coming forward with some clarification because certainly the bill that they called "the best in North America in 1970" has caused no end of problems in this province. — (Interjections) — Well, we're interested too in those types of headlines because what happens, your phone rings off the hook because the headlines say eviction to be made easier under the amendment law. And that, plus the fact that the Minister won't clarify what he means in the rent control picture is going to present some interesting problems.

But to go to the bill, and I refer again to February 6th of last year, where the Member from Fort Rouge was demanding in a headline story that the Minister clarify rent controls. So 365 days and now 9 more days — a year and some months later we're finally going to get a clarification of the request from the Member of Fort Rouge in asking for clarification.

I think we have to start and approach this thing about asking some numerous questions and I'd like to start maybe with the landlord's position, some comments and then maybe end up with several situations pertaining to tenants. But the landlord must give a written notice to the tenant as sort of a proof to vacate and it occurred to me upon examining the bill, why can't the tenant give a written notice to the landlord? I think this would be fair if there's two parties in this particular agreement, because there are cases where a tenant could say that he was moving in two month's time, find that the rental market is not all that it's made out to be, find out his acceptability in different blocks around the city is not all it's made out to be and simply say, "I never told you I was moving," and go to the rentalsman. What proof does the landlord have? I'd like to see some requirement that the tenant give a written notice.

I think when you talk about security deposits when you're dealing with rooming houses at \$40 to \$60 a month, I think these security deposits are too low, because invariably these two-and-a-half or one-and-a-half room rentals, there's a great deal of valuable possessions that the landlady has and I think there should be a minimum of \$100 a month for a security deposit. I say that because the rentalsman can hold on to it, so there is protection for the tenant and you just have to look at the fact of one damaged air conditioner, one case of where a person sticks a knife through the fluid in a fridge and wilful damage that could be caused of which there's no recourse but the damage deposit.

Looking at all the complaints about the rentalsman, I think that he's a reasonable man himself. But upon examination you find that he does very little of the work. He just delegates authority down and seems to have a rubber stamp for his signature, and may not — just may not, I suggest — be reading all the material that is put in front of him. It has been suggested to me that the personnel needs some supervision by the Minister himself who is probably very very busy, but I think if he's going to take responsibility for the program, take all the glory if it works, that he has to be able to say that he knows what's going on in that department.

I refer particularly to the suggestion — and maybe it's unfair to name somebody, but the Landlord's Association have gone on record of some woman named Therrien, Jeanine Therrien or something, who they are demanding that her qualifications be stated. They want to know her percentages of voting against the landlords. They want to know questions like who is she related to? The property management people they want out. In other words, Sir, it's obvious in their suggested thing to myself a bias towards landlords, unbelievable in the department that says they deal in fair play.

So while the rentalsman himself is a man who has a lot of credibility with the Landlord's Association, some of the staff members carry possibly a political or just a personality hatred that is just not becoming a department who deals in fair play.

It's been suggested that delays, and we can talk about experience I guess, but delays in the cost of eviction. Of course we all know that laws in this Chamber are passed in many cases just to create work for the steady flow of graduates from the legal profession. And this is one example of which they have certainly created a bonanza for the legal profession, because you can't evict anybody today for around \$2, \$3, \$400. Formerly it cost them, I would suggest, \$25 or less before the amendments to the Act. These delays are certainly costing a lot of money because all the time there's delays the landlord is losing the rent, because anybody knows that if he's getting evicted he certainly does not pay his rent or as suggested a high percentage of them don't.

So who pays under these circumstances? I've referred to it many times in the Minister's Estimates. You see the honest tenants in the block pay because anybody that owns and certainly the Minister knows in the hearings that a block is run as a business, and all these delays in eviction caused by the poor clarification and the procedure in the Act are costing money which is passed on to the honest tenants, the hardworking, paying tenants. It seems the only way that a landlord can get somebody out is if he has a lot of fist fights and a lot of wild parties, then he can apply to the court and there's a quick five-day clause. It seems a shame that only fights and wild parties are the only ways to get rid of people in a very quickly moving system. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that practically all of the reasons take no less than 30 days and that's a miracle if we can get them out in that particular time.

The rentalsman, of course, — here's one of the problems in the bill that I look at is there is a new

thrust for an outreach thing, and the Minister talked about 552 visits. He is now talking about his representatives are going to spend their time in County Court. . We all know he talked about some of the staff being graduates from Bachelor of Commerce degrees and everything. They're obviously making a good salary and for them to sit around in Small Debts or County Court listening to all the cases that come up before they do and maybe there's an adjournment and they go back for the second and third day. Even if they only make \$10 a hour, what a waste of taxpayers' money. I submit that this lost time in production sitting in court, and I call it a holiday for the staff, that I feel a written report is all that is necessary. If there's some problem in time, maybe the Sheriff's Office or a special messenger service could deliver this report the day of the trial and save all kinds of money.

Again we deal a lot with hearsay evidence, because what the report is doing, I hope, is dealing in some essence in fact, and I'm concerned by the changes in the Act which will allow a representative of a tenant to appear. I know dealing in the City of Winnipeg when we had certain expropriations in the Minister of Public Works that there is in this particular society a lot of professional trouble makers. There's a lot of Legal Aid salesmen out looking for customers who would run around with consent forms because they want to increase their caseload from 35,000 to 45,000 to 55,000. The chances are many of the blocks in town would have a lot of these Legal Aid salesmen running around with these consent forms looking for someone to take to court.

I think that this consent should only apply to the elderly, the sick and the handicapped. I think there should be some indication from the rentalsman who is available, because I can't see any healthy person that should be able to lie in front of the television set while a large bureaucratic empire goes to work fighting a battle no matter which side it is. I don't think that is right that this outreach program that allows a representative without some form of discretion on the rentalsman's part as to who qualifies.

Well, I think this Act does state, and I may be wrong, but I think so the way I interpret it, that the landlords can only apply to the courts for an Order for Possession and I think somehow or other these situations should be held in the By-Laws Court But not any of these — I don't know it may be the Queen's Bench, or County Court, because there you are dealing with an extremely streamlined expensive procedure. And I'm wondering how we, as taxpayers, should really be involved in this real expensive procedure in dealing with something like a possession of a suite, a battle that does not involve any crime between two people. To me it falls within the same category as a health by-law infraction of the City of Winnipeg and should be dealt with in a lower court system where the judges are just as qualified, in many cases, and certainly are appointed by the government.

I would think that that would cut down the costs because I think \$200, \$300, or \$400 in lawyer's fees, and a five-month delay is too much to ask the property management people to have to go through if they happen to be right. And all this free rent, all this time being passed on to the elderly and good tenants in blocks, is something that should be given a little more priority by the Minister's department, Mr. Speaker, because I know, I saw the way the judges perform in some of these low priority cases, and they treat them, somehow or other, with lack of priority and lack of attentiveness that is necessary to come at a fair and just decision. And I think that at a lower court that we would get this interest because this would be the man's job and he would be really really interested.

Many tenants are calling me and saying many of the changes give them no protection. This is really one of the things that the headline when it says, "Eviction will be easier," and the Minister not clarifying his rent-control program. Rent Control Program. The tenants of this province are really unaware of what to expect. There is an unknown factor ahead of them. I'd like to ask the Minister where the protection for the tenants are under this new Bill 14 when the landlord can say that he needs that room or that apartment block for his own use, without any fear that he may be lying. I feel the landlord should fall under The Canada Evidence Act, and if the the Attorney-General was here he would probably think that that suggestion might have some merit because if a tenant is uprooted after five, ten, fifteen years of living in an address, and because he dared to call the Rentalsman or demand a health inspection. If he should be uprooted and told to move under some phoney excuse of personal use by the landlord of this particular block, or some vengeful landlord who is determined to show that he is the boss because the person dared to complain, then there should be that affidavit required under The Canada Evidence Act to make sure that there is some penalty attachment should it turn out that the man had no intentions of moving from Crescentwood or Transcona or Springfield into a two-room apartment in some smaller block, or the third floor of some rooming house.

And I think that fairness in this Bill 14 should be the order of the day. I'd like to see some form of a compensation to a tenant who has been uprooted, and I don't know how at this time to go about that. I referred to before about the Minister's refusal to give his own ideas on rent controls. The Minister has stated some of his, but again, not clear, and he promised in his Estimates that sometime before May 31st, he will tell us his thoughts. But with these rumours running rampant amongst the tenants, and you don't know the mental anguish of many of these elderly people that are calling me, of increases suggested of 40 or 50 percent as soon as the controls are lifted. I have Mrs. Rice over on Langside, I

have many ladies calling me who have indicated to me that their landlords have suggested the rents will go up 50 percent as soon as the controls are lifted. These, I am talking about are the small holdings, the small six-suiters or the rooming houses where there is more of a personal contact with the people in them. And these people who are basically afraid of officialdom and count on what they read in the newspapers to be the gospel truth, are awaiting for the Minister to make a public statement. He is keeping them on the string till the end of May. I think that's unfair. They should know where they stand and that's all they ask is there's got to be some kind of a percentage that they know what they are up against, because with all the things going up they have got to have some idea if they can afford to live in the district.

So, I suggest in closing, that many of the vague clauses be taken out of this Act. Back in 1970, it was like an old cheese with lots of holes in it, and it was certainly the type of thing that needs some clarification. There really is so many many vague terms in it that some of the terms — four, five or six, I guess 1970 till 1977 - it has taken that government seven years to get around to clarifying some of them, and I guess we should welcome those changes. But I will examine the bill at Law Amendments and possibly, given some chance, we can rebut some of the comments made by a minority, some of the people who claim they are going bankrupt when possibly we all know they are suffering hardships by the amount of apartments that are on the rent. But I can't help but cite in one case, an example of some of the projects that were supposed to be left alone, but now because of increased Hydro costs and increased government situations, have got themselves in a real bind.

I have a letter here from a lady who says that she is worried about April 1st of a certain year. "We reside at the Manitoba Eastern Star Chalet." In 1972 the rent was \$65 a month, by 1976 they were paying \$80 a month. Now they are paying \$114 a month. Now, they are paying \$127.75 for a single room. These elderly citizens, and she quotes that she is 78 years old, talks about a 43 percent increase and her old-age pension has not gone up by 43 percent. These are the kind of things that I am getting every day and there has to be some clear guidelines as to what government is going to do, and not like the former Minister of Consumer Affairs who was in this House, he is now Minister of

Education. I drew to him a problem that I had in my constituency which goes back to my younger years. It was called "No visitors after 11" where the landlady had the right to control the moral behaviour that went on in her house, and the Minister now of Education, slapped these ladies, these very solid foundation of my particular riding. He told them they had no rights to set rules, that they might as well take them all down off the wall, those fading house rules that these landladies had for years. have because of the Minister, now the Minister of Education, that's what he accomplished when he was the Minister of Consumer Affairs. He did away with "No visitors after 11" and now people can party all night and there's nothing they can do.

And this is the kind of thing that I think is very unclear in the Act. If you want to tell the landladies of Wolseley riding that they can't set the house rules, put it in the Act. These are the kind of things that we will be examining in the clause-by-clause review under Law Amendments. I have told these landladies to come forward and give the new Minister of Consumer Affairs an earful because he may be more understanding than the now Minister of Education who I called the Minister of control, who even had the nerve to control the house rules set by the landladies of Wolseley.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

**MR. HONOURABLE RENE TOUPIN (Springfield):** Mr. Speaker, would the honourable member consider a question.

**MR. WILSON:** Sure.

**MR. TOUPIN:** The honourable member, Mr. Speaker, made reference to the lack of notice provided in the Act in regard to the landlord. I would like to ask the honourable member if he is aware of Section 28, Section 102(1), and Section 103-3 of the existing Act.

**QUESTION put.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

**MR. STEVE PATRICK (Assiniboia):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Portage la Prairie, that debate be adjourned.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

## SECOND READING

### BILL (NO. 50) — AN ACT TO AMEND THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT

**HONOURABLE RUSSELL PAULLEY (Transcona)** presented **Bill (No. 50) — An Act to Amend The Payment of Wages Act** for second reading.

**MOTION presented.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour. **MR. PAULLEY:** Mr. Speaker, honourable members will recall a few days ago I introduced a bill — An Amendment to the Vacations with Pay Act — in order to assure that the workers were placed into a position where the wages that they had earned were guaranteed as much as we can guarantee. In that particular bill the only criticism that I

had was from the Official Opposition, who question whether or not I was placing the hard earned dollars of the worker ahead of preferred creditors insofar as wages were concerned. I want to indicate, Mr. Speaker, that this bill is rather similar and it is another step forward in the progressive action that this government has taken over the years to bring about a new deal for the workers of the province and to ensure that their input in industry and the rewards that they accrue as a result of their input really take priority over the champions of the so-called free enterprise system.

So, therefore, Sir, I would like to introduce a bill to amend The Payment of Wages Act. This Act has been amended extensively over the last several years for the purpose of improving and strengthening provisions for the collection of unpaid wages. Experience in the administration of the Act over the last year or two, has shown that it could be improved upon by clarifying some of the provisions and making some technical changes. Also, one or two more substantive changes are intended to further strengthen procedures for the collection of wages to employees.

One of the more substantive changes stipulates that an employer is deemed to be holding wages owing to an employee in trust for that employee. A major thrust, Mr. Speaker, of the bill is to in effect change the onus clauses which were so prevalent under the Conservative administration from that upon the employee to try and collect his wages through legal process from his employer and under the changes I am proposing in this Act, that the wages of a worker will be a first claim upon the employer.

The general intent of this proposed change is to place wage claims in a priority position over the claims of other creditors of the employer. The provision is expected to be particularly useful in cases of bankruptcies since The Federal Bankruptcy Act gives a special and preferential status to such a trust condition in the distribution of the employer's assets. It has long been contended by those of us who are deeply concerned with the wages of our wage-earners, to find, Mr. Speaker, that under The Bankruptcy Act the priority of workers' earnings comes after the tax collector at the federal, provincial or municipal level and then preferred creditors which, of course, is historic with the free enterprise system that we have been confronted with for so long in this Dominion of ours. I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that it has always been our contention that wages earned by and owed to an employee should always be payable before the claims of other creditors are satisfied. This amendment is intended to achieve that objective. While sometimes I may be accused of being the Minister for Management instead of the Minister for Labour, Mr. Speaker, I do think that the approach that I am making in this respect at least will gain the support of the wage earner who has been forced under the present laws to wait his turn until the tax collector has received his pound of flesh.

At present in the Act, the Act provides the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council to require that an employer furnish a bond in an amount and subject to such conditions as may be prescribed in the regulation. The Minister could then apply the proceeds of the bond toward the payment of wages to employees where the employer failed to pay wages to the employee. If the employer failed to furnish a bond as requested, the Minister could apply to the Court for an order prohibiting the employer from carrying on business in the province. In other words, that was the methodology of trying to put out of business the fly-by-night operators. To facilitate the administration of these provisions, it is now being provided that the Minister, rather than the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, be empowered to require an employer to furnish a bond which could be used for the payment of unpaid wages.

The amendment is intended to facilitate administrative procedures. This section has to do with the collecting of moneys from another person who owes money to an employer who has failed to pay wages. Funds can be collected, Mr. Speaker, in this way: by the Employment Standards Division to pay wages that an employer may owe to his employees. In other words, carrying on the process that we have adopted of continuous referrals to the courts in respect of payment of wages which often lands up in prolonged legal battles. The provision, once again, is to try and facilitate the payment of wages in the simplest way possible and at the least expense to the employee by not going through the courts precisely although, of course, there is always provision on stated cases of law for consideration of the court. At present, the Act contemplates that such moneys are to be collected between the time that a complaint is filed and the time that a final determination of the matter is made and that the moneys will be disbursed in accordance with the final determination. In other words, the poor fellow who has gone out and by the sweat of his brow earned wages under the present situation has to simply wait until the powers that be make a final determination as to whether or not he is to receive his wages. It is contemplated under this that the wages will be paid to the individual concerned and the arguments will follow. In fact, however, moneys are sometimes collected in this manner only after the case has been heard and disposed of. The proposed amendment would make it clear that in such situations the division would be authorized to dispose of the moneys immediately in accordance with the final determination. In effect, it will eliminate the possibility of hearing the exact same case twice and will eliminate possible delays in payment of wages due to employees.

Another section requires an employer who is appealing a Labour Board decision in the County Court to pay into the Court the amount ordered another section requires an employer who is appealing a Labour Board decision in the County Court to pay into the court the amount ordered to

be paid by the Board. The amendment will make it clear that the employer must — I emphasize must — pay this amount into the court at the time he is filing his appeal. At present in the Act there is no stipulation as to exactly when an employer must file that amount with the court.

Another section now provides that where a judge finds an employer guilty of an offence, he may order the employer to pay the Employment Standards Division the amount of wages found to be unpaid. The proposed amendment to this section eliminates the discretionary powers in this regard by requiring him to order the employer to pay any unpaid wages to the Division. That is, of course, Mr. Speaker, the Employment Standards Division of the Department of Labour.

Another amendment, Sir, is technical. This section now provides for the filing of a judge's order to pay wages into the County Court in the district in which the employer carries on business. Since some employers cease operating their business, this section is being amended to take this into account or formerly carried on business. We found by adding the words' that in some instances employers tried to circumvent the intent of the law by just moving out of their little bailiwick. In this way orders could still be filed in the court even where the employer ceased operations in that County Court division. So the order would be applicable on a more universal basis than it is at the present time.

Another section, Sir, is being amended simply to make it clear that an order, notice or other document can be served on an employer at his place of residence. As I understand the present Act the notice can only be served on his place of business, and as is quite frequently the case, the businessman doesn't turn up at his place of business, he stays at home barbecuing out in the backyard. This will overcome that type of a situation.

A new provision is intended to clarify the intent of the Act, which with regard to the liability of directors of a corporation in cases where a corporation fails or is unable to pay wages due to employees of the corporation — I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, with your experience over the years, that you like I have found that in some cases the corporation has been able to avoid or evade the payment of wages because of their corporate structure and this is to overcome that. There will be a liability on directors of corporations for the payment of justly earned wages. In effect the amendment stipulates that an order for the payment of wages is in the case of a corporation payable by the directors of the corporation only when the corporation that is primarily liable for the payment of wages fails or is unable to pay wages owing to employees.

These proposed changes, Mr. Speaker, I believe will clarify certain provisions in the Act and will improve procedures for the collection of unpaid wages. I believe that we should do as much as possible that we can do to ensure that employees are paid the wages that they have worked for. I therefore commend these changes for the approval in principle of this House, that wages earned by an employee are truly a debt upon the employer and should not be overcome by any technicality, legally or otherwise.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

**MR. BOB BANMAN:** I wonder if I could ask the Minister of Labour one question. I wonder, in his explanation of this particular particular bill, I wonder if he could inform us if it is the government's intent to bond businesses to ensure that the wages are paid.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Labour.

**MR. PAULLEY:** The effect of the bill, Mr. Speaker, would be in direct answer, yes. If there is a fly-by-night employer who continually utilizes the sweat of the brow of the worker to try and circumvent paying wages to him, yes, that type of a fly-by-night organization will have to be bonded. As a matter of fact there is some provision in the Act at the present time, but we are going to strengthen that.

**MR. BANMAN:** A further question. The Minister is not suggesting though that every business establishment in the Province of Manitoba will be now required to register a bond.

**MR. PAULLEY:** No, Mr. Speaker. It is not directed to the employers in general but only those — (Interjection) — I don't know whether my friend has answered to the satisfaction of the Member for La Verendrye. No, Mr. Speaker, it is not the intention to regiment and extend the bonding provisions to every employer in Manitoba, but I'm sure my honourable friend would be aware of some situations that I've made reference to where by circumvention or other ways, some contractors, to use that term in its broad sense, attempt to evade their responsibility. It is that type of an employer that the legislation is directed toward. Just to carry on in that phraseology, Mr. Speaker, by and large most labour legislation that is on the books in the Province of Manitoba, and in particular the labour legislation that we have introduced since becoming government is not directed at the good employer, but the one who is not so good.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

**MR. L. R. (Bud) SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Brandon West, that debate be adjourned.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hour of 10:00 o'clock having arrived, the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow.