

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Thursday, 2 April, 1981

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MATTER OF HOUSE PRIVILEGE

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter involving questions of privilege of the House, moved by myself and seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Johns, that;

WHEREAS the Minister of Finance has addressed a letter to civil servants misrepresenting the facts in relation to the Interim Supply Bill; and

WHEREAS he is expending public funds for the purposes of a political attack on the New Democratic Party Opposition;

This House refer the said letter and the Minister's actions to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: This is a Matter of House Privilege. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, we have become in possession of a letter which I understand is already in process of distribution to the public servants of the province and the letter is dated April 2, 1981, under the letterhead of the Minister of Finance and signed by the Minister of Finance for the Province of Manitoba. The letter reads:

"To all employees. Because the government has been unable to have the it is not possible for my department to issue payroll cheques in sufficient time to have them received by all employees on the regular payday.

I sincerely regret that the government finds itself in this position, which was brought about by the New Democrats in the Legislature refusing to pass the Supply Bill before April 1. I regret any inconvenience you may have suffered as a consequence of this action. Mr. Speaker, this is not only a serious breach of The Civil Service Act, because it calls upon the civil servants of this province to deliver what is basically a political message to fellow civil servants but is a serious breach, Mr. Speaker, of the privileges of this House, actions perpetrated by the Minister of Finance in this Chamber. Mr. Speaker, what we have been confronted with is a situation by which the Minister of Finance has demonstrated his own ineptitude and incompetence in dealing with the matter before us.

On Monday of this week the House Leader, Mr. Speaker, indicated that his understanding was that the cheques are to be issued for the end of this week and I hope we can proceed with all despatch. That assurance was given, Mr. Speaker, by the opposition that indeed we would proceed with despatch. The reference by the House Leader was to

the end of this week and that was based upon the past practice of previous Ministers of Finance.

Mr. Speaker, in previous years, previous Ministers of Finance have consulted in ample time in order to arrange and to ensure that debate in respect to the Interim Supply is completed in time for the cheques to be delivered. Mr. Speaker, that took place last year and indeed the cheques were delivered prior to the time which was required in order that the cheques could be presented for payment at the bank. There was no problem because the previous Minister of Finance saw fit to consult, not only to consult with the opposition, Mr. Speaker, but indeed he involved the Manitoba Government Employees Association in those consultations.

Mr. Speaker, if the present Minister of Finance had indicated on Monday or Tuesday of this week that the practice which had been followed by his predecessor, the Minister of Finance, the present Minister responsible for Hydro would not be pursued, then the opposition would have been alerted to the fact that indeed Thursday was not the target date for passing Interim Supply in this Chamber. But, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance chose to remain mute as to the date upon which Interim Supply had to be passed in order to distribute cheques.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. We can only have one person speaking at a time on any matter before the Chamber.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, for the Minister of Finance to suggest in his letter and I quote, "That the position was brought about by the New Democrats in the Legislature refusing to pass The Supply Bill", is blatant falsehood.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Chair finds it extremely difficult to hear the remarks of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, it is blatant falsehood on the part of the Minister of Finance. Firstly, not only did opposition members participate in the debates on Interim Supply . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. Once again I repeat, we can only have one speaker at a time in this Chamber.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, not only did Opposition members participate in debate on Interim Supply, but members of the government participated in the debate on Interim Supply, as is their right. The Minister of Transportation participated in the debate. The Member for Roblin participated in the debate. The Minister responsible for Natural Resources participated in the debate. Mr. Speaker, let the Minister of Finance not leave the impression that only opposition members participated in the debate. There was in fact, an unparalleled degree of participation in the debate by government members.

But the fundamental point, Mr. Speaker, is that if the Minister of Finance had indicated Monday or Tuesday that there would be a problem if the Interim Supply Bill was not passed by Tuesday, 12 o'clock, the Opposition would have given that co-operation because there was a commitment from the Opposition to provide co-operation in order to prevent any situation that would bring about a delay.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I find it extremely difficult to hear the words of the person who has been recognized as being the speaker on the floor at this time.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, if indeed the Minister of Finance had alerted the Opposition on Tuesday night to that fact, the Opposition would have ensured that Interim Supply would have been passed. But last year debate carried on, on April 3 of 1980, and because this Minister's predecessor had the common courtesy in order to consult, in order to discuss arrangements and had looked ahead to what could happen, we avoided the present situation which the present Minister of Finance is faced with because of his own incompetence and ineptitude, Mr. Speaker. The present Minister of Finance ought not to hide his incompetence and ineptitude by attempting, as he is doing here, to spread falsehood in a political manner through the use of public funds by massive distribution to the public servants of the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, this morning in a radio report I heard the Minister of Finance suggest that he wasn't able to carry on the practice of previous years because he had been advised that the previous practice was illegal. He indicated that he had been so informed yesterday morning, April 1, while his colleagues were indeed preparing for the trip to Brandon, the Red River Exhibition. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, the Winter Fair.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the Royal Winter Fair in Brandon. The question must be posed to the Minister of Finance if he only discovered this information on the morning of Wednesday, April 1, then why had he not undertaken what would have been expected to be reasonable if he had doubts as to the practice that had been pursued in previous years, then why had he not consulted with the Provincial Auditor and senior officials in his department prior to yesterday morning, before, so that he not only would have alerted himself but would have alerted all members of this Chamber? Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the Minister of Finance, by his admission, by way of reports, was not aware that there was any legal problem, as he claims there to be a legal problem, until he received such advice yesterday morning.

Mr. Speaker, by way of summation, what we are confronted with is one the most dangerous and undemocratic stunts that I have seen in many a year attempted by a government, the government of the Province of Manitoba, dangerous, undemocratic, a deliberate attempt to politicize the Civil Service and arrogant, Mr. Speaker, in the extreme.

Mr. Speaker, secondly, what we have observed is a practice on the part of this government which is untraditional in the political affairs of this province by any government, regardless of political stripe. Mr. Speaker, the Schreyer government, the Roblin government, the Weir government, the Campbell government would never for a moment considered sending political messages by way of massive distribution, by use of public funds, in the manner that this government by way of the Minister of Finance has seen fit to do. Mr. Speaker, there was no problem in 1978, 1979 and 1980; appropriate consultation had taken place. There was no difficulty; there was no problem.

What this government has seen fit to do, Mr. Speaker, is to undertake a cheap political stunt because it's an election year in the Province of Manitoba. This government is attempting to electioneer with the utilization, though it wasn't enough, the expenditure on television, with the use of public funds, Mr. Speaker, in order to undertake an unfair heavy-handed attempt to politicize the public servants in the Province of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, the public servants of this province will, I am satisfied, denounce the efforts on the part of the Minister of Finance, obviously supported by the First Minister and the entire government, to perpetrate politicization upon the civil servants in this province. Mr. Speaker, we have the letter; the letter has been referred to. There has been a serious breach of the privileges of this House and we ask, Mr. Speaker, for you so to rule.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, perhaps I could engage briefly I hope in this debate because I need not remind the Leader of the Opposition or members of the House that the time that we spend on this matter of privilege, which he is perfectly entitled to raise as a matter of privilege, is derogating from the time that we could be spending on the Supply Bill which my honourable friends have seen fit not to pass which was the cause of the problem in the first place. So I intend to be brief in response to my honourable friend to say, first of all, that we do not accept in any particular any of the comments that he has made this afternoon about the letter or about the circumstances surrounding the sending of that letter because Interim Supply was not passed on the 31st of March.

Mr. Speaker, every word in that letter that was sent by the Minister of Finance was true. Every word was true. And my honourable friends, they can squirm and weasel and twist and oil their way all they want but they, Mr. Speaker, can read a calendar as well as anyone in the Province of Manitoba and on the 31st of March, Supply ran out. My honourable friends can say whatever they wish; they knew that. They were warned by the House Leader at the beginning of the week as to the urgency and the necessity of passing Supply and they didn't. So now, Mr. Speaker, acting on the advice that he has had from senior civil servants that he cannot issue the cheque because the Minister of Finance chooses to pay heed to the interpretation and to the advice that he receives from the Provincial Auditor, from the Legislative Council and others, my honourable friends are in the rather

awkward position of saying, "Well, it's better to let us talk and break the law than it is to observe the March 31st cutoff date, and to observe the law". — (Interjection)—

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Brandon East says why didn't we bring it in sooner. We brought it in as I recall, on or about the 12th or the 11th of March of this year. It's had — how many — eight different sittings the matter has been debated and I make no complaint about that at all, but my honourable friends are on a sticky wicket when they try to say that they haven't had sufficient time to debate it.

Mr. Speaker, they're hoist on their own petard, they know it and they're stuck with it and for them to stand up in this House and try to shift the blame somehow or other onto the Minister of Finance for their own negligence and for their own incompetence I must say because they are so disorganized as a party that you can't get signals from them as to when they're going to deal with any matter in this House.

I suggest to my honourable friends that rather than wasting the time of the House on a trumped-up point of privilege, they should go into their caucus room and do some introspection on their party and their leadership. Mr. Speaker, if that statement isn't true, I point to the supportive evidence of the Honourable Member for Inkster and his two colleagues to show why they left that disorganized group over there because they couldn't stand it any longer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have only one or two other comments to say, and let me make it clear, we intend to vote against this trumped-up piece of nonsense that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has brought in this afternoon. I heard him apply some epithets to this government with respect to our conduct of this matter, saying that never in the history of recent governments in this province has anything so blatant been done, and so on. Mr. Speaker, I've already indicated to you, Sir, that every line and every word of that letter about which the Leader of the Opposition complains, every word of it is true, Mr. Speaker, every word of it is true.

So I say to him right away that he is exaggerating in the context in which he chooses to fight this debate in order to draw attention away from his own disorganization, and that of his own party, to carry on the proper function of a loyal opposition in this House.

But, Mr. Speaker, my memory is not so short as that of the Leader of the Opposition of this House because in 1974, sitting beside him is the then Minister of Finance, in 1974 when the Interim Supply Bill was being debated in this House, the opposition of the day had a point that they were trying to make and they were refusing supply to the then government of the day, to the Schreyer government; they had a point they were trying to make, unlike my honourable friends this year who didn't have any point and who very seldom have one in any case. So, Mr. Speaker, I remember that.

What was the concern that my honourable friend showed for parliament on that occasion. Mr. Speaker, do you know what they did? They took up a section of The then Financial Administration Act and they somehow or other convinced themselves that was going to permit them to turn their back on

Parliament, on this Legislature, and in effect to say to this Legislature to hell with you, we New Democrats with our executive government will pass an Order-in-Council and tell parliament to go to hell and that's exactly what they did.

Mr. Speaker, the late former Senator Eugene Forsey made comment in our papers at the time — I regret I don't have his comments in front of me — he referred at that time, Mr. Speaker, to what my honourable friends did when they were having trouble getting Interim Supply through as one of the greatest affronts, or words to that effect, one of the greatest affronts to parliament that he had seen in Canada. My honourable friend has the gall and the brass and the nerve and the hypocrisy to stand before this House today and to complain about a letter that the Minister of Finance sends out to the civil servants against the background of the record of what those people did; what those people did when they were occupying the executive offices of this government. Mr. Speaker, what they did was a shame to Parliament, acknowledged by parliamentarians throughout the Commonwealth.

This morning, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition was interviewed on CBC and he was reported as saying to the CBC that he thought it might be a good idea if the Conservative amendment to The Financial Administration Act in which, in 1978, we struck out the offending section which permitted them, through a stretched and exaggerated interpretation, to perpetrate that nefarious deed in the Cabinet Room; we struck that out. And the Leader of the Opposition stands up this morning before CBC and says maybe we should put that back in so that we can again, if we're ever graced with the power of government, so that can turn our backs on the Legislature, march down the hall to the Cabinet Chamber and pass what was essentially an illegal Order-in-Council.

Mr. Speaker, as I've said before that Leader of the Opposition doesn't know much about Parliament if he's prepared to advocate that. Mr. Speaker, may I say in the strictest and in the fullest terms I can, he doesn't know anything about this Premier or this government if he tries to advocate that kind of nonsense as a remedy for his own kind of stupidity and his own kind of irresponsibility with respect to what he raises as a trumped up question of privilege.

Mr. Speaker, I know he doesn't like having his own sordid record with respect to Interim Supply being raised in this House but I raise it, Mr. Speaker, because I'm ashamed that anybody who is elected to Parliament betrays such a fundamental lack of knowledge of why Parliament is here. Parliament's main purpose is to vote supply and Interim Supply is something that we do routinely each year. My honourable friends failed to permit Supply to be voted this year; as a result, cheques can't go out and my honourable friends are as well aware of that as anyone in this province or anyone in the Commonwealth, and if they aren't they shouldn't be sitting in their seats in this House.

So, Mr. Speaker, I merely say to you that we do not intend to vote in any way except against this trumped up piece of nonsense that is delaying the proper business of the House. The sooner we get on with the proper business of the House the better off the people of Manitoba will be.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, talk about trumped up. If there ever was a trumped up failure to pay salaries and trumped up reason for the failure it's what was done by the Minister of Finance and what is now being done by the government with respect to this matter.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you could tell who is the perpetrator of this nonsense by looking at the faces of the members of this House when it was suggested that salary cheques were not going out. Mr. Speaker, the members on the opposite side were laughing, grinning and drooling at the fact that salary cheques are not going out, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. I find it difficult to listen to the remarks of the honourable member. —(Interjection)— Order please. I'm listening to a point of privilege at the present time; that takes precedent over Points of Order.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that Supply was delayed, that the Opposition was given ample opportunity to debate Supply, that they used that opportunity; that they used it perhaps longer than one would think that debate should go on, but that happens all the time, Mr. Speaker. But at no time was the Opposition of the opinion, anybody in the Opposition, and I didn't take part in the last day or day-and-a-half, but at no time was anybody in the Opposition ever fearful of the fact that the government would have Supply in time to write the cheques, Mr. Speaker. They have had every reason to think that was the case. When I was spoken to about it on the bus yesterday, I said almost every Parliament, Mr. Speaker, has had the occasion two days before Supply to say that cheques may not go out but it never happened, Mr. Speaker. It's probably the first time in parliamentary history that it is being suggested that a cheque is not going out because Supply was not issued. I know it's been threatened, Mr. Speaker, many times but it's never happened before. The reason that it's happening is not because of the opposition but because the government has become so desperate in its electoral position that they thought, Mr. Speaker, that here is a way of demonstrating to the civil servants of the Province of Manitoba that it's not the government's fault that cheques are not going out but the opposition's fault, Mr. Speaker. It is so patent an absurdity, Mr. Speaker, that it will be another nail in the coffin of the Conservative administration.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that when they were sitting in this House 15 minutes ago when the question of the letter came out you could see on their faces, Mr. Speaker, that they think that they have scored a political coup and I say, Mr. Speaker, that it's a political coo-coo; that the fact is it will be recognized as such by the people of the Province of Manitoba. I, Mr. Speaker, am becoming bemused at the efforts that are being gone to by parties in this House, to try to lose the next election, Mr. Chairman. The fact is that there was once a series; the National League ended up in a tie and I believe it was the Giants had to play the Dodgers for the privilege of

who was going to play the Yankees and the game in which they went into was a fiasco, and Red Smith wrote it up as follows, that: "The Dodgers and the Giants are trying desperately not to be in the position of facing the New York Yankees". So, they decided to play this game to outdo each other as to who is going to lose and the first example of it came when the pitcher started to throw deliberate balls at the batter, who not to be untongued started to swing at pitches which were 20 feet outside and when he swung at one that was over the plate which was given to him as a lead pipe cinched grooved ball, instead of hitting it he swung over it to take the third strike but the catcher was too smart for him. He dropped the ball and let it roll between his legs, at which point the batter decided to amble towards first base and try not to make it. When the catcher saw this happen he decided, I've got to make it look like I'm going throw, but he threw the ball 30 feet over the first baseman's head, so that the batter would be able to reach first.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that the Conservative party for some reason is deliberately trying to make itself look as terrible as possible in terms of the next election and they are succeeding. They are succeeding. Mr. Speaker, we know the problems of getting through Supply. We know that at 10:00 on Monday night, doesn't everybody know, doesn't everybody know that at 10:00 on Tuesday night, if there was a problem the Minister of Finance would have got up and said, can we have leave to continue, leave to continue —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. We can only have one speaker at a time. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: I was here. I did not know that the Minister asked for leave. If the Minister did ask for leave to continue on Tuesday night, and I am wrong in that respect, I apologize. I did not see a request for leave, Mr. Speaker, and in particular I know that the Minister did not get up and at any time inform the House that if we do not get leave the cheques that are supposed to go out will not go out.

Mr. Speaker, the reason I will support this motion is because what I see are deliberate attempts of the government to try to embarrass at the expense of other people. Secondly, I want to know, Mr. Speaker, I want this referred to know what was told to the Minister of Finance as to whether he can get his cheques out; as to whether they can go out on time; because I believe that they can and a good example of it is, I can remember being in this House. I can remember being in this House, voting our salaries and the bill was given Royal Assent and within a couple of minutes — and I hope I'm recalling correctly, I believe I was standing in my place speaking — there was a cheque put on my desk, Mr. Speaker. So somebody worked very hard to make sure that the MLAs got their cheques. They couldn't have been prepared between the time that Royal Assent was given and the time that we got the cheques.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let there be no mistake about this. The fact is that on numerous occasions Supply has gone beyond the date and there have been no severe repercussions and I don't believe that there are severe repercussions this time, except those

repercussions that are deliberately being caused by the Conservative administration in the guise of trying to win votes on one issue when they know they have lost among all other issues. So there is no doubt that this has happened.

I am going to reserve one word, Mr. Speaker, for Special Warrants. I believe that I know parliament as well as the First Minister but that is for others to judge. That is for others to judge. Well, I'm not even going to say that I will let others judge as to whether I know it better than the Member for Riel. I'm prepared, Mr. Speaker, without any difficulty of contradiction by anybody learned in the subject to say I know it better than the Member for Riel. The fact is that there was a statute on the books which said, "passed by the Conservative party"; which said that you could "issue a Special Warrant during the term of the Legislature".

Mr. Speaker, the only reason that Special Warrants are not usually issued when parliament is in session is because parliament is there to vote the money and the Special Warrant that was issued in 1974, was issued with good cause and the fellows who issued it — and this is most important — walked in the next day, or the same day that afternoon, occupied those benches and said, "We have issued a Special Warrant". —(Interjection)— If you know Parliament then you will understand it. We said, Mr. Speaker, we have issued a Special Warrant. We are standing here as the Minister did when he said that he issued a Clean Environment order. We have done it. We felt that we were right in doing so. We are facing you now, vote.

Mr. Speaker, my friend the First Minister says that was chutzpah. He's having a little difficulty with the "Ch" but we can understand that. But, Mr. Speaker, that's Parliament; that every day that we sit here and every day that there is vote — and it can happen at any time and this is what some people do not understand when they say governments change every four years — governments change when the elective representatives of the people, all of them in every seat, and you'll see that in England and in Canada and every other place, people do not necessarily vote for the government or for their party, unlike what some people who do not understand parliament say that you can only change it in four years. With a conscientious Legislature you can change it at any time.

In 1974 we stood up and we said, we have done this, these are the circumstances that we have done it in, we are prepared to be judged as to what we have done. I see nothing unparliamentary about that, Mr. Speaker, and I tell the Honourable First Minister that that's — well he sees it differently and we judge it differently — but I am telling the First Minister that if this side of the House chose for another week's time to try to delay Supply by using what could plainly be seen, obstructionist methods, then it would not offend the rules of Parliament at all. If there was a rule saying that the government can pass a Special Warrant, pay those bills and face parliament, Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely nothing wrong with that.

I will support this motion, Mr. Speaker. I will support it because I consider the letter that has been sent out by the Minister of Finance to be the epitome of expediency, the epitome of opportunism, that all of the people in the Conservative party are happy

about it and that's the best way of judging who perpetrated it.

I told a story the other day about being in court, Mr. Speaker, and I will repeat it because the exact circumstances apply. I was standing in court and the lawyer for the employer said, the union put tacks on the street to make holes in the tires of the cars that were passing into our premises. I let him argue, Mr. Speaker, and when my turn came I got up and said the company put tacks on the street to put holes in the tires of their cars as they passed through the picket line. The court said to me, Mr. Green, how can you say that the company did that? I said, my lord, I am using the same evidence as the lawyer for the employer who said that the union did it. The bench said to me, but who is getting the benefit of it? I said, oh, my lord, if we are discussing who is trying to get a benefit out of it, then my case is stronger than the union's because who is urging it upon the court as being something in their favour? Mr. Speaker, who is urging this position on the people of the Province of Manitoba as being something in their favour and to the disfavour of the Opposition? The government, they are the ones who have caused the problem.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I want to refer to Hansard of Monday at 2 o'clock, March 30, of this week in which at the very beginning of Interim Supply I rose and said, "I simply want to place on the record as we begin Interim Supply that the Interim Supply was introduced March 11. It has been discussed already six days. Search of the records would appear to indicate this is by far the earliest date in which Interim Supply has been introduced. The same search of records would indicate that we have spent more time certainly on this stage than ever before according to my search of records and I would therefore simply rise to speak, Mr. Chairman, to bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Assembly and hope that this matter could be dealt with, with some dispatch.

"We will not be meeting on Wednesday. I think all members have agreed the Legislature will be attending the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair in Brandon. My understanding is some cheques are to be issued for the end of the week and I hope we can proceed with all due dispatch". The Leader of the Opposition . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the clear understanding was that cheques are to be issued pending approval of Interim Supply. The Leader of the Opposition rose immediately following, Mr. Speaker, and said, "Mr. Chairman, let me assure the House Leader that we have no intention to delay passage of Interim Supply."

Mr. Speaker, subsequently on Tuesday evening I was not in the House as I was attending a Cabinet meeting. My understanding is the Honourable Minister without Portfolio spoke twice to the House Leader on behalf of the Minister of Finance to urge passage of Interim Supply. Mr. Speaker, the Member

for Inkster has referred to "perhaps some members are laughing". Mr. Speaker, that has become commonplace in this Assembly on this side to laugh at the Leader of the Opposition and his cohorts and the Leader of the Progressive party who continually bicker; the Leader of the Opposition whose party is divided who can't control, Mr. Speaker, again, as I've said on numerous occasions, can't even control the number of members of their group who wish to speak on a matter and have exercised no responsibility on such an important matter as this.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAMUEL USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I want to rise on this motion of privilege to point out to the Premier of this province that if the Premier felt he was going to lose his majority by Friday, he should have informed the Leader of the Opposition and we should have called an election, Mr. Speaker, because that's what the government is saying. That's what parliamentary democracy is all about, Mr. Speaker.

If the Opposition is unfair and is holding up the passage of the instrument which is supposed to facilitate the mailing out of cheques to the Civil Service of this province, the Premier knows that he had the majority to put it through and I want to refer, Mr. Speaker, to the speech given by the Minister of Government Services in 1974, the time the issue the Premier raised in the debate this afternoon wherein he stated that a responsible government might have to use closure from time to time if the Opposition was obstructionist.

I want to remind the Minister of Government Services of that fact and the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, that the leader of the Progressive party is correct. The government does issue cheques in advance and in anticipation of the passage of bills in this Assembly, in anticipation, and that is done many times during each session of the Legislative Assembly. This is no exception; the cheques could have been issued; still can be issued and still can be delivered in time for tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, if there is the will on the part of the other side to make it happen.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the Leader of the Opposition gave a commitment to the Attorney-General the other day "that we will not unduly delay the passage of Interim Supply". There was no indication by the Minister of Finance that if this bill was not passed on Tuesday night that indeed there would be a problem with respect to the issuing of cheques. There was no indication of that. I know there was an indication that they wanted to go beyond 10 o'clock, but there was no indication that if this bill was held up until today, that the cheques would not be issued and could not be issued. That was not made clear to anyone, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if the Minister of Finance wanted to circulate a letter to the civil servants of this province and if he wanted to attach any blame to the process within this Assembly, then at least to be fair he should have said, the Assembly was unable to pass this measure but in doing so he would have had to admit that although he had the majority he is incapable of governing, and that is the issue. That is the issue, Mr. Speaker.

So, there is no question that the government is desperate politically. There is no question, Mr.

Speaker, that the government wants to gear up the people of Manitoba for an election and I invite the First Minister to do so now. If that's what he wants, then . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order. Order please. May I point out to the honourable member that remarks on a point of privilege should be germane to the point of privilege.

The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Attorney-General make reference to the fact that we've had eight sitting days of debate. The fact of the matter is that the House Leader has a responsibility to assure that the government business is carried forward with due dispatch, Mr. Speaker, and if he chose to do so we could have debated Interim Supply every day, not two days a week. If that was a priority and if that was a concern of the government bench, then why were we not considering Interim Supply every day if they felt that they were not going to meet the deadlines that are necessary to be met? Mr. Speaker, the finale to this whole scenario is the fact that they are so concerned that they closed this House down for one day in order to make a trip down to the Winter Fair in Brandon. —(Interjection)— Yes, yes, that's right, that's right.

Mr. Speaker, we know where their priorities lie. If they . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. We can only have one speaker at a time. I recognize at the present time the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, if this was indeed a problem for the government, the question of timing, the question of the passage of Interim Supply, then it seems to me that the logical thing to do would have been to send a contingent of people from this Assembly, members, to the Brandon Fair, and that the House should have continued sitting yesterday, Mr. Speaker, if this is that important and that crucial in the minds of the Government of Manitoba. But obviously, Mr. Speaker, that is not the issue. The issue is that the government is looking for ways and means of embarrassing the Opposition. Yes, the government is not trying to expedite the business of this House, Mr. Speaker, the government is playing politics and it's cheap politics.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, unfortunately it's necessary for me to take some time which will further delay the passage of The Interim Supply Bill. I wish to point out to the honourable members opposite that on two occasions the Leader of the Opposition has now broken his word. On Monday of this week, Mr. Speaker, he gave his assurance that Interim Supply would not be delayed. Yesterday afternoon, he gave his assurance to the President of the MGEA that passage of the bill this afternoon would not be delayed. Twice. —(Interjection)— "It'll go", he says. Sure, that's the casual attitude that they have towards governing, Mr. Speaker, and towards the truth.

Allow me to put some of the facts on the record, Mr. Speaker, facts in addition to the letter which is entirely factual. Mr. Speaker, the Member for Lac du Bonnet indicated that there had not been adequate time for debate of Interim Supply. The Member for Brandon East, speaking from his seat said, "Why didn't you introduce it earlier?" Mr. Speaker, allow me to enter on the record the dates on which Interim Supply has been introduced into this Legislature, and when it was passed, and the number of sittings.

In 1970, it was on the 25th of March; in 1971, it was the 26th of May, now there's a story in itself how the honourable members ran government then; in 1972, it was the 28th of March; in 1973, it was the 19th of March; in 1974, it was the 18th of March; in 1975, it was the 18th; in 1976, it was the 17th; in 1977, it was the 22nd; in '78, it was the 30th; in '79, it was the 27th; in 1980, it was the 28th of March, and in 1981 it was the 11th of March, Mr. Speaker, in order to allow those members opposite to ramble on in their debates as much as they wished and still get the bill passed by the legal deadline of March 31st.

In 1970, Mr. Speaker, Interim Supply was passed with two sittings; in 1971, it passed with one sitting; in 1972, it passed with one sitting; in '73, it passed with four sittings; in '75, it took six sittings, and that was the year that the Opposition delayed passage of the bill because that was a technique of Parliament that they wished to use to protest an action of the then government; in 1975, it took three sittings; in '76, it took three sittings; in '77, it took two sittings; in '78, it took two sittings; in '79, it took two sittings; in 1980, it took three sittings; Mr. Speaker, they have had eight sittings prior to today to pass Interim Supply.

The House Leader rose in this House on Monday afternoon and said that it is necessary to pass Interim Supply. The Leader of the Opposition stood, and in the space of two minutes gave three assurances that it would be passed. We had every reason to believe that it would be passed. At twenty after eight on Tuesday evening one of the members from our side went to the House Leader and said, "We want your assurance that this will be passed tonight". They would not give it. We assumed they were playing their usual games, but would pass. At five to ten we went back to the House Leader and asked for leave to sit past 10 o'clock to pass the bill, Mr. Speaker, they refused to do that.

Mr. Speaker, they say that this is a matter of practice. Let me say that the only time, with the exception of 1974, in the last 10 years, that passage of Interim Supply has been delayed past March 31st, is when those members were in Opposition and were delaying the business of government. In 1978, Mr. Speaker, assent was given on April 3rd, which happened to be a Monday. The 1st and 2nd of April fell on Saturday and Sunday and no cheques were issued. The payroll was not due until the 7th of April that year. No other cheques were issued until after Interim Supply was passed. The laws of this province were adhered to by this administration.

In 1979, Mr. Speaker, assent was given on April 2nd, which was again a Monday. Payroll was due on the 6th, which was Good Friday; the cheques were dated the 3rd. No other cheques were issued until after Interim Supply had been passed. Last year,

Interim Supply was not introduced until the 28th of March. The members opposite complained that they had not had adequate time to debate Interim Supply. We acknowledged there may have been some substance to their position. They said that they would not pass Interim Supply by March 31st; they gave their assurance that they would pass it on April 3rd, which was the same day as payday. The department and the Minister took the chance of issuing those cheques and I must say it was some chance, relying on the word given by those members opposite, seeing the kind of assurance and action we've received from the Leader of the Opposition. No other cheques were issued prior to that, Mr. Speaker, only payroll cheques. The Provincial Auditor said that practice is unacceptable.

This year, Mr. Speaker, Interim Supply was introduced on the 11th of March so there would be adequate time to debate. They had eight sittings prior to today. The Leader of the Opposition gave his assurance that it would be passed, his assurance was worthless; he gave his assurance to the MGEA that it would be passed early this afternoon so that the cheques could be released, that too was worthless. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite should forgo their question period today, get into Supply and pass the bill so the people can be paid.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, we have seen what I believe to be either a deliberate effort on the part of the Conservative party to attempt to create a situation to justify a letter which is shameful in every respect or a question of ignorance and incompetence which made it necessary for them to pose now as being righteously indignant. Mr. Speaker, it is well-known that payday comes every second Friday; it is well-known and was well-known to everybody that payday is tomorrow; it is also well-known, Mr. Speaker, that the first couple of days of the month, other than payday, are not vital to the carrying on business of government as far as issuing cheques are concerned.

Mr. Speaker, the First Minister spoke about 1974. Let's speak about 1974 for a moment; let's speak about the fact that in 1974 the Interim Supply Bill, and I intend to read from the Index and the Journals just to see who spoke on it. I moved second reading. I debated Mr. Sherman. Allowed to stand in the name of Mr. Sherman. Debate continued; Sherman, Toupin, Banman. Referred to Committee of the Whole. Reported without amendment. Honourable Mr. Cherniack moved Third Reading. Adjourned by Mr. Jorgenson. Debate continued; Jorgenson, Craik, Einerson, Uskiw, Asper, Ferguson, McGill. Adjourned Mr. Minaker. Debate continued; Messrs. Minaker, Graham. Allowed to stand in the name of Graham. Debate continued; Messrs. Graham, Marion, Sherman, Bilton, McKenzie. Allowed to stand in the name of McKenzie. Debate continued; Messrs. McKenzie, Blake, Henderson, Enns, Honourable Mr. Pawley, Messrs. Moug, Johnston. Allowed to stand in the name of Mr. Johnston. Debate continued; Messrs. Johnston, Axworthy, McGregor, McKellar, Spivak. Then it received Royal Assent.

In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, you will recall how clear it became that it was every intention of the

Conservative opposition to block the passage of Interim Supply in order to attempt to embarrass the government and, more important, in order to prevent the civil servants from being paid. That was their intent, it became absolutely clear, Mr. Speaker, that it was the intention not to pay the Civil Service on the date that they were expecting. Mr. Speaker, we then found in an Act which we passed, which was drawn by the Conservative Weir government, a change in The Financial Administration Act, where they drew an Act and that summer, when we were elected, we passed their Act without change. That Act reads and I quote now from a quotation on Page 2154 that did read: "Wherein an expenditure, not foreseen or provided for, or insufficiently provided for, is urgently and immediately required for the public good, upon report of the Minister that there is no legislative provision or sufficient provision therefore, and if the member of the Executive Council, having charge of the service in question, that necessity is urgent and the expenditure is for the public good, the Lieutenant-Governor in Council may order a Special Warrant to be prepared and signed by the Lieutenant-Governor authorizing it". That was the law, that law was used by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council and we said go ahead with your debate, you wish to continue to debate Interim Supply, there is no reason why you shouldn't do it. We will see to it that the Civil Service is paid. We took the responsibility. We don't back away from it. We saw to it they were paid. We did not flounder around like the present government did this year to see to it, either deliberately that they would not be paid or by complete inadvertence and negligence.

Let me tell the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, that after the Special Warrant was passed in 1974 members opposite, who were in the opposition said, you didn't have to do this, this is an affront to parliament, you should have brought in closure; that's what they said. You had your ways, you should have brought in closure. I think it was the member who was then the House Leader for the opposition, the present Minister of Government Services who said it and I can quote. The Member for Roblin said it, others said it, you should have used closure. I would have to say to the Minister of Finance, if he knew what he was about he should have used closure. But the fact is, Mr. Speaker, he didn't know what he was about.

The House Leader who quoted himself today said on Monday, March 30th, Page 2254, "My understanding is some cheques are to be issued for the end of this week". That was our understanding. Mr. Speaker, it wasn't only his understanding and my understanding, everybody knew that, and I quote again, "Some cheques are to be issued for the end of this week". Mr. Speaker, last year it was well-known that the debate continued until April 30th and on April 30th, the payday, because Friday was a holiday, April 3rd. Because Friday was a holiday on April 3rd the Interim Supply was passed, the cheques were approved, they had been sent previously and on April 3rd last year it was in order. Now the Minister of Finance is suggesting that the gentleman who preceded him last year broke the law. I don't accept that, Mr. Speaker. I believe that he did exactly what he had a right to do and did. This

Minister of Finance either didn't have the guts to do it or had the ignorance to do it or didn't consult the Auditor in time. He is now laying the blame on the Auditor; he is now saying the Auditor only told me yesterday. That must be true, Mr. Speaker, because I quote from the Brandon Sun of Wednesday, April 1st which was yesterday, the Fools' Day for many, Mr. Speaker. It said, "Mr. Ransom said that unless the government request is met by Friday when the government pay cheques are payable civil servants may be unable to get their pay before the weekend". Mr. Speaker, the bill will pass today unless there is obstruction on the part of the government which doesn't want that. The government wants to justify its letter. The government has done so, Mr. Speaker. Did the Minister of Finance want to ask something?

MR. RANSOM: When did I say that?

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance says when did I say that? I'm quoting from a newspaper dated April 1st and it is a story by Mr. Patrick McKinley, the Sun staff writer who may even be in this building now. It says failure and I quote again, "Failure to approve the Interim Money Supply means that the government has no legal authority to pay its bills. Mr. Ransom said that unless the government request is met by Friday when the government pay cheques are payable civil servants may be unable to get their pay before the weekend". Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what happened last year on Thursday, April 3; the Supply Bill was passed and received Royal Assent; all the civil servants were paid in time. The Minister of Finance obviously thought that it would be the case this year, too, and that was the case. Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Finance said last night, he was asked, and I don't know by whom, I assume not by the House Leader, whose duty it is to deal with the other House Leader so that they can arrange the order of the day, when he said that the request was to stay on later in order to pass the bill, he at least did not have the — well he did have — the good sense not to suggest in any way that it was stated that if it didn't pass on Tuesday there would be a problem with cheques. — (Interjection)— Well, the fact is that you may have been here and you didn't hear it either. Mr. Speaker, there is no indication that there was a statement made that if it wasn't passed Tuesday there would be no cheques paid on Friday. Mr. Speaker, what was said is, we know the date as well as anybody.

If the First Minister knows what March 31 is, where was he last year? Why was it that last year there was no problem? The reason there was no problem last year is that there was a discussion and there was an agreement and no way, no way, is there a breach of faith on the part of my leader and no way would it help them to try to run down and derogate the ability of our leader. No way, Mr. Speaker, because the fact is that the House Leader who should be responsible for the passage of bills said last Monday, my understanding is some cheques are to be issued for the end of this week, I hope we can proceed with all due dispatch. To be issued for the end of this week. (Interjection)— I'm glad the Minister of Economic Affairs can hear and it is true, Mr. Speaker, that he can talk from his seat very well but "for the end of the week" means tomorrow. The House Leader said we have no intention to delay

passage of Interim Supply and we didn't delay it any more than did the speakers on the other side who spoke — the Minister of Transport who spoke twice.

Mr. Speaker, we don't resent their speaking; they could have spoken today as well. The bill will be passed today as far as the people on this side are concerned; the bill will be passed today but the Minister of Finance with . . .

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Is that a promise?

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Natural Resources asked if that is a promise. I cannot speak for him and he knows that. He knows that I cannot speak for him or his colleagues but I can speak for my colleagues and, Mr. Speaker, I'm saying as far as we're concerned we intended all along and we intend now to pass the bill today.

MR. SPEAKER: There is an awful lot of disturbance here. I find it difficult to hear the words of the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I am concluding. If the Minister of Finance knew what he was about he would have seen to it that he or the House Leader would have discussed their problem about issuing cheques on Tuesday in ample time so that it could be dealt with by the Opposition in an orderly fashion — if they knew what they were about. I suggest they didn't know what they were about. If they knew what they were about, they could have issued the cheques as they did last year, send them out last year. It is still in the control of the government when the cheques are sent to regional offices. If he didn't know what he had to do and how to do it, then it's a question of his incompetence, his embarrassment.

Mr. Speaker, I want to conclude by saying what is absolutely false in the letter which we are now discussing is a statement that it is not possible for his department to issue payroll cheques, that's not true; in sufficient time to have them received on the regular payday, that's not true. It happened last year, it was possible last year, it should be possible this year; it was done last year.

Furthermore, he says that he regrets that the government finds itself in this position. He should regret that it finds itself in this position but I think he has no regrets that he was able to complete the sentence by blaming the New Democrats for refusing to pass the Supply bill. The warning as to his problem, the warning as to the way in which he had to handle himself, was not given in any manner to suggest the problem he has and he is now trying to go to the civil servants and blame others for his own inadequacy. For that, Mr. Speaker, the least we ought to do is to make sure that it goes into Committee of Privileges and Elections so we test the truth of what he said, so that we are able to have it properly aired and properly dealt with; they would have a majority there anyway.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read for a moment from Beauchesne, Page 101, Fourth Edition, "Willful misrepresentation of the proceedings of members is an offence of the same character as a libel. As early as the 22nd of April, 1699, the Commons of England resolved that the publishing of the names of the

members of this House and reflected upon them, misrepresenting their proceedings in Parliament is a breach of the privileges of this House and destructive of the freedom of Parliament." Let them take that to heart.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSON (Morris): Mr. Speaker, this has been a very interesting spectacle that has been put on for the House by the honourable gentlemen opposite. We've gone through this drill a few times in Interim Supply, Mr. Speaker, but I want to say that never have I seen such a performance in all my life as has been put on by, first of all, the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues. But I must reserve some very special disappointment for the contribution that was made, on my part at least, by the Member for Inkster; one who I thought and was sure knew better, which only goes to show that I suppose that from time to time we have off-days and the honourable member demonstrated that he is not, as he believed and many of us might have thought, perfect all the time.

Mr. Speaker, I began my remarks by quoting from the statement that was made in 1974 by the then Minister of Finance when he said he was attempting, in a press conference, to justify the reasons why they brought in Special Warrants in order to pass Interim Supply. This was the statement that he made, "The fiscal year of the province ends on March 31". Now, that may come as a surprise to honourable gentlemen opposite notwithstanding the fact that they had been sitting in this Chamber and were the government for eight years. They've forgotten that March 31 was the end of the fiscal year and all of the arguments that have been made here that they can go to the 3rd, go to the 2nd and go to the 4th are meaningless. They are meaningless arguments, Mr. Speaker, because they know darn well that the fiscal year ends on the 31 of March and any time after that is time that is encroaching on the period that the Minister can send out those cheques. Why don't they end the debate on March 31 and then there will be no problem?

Now, every year that honourable gentlemen have been in Opposition, since 1977, it has never passed on March 31st. In 1970, it was March 26; in 1971, it wasn't passed until the 26th of May, but there was a reason for that because the House didn't sit until the 7th of April, and Governor-General's Warrants, at that time, because the House didn't sit until after the 1st of April, the Governor-General's Warrants were properly used to grant themselves two months' Supply, which ended at the end of May but it was passed before the deadline. It was passed before the deadline in 1972; as again in 1973, on the 28th and 27th of March; in 1974, and that's the argument that the Member for St. Johns is hanging his hat on, that we let it go until the 5th of April. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we did, and we indicated at the outset that we were going to filibuster that bill and if they wanted to bring in closure they could do it, not unlike the Leader of the Opposition who told us on several occasions that this bill was going to pass in time.

Therein lies the difference, Mr. Speaker, at least we were honest enough to tell you that we were going to filibuster that bill; you knew we were going

to filibuster it, and we had a reason to filibuster it. Now if you had reasons to filibuster they were not made obvious to us. (Interjection)— Now there is the Member for Wellington, Mr. Speaker, that mental giant who makes an exhibition of himself every time he rises in his place, Sir. My honourable friend who doesn't know what morality or integrity is. This gentleman now interjects into the debate.

Mr. Speaker, then we come to 1975, it passed on the 24th of March; in 1976, again on the 24th of March; in 1977, the 28th of March. Every one of these occasions, with the exception of 1974, and we indicated that we were not going to pass it. That is a tool that is provided by the Opposition if there is, they feel, justification for not passing a bill. The whole purpose of Parliament is to grant Supply, and to withhold Supply if the Opposition feels it's warranted. There has been no indication by honourable gentlemen opposite whether or not they felt that granting of Supply was warranted or not; they're wandering in their usual way, lack of leadership, disorganized, absolutely not one of them knowing what direction they're going.

Mr. Speaker, while we were in Opposition, I would like to think . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. We can only have one speaker at a time.

The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. JORGENSEN: I would like to think that when we were in Opposition and I gave my word that something was going to happen, that word was kept. I think that the Member for Inkster will agree that insofar as it was possible, when a commitment was given, it was carried out. That is something that we can never depend upon anymore, never. When they tell us now that the bill is going to be passed this afternoon, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take that with a grain of salt, too. That I've got to see, because the kind of commitments that have been made by honourable gentlemen opposite, commitments that have been forever and a day broken, are far too frequent for us to take them at their word any longer.

Mr. Speaker, what did the Member for St. Johns say in that statement that he issued on the 4th of April, 1974? I read the initial part. Here's what he went on to say: "Since the Supply bill is hardly ever passed well into the fiscal period, it is the tradition for government to request the Legislature to pass what is known as Interim Supply" — that's an explanation, Mr. Speaker, that has not been given on this occasion by honourable gentlemen opposite — "which authorizes the expenditure of a portion of the Authority requested in the Main Supply Bill. This is usually considered routine and is barely discussed, since all members of the Legislature in the past have considered it vital that the province pays its bills. These are ringing words, Mr. Speaker. For example, the Canadian Press reported then on Monday, March 25, 1974: The House of Commons gave Federal Government Authority to make interim expenditures totalling \$3.1 billion for their fiscal year commencing April 1st. The report states that the amount was covered in Interim Supply Bill, a routine measure which MPs whistled through the House with almost no debate.

A review of past experience in the province confirms that in the past, The Interim Supply Bill

would go through the entire process, by leave, in one day, as it very frequently has. In most cases, it even passed before the Budget debate itself, and concluded, and the government had received confirmation of the countenance of the Legislature. In 1968, under the Roblin administration, the resolutions in Supply and Ways and Means were dealt with in about 15 minutes on March 25th and that has happened again.

On March 27th, the bill went through all three readings and committee, by leave, in about 10 minutes". (Interjection)— Yes, my honourable friend now is advocating that it be passed in 10 to 15 minutes. Well then tell me, Mr. Speaker, why did it take eight sessions in order to deal with it, and then not deal with it? Why take eight sessions on this occasion? Maybe honourable gentlemen opposite can explain why eight sessions were taken and the bill still not passed. (Interjection)— Oh, now we hear it. The Minister of Highways spoke twice. I presume, Mr. Speaker, from the words of the honourable gentlemen opposite, that on an Interim Supply bill or any other bill, it is forbidden for members on the government side of the House to speak. Oh, eight days and three speeches were made.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. It is exceedingly difficult to hear the words of the Honourable Minister of Government Services with everyone trying to speak at once. We can only recognize one speaker at a time.

The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

MR. JORGENSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. "In 1969, during the Weir administration, the resolutions were adopted in short order on March 25th", and I'm continuing reading from the statement by the Member for St. Johns, "and the bill went through second reading, committee and third reading in about 15 minutes on March 27th. In 1972, the entire process was carried through in about 30 minutes on March 28th". He's confirming, Mr. Speaker, that when we were the Opposition we acted somewhat responsibly in dealing with Interim Supply, which is more than I can say has been the actions of my honourable friends opposite. On no occasion yet, have they passed Interim Supply by the deadline of March 31st, and my honourable friends better start thinking about that.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I go on: "In 1973, on March 19th, Interim Supply went through both committees, and was introduced in second reading in about 30 minutes. It was debated during second reading on March 20th, 22nd and 23rd, and went through the balance of the procedure on March 27th with an estimated total debating time of about seven hours".

This year, I introduced Interim Supply on March 12th. It was debated in committee and concurrence motions from March 12th, 13th, 15th and 18th, for an estimated six hours during which time 14 Conservative speeches, one Liberal and 10 NDP speeches came in reply. I want to draw that particular thing to the attention, particularly of the Member for Brandon East. There were 14 Conservative speeches delivered at that time, and 10 NDP speeches in reply and he complains because the Minister of Transportation made a speech. — (Interjection)— Oh, now he is withdrawing. Do I

understand my honourable friend is withdrawing his remarks now? Oh, you see, when they're suddenly faced with the truth, Mr. Speaker, when they're suddenly faced with the facts, then they have a change of heart. Well, this has been our experience with honourable gentlemen; our experience with honourable gentlemen all the time, Sir; we simply cannot trust them. "Mr. Speaker, on March 20th The Interim Supply Bill was presented for second reading, and on March 21st there were three speakers for about one hour and the bill passed through second reading, Committee of the Whole House, and introduced for third reading".

Then he goes on in the final part of his statement to the press — the statement wasn't made to the House, Mr. Speaker, it was made to the press: "The government of Manitoba cannot permit such a situation to frustrate the proper management of provincial financial affairs. When we speak on the opposite side of the House, they are being frustrated; but when they do the same thing, and they do it first of all by telling us that they have no intention of doing it, then that becomes incompetence on the part of the government. Well, such hypocrisy, Mr. Speaker, such hypocrisy.

"Under the Legislative Authority of Section 42(1) of The Financial Administration Act, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council is provided for the issuance of a Special Warrant for 1/26th of the total Budget, that is for two of the 52 weeks in our fiscal year. It is the intention to absorb this amount in the Main Supply Bill when it is dealt with. Lest it be thought that the Executive Council lacks legislative support for its action, it must be pointed out that unlike most previous years the Budget Motion has already passed after the non-confidence amendments were rejected by the House. The passing of third reading of The Interim Supply Bill will merely tidy up the financial requirements until the current session is ended". What a difference in attitude, Sir, they take today as opposed to the attitudes they took when they were on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to reserve some special comments for the Leader of the Opposition who has demonstrated beyond doubt, beyond anyone's doubt, a total, complete lack of capacity to provide leadership. Mr. Speaker, something that strikes me as passing strange is that when statements are made by honourable gentlemen opposite to the CBC, I find it difficult to understand, although perhaps it shouldn't be difficult, there is never anybody on this side of the House asked to respond to those statements, never; I have never known that occasion yet. But when statements are made, as was made by the Minister of Finance this morning, immediately they got on the blower and called the Leader of the Opposition to pass his comments on what had been said by the Minister of Finance. I just throw that out, Mr. Speaker, in passing, in order to perhaps confirm some of the observations that were made in Barbara Amiel's book, "Confessions".

Mr. Speaker, here is what the Leader of the Opposition said to Mr. Harvard. (Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, I still hear the chattering of the Member for Brandon East, who always adds the comic role to the proceedings of the House. Mr. Harvard asked the Leader of the Opposition, "Well, the way I hear Mr. Ransom tell me the story it's your party that has to

take the responsibility for the delay in passage of the bill". Pawley: "Well, John, if I could just make a few comments in connection with that. By the way, this is not the first year that this has happened; this is apparently the fourth year in a row". Again, a statement that is not factual, because it has only happened three times in the past, but he says four. With that kind of reckless abandon that is so characteristic of himself and the Member for Brandon East, throw any figure into the air as long as it sticks —(Interjection)— I wish my honourable friends would allow me to continue my remarks. With that kind of reckless abandon that they use figures with on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter, three, four, 400, 500, 6,000, 10,000, what's the difference? Throw a figure into the air. Everybody's going to believe it.

Though in previous years the cheques were not held up to the extent that they were received by the employees because there was prior consultation between the Finance Minister. Mr. Speaker, why is it necessary to have prior consultation to tell honourable friends opposite that March 31st is the deadline? I was under the impression that they knew that. I was under the impression, as a result of the statement that was made by the Member for St. Johns that they knew that March 31st was the deadline. Why does that deadline now have to be extended until April 2nd or April 3rd? Why? Mr. Speaker, are we to believe that they don't know the difference between March 31st and April 2nd? I find that exceptionally difficult to believe, Mr. Speaker.

Now then, Mr. Speaker, he says: "Now this year unfortunately, John" — and I note the very friendly tone that he takes with the interviewer — "there was no consultation on the part of Mr. Ransom and the Opposition". And that, Mr. Speaker, is a falsehood; there was all kinds of consultation. We were trying to tell them from time to time that there was a problem. We didn't have to tell them that, Mr. Speaker, because surely they must have known that March 31st is the deadline. Why does there have to be that kind of pleading and consultation?

But, Mr. Speaker, let's go on. Here's another jewel of a comment. Mr. Harvard: "I gathered from Mr. Ransom though, that Gerald Mercier, the House Leader had made a special plea to the Opposition to let the bill through". Pawley: "Well, it was the routine kind of plea". Mr. Speaker, I wonder if my honourable friend could tell me the difference between a routine kind of plea and another kind. Perhaps my honourable friend would be able to tell us what kind of a plea that he wants us to make and I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of Finance and the House Leader would be glad to accommodate him. Does he want us on our knees? Does he want a registered letter? Please, Mr. Speaker, will he tell us what isn't a routine kind of plea?

And here is another one, here is what Mr. Harvard said: "So you didn't think Tuesday was the deadline?". And here is an observation on the part of Mr. Harvard that demonstrates his perception capacities but at the same time though. Mr. Pawley: "The people in the Opposition side can read the calendar, March 31st happened on Wednesday". He said March 31st happened on Wednesday and this here is Pawley: "Well that's quite true, John".

Then a little while later, Mr. Harvard goes on to correct himself. He said: Harvard: "I mentioned

March 31st being Wednesday", somebody in Mr. Harvard's staff obviously drew to his attention that he'd made an error. He said: "I mentioned March 31st being Wednesday, of course it was on Tuesday". And what did Mr. Pawley say? "Right". He agreed with him, Mr. Speaker. He agreed with him that March 31st was on Wednesday and then he agreed with him that March 31st was on Tuesday. Mr. Speaker, there is the leadership, that's the leadership that you've had on the other side of the House. It doesn't matter which direction you go, he's going to follow and he finds some difficulty, Mr. Speaker, he finds some difficulty in spreading himself in all directions.

Have you ever seen anything like it? I doubt very much if a performance of this nature has ever been put on for the public to see. A demonstration, Mr. Speaker, that denies common sense. A leader who turns out to be a political tomcat. He stands on the fence and yowls and he doesn't know which way to jump, whether to the left or the right. It's a performance, Sir, that was most remarkable and one could not help but think while one listened to that interview by Mr. Harvard this morning, that the Leader of the Opposition was grasping in all directions, attempting to find some small justification — and only small it could be — for the actions and indeed, Mr. Speaker, the stupidity that the honourable gentlemen opposite have demonstrated during the course of this debate.

Firstly, their inability to recognize it, and even after the fact as demonstrated by the Leader of the Opposition, their inability to recognize that March 31st was on a Tuesday. Well, as if that isn't enough, the Leader of the Opposition today, which is further indication that he is somewhat at a loss and somewhat at sea when he said that we shouldn't have gone to Brandon to the Red River Exhibition. Well, Mr. Speaker, he calls the action of the Minister of Finance dangerous and undemocratic.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if there ever was a dangerous and undemocratic action taken by any government it was the action of the government in 1974. When they sought to circumvent Parliament and the proper function and role of Parliament by using the questionable "nay" indeed, the negative technique of Governor-Generals Warrants to circumvent Parliament; and both the Member for Inkster who stands in his place and the Member for St. Johns who I don't expect much more from, defend that action. The member who says he knows more about Parliament than anybody in this Chamber — and I am not going to question that — but the honourable gentleman surely must recognize that circumventing Parliament in that way is a denial of the rights of the members of Parliament.

The whole purpose of the Legislature, Sir, is to pass judgment on the spending Estimates of the government and it's the reason why in 1972, '73 and '74 that I demonstrated the weakness of the method by which we were dealing with Estimates; that method was undemocratic in that it imposed a time limit that was a denial of the rights of members. (Interjection)— Yes, you didn't agree until I had to demonstrate how futile it was but we demonstrated that it was a denial of the rights of Parliament. Well then, what is the difference between a denial of that nature by simply imposing time limits, than a denial

by preventing the Opposition from passing judgment on Interim Supply? There is no difference, Mr. Speaker, both are a denial of the rights of members. Then the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, has the stupid audacity to stand up in his place today and say that we are politicizing the civil servant.

Mr. Speaker, was it in 1974 — and the Minister of Mines and Resources will be able to tell me — (Interjection)— Right. That information is now on the record, I presume. They tried it, and I'll paraphrase the Minister of Mines and Resources, they tried it in 1973, pulled it out and brought it back in 1974, politicizing of the Civil Service. (Interjection)— Now, that wasn't merely an attempt to politicize the Civil Service, that was a politicization of the Civil Service and we argued, we opposed it at the time. We indicated what would happen as a result of the passage of that bill and what we said would happen has happened. You have a politicized Civil Service and against the wishes of a good many conscientious members of the Civil Service. They would much prefer to be independent of politics. — (Interjection)— He says send them a letter. The Civil Service has been politicized by my honourable friends, anything that is done from here on in doesn't make that much difference as far as I'm concerned.

The Member for Lac du Bonnet and the Member for St. Johns both advocated the use of closure and they are saying now, why don't you bring in closure? Well, Mr. Speaker, they pointed to the example of 1974. Well, Mr. Speaker, there is quite a difference between what happened in 1974 and what's happening today. We said at the outset that we were going to oppose that bill; that we were not going to support it; that we were going to filibuster it; you knew what we were going to filibuster; but my honourable friends opposite had a different attitude.

They told us right at the outset, there was going to be no problem getting Interim Supply through. They kept reassuring us that there was going to be no problem getting Interim Supply through. I tell you, Mr. Speaker, there is a difference because I know my honourable friend the Member for St. Johns is looking something up and he says, not at the outset and he's right. —(Interjection)— No, we didn't oppose at the outset. We wanted only one closure motion because if we had demonstrated that we were going to filibuster on the two committee stages, the first reading stage, the second reading stage, and the committee of the whole stage, that would have meant you'd have to impose closure all the way through, we wanted to make it easy for you. So on third reading you had the opportunity to impose closure once and once only and that's the situation you face today.

But here's the difference. Honourable gentlemen opposite have told us time and time again, that this bill was going to be passed in jig time. It would not be held up. I can't understand the attitude of the Member for Lac du Bonnet, he is standing there shaking his head in agreement. Why isn't it passed then? —(Interjection)— Oh. Oh. Mr. Speaker, on that solemn assurance that has now been given to us by the Member for Lac du Bonnet — and I don't need confirmation from anybody else on that side of the House — on that solemn assurance on the part of the Member for Lac du Bonnet I will resume my seat and let's see what happens, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The point of privilege raised of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition — and I refer to Citation 81, 82, 83 and 84 in Beauchesne and I'm sure all members have looked at Beauchesne.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition has fulfilled requirements of Citation 81(1).

He has fulfilled the requirements of Citation 81(2) with a motion. That motion has been read to the House.

The role of the Speaker is one, "that once a claim of a breach of privilege has been made, it is the duty of the Speaker to decide if a prima facie case can be established. The Speaker requires to be satisfied both that privilege appears to be sufficiently involved to justify him in giving such precedence that there is a prima facie case.

In this particular case I want to also refer to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba which are the rules of this House — Beauchesne is a reference — and I refer to Page 59: "There are privileges of the House as well as of members individually, willful disobedience to orders and rules of Parliament in the exercise of its constitutional functions; insults and obstructions during debate are breaches of the privilege of the House. Libel upon members and aspersions upon them in relation to Parliament and interference of any kind with their official duties are breaches of the privilege of the members. But a dispute arising between two members as to allegations of facts does not fulfill the conditions of parliamentary privilege."

In this particular case I believe there is substantial argument about allegations of fact. However, I do believe that there might be a possible prima facie case and that is why I have allowed the debate to continue. The question can only be answered by the members of the House itself. So are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne says: "That it is the duty of the Speaker to decide if a prima facie case can be established". You have indicated that it might possibly be established. In that case, there is no prima facie case at all.

MR. SPEAKER: If the Speaker has any doubt at all in the issue, I will allow the House to make that kind of decision. Are you ready for the question? The motion before the House is the motion of the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to refer . . . Can the Clerk read out the motion please?

MR. CLERK, Jack Reeves: WHEREAS the Minister of Finance has addressed a letter to the civil servants misrepresenting the facts in relation to the Interim Supply Bill; and

WHEREAS he is expending public funds for the purposes of a political attack on the New Democratic party opposition, this House refers the said letter and the Minister's actions to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

MOTION presented and defeated.

MR. SPEAKER: On division. There's a request that it be on division. Is that acceptable?

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know what that word means. I am indicating that from the point of view of the Progressives that they are voting in favour of the Motion, all three of them in the House. I want that on the record.

MR. CHERNIACK: . . . Mr. Speaker, on the point of order raised as to On Division I think it's clear that we do not want to take the time for the Ayes and Nays to be called. The proposal for On Division was to make it clear that there's not a grievance on the motion and, as was said by the Member for Inkster, all New Democrats present are voting in favour of the resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources on the point of order.

MR. ENNS: No, Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order I want to make it clear that I can, without consulting any of my colleagues, make it abundantly clear that we all support the Minister of Finance and that we are voting against it.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that understood? Then we'll proceed with the business of the . . .

The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if members opposite would be prepared to grant leave to dispense with routine proceedings and proceed immediately to Orders of the Day and Second Reading of Bill No. 32 on Interim Supply.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there agreement to proceed directly to Orders of the Day? (Agreed).

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING

BILL NO. 32 THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill 32.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 32, An Act for Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service of the Province for the Fiscal Year Ending the 31st day of March, 1982 standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will be very brief in concluding. I would remind you, Mr. Speaker, that when I stood up on Tuesday evening last there were two members on the government side prepared to stand up and speak at a few minutes to 10:00 o'clock.

The Member for Emerson had a stack of notes on his table, the Minister of Finance was prepared to speak and for them to now be coming into the House and before now, coming into the House and saying, Mr. Speaker, that somehow it was this side

that was delaying things is a pile of nonsense. I would suggest that what happened was another demonstration of the total incompetence of that government. They weren't aware that they had a problem until Wednesday morning. That's why the Member for Emerson was angry because you did not recognize him at a few minutes to 10:00 o'clock on Tuesday evening last. That is why the Minister of Finance was prepared to speak at that time although there was no agreement, and he was well aware of it, that there was no agreement to extend the hours at that time.

I just want to say one final thing. This afternoon we heard the First Minister again talking about Parliament and parliamentary democracy after on Tuesday evening interrupting my speech, on several occasions, to refer to the matter of a Bill of Rights in the Soviet Union. Now, Mr. Speaker, a person who does not understand that in a dictatorship you cannot have an effective Bill of Rights is hardly the person to be defending parliamentary democracy, is hardly the person to have a sufficient understanding of parliamentary democracy to know the function in that democracy of a Charter of Rights. A person who uses that kind of an argument against a Charter of Rights in a democratic country and suggests that because of the Bill of Rights in Russia people are being discriminated against, because of a Bill of Rights in Russia people are being exiled and having their rights violated, is a person who has absolutely no concept of what happens in a democracy or a dictatorship. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the First Minister should get down to learning something about democracy and learning something about what it means to have a Bill of Rights; that it means, in fact, Mr. Speaker, that there is a limitation on the rights that any people give to their elected representatives. It's as simple as that. When those elected representatives go beyond the jurisdiction which the people wish to give to them, then the people have the right to go to the courts to protect their rights. That is a right that people do not have in the Soviet Union; that is a right that people do not have in other dictatorships; that's why my parents came to this country. They wanted a place of freedom and democracy, not a place of dictatorship. For the First Minister to be using that kind of an argument against a Charter of Rights is to me, Mr. Speaker, offensive.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister will be closing debate.

The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. RANSOM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again to close debate as I attempted to do twice on Tuesday afternoon, once on Tuesday afternoon and once Tuesday evening.

The honourable members opposite will be aware, Mr. Speaker, that it is necessary for this bill to be passed in order for the government to have the authority to issue cheques to meet its financial commitments.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself

into a Committee of the Whole to consider and report of the following bill for Third Reading, No. 32, An Act for Granting to Her Majesty Certain sums of Money for the Public Service of the Province for the Fiscal Year Ending the 31st day of March, 1982 and to Authorize Commitments to Expend Additional Money for Subsequent Years.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

BILL NO. 32 THE INTERIM APPROPRIATION ACT

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats: Committee will come to order. Bill No. 32, Clause (1) — pass; page by page?

The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I believe there was an undertaking on the part of the Minister to answer some of the questions at this stage; questions that were put to him by the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: What questions is he speaking of, Mr. Chairman?

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, just to be very brief. I would not say there was an undertaking, there was a request on my part that the First Minister be prepared at this stage to tell us what the problem is in relation to the filing an Order for Return of last May of the Member for Fort Rouge dealing with boards, commissions; it's his responsibility according to the House Leader.

The other request was the Minister of Agriculture explain why there's an Order for Return that's almost two years old that's still on the Order Paper waiting a response. That was the point I made. I recognize

. . .

MR. CHERNIACK: —(Interjection)— I don't feel I got an absolute commitment. I expressed a request and I don't know whether it will be dealt with or not.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Chairman, I haven't precise detail on the question asked by the honourable member. I'll look into it. If the order was accepted it will be given. If it's related to boards and commissions and the appointments thereto, up to a certain date, I can only speculate that takes rather more time than a simpler order. I'm not making excuses, I'll look into it and see if we can expedite its production.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, may I ask the Honourable Minister. In the absence of the Minister

of Agriculture whether he would make that inquiry because the one he's referring to is almost a year old. The other is almost two years old. I would appreciate if he could respond or have the Minister of Agriculture respond similarly.

MR. LYON: We'll check as we do, and the House Leader does from time to time, all of the outstanding orders to expedite and see that they're brought along. We certainly will give that undertaking with respect to any that the Minister of Agriculture has outstanding.

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

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Chairman, it's not my intention to delay this matter but I was supplied with some information by the Minister of Finance a few days ago that I believe worthy of putting on the record. I've been waiting patiently until we reached this stage of the bill in order to do so.

You might remember, Mr. Chairman, that when we were discussing the matter of Swiss loans and interest rates and the borrowings by the province, I had asked the Minister, and I believe it was in the Estimates of his department, about the cost of borrowing on the Swiss market at current interest rates and to inquire of him by how much that rate would have to go up to be translated into an equivalent rate of 14 percent which was the rate at which the government has recently borrowed money from Alberta.

We all know of course that the government, by a matter of policy, has switched from borrowing overseas to borrowing in Canadian funds wherever possible. The Minister of course didn't have the information available to him but the department provided it for me very promptly. It indicates, Mr. Chairman, that the present value of a Swiss franc is about 62.25 cents and that the present borrowing rate in Switzerland is approximately 7 percent. The department indicates that the Swiss franc would have to appreciate in value to 94 cents before the rate would be equal to the present borrowing rate that the government is paying of 14 percent; or put in another way, the value of the franc would have to appreciate by 51 percent before it would become more expensive than the last issue from Alberta, which raises the question, Mr. Chairman, of what advice the Minister has been given, both from his department or any other financial advisors that he might have, to whether the value of the Swiss franc is expected to increase by 51 percent over the next 10 years. Because if it doesn't appreciate that much then it would be obviously cheaper to borrow on the Swiss market. If the department or the Minister expects it to appreciate by more than that, then quite clearly he is taking the right course.

There is the other possibility that the rate might rise very slowly to reach 94 cents over the 10 years which is the current term, which would indicate also that for the first while — let me put that in a different way. Let us suppose that rate is reached after five years, then for the first five years the government would in fact save money on a Swiss issue; if the rate continued to rise at the same rate for the following five years, then it would balance out. It would indicate to me that the value of the

Swiss franc could go up some 60 cents to \$1.24 over that time before it would become more expensive to borrow overseas. I'm not sure whether the Minister cares to respond to this; whether it's a matter solely of government policy or whether it was practical financial advice that the Minister got, but in any case, Mr. Chairman, the information is of sufficient importance I believe that it should go onto the record.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, just so that I'm not issuing a routine plea, I just want to put it on the record again that the cheques are waiting in the Post Office to be released by the passage of this bill.

The advice from the financial advisors is they wouldn't touch it with a barge pole because the franc has increased in value against the Canadian dollar over the past 10 years by 167 percent. On the basis of that record it is unwise to borrow in Swiss francs today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Page 1 — pass; Page 2 — pass; Page 3 — pass; Preamble — pass; Title — pass. Bill be reported.

Call in the Speaker.

The Chairman reported upon the Committee's deliberations to Mr. Speaker and requested leave to sit again.

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie, report of committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER presented Bill No. 32, An Act for Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service of the Province for the Fiscal Year Ending the 31st day of March, 1982 and to Authorize Commitments to Expend Additional Money in Subsequent Years for third reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J.R.(Bud) BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be very brief. Amen.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Mr. Speaker, Education will be starting in the House and Community Services continuing outside.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Education; and the Honourable Member for Dauphin in the Chair for the Department of Community Services.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY
SUPPLY — COMMUNITY SERVICES
AND CORRECTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN, Jim Galbraith (Dauphin): We will call the committee to order. Before we start here, it's been agreed that we will pass by 6.(c) for the time being and come back to it later. We will now proceed with 6.(d)(1) Salaries — pass. the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Before you pass that, Mr. Chairman, with regard to the changes that were made in the supplement I want a clarification. There was an increase in the amount. Was there a broadening of the category or a broadening of the requirements, the guidelines, so that more people could be included under the supplement program?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): Mr. Chairman, because there's a minimum amount that's paid out on a quarterly basis, and if I remember correctly, it's \$3.00 or \$6.00. By doubling it, it meant that we could expand the number of people in that lower range and it expanded because of the doubling. It meant that in actual fact it was increased approximately by about 5,000 in that category, 65 and over, by doing that.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, what the Minister is saying is that by increasing the amount more people are able to qualify that had qualified before because the ceiling was therefore raised, okay. Now the next question is since this is still related to the Old Age Pension and I expect the GIS, they are indexed quarterly, does the government every three months have to raise the ceiling to maintain the qualification or to preserve the qualification of people on the program?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Chairman, that is correct. It's automatically increased every quarter, so in other words it's based on if the person gets a GIS and the OAS only, then they would get the maximum rate of either \$202-and-some-cents. (Interjection)— Right, yes, so we keep pushing it up. The same as was done I understand of the former administration. There hasn't been any change in that whatsoever.

MR. MILLER: I wonder whether the Minister could inform us the number who are getting the supplement for pensioners.

MR. MINAKER: The total now, I believe, is somewhere in the order of approximately close to 28,000. It changes every month as more and more people are finding out they qualify and we anticipate there is roughly close to 2,000 that we feel are still out there that qualify that we haven't found as yet.

This would be in the 55 to 65 category, the over 65 we automatically pick up.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, the revenues or the income derived from the supplement itself would have to be declared by the pensioner as income at the end of the year when he files his income tax, just as you'd have to declare the Old Age Pension or anything else. Does that not show in his net income?

MR. MINAKER: My understanding, Mr. Chairman, that it is not, no. It's treated in the same way as the federal GIS payments so that in the instance of the impact of the net family income, a single individual or a married couple are after all calculations, I think, approximately \$200 ahead of what they would have been under the old system because of the fact that it is not counted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, under (3), practically \$3 million for that, was that all spent last year?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Chairman, we've been advised that it will almost be exactly what was voted, the \$3,016 — or correction . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: \$2,940,000.00.

MR. MINAKER: \$2,940,000, I was giving you the bottom total for that section.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, could the Minister tell me what I'm forgetting or where I'm wrong? I take it that Financial Assistance is the actual payment to the client and if you spent all that last year and if you're going to have more people that qualify and that's increasing — it will increase even during the period of the year — and you're giving them exactly double what they had last year, you got over \$1 million missing. Now what am I doing wrong? You don't understand the question?

MR. MINAKER: I wonder if the honourable member could repeat that question.

MR. DESJARDINS: All right, I'm saying this \$2,940,000 was all spent last year. That, I would think, represents the actual money assistance to the client, the supplement. The supplement has been increased by 100 percent. There are more people now and you expect even more practically every month that will qualify. They get exactly double what they had last year and my calculation tells me — I must be forgetting something or there is some information I would imagine — but my information tells me that you are over \$1 million short in what you are asking.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Chairman, when we return after supper we will have an answer for him. The member has, I think, a pretty good point. I'm sure there must be an explanation on it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: We'll go along with that, providing there is no other question, let's pass that

with the proviso that you're going to give us the information and if we want to just touch on that or if we have any question on that. In other words, let's not leave (d), let's pass (d) but with the provision that once we get the answer we may want to comment. We're in (a), what we've done is cover the whole thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (d)(1) — pass — the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: I note that you've switched, you've jumped into another area and I'm wondering whether the committee would go along with me if I'm able to go back and raise with the Minister the one specific item of the north office of the social security. If that would be acceptable and I could raise it, I do consider it really pressing and couldn't raise it this afternoon for obvious reasons under the question period. I wonder if the committee would permit me to go to that?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Chairman, I'm just wondering, we're in the midst of Item (d) that we are almost coming to a completion on, at least that was my understanding that if we got that one answer, then we could maybe approve that and then go back to that other section, if that's fine with committee?

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6. (d)(1) — pass; 6. (d)(2) — pass; 6. (d)(3) — pass; (d) — pass. —(Interjection)— .

MR. MINAKER: That understanding is there. We're going back to I believe, Mr. Chairman, Income Security, under 6. (a). —(Interjection)— I had indicated to the honourable member that we would try and get some information relating to our income security, the North Winnipeg District office and the lease information. I presume that's with the honourable . . .

MR. CHERNIACK: I have a report to make as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member from St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, whatever the Minister likes. I'll tell the Minister that yesterday I was accused of blocking the move to the newly intended location on Kilbride and Main Street because the information was that because I had asked questions about it, that meant that the move was stopped. This came to me from people in that office who I didn't even know but they somehow discovered that I'd asked questions and that they said, now we're in that hellhole where we are and now we're still there because of my blocking it. I don't think I blocked it because I just challenged the Minister to give me the information and justify his move, I didn't have the right nor did I think I had the nerve or the courage to block it and I wouldn't have because I don't know other places.

But aside from that, I tried to explain that I had asked legitimate questions and I'm awaiting responses which I will deal with at the time, I went this morning to see that it's an awful place, Mr. Minister, the cellar of 600 Main Street. I think it's inexcusable that for 11 weeks people have been in a cellar, with cellar walls, cement walls, rough cement

walls, with six fans going full blast, no ventilation, and I was told that it's not as hot as it was yesterday. It's not as unbearable as it was yesterday or the day before. There is no ventilation there. There is no natural light. It is a basement, Mr. Chairman, an actual cellar of that other building, and it is so crammed that the desks are side by side, face to face, very few telephones. There's no interviewing space available, really. No person has an office to himself or herself, maybe there is one office, and I don't think that if the inspectors of the Health Department or Labour Department visited that place they could pass on it, so I am really critical of the fact they've been there that long when I know two things.

The one I looked at, you know that half a block from this place on the corner of Alexander and Main, there is a refurbished bank building. You look into the windows on the main floor where the bank was, there's a very large space absolutely empty and clean. It's just been cleaned up. I don't know whether that landlord would have wanted exorbitant rent, but if he had I would have paid it. For a temporary accommodation, where they are now is terrible. Although I don't accept any blame for the questions I asked, I still think there are other places they could be located which is more central to that division, and I must say again, I am shocked to find that there are only three branches in all of Winnipeg.

All east of the river, St. Boniface, St. Vital has to go to Portage and somewhere around Arlington, or Maryland, somewhere around there. All the people from East Kildonan, Elmwood and that area — I suppose East St. Paul to the extent that it's covered — go to 600 Main. Now it is planned for all the people who are four miles away, because there are people in The Maples who are their clients, have to go to this north-east corner. I think there ought to be more places in Winnipeg.

I notice that the Department of Community Services has at least half a dozen and maybe more branches spread throughout Winnipeg and why Social Security doesn't, I don't know. So I've made this little speech to acquaint the Minister of the horrible conditions under which a number of people are working now. I'm told there are more people in the north branch than there are in what they would call the central branch, I suppose, 600 Main, where they have pretty adequate facilities for themselves.

Having told the Minister that, I think he ought to get them out immediately. As to where to put them, that's his responsibility and if I find that there are other places they should have selected other than the one that they have selected apparently, I will criticize them. But I'd like to know whether it is true what they believe, that I stopped the move taking place, and that the landlord is not going ahead with the changes, the renovations because of the questions I raised.

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Chairman, I don't know who the honourable member was talking with. I can tell you that to my knowledge no one has implied. I know I have never implied that there was any delay because of questions by anybody on this committee.

I can tell you that the location where the present staff is, was a decision under emergency conditions which took place on the Monday because the fire took place on a Saturday. We wanted to relocate as

quickly as possible, and they were always thought of as very temporary quarters. Upon that fire, I've been advised that immediately they started to pursue trying to locate possible locations and that there were three locations that were looked at, one on Main Street north of Euclid on the east side which had a 3,000-square-foot area. The reason that it was not accepted was that it wasn't large enough in square-footage terms.

Another location that was looked at was 1261 Main Street at Anderson on the east side again. This one was just 3,150 square feet and again not large enough in terms of square footage and there was no elevator for handicapped to the second floor, and the building was very poorly maintained and in a state of disrepair.

Again, all costs were compared in terms of square footage. The final location was at — I'm sorry, there were four locations that were looked at — 1839 Main Street, the Gemini Building, and the reason for rejection was it was too costly in terms of cost of square footage and there was no elevator for second-floor access, and current office layout was not suitable. Then 1790 Main Street was looked at, of roughly 4,100 square feet and the rental agreement was being drafted up this week. It was not delayed and I believe the lease has been signed. If it has not been signed, it will be signed before the end of the week and there was no intention on anybody's part that I'm aware of, to indicate that you had caused any delay in this particular lease of this building.

I might say that the owner of the building is Mr. Fox, whoever he is. The realtor agency is J.A. Flanders; the lease term is for five years. The leasehold improvements estimated would be \$48,000 of which \$43,000 will be paid by the government and the landlord will pay \$5,000.00. In respect, as far as the space that's located at Bannerman and Main as far as we can determine, this space is not for lease or sale and the property is still owned by the bank.

The Department of Government Services have advised us they reviewed the building last fall as a possible site for a family court. However, at that time it was deemed too costly to upgrade as all building support systems, electrical heating and air, would require replacing along with extensive internal and external renovations. So that is the present status of that particular office and I agree with the Honourable Member for St. Johns, that I haven't seen the particular site that he referred that the staff was working under, recognizing that it is a very temporary location and was selected, based on not disrupting the service in that area.

I might say the new office will serve everything north of the C.P. tracks and east of the river and as far west as King Edward Street. The main bus routes running into Main Street are Jefferson, Mountain, Selkirk and Redwood, so it would appear that there is some connection, recognizing again that there is not a weekly visit by people receiving this allowance, that normally the cheque is mailed to them so that they don't have to routinely visit the office necessarily.

MR. CHERNIACK: I don't need to be protected from the slings and abuses but for good morale purposes I would suggest that a message be sent down into that basement right away telling them

what the prospects are and the timing because they are in a desperate situation and my information is as of 6 o'clock, yesterday afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I'm interrupting proceedings now for Private Members' Hour and the committee I think will return at 8 o'clock.

SUPPLY — EDUCATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This committee will come to order. I would direct the honourable member's attention to Page 47 of the Main Estimates, Department of Education, Resolution No. 50, Clause 1 - Departmental Administrative Support Services, Item (a) Minister's Salary. The Honourable Minister.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to present to the members of the Assembly my department's proposed spending Estimates for the 1981-82 fiscal year. It is not my intention to provide a detailed account of the activities of my department over the past year. These details are provided in the Annual Report. I will therefore, Mr. Chairman, briefly summarize the past activities and highlight the new thrusts and initiatives.

With regard to the Field Services Branch, 1980 has been a year of intense activity. Increased demands for services and assistance have come from several sources. Groups of teachers have requested and received assistance on specific subject area inservices at the school and regional levels. School boards have continued their requests for program analyses at individual schools or in groups of schools so that the school administration might use information coming out of such analyses to identify more clearly the direction of existing programs or the need for modification and/or adaption. Various branches of the department continue to rely heavily on Field Services staff for support and assistance.

The Branch has particularly strong liaison with teachers' certification, with measurement and evaluation, with program development and curriculum services, with the Bureau de l'Education francaise, with Support Services Branch, with the Finance Branch, and the Capital Facilities Review Committee.

Letters have been received by me and by my staff which comment on the very valuable services provided by members of the Field Services staff; such comments come from school principals and their staffs, superintendents, university personnel and from other branch directors. Members of the Field Services Branch will continue to give strong support to local school boards and their staffs, to continue to assist in inservice sessions to be available for the support of other branch activities, to be a strong liaison arm of this department and to provide my senior staff with current information on the educational needs in all parts of the educational system, be that in urban, rural or isolated settings in the province.

The Research Branch, Mr. Chairman, completed 14 projects. Eight projects are still in progress and during 1980-81 this branch will conduct a study of educational needs of children of single parents and a follow-up study of school drop-outs. In addition the

branch will undertake studies focusing on concerns such as in-service education and the impact of declining enrolments.

The Frontier School Division operates 31 schools in 29 communities in Northern Manitoba to improve educational facilities and programs, Mr. Chairman. This division proceeded with major capital projects at Norway House, Duck Bay, Wanipigow and Cross Lake. The total costs of these projects is over \$14 million.

Mr. Chairman, I think it would be worthwhile for me to elaborate on the new high school being built in Norway House, because it is the first high school facility of this type ever provided to natives on reserves in this province. This school will accommodate approximately 255 students in grades 9 to 12. It will be 44,810 square feet in size and this school will offer general academic and vocational programs. Facilities for commercial foods, building construction and power mechanics are included as well as science facilities, gymnasium, material resource centre, art room and multipurpose area. Mr. Chairman, this facility will not only enhance educational opportunities for students in Grades 9 to 12, but also for adults in the community.

For 1981-82 major additions are also proposed to Waterhen's School and Cranberry Portage Elementary School. The total cost of these projects will be approximately \$3 million.

During 1980-81, Mr. Chairman, through the Curriculum Development Branch a revised curriculum guide for physical education K-12 was published and distributed. Pilot classes were conducted to field test revised curriculum and language arts and social studies K-12, as well as mathematics and science at the Grade 10 level. Curriculum guides were also completed for Italian — Grades 1-12, Spanish — Grades 7-12, and Latin — Grades 10-12. These will be distributed in the Spring of 1981.

A curriculum support document for Grades 7-9 teachers of mathematics entitled "Ideas and Activities for Grade 7-9 Mathematics" was also prepared together with a resource handbook for teachers of English, as a second language at the elementary level.

In 1981-82, Mr. Chairman, interim revisions of kindergarten to Grade 9 curriculum guides for language arts and social studies will be developed. Pilot programs will be conducted in Health, Kindergarten to Grade 9 Language Arts, and also Social Studies at the Grade 10 level and Mathematics, Chemistry and Physics at the Grade 11 level.

At the same time, Mr. Chairman, curriculum development will continue in the areas of vocational, industrial and business education; home economics; music and art; in addition to revision of the guides in Maths, Science, English and Social Studies for Grades 11 and 12. The English-Ukrainian Bilingual Program will continue expanding into Grade 3 as the third year of a three-year pilot program.

The Native Education Branch has completed and distributed to all Manitoba schools a bibliography of native books, resources materials and films. The native language, Cree, Ojibway and Dakota, Grades 4-6 instructional guides have been completed. The Moose Lake Cree Stories booklet is being completed and is being used by several schools. During 1981-

82 the Saulteaux Language kit will be completed. Final editing of Native Language Instructional Guide, Grades 4-6, will be done. Native Language Guide for Grade 7 will be completed and ready for final editing. The Native Education Branch will continue assisting Winnipeg School Division No. 1 with its curriculum development project. It is also studying the feasibility of its proposed Native Guidance Training Program.

Last year I indicated, Mr. Chairman, that in 1980-81 the Vocational Educational Branch will begin a major thrust in the development of guidelines and materials for a co-operative Work Education Pilot Program in Manitoba schools. Mr. Chairman, at this time I'm pleased to note that the guidelines and related materials for implementation of this program have been developed and the project will move into the implementation stage during 1981-82.

Over the past year the Measurement and Evaluation Branch has conducted an Assessment Program at various grade levels and in various subjects. In May, 1981, this branch will conduct an assessment of Mathematics at the Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12 levels and Chemistry 200 and 300 in June, 1981. French language tests in curriculum areas other than Language Arts will be produced during 1981-82.

Our Child Development Support Services Branch has continued to stress the early identification and remediation of learning and adjustment problems. An important part of the operation during the past year was the continuation of professional development activities for special education and administrative personnel in the schools. During the past school year these activities were extended to a large number of kindergarten and Grade 1 teaching personnel to provide them with more awareness of and sensitivity to potential learning difficulties.

A major new thrust will be undertaken by Child Development and Support Services in the area of early identification and intervention with an emphasis on a preventative approach to children with special needs. After careful planning and preparation with several school divisions a pilot project will begin in September, 1981, focusing on screening and subsequent strategies for children with special needs. An expansion is planned, Mr. Chairman, in the areas of services for the visually impaired with the addition of a new position for a consultant for the visually impaired in the Parkland Region. Additional funding is being provided to expand its services to multisensory handicapped, deaf, blind children to provide them with a basic educational service. Child Development and Support Services will also be developing a Diagnostic Support Centre to assess children with severe learning disabilities and to work closely with classroom teachers in developing remediation strategies.

As members are aware, Mr. Chairman, there will be increased funding to school divisions for students with special needs. I will refer, Mr. Chairman, to this in more detail later.

In the area of Instructional Media Services, which consists of school library services, the Department of Education Library, production and school broadcasts, school film services and special material services; special material services of course, provide audio tape textbooks, large print textbooks and Braille textbooks. I may report that the work is

proceeding with the automation of media resources to include booking, cataloguing, distribution and inventory of holdings. With regard to school broadcasts, this section has been converted to a production unit, producing audio tapes, video tapes and media kits without the assistance of the CBC. Preparation for automation of film services is proceeding at a good rate, with the expectation that information will be on line by April 1st of this year, with services to be provided through computer holdings as of September, 1981.

In the area of special materials, Mr. Chairman, we have increased the quantity of French language, large print, Braille and audio tape materials required by schools to program for special students. Mr. Chairman, the Bureau de l'Education Francaise, which is the section in my department responsible for all program aspects of French language education in the province continued in its work in improving services and programming of studies. Among numerous other projects, the Bureau launched a core French pilot project at the grade four level in 11 school divisions comprising 54 classes in 36 schools.

Due to considerable increase in demand from schools for diversified curricular programs, the French Bureau is developing expertise in curriculum in both French as a first and French as a second language program, thereby maximizing the quality and the diversity of services to school. The Post-Secondary Career Development Branch, Mr. Chairman, will expand the access program at the University of Manitoba by up to 10 students in response to a demand for specialized needs, such as in mathematics, science and administrative studies areas. Enrolment in the access program at Brandon General Hospital will be increased from 20 to 30 students. This will allow an annual intake and graduation rate of approximately 10 registered nurses. The special premedical studies program at the University of Manitoba will recruit an additional 10 students, bringing the total enrolment to 30.

Mr. Chairman, the continuing concern of this government to provide financial assistance for students to continue their education will again be reflected this year in substantial increases in total student aid dollars, and in procedural changes designed to make it easier for students to qualify for loan assistance particularly. We are, as members will be aware, one of the few provinces with a continuing program of assistance for secondary students, a program which we consider a necessary undergirding to our program of post-secondary assistance. Some 88 percent of our secondary students who apply, receive bursary assistance. In addition, our Metis and non-status Indian students receive special opportunity assistance over and above the regular bursary entitlement.

In the post-secondary area, the decline in applications appears to have reversed its direction. There are signs that they are about to begin increasing once again. The percentage of successful applicants continues to rise as does the size of the average award. As an example, the average award for bursary loan recipients in post-secondary has risen from \$1,760 in 1977 to 1978, to \$2,600 in 1980-81. It is estimated to reach at least \$2,890 in 1981-82. In fact, with the planned increases in

assistance and freer access to Canada student loans, this average award may well reach \$3,000 or more in the coming year. The money allocated to assistance has been incremented annually from slightly over \$4 million in 1977-78, to approximately \$6 million in 1981-82.

Members are no doubt aware of the work of the Federal-Provincial Task Force on Student Assistance, whose report has recently been released for public comment. This government has had strong representation on that task force and at the request of the CMEC — Council of Ministers for Education Canada — I have recently agreed to have one of our senior staff assume co-chairmanship of the task force, thus providing an even stronger input into this review and reassessment, which is long overdue.

Mr. Chairman, members will I am sure, be interested in the improvements planned for 1981-82 in our Manitoba Student Aid Plan. Very recently, the federal authorities made a number of changes to The Canada Student Loans Act, which the provinces have been pressing for a number of years. Some of the more important of these are as follows: calculation of the annual loan limit at \$56.25 per week instead of a fixed limit of \$1,800 per year. As a result the average university student in a course of 33 weeks will now be eligible for \$1,860, community college students in a course of 42 weeks will now be eligible for \$2,370 in Canada student loans. The lifetime loan limit has been retained at \$9,800.

As well, minimum course length eligibility has been reduced from 26 weeks or 13 weeks of a longer program, to 12 weeks. Thus many more of our post-secondary students attending provincial colleges and private trade schools will be eligible for Canada student loans. Permanent residents will now be eligible to apply for Canada student loans as soon as they enter Canada instead of having to wait 12 months, as previously required. Also the eligibility for group B, or self-supporting status has been expanded to include four calendar years since leaving secondary school.

In response to these changes, Mr. Chairman, this government will substantially increase its maximum bursary assistance to match the Canada student loan increases. As a result, there will be increases to \$4,740, in other words, \$2,370 loan and \$2,370 bursary in the maximum aid available to most diploma course community college students, and to \$3,720, \$1,860 loan and \$1,860 bursary for university students in 33-week courses. Total aid of course, will also be higher for those university students in courses longer than 33 weeks. Consideration is also being given to ways in which additional assistance might be provided to students whose needs exceed even these new maxima.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, we will move in 1981-82 to a two stage assessment process which will assess students first for Canada student loan eligibility, using the less demanding Canada student loan criteria. These criteria place less emphasis on such things as part-time earnings, vehicles and net worth of businesses and farms, and will enable more students to qualify more easily for loan. Students will be notified first of their loan eligibility and will be told that they can also apply for bursary assistance, which will require the submission of information on assets, income tax, summer and part-time earnings

and resources of parents, as in other years. They will then be advised of their bursary eligibility.

I might add, Mr. Chairman, that the 1981-82 application material includes a table, or self-assessment guide which will enable post-secondary students to know at the time they submit their applications, approximately what amount of bursary assistance they can probably expect based of course, on the cost allowance figures used in the Manitoba Student Aid Program. I should point out that owing to the lateness of the changes in The Canada Student Loan Act, certain of these changes outlined here could not be included in our bursary application kit. Appropriate amending information will be included in award letters going out to students. Other significant changes, Mr. Chairman, based on the Canada student loan amendments. Our own continuing review of our program and an input from our student aid consulting committee include: full-time, single-term university students will now be eligible for bursary assistance of up to some \$900 in addition to their Canada student loan eligibility, thus extending to them the same level of help formerly available only to one-term community college students. Also in assessment for bursary assistance, the first \$500 of assets will be exempt, and 100 percent of the remainder will be assessed as against the former practice of assessing 50 percent of all assets. This will result in significant benefit for over 72 percent of students with assets.

The lower Gold Book wholesale rate will be used for determining motor vehicle values, instead of the retail value, and in addition, the Canada student loans operating allowances of \$372 will be allowed for vehicles that are exempt from assessment in place of the \$5.00 per week transportation allowance.

I might also mention that students may claim up to \$100 for the first time this year, for work-related expenses during summer employment, in addition to living expenses. As in previous years, Mr. Chairman, standard allowances and deductions have been increased in accordance with the Consumer Price Index Estimate established by Guaranteed Loans Administration. This year the Index increase is 10.1 percent. I would also remind members that certain cost figures such as tuition fees, books and supplies and residence fees automatically increase to the level set by the institution.

One other change worthy of note, Mr. Chairman, is that whereas only adults enrolled full-time in adult grade 12 were eligible for secondary bursary assistance previously, this eligibility will now be extended to full-time adult students in public adult secondary programs, grades nine to 12.

Mr. Chairman, with regard to financial support for school systems, honourable members will recall that during debate on my Estimates at the last Session, I indicated that a study was in progress, with the objective of devising a new or improved system of financing for 1981. This system, the Education Support Program, was announced in January of this year in order that school boards could incorporate the additional revenues into their 1981 budgets. Mr. Chairman, although this new system was outlined in a White Paper and was widely circulated at this time, I believe it would be useful to describe here some of its main features at this particular time. These

include: (1) an increase of \$70 million in direct provincial support for 1981, which is included in the Estimates now before the Committee; (2) a greater measure of equalization over the entire province; (3) increased incentive grants for vocational education and for programs for children with special needs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour is 4:30. I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour and will return into Committee at 8 o'clock this evening.

ROYAL ASSENT

DEPUTY SERGEANT AT ARMS (Mr. Myron Mason): His Honour the Administrator.

The Honourable the Administrator of the Government of the Province of Manitoba, having entered the House 4:40 p.m. and being seated on the Throne, Mr. Speaker addressed His Honour in the following words:

MR. SPEAKER: We, Her Majesty's most dutiful and faithful subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba in Session assembled, approach the Honourable the Administrator with sentiments of unfeigned devotion and loyalty to Her Majesty's person and government, and beg for the Honourable the Administrator the acceptance of this Bill:

No. 32 — An Act for Granting to Her Majesty Certain Sums of Money for the Public Service of the Province for the Fiscal Year ending the 31st day of March, 1982 and to Authorize Commitments to Expend Additional Money in Subsequent Years.

MR. CLERK: The Honourable the Administrator of the Government of the Province of Manitoba doth thank Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, accepts their benevolence, and assents to this Bill in Her Majesty's name.

His Honour was then pleased to retire.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: We're now under Private Members' Hour. On Thursdays the first item of business is Public Bills.

Bill No. 5, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Stand).

Bill No. 14, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Rhineland (Stand).

Bill No. 17, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan (Stand). Bill No. 19 as well, 23, 24, 30, 37 and 40 (Stand).

Bill No. 28, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Gladstone (Stand).

Then proceed to Private Bills.

Bill No. 31, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan.

ADJOURNED DEBATES ON SECOND READING

BILL NO. 31 THE MENNONITE COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

MR. JENKINS: I adjourned this bill, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have examined this bill and I rise in support of it. The Mennonite Collegiate Institute evokes some fond memories for me. I grew up in the Town of Gretna where that particular institution is located and I recall as early as my fifth or sixth year hearing Gilbert and Sullivan being performed at MCI. There were many musical events performed at the auditorium there and my family, four sisters and one brother attended the Mennonite Collegiate Institute. I spent one year there and I have some mixed memories — some very enjoyable times, some excellent education.

At that time the principal of the school was the Reverend Paul Schaeffer and we had an opportunity frequently to hear his lectures on ethics, his lectures on religion. I recall very clearly his arguments in support of the notion of the separation of church and state. That was a very fundamental principle which he frequently referred to. It is an institution which does have obviously assets financially much greater than the \$10,000 to which it is now limited. It has residences for young men and young women, sports recreational facilities in the school itself and therefore we certainly welcome this bill, Bill 31, which makes their current property holdings in fact in accordance with the law of the land which I'm sure that school would always want to have.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 33, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand).

Then we'll proceed with resolutions.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 12 on the motion of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

The Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

MR. WARREN STEEN: This resolution that the Member for St. Boniface has proposed and that's before the House is somewhat different that the one known as No. 10 that was introduced to the House some time ago by the Member representing Inkster in that, although they both deal with child care, the Member for St. Boniface's resolution is primarily asking that a Child Care Act be introduced by the government; whereas the resolution that was introduced by the Member representing Inkster was wanting, as a government, to go into an exploratory situation using schools for child care purposes.

About a week ago, or slightly better than a week ago, Mr. Speaker, I spoke on the Member for Inkster's resolution and at that time gave what I thought were some complimentary facts and figures relating to the child care assistance that is in place within the province today, and which comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Community Services. At that same time, Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that day care centres have been in existence for many many years but it was the former government that back in 1974 started to give

financial assistance to day care centres that do operate within the province and that our government has taken what I consider a good program, initiated by the former government, and enhanced upon that program where today we have literally hundreds of youngsters that are cared for in day care programs, many of them being operated in church basements and other public facilities and being operated by volunteer groups. At that time, about a week ago, Mr. Speaker, you may recall I mentioned that in a day care operation that 80 percent of the voting privileges in instituting any program is held in the hands of the parents of the youngsters that are housed within that program and that at no time can more than 20 percent of the say be in the hands of staff members.

So therefore the parents of the youngsters that are registered within the programs are the ones that have the say as to the calibre of program that will be operated within that day care centre and just what the program will consist of. So that the parental input is, as I say, five times greater than the input of staff members.

We in the Conservative government believe that the responsibility of caring for children rests with the parents, whether it be in an institution or a day care centre or whatever it may be. We believe very strongly that parents still must take the responsibility for the care of their own children.

I did mention, Mr. Speaker, last week when I spoke on this subject, that the lady who runs perhaps the largest institution in the City of Winnipeg, that being Norma McCormack the Director of the Day Care Centre at the Health Sciences Centre has on more than one time said to our Minister that when she leaves the Province of Manitoba and she is meeting with other persons in the day care field, that she is very proud of the record that the Province of Manitoba has and the services and the support that the government of Manitoba gives the day care programs and that Manitoba doesn't take a back seat to any province in the day care field.

In April of last year the Minister announced some increases in capital and maintenance grants for day care centres, also they've increased the per diem rate. Last year there was a \$4.5 million added to the Provincial Budget for those very purposes, also with the effort to increase the number of spaces available to youngsters.

I also mentioned that about 55 percent of the youngsters in day care programs are in programs within the City of Winnipeg and about 45 percent of them are outside of the City of Winnipeg; and that a mother, for example, Mr. Speaker, who's earning 8,000 a year comes under complete subsidy and a parent has to earn in excess of 12,000 a year before there is no per diem subsidy. But regardless of what that parent is earning, and I cited the last time I spoke on this subject the example, the Health Sciences Centre, where you could have two parents from a family, the mother and father could both be professional doctors, both be in the very high earning brackets in the Province of Manitoba. Sure they don't get a per diem assistance from the province by the centre gets a maintenance grant each year for that one space that particular child might be in. So all of us as taxpayers in the Province

of Manitoba are even assisting in that particular example in day care funding.

What the Member representing St. Boniface has attempted to do in my opinion with his resolution, Mr. Speaker, as I said at the outset, is have the government introduce a Day Care Act. I might point out to members of the House that the Provincial Government has been operating under The Social Services Administration Act for a number of years. In this particular Act it's spelled out how the financing of day care is to be administered, the licencing whereby we can protect against the quality of service and we also have the regulations. The regulations are some 20 pages in length, they go into great detail in these regulations as to licencing of the facilities, the fees, the fee structures, for example, Mr. Speaker, and goes into the subsidy eligibility and who qualifies for subsidies and what is the eligibility of each and every particular instance. It also shows in the regulations the subsidy calculations, the formula that's used and the attendance requirements — that if a parent has the youngster enrolled in a day care centre that the youngster must be attending the day care centre on a regular basis in order for both the parent to be given the per diem subsidy and for the day care centre to be qualifying, having a youngster in that particular slot.

There are grants available under these regulations for handicapped youngsters and it goes on and mentions the general licencing requirements and how a day care centre must operate and so on; and mentions also the pre-school and the Minister's responsibilities. So as I have said, Mr. Speaker, that The Social Services Administration Act was used by the former government to administered day care centre, it's being used by this government. Our Minister thinks that this particular Act is broad enough and with the regulations that the Act mentions, that the day care programming in the Province of Manitoba is second to none.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move an amendment to the Member for St. Boniface's amendment.

I move, seconded by the Member for St. Matthews. I have copies that I can give to the Page which he can distribute to yourself and other interested members.

Mr. Speaker, preceding the first WHEREAS insert the following:

WHEREAS the primary responsibility for caring and raising of children rests with the parents; and

WHEREAS some parents who are working or receiving educational and occupational training require assistance in caring for their pre-school or early school aged children; and

Secondly, in the first WHEREAS of the resolution in the first line thereof delete the words "continuing demand" and insert in their place the word "need";

Thirdly, preceding the second WHEREAS insert the following:

WHEREAS the Manitoba Government has increased the family income levels that qualify for subsidies to parents of children using day care; and

Fourthly, delete the third WHEREAS and insert the following:

WHEREAS parents should have the opportunity to influence and contribute to the quality of care their children receive and the affordability and costs of that care; and WHEREAS the government has enacted basic quality, regulations and funding mechanisms within which day care centres operate; and WHEREAS there is included as part of these regulations the requirement that day care centres receiving grants from the province must be directed and governed by a Board of Directors, the composition of which must be comprised of not less than 80 percent of parents of those children attending the centre; and

Fifthly, in the fourth WHEREAS, after the word "Manitoba" in the second line thereof, insert the following words "or their municipality"; Sixthly, after the fourth WHEREAS, delete the remaining parts of the resolution and add the following:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Manitoba continue its policy with respect to ensuring standards of good quality day care for children;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Government of Manitoba be commended for initiating programs of Child Care Centre Expansion and Noon and After School Care to meet the present needs throughout Manitoba.

Now, Mr. Speaker, after the resolution has been amended it will read as follows:

WHEREAS the prime responsibility for caring and raising of children rests with parents; and WHEREAS some parents who are working or receiving educational and occupational training require assistance in caring for their pre-school or early school-age children; and

WHEREAS there is a need for quality child care by both single parents and two-parent families, particularly in these times when escalating costs of living move ahead of real income; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba Government has increased the family income levels that qualify for subsidies to parents of children using day care; and

WHEREAS most children benefit from the good quality group experience while mere custodial care may even be damaging to some; and

WHEREAS parents should have the opportunity to influence and contribute to the quality of care their children receive and the affordability of the cost of that care; and

WHEREAS the government has enacted basic quality regulations and funding mechanisms within which day care centres operate; and

WHEREAS there is included as part of these regulations the requirement that the day care centres receive grants from the province must be directed and governed by a Board of Directors, the composition of which must be comprised of not less than 80 percent of parents of whose children attend the centres; and

WHEREAS the public, acting through the Government of Manitoba or their municipality,

has the right to expect good and well enforced child care standards throughout Manitoba; THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Government of Manitoba continue its policy with respect to ensuring standards of good quality day care for children; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Government of Manitoba be commended for initiating programs of Child Care Centre Expansion and Noon and After School Care to meet the present needs throughout Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member on a point of order.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. It seems to me that this does the exact opposite of what is requested in the resolution and it ignores the resolution and just says we will keep on the way things are going now. It seems to me if that is the case, that you vote against the resolution. The amendment doesn't bring in anything new at all. I wonder if you could take it under advisement, Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that it's certainly out of order.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader on the point of order raised.

MR. MERCIER: On the point of order raised, Mr. Speaker, in considering this matter now which I believe you can do, the resolution submitted by the Member for St. Boniface referred to assuring this House that unless certain conditions were present with ensuring good standards of quality care, and the amendment is on that very topic, continue its policy with respect to ensuring standards or good quality care. I don't think therefore that the amendment is exactly contrary to what the Member for St. Boniface proposed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface on a point of order.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, if I may, it seems to me that if the government wants to achieve what it mentions here that all it does is vote against the resolution. It doesn't bring anything new. I've asked for an Act; it doesn't talk about the Act. It says, "THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED", and that's the important thing, that the Government of Manitoba continue its policy with respect to ensuring standards of good quality day care for children. Then there's the usual congratulation or slapping on the back.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if the government feels that this is the situation, all they have to do is vote against the resolution. There is nothing new at all, it's completely different. I wonder if you would, unless you're ready to rule on it now, Mr. Speaker, to take it under advisement.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns on a point of order.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I too, would like to make a comment on this, not having had much opportunity as you have not, Mr. Speaker, to examine carefully the implications of the amendment.

But it is I believe correct to say that the amendments in deleting the third preamble ignores the problem of private profit-making child care centres — and that is one that's raised in the preamble and in the resolution feature — both dealing with public versus private, the amendment removes any discussion about the distinction between the two and therefore would deny a proper debate on it.

Further, the proposal in the original motion or resolution that there be an Act passed is ignored completely and the standards dealing with the United Way Day Care Study, therefore I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, without any of us really having had a proper opportunity to examine the implications of the resolution that you ought to I believe take it under advisement unless you had the opportunity denied to us, to look at the proposed amendment in advance.

It seems rather complicated. I think it's important from the standpoint of proper discussion of the resolution that any amendment thereto should not prevent a discussion on the resolution itself but rather an amendment should not act against it. In effect, I think what the Member for St. Boniface said is that it contradicts the resolution and may therefore be an improper amendment and maybe the proper way would be to vote down the resolution and then proceed with the government's idea of what it ought to have. In any event, Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid I personally would like to be able to review it again more carefully but it seems to me there's enough doubt right off the bat.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader on the point of order.

MR. MERCIER: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, it would be my impression that the Member for St. Boniface's resolution is directed towards proper standards of day care, perhaps different mechanisms — The Child Care Act — for the purpose of reflecting standards. I submit to you, Sir, that the amendments are on that very topic for subject of ensuring standards of good quality day care in Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, if you wish to consider this matter further, perhaps there's an inclination to call it 5:30.

MR. SPEAKER: I'll take the matter under advisement. The hour being 5:30, the Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Honourable Minister without Portfolio, that the House do now adjourn and resume in Committee of Supply at 8 o'clock.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning (Friday).