

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 11 May, 1981

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. ARNOLD BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Third Report of the Standing Committee on Statutory Regulations and Orders.

MR. CLERK, Jack Reeves: Your Standing Committee on Statutory Regulations and Orders begs leave to present their Third Report:

Your Committee met on May 11, 1981 and heard representations with respect to Bill No. 10, The Builders' Liens Act as follows:

Mr. Gordon Carnegie, the City of Winnipeg

Mr. G.L. Greasley, Winnipeg Construction Association

Ms. Roslyn Roth, Manitoba Telephone System

Mr. Ernest Pydee, Manitoba Hydro

And has agreed to report the same with certain amendments.

MR. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Emerson, that the Report of Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time I would like to draw the honourable members' attention to the gallery where we have 28 students of Grade 5 standing from the Cranberry Portage Elementary School under the direction of Mr. Neufeld. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

We also have 30 students of Grade 6 standing from the John Dafeo School under the direction of Mr. Morris. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

On behalf of all the honourable members we welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier. The Deputy

Premier has accepted a number of questions as notice pertaining to Manitoba Hydro; we still have not received response from the Deputy Premier. Can the Deputy Premier advise whether he has a response to the questions that have been posed from the Opposition for us today?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, the only substantive question that was posed that I undertook as notice was with regard to whether or not copies of the 1979 report, as posed by the Member for Inkster, had been printed or not and I undertook to enquire as to whether that had been the case. The information I have is that some original copies were submitted to Manitoba Hydro, something less than a dozen copies and following that and following reference to myself as the Minister I requested that the deletion be made with regard to the former Chairman which was done, along with some layout changes and the report was rerun. Now the original report was in final form; apparently Manitoba Hydro had received something less than a dozen copies in the initial instance of the original report so presumably it was completely rerun. I don't know that for a fact but presumably it was.

MR. PAWLEY: Then further to the Minister responsible for Hydro. If there were only about a dozen copies that had been printed, can the Minister advise why the cost for the Manitoba Hydro Report terminating March 31, 1979 was approximately double the printing cost of the Manitoba Hydro Report terminating March 31, 1980 in which, in the 1980 report, there were some 800 more copies printed than that which was shown by the Manitoba Hydro officials to my colleague, the Member for St. Vital?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to suggest that they weren't printed, either then or at some time following the initial receipt of them, what I'm saying is that in that case they remained presumably and apparently with the printer.

MR. PAWLEY: Then, Mr. Speaker, is the Minister prepared to acknowledge there were approximately 4,000 copies that were printed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

MR. CRAIK: I can't confirm that, Mr. Speaker, but I expect that that's probably the case.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then since the Minister acknowledges that possibly was the case — I believed his words to be — would the Minister also acknowledge that the statement originally issued by officials of Manitoba Hydro that the first printing contained the massive statistical errors was indeed incorrect?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, if that fact was said I was not made aware of that statement.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister responsible for Hydro, numerous questions have been posed to the Minister in connection with whether or not — and it was my understanding the Minister had also accepted these as ones of notice — whether or not Manitoba Hydro would pursue the questioning of Aikins MacAulay in order to obtain unanswered answers to questions that were not answered in the letter of April 27 from Aikins MacAulay and would they do so by communicating with one Steward Martin as per the invitation of the firm of Aikins MacAulay that they so do as it was only Steward Martin that could respond to the questions that Manitoba Hydro had placed to them.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, that question of course has been dealt with any number of times in the House here. It has been posed by the Leader of the Opposition and I have said before if Manitoba Hydro Board wishes to pursue those matters and advise back I will be more than pleased to provide the information back to the House.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question then to the Minister responsible for Hydro, will the Minister responsible for Hydro request that Manitoba Hydro obtain answers to the questions unanswered in their letter to Aikins MacAulay so that in the public interest all members may be informed as to the answers to the questions posed by Manitoba Hydro themselves to Aikins MacAulay, approximately one-half of the questions that were posed and not answered. Will the Minister request Manitoba Hydro to do so?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, in so doing then I would be doing exactly the type of request that the Leader of the Opposition would like, the type he would like to be critical of, which he was in the very initial instance. I want to indicate to the Leader of the Opposition again and repeat to him that if he had the foresight or the courage to stay in the committee and pursue the questioning of Manitoba Hydro when it was before the committee, he perhaps would have had all of the answers to all the questions he has been posing.

MR. PAWLEY: It seems that the Minister responsible for Hydro won't do that which indeed he requested Manitoba Hydro to do when he requested they delete a tribute to Len Bateman. Now he tells the House that he won't even make a simple request to Manitoba Hydro they obtain answers to the questions that were posed by Manitoba Hydro. Will the Minister responsible for Hydro advise whether or not he was ever informed by Manitoba Hydro that the answers he provided to my colleague the Member for St. Vital in regard to questions that were posed by the Member for St. Vital on Thursday, June 12, 1980, Page 117 of Hansard, were incorrect? Was the Minister so informed that his answers given to the Member for St. Vital were incorrect in respect to the Manitoba Hydro report?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, this procedure just becomes more impossible all the time. The member is referring to pages from some source, either the transcript from the Committee or from the House and is not placing the question but simply making

reference to a page and it's impossible to deal with questions in that manner.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I read the question to the Minister and the Minister's response then ask the Minister whether or not he was informed by Manitoba Hydro subsequent to June 12, 1980 that the answer that he provided to the Member for St. Vital was incorrect.

The Member for St. Vital: "While we are here on that report by the way, I looked through the report to see an acknowledgement or read an acknowledgement of Mr. Bateman's services and record to the corporation and I didn't see it mentioned anywhere. There was an acknowledgement on the back page of all its employees and other people but nothing for Mr. Bateman. Can you tell me why the Public Relations Department slipped up in not putting that in the report?"

The Minister then responded: "Mr. Chairman, I think perhaps I should answer that. When the report was drawn together the Hydro staff had asked whether it would be appropriate to include an acknowledgement in the annual report last year, I advised them that in my opinion that with the Tritschler Inquiry still sitting it would be inappropriate". When the report was drawn together Manitoba Hydro staff asked the Minister whether it would be so appropriate. Did the officials of Manitoba Hydro point out to the Minister that his response of June 12, 1980 was incorrect?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it's reasonably consistent.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Finance. Can the Minister of Finance advise us as to whether the climatic conditions in the Province of Manitoba are such that it is likely the Estimates which we have dealt with with respect to both forest fires and drought will not be sufficient to cover the expenses which appear to be presently contemplated?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, to my knowledge we are at the moment not contemplating Supplementary Supply for those purposes.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, then may I ask the Minister whether there is any contingency planned that the government has with respect to possible drought conditions in some areas of the province?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, perhaps I should direct the question to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture if the member is speaking about conditions that deal with drought and the agricultural sector.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if, without using another question, the Minister of Agriculture would answer that question?

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MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Well, Mr. Speaker, the member refers to the drought conditions or possible drought conditions that may in fact be of concern to the government. We have, Mr. Speaker, extended some of our programs which are taken into account with the funding that is available from last year with the extensions of our water pumping programs as well as the Transportation Program on movement of feed within the province. However, we are meeting and discussing with the Federal Government other plans that may have to be implemented. At this particular time the germination and soil conditions, the moisture conditions within the soil, are to a great extent better than last year. We had continued hot-dry wind that took the moisture out of the soil and this year to this point we would hope we wouldn't have to implement programs like we did last year but I would say seeding conditions are pretty well optimum and germination should be above last year's levels and would think with any amount of rainfall in the oncoming months that we shouldn't have to move to introduce major drought programs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with a final supplementary.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for his very encouraging answer and I would like to ask the Minister of Natural Resources whether he contemplates that there would be any need in terms of financial supply with respect to forest fire conditions?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I could perhaps simply put ditto marks behind the answer that my colleague the Minister of Agriculture made with respect to the general condition in the forests of Manitoba. We are keeping our fingers crossed. The general difference in the weather; cool, some damp, some snow in the northern parts of the province has to a large extent, at this point, reduced the potential danger and of course the incidence of forest fires. In the manner and way which funds are required, that is well known to the honourable member, a former Minister of the department, that as occasions and need for funds arise this government, as indeed his government, showed no reluctance to expend them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Mines. Last Thursday he indicated in answer to a question from me that the principal reason that the IMC Letter of Intent was not being made public at this time was the fact that there were third party negotiations going on. Could I ask the Minister whether there are any reasons other than the fact of those third party negotiations for the Minister not making the Letter of Intent with IMC public?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, as I said last year and I think I repeated last Thursday, that if and when an agreement is reached with IMC all of that sort of thing would be made available at the time the agreement was reached. So certainly in the event of there being a more definitive agreement reached with IMC, the Letter of Intent will be available.

But certainly the principal reason — and I think his question last day was why in the case of Alcan file a Letter of Intent and why not with IMC — and I indicated that the major difference was that in the case of the potash there are a number of third party interests in private groups that have holdings in that area and essentially what the government was doing was entering an agreement with IMC to then attempt to put together a sufficient block of property, to put together a potential potash mine. It seemed to the government in that case not to be in the public interest to be dealing with the partner who you had entered this agreement with to have the Letters of Intent publicly tabled at that time. Again to repeat, Mr. Speaker, in the event of a substantive development with the IMC taking place that information will be available.

MR. SCHROEDER: A supplementary to the Minister of Mines. Can he then tell me without — and I'm not asking for specifics with respect to that Letter of Intent — can he tell the House whether the Letter of Intent includes items not yet made public which could affect third party negotiations?

MR. CRAIK: It's not possible, Mr. Speaker, to be definitive on that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere with a final supplementary.

MR. SCHROEDER: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I missed the Minister's answer. Did he say it wasn't possible to answer? Either there is other material in that agreement which isn't public or there isn't. It would seem to me the Minister could answer as to whether there is or there is not material in that agreement which has not yet been made public, which might affect the third party agreement.

MR. CRAIK: Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, in the event that the member didn't hear my answer, I said it's not possible to be definitive in answering that question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere with a final supplementary.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, on a matter of privilege. Last year the Minister — and this goes back to May 6, 1980, in answering a question from the Member for The Pas, it's at Page 3300 of Hansard, I'd like to quote it:

"MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance. I wonder if the Minister then would indicate since he hasn't clearly said to the House, is the Minister willing to table the Letter of Intent that he has in regard to the potash development?"

"MR. CRAIK: "Mr. Speaker, the entire contents of the Letter of Intent have already been indicated by

way of public statement by the government. There is nothing more to be issued".

MR. McBRYDE: "Then my question to the Minister is, could he explain to the House then why he will not table that Letter of Intent?"

MR. CRAIK: "Mr. Speaker, having now answered this three or four times, if it will ease the member's pain I think we should probably table the Letter of Intent".

Mr. Speaker, he indicated that everything was public at that time. He has indicated this morning that it is impossible to answer whether it is public or isn't public. On Thursday last, Mr. Speaker, the Minister in answering a question from me at Page 3422 of Hansard said: "Well, as I think I indicated last year, Mr. Speaker, principally because there are third party negotiations involved in the potash project, as opposed to the agreement with Alcan where it was principally between the two parties".

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Minister is changing his stories from time to time. On the one hand he is telling the House that he has divulged all information —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. SCHROEDER: . . . on the one hand, Mr. Speaker, a year ago on May 6th, he told this House all information in that Letter of Intent had already been made public. Last Thursday and today he has been telling us the reason he is not making it public is because there are third party negotiations going on. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that it is clear this is another case of the Minister deliberately misleading the House and I would therefore move that the entire matter be brought before the Committee on Privileges and Elections. (Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.
The Honourable Minister on a point of order.

MR. CRAIK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the member is avoiding also the statement that went with it, that was said last year as well and said this year again, that there appeared to be no public interest to be served in tabling the Letter of Intent at that time. I also said last year that the basic contents of the Letter of Intent or whatever the wording he's used, Mr. Speaker, the matter of privilege as the member is suggesting here is that something was said which was not in agreement or contiguous with what is being said at the present time. The same thing was said last year as this year, Mr. Speaker, the matter of privilege does not exist. (Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I would refer the honourable member to Page 59 of Rules, Orders and Proceedings, where it states: "But a dispute arising between two members as to allegations of fact does not fulfill the conditions of parliamentary privilege". Therefore I would have to rule the matter of privilege as raised by the Honourable Member for Rossmere as being out of order.

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Honourable Minister of

Labour and it refers to a question I asked him on the 1st of May, to which he said he would try to obtain answers. I wonder if he has yet received and/or read the report from his research officials in connection with the conference board analyses and forecast of last November, forecasting that Manitoba would continue to have the slowest growth rate of working-age population and a number of other items I referred to on that date. Can the Minister yet give us an answer on that?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I said I'd review that information and I'm doing it.

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

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I want to address a question to the Honourable Attorney-General, who on May 4th Page 3303 of Hansard regarding the contents of Bill No. 5 states: "Since the bill was distributed I've again asked the Minister of Finance to have the bill reviewed by his department in order that he can provide us with his recommendations as to the provisions of the bill". Again, Mr. Speaker, I have not yet received those recommendations. Hopefully we will receive them before the end of the session so the bill can be dealt with in a positive manner. I ask the Honourable Attorney-General whether or not he has yet received the recommendations from the Minister of Finance which, Mr. Speaker, have been really outstanding for well over a year, since the Law Reform Commission submitted its report that long ago.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a supplementary. The Honourable Attorney-General asked me what was the question. Since he couldn't hear it I would want to repeat it, Mr. Speaker, to say, has he received the recommendations from the Minister of Finance which he hoped he would receive before the end of the session?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne): No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, in view of the Honourable Minister's commendation to me for bringing the bill forward and in view of the fact that he is proceeding with the Speed-up Motion, would he undertake that before the session ends he will not only call Bill No. 5 but also inform us as to the recommendations from the Minister of Finance so that the bill and the contents can be discussed intelligently?

MR. MERCIER: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, then in view of the fact that the Law Reform Commission report was made so many years ago and was one which criticized existing tax enforcement legislation, will the Minister therefore agree to delay the final vote on the resolution dealing with speed-up in order to ensure there is sufficient time for the government to get its own business done, get its own slate cleared in order

that we should be able to complete the session in an orderly fashion?

MR. MERCIER: The Minister of Finance is still reviewing this matter and he may or may not be in a position to respond to Bill 5 during this session. If he is, we will call it and deal with it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier who reports to the Legislature for Manitoba Forestry Resources Limited. I asked the Minister a number of questions when this company appeared before the committee. I wonder if the Minister could tell us whether there are now any preparations underway for the proposed expansion of ManFor, whether there's been any purchases or call for tenders or contracts or other preparations made for the expansion of the ManFor operation at The Pas?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I have no further information that I can offer to the member since his last question some two or three weeks ago.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could indicate whether invitational tenders have been called for 1,700 tons of structural steel and that the full amount of 7,000 tons of structural steel has been awarded to Marshall Steel of Toronto and Frankel Steel of Hamilton in a combination?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I can't offer the member any information on it. If it were the case it would have to have been by a party that had some interest in the project; it certainly wasn't by ManFor.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas with a final supplementary.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could find out and report back to the House whether or not ManFor, or any of its agents, consultant companies etc., whether any of its agents have asked for bids or tenders for structural steel of the magnitude that I mentioned.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I can check that with ManFor.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Co-operative Development and ask the Minister whether he can advise the House on whether the matter of financial backing of CCIL, Co-op Implements Limited, is still being actively considered by this government?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport.

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, officials from my department are meeting with officials from the other two provinces involved. Discussions are underway with regard to

financial assistance for CCIL and once the determination has been made either way we will be making an announcement in the Legislature.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can advise, appreciating the fact that negotiations are still underway, can he advise as to the nature or the degree of the financial backing being requested and what it means in terms of expansion of that company if such should be the case.

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I believe the total figure involved that CCIL was asking for was the figure of \$35 million. This would be broken up into the Federal Government, the three prairie provinces, the Co-op Movement itself and the shareholders; that is being examined at this present time. The exact breakdown, what each party should be involved with, is one of the areas that is being negotiated and until that has been resolved I'm not in a position to make any announcement or speculate as to what the final agreement will be.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East with a final supplementary.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could advise the House whether Ottawa is also actively engaged in this — I believe he made reference to discussions with the other prairie provinces — but to what degree is Ottawa actively involved in this and are they prepared to be as positive to help our industry, CCIL, as they apparently have been able to help Massey-Ferguson Limited.

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, that's precisely part of the negotiations. After what happened with Chrysler and what happened to Massey-Ferguson and a few of the other areas that the Federal Government has got involved in that is very very much part of the negotiations that we are undertaking right now with the provinces as well as the Federal Government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A.R. (Pete) ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Highways. I wonder if the Minister of Highways could inform the House if it is correct that the bridge at Emerson across the Red River has been closed?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Transportation.

HON. DON ORCHARD (Pembina): That information, Mr. Speaker, is not correct.

MR. ADAM: Could the Minister then advise if the Village Council has been advised that the bridge will be closed for a month?

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, the bridge over the Red River at Emerson is to undergo repairs this summer and when those repairs are underway the bridge will be closed for a period of time. I'm not certain whether the month figure that the Member for Ste. Rose indicates is a correct figure or whether

it is a period of lesser or greater time. I might tell the Member for Ste. Rose that the MLA for Emerson has been questioning me and the department as to the length of time for the closure and the arrangement of alternate routes for the community of Emerson to use, to assure a connection of both the east and the west portions of the town, and we are actively working to resolve those concerns, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose with a final supplementary.

MR. ADAM: Yes. I would ask the Minister why they only notified the town on the 20th or 21st of May that the bridge would be closed, not providing them sufficient time. I'd ask the Minister if they have found an alternate route for the people to travel back and forth and, in view of the fact that the tourist season is coming on at the present time, why they have not made arrangements with the CNR to use the CN bridge as an alternate route? In view of the fact that the Member for Emerson has never raised this in the House, I would ask the Minister if he could advise us if they have made an arrangement with the CNR to have the use of their bridge during this closing of the regular bridge?

MR. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm that on May 21st my department notified the town because we are some 10 days away from May 21st. The proposition of using the CN bridge is part of the consideration of an access to be used as an alternate to the bridge while it's under repair.

I might indicate to the Member for Ste. Rose that last fall, whilst visiting the community of Emerson with the MLA for Emerson, I in fact did look at the CNR bridge for the possibility of using it in such an event. The bridge will be used if it is structurally sound. That bridge, in case the Member for Ste. Rose is not aware, has not been used for some years. It was the original river crossing which was used by the railroad and had a cantilever which was used by wheel traffic or cars trucks, etc. The cantilevered section is the section that is now under investigation to determine if in fact it will carry such traffic as emergency vehicles and school buses. That determination I hope will be made, Mr. Speaker, in the very near future.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose on a point of privilege.

MR. ADAM: Yes. Just to make a correction in my remarks. I meant to say that they had been notified that the bridge would be closed on the 20th or the 21st of May.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Tourism. I'd ask the Minister what action he will be taking or what action he has taken to fulfill his assurances to residents of Churchill that he will take strong action to protest and hopefully to prevent the proposed demolition of the F-22, a single men's accommodations building at Fort Churchill which has been tendered by the Department of National

Defence. I understand that the tenders have been closed, although not awarded, and that demolition is slated for the very near future.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I had instructed the department to make contact with the people of the government intending to demolish that building because I did have sudden discussions with the gentlemen from the Chamber of Commerce in Churchill that it might be used for accommodation for tourists. I can't report at this time what the answer is. I'll have to take the question as notice, Mr. Speaker.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Speaker, I would impress upon the Minister the need for some urgency as the demolition has been slated for the very near future. It's my understanding within a couple of weeks, although that may not transpire at that time. I'd ask the Minister of Labour on the same question, what action he will be taking in response to his visit to the community last week, I believe, at which time I understand he toured that facility and also gave some assurances to people in the community that the provincial government would take very strong action to try to prevent this unneeded, unnecessary demolition of that particular building which probably could be of benefit to the Tourism Industry in the area if it were so applied?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the member is correct that I did tour that particular building. What he didn't say and I'm sure he has those figures too is that the Federal Government has spent something in excess of \$200,000 to renovate that particular building. It has a beautiful interior with a tremendous amount of facilities there that certainly could be used by the people of Churchill. What the request was from the Chamber of Commerce people that I toured the building with, was that the building be set aside if at all possible for the overflow of tourists that come into town at particular periods of time. In talking to the hotel operators that is a real essential asset for that community. They just happen to have something to pick up the overflows.

I've been in touch with the Department of Tourism, my colleague the Minister of Tourism, and told him that I have in fact viewed that building and it seems that the business community themselves are very desirous of retaining the building and it seems like a real waste to destroy that building: (a) it was foundationally sound to start with and, (b) there has been a tremendous amount of money spent in upgrading it and it could in fact be used as an overflow sort of accommodation for tourism. So I've been encouraging the Minister of Tourism who in fact has, in my understanding, made a pretty strong case to try and preserve that one particular building.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill with a final supplementary.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Speaker, I can certainly agree with the Minister of Labour in respect to the

potential for that building having been informed, and he perhaps knows better than I that there is a new sauna in it, a new furnace, that carpets have been laid recently and that the building was just renovated last year at an expensive project on the part of the Federal Government and is now up for demolition; it just doesn't make any sense when that building could be put to that sort of good use for overflow capacity.

I'd ask the Minister of Economic Development, as he is a Minister most involved with this particular project, if he will take ministerial action at the ministerial level and write directly to the Minister of the Federal Government involved in trying to impress upon him the usefulness or the potential usefulness of this project and try to prevent that demolition from proceeding and I am quite concerned that it will proceed unless that type of strong action is taken immediately. So I would ask him if we can have the assurance that he will go right to the top on this; that he will go to the Minister, try to impress upon the Minister the need for that building and the potential for that building?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

MR. JOHNSTON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, after I've had the information that I mentioned just a few minutes ago from my department.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Health and refers to questions he took as notice on the 19th and 25th of February last.

I asked at that time and I wonder if he yet has information concerning the need of Medicare to cover the cost of an interpreter when a deaf person has to go to a physician and when a deaf person wishes to participate in prenatal classes which are now not, or were not in February and since available to such a patient, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister has been able to obtain any information, whether he has any intentions regarding these people.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, my enquiries lead to the information that the service to which the Member for Fort Rouge refers is not an insured service but assistance is provided through the Society for Crippled Children and Adults and Kiwanis School for the Deaf and other organizations and agencies of that kind, many of which are funded in part and in some cases in substantial part by government, but there is no direct insured service.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRIDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister who reports to the House for Manfor if he could get some additional information in his enquiries from Manfor. I'd like to know whether

Manfor or any of its agents in calling for invitational tenders asked Manitoba companies that are capable of providing structural steel whether they received these tenders or whether they had the opportunity to bid on this job.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, that's associated with the first question. I indicated I would inquire specifically of Manfor as to whether they had been involved in the tendering of any of the products. I'll add that question to it.

MR. SPEAKER: Time for question period having expired we'll proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call the motion in my name on Page 3 of the Order Paper.

ADJOURNED DEBATE SPEED-UP MOTION

MR. SPEAKER: The proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General.

The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year, it was a bit later in the year at that time, I recall speaking to this particular resolution. At that time I had very little hope of changing anyone's mind in respect to the imposition of speed-up. You will recall at that time, Mr. Speaker, that the government had dug itself into a very deep and treacherous pit. We were in the session for over 90 days; it was late in the year; there were over 30 pieces of legislation that were yet to come after the Speed-up motion had been passed and some of those were majors pieces of legislation, if you will recall.

I think one of them was The Elections Act, which in fact did generate a great deal of debate not only in the House but in the Committee. As well there was The Election's Finances Act, the counterpart to The Elections Act which generated a great deal of controversy and a great deal of debate in the House and in the Committee. I believe The Milk Prices Review Act came in after speed-up had been passed by this House last year, another major Act which involved a great many of the members of this House in some rather extensive debate; the Legislative Assembly Act, the Act to amend that brought forward by the Honourable First Minister was brought in after speed-up; the Manitoba Energy Council Act, another controversial Act was brought in at that time, after the speed-up resolution had been passed; the Manitoba Energy Authority Act was brought in; the Builders' Lien Act was brought in, although in all fairness it not proceeded with, however, it was laid on our desk and we did have to review it and we did spend some time looking at it before we were informed that it would be proceeded with and it did take up some of our time even although it has yet to be passed by this particular House.

The Wildlife Act, I think, was brought in after speed-up resolution was passed, another major Act which did in fact take a great deal of research on the part of members who were interested in it. I remember the Member for The Pas, the Member for Rupertsland, myself and others sitting down and going over that Act in some detail and spending a great deal of time discussing that Act so that we could present in this House, or could have presented on our behalf at least, an intelligent overview and criticism of that particular Act. When speaking to The Wildlife Act, Mr. Speaker, and the events of last year, I do have to mention that one of my disappointments was that we were not able to get that Act out into the field enough to get the type of feedback from own constituents and from groups within my constituency that could have perhaps devised and developed some amendments to that Act which would have improved that particular Act. So even although we were able to make a legislative response to the Act last year during speed-up it was impossible to bring a response, after considering the remarks and criticisms of our constituents on that there just was not enough time.

So those were some of the major Acts out of the 31 Acts which were brought forward after the Speed-up Motion was passed last year and that sounds a bit strange when compared with statements by the members opposite when they were in Opposition and they were faced with a speed-up resolution, and at that time they knew that major legislation would be coming forward.

Let's look at the record in that respect. On May 31 in 1976, that's the day on which the Speed-up Motion was passed during that year, the now Minister responsible for Hydro said in this House, when he was in Opposition, "So we don't intend to oppose the Speed-up Motion, we just simply wish to censure the government for bringing in legislation that is important legislation at a late stage of the session." The Leader of the Opposition at that time also remarked on what they felt inappropriateness of bringing forward major legislation after speed-up had been introduced. He said, "In principle, it would appear to me that speed-up should not occur until all of the bills of government have been presented and second reading has taken place." That's a point that the Member for Morris, the Minister for Government Services, makes time and time again when talking about speed-up and he says if one goes back and reads the record, and even today in his recent speeches, he says, well, the past government always waited until after speed-up had been introduced to bring in their major legislation and then he rattles off the figures. Well, that's not true or if it is true in that instance it is true in their instance as well.

Last year there were a total of 115 bills and that's all the bills, Mr. Speaker, in all fairness that's the bills that go through every time on Supplementary Supply, the bills that go through on finances, the private members' bills, any bill that was introduced in the House and out of that total 31 were introduced after the speed-up resolution had been brought forward and passed, after we were in speed-up and in fact many of those, as I just indicated, were major pieces of legislation.

Now I don't think that will happen this year because I don't think there are that many major

pieces of legislation that the government is going to bring forward. I don't know but I don't imagine that there would be too much more, perhaps the House Leader of the government could tell us but the fact is that, if there are not major pieces of legislation be brought forward, then there's very little reason for speed-up to be introduced; very little reason at all. If we're going to have housekeeping sorts of legislation brought forward or minor Acts — I don't mean to in any way denigrate those Acts but Acts that don't take a great deal of consideration and Acts which are not controversial — then in fact there is very little cause for speed-up to be brought forward this year.

But I want to talk about last year a bit more in order to lay the scene for this particular year and to point out some of my general objections to speed-up and the process of what the Minister refers to as expediting the business of the House in such a way. It was obvious last year that the government, not the Opposition, but the government was in desperate need of speed-up; not because the Opposition was obstructing, not at all, but because their legislative program had been badly conceived and in many instances badly drafted and badly reviewed by the government before introduction into the House and they were having great difficulty. So when I spoke on this motion last year I indicated very clearly that I believe there may be situations where speed-up is warranted. I'll go one step further than that, I believe there may be situations where Speed-up Motion is necessary, where the House has to go into that sort of hectic pace in order to accomplish its business but I think those times are limited to specific times and for specific reasons. I say that categorically, I don't wish to see the carte blanche use of speed-up as a blanket mechanism to bring the session to an end.

When I mentioned to some of my colleagues who have been in government that I was going to make that statement or a statement similar to that statement, they said, ah ha, ah, ha, but be careful because you may be in a position where you will want to see the speed-up brought forward in order to finish the end of a session. I had to think about that; I had to think about it not from a personal perspective but from a philosophical perspective. If I don't like speed-up now and if I think speed-up is improper now and bad for the business of the House now, why would I change my mind, except for the most base of motives, when on the other side? If speed-up doesn't suit the legislative mechanisms now why would it suit them if the roles happen to be reversed? I don't think it would, yet I know the problems that come with being a government, the desire to finish a session as quickly as possible because the session suits the Opposition more than it does the government. From a pragmatic point of view I can see the reasons for speed-up but I would hope that I would not fall prey to that pragmatism if I was in a different position; I would hope that I would say at that time, as I am saying now, I don't think that speed-up will in fact help us as legislators conduct our business.

So I'm going to make the categorical statement and if I am in the position of having it read back at me in years to come, then so be it. Then perhaps I should take that abuse because I in fact do believe

very strongly now that speed-up does not assist us as legislators; does not make better legislation; does not make this a more effective Legislature and, in fact, does exactly the opposite in all those instances. I'm opposed to the government attempting to ramrod its legislation through the House, more because of fatigue than because of honest reflection and critical debate. I think that has to be said and if that has to be read back to me at another time then perhaps I shall have to suffer the slings and arrows of outrage at that particular time. But I believe it today; I think I will believe it then. That is exactly what happens.

Mr. Speaker, you know so well because you are probably as hard imposed upon as any of us during the speed-up. I can see the look of fatigue on your face already as you just think about it, as you consider the long drawn out acrimonious debate that comes as a result of being fatigued, being tired, being ornery and being cross as an old bear because that's what happens to us after a certain amount of time in this House. We get so embroiled in the debate and so embroiled in the activities of this Legislature, whether it be the sitting of the House or the sitting of Committees, that we become self-reflective, we lose our perspective and we begin to prolong debate that would not be prolonged under other circumstances.

So when speed-up comes in, we have the long hours, we have the constant barrage of committees, of debates, of discussions and finally the whole process breaks down and that's how the session comes to an end; we succumb to fatigue, not because we've thoroughly debated the bills; not because we've thoroughly examined the amendments but because we're fatigued. So those bills are brought forward and passed in many instances without adequate debate and in an unfinished state of business. You know that because each year after speed-up we'd have to go through with The Statute of Law Amendments Act and other Acts, amendments to those bills which should have been made in the year previous but were not because, in fact, we were in speed-up and unable to give those pieces of legislation the critical and extensive debate which they should have.

Speaking to the Member for Morris and the Minister responsible for Government Services' remarks of the other day. I shake my head in disbelief — I'm glad he's here because I hope he can correct me — but I shake my head in disbelief when he assured this House that speed-up meant for many of us a rest, a relief. He said that because it was the practice of his government to call committee hearings in the evenings and not to have the House sitting; therefore the supposition is that only those members of the House who are on those committees would have to sit in the evening, the Member for Morris said that; and that, in fact, the rest of us would have a night off.

Well, let's review the record of what happened in the most recent example. Let's review the record of last year — and I'm glad the Attorney-General is here with us as well because at the beginning of last year's Estimates, on the day it was passed, the Attorney-General had these words to say — and I'm reading from the Hansard: "Mr. Speaker", referring to you, Sir. "Let me first of all indicate, if I had not

indicated when I spoke on this Motion, that I have had the opportunity to review the debate that's taken place on the Speed-up Motion for the last number of years, back in the days of the previous administration and our administration, I probably should have indicated at the beginning that I certainly see during speed-up, Mr. Speaker, that I would make every effort to have committees meet in the evening, possibly on Saturdays which does tend I think, as the Member for Inkster said earlier, and others have said, tends to in fact reduce the workload for a number of members and certainly will give to the members opposite an opportunity to review legislation, review bills that will be distributed or have been distributed. I most certainly, Mr. Speaker, agree with their concerns that if significant legislation is introduced or any legislation is introduced they require reasonable opportunity to review that legislation before responding".

What else did he promise us besides that particular promise? He said, "it might very well be, Mr. Speaker, that during the next few weeks it may even be necessary, for example, adjourn the House for a couple of days if that is required, in order to give members opposite an opportunity to review legislation that is introduced into the House". So what promise did we have last year from the House Leader when we went into speed-up? It must be noted that the Minister responsible for Government Services has given us those same assurances this year when he indicated on Friday last that, and I quote him: "The fact is that the Speed-up Motion, after the manner in which we're dealing with the Estimates and the manner in which we're dealing with the Business of the House, comes as somewhat of a relief. I believe, Mr. Speaker, it was you, yourself, who made the suggestion which was acted upon and has proven to be a very useful suggestion, that we sit in the House two sessions a day, in the morning, in the afternoon and then we reserve committee hearings for the evening. That relieves a large percentage of the membership of the House; they actually have a night off and if you judiciously alternate members of the committee it gives everybody an opportunity to get an evening off and maybe two or three evenings off a week. I don't find that an onerous burden at all".

Well, let's see what sort of onerous burden we had to sit under last year after the speed-up was introduced. On the 3rd it was passed and in between the 3rd of July and the 29th of July we had speed-up — the 29th was when the House was prorogued of course. We went into extended hours almost immediately. The next day, which was a Friday and normally we'd sit from 10:00 to 2:30, we sat from 10:00 in the morning to shortly after 5:00 in the afternoon. Remember, that compares with the normal adjournment on Friday of an early afternoon.

Now I don't know about the rest of the members — I know about some but I don't know about all of them — but I use that time on Friday afternoon to go through my files from the week, to sort them out, to prepare them, to get ready for the next week, so it is useful time to me. I don't leave the building at 12:30 or 1:30, I usually stay around until 4:30, 5:30, sometimes till 7:30 or 8:30 at night and come back in on Saturdays, if I'm here, to do work which I need in order to get ready for speaking engagements, for

speeches in the House and for committee work during the next week, as well as my constituency work because remember while we're sitting all these extended hours we still have constituency work piling up.

I get on the average anywhere from half a dozen to a dozen constituency calls a day, that's on average, very seldomly does it go over that but there are days in which it does. I get several pieces of correspondence a day which I have to work on and during speed-up I find that all that has to be put to the lowest priority just in order to stay ahead of what's happening in the House.

But let's talk about what happens in the House. On the 8th there were three sittings of the Legislature, so already we're only five days in the speed-up but we're sitting three times and it lasted from 10:00 in the morning to 11:10 in the evening, on the 8th. So much for the assurances of the Minister; so much for the assurances of the Minister for Government Services of this year.

The record went last year from bad to worse. On the 11th, which was a Friday, we had three sittings of the House, from 10:00 in the morning until 10:20 in the night. On the 14th we had two sittings of the House and we ended up at 11:25 in the House, that was when we adjourned, Mr. Speaker, and it's all a matter of the public record. On the 15th there were three sittings and we ended up at 10:40 p.m. in the House. We had short days in the House, although we had committee meetings on the 16th, 17th and the 18th. On the 21st we went to three sittings again and it lasted until 11:30 in the night. On the 22nd we went to three sittings again and it lasted until 2:15 in the morning. On the 23rd, two sittings and it lasted till 8:20 at night. On the 24th we had two sittings and it lasted till 12:45 in the morning. On the 25th, it was a short day, a Friday, we had one sitting although we had committee meetings and I want to read those out in a minute just to put on the record the type of schedule that takes place once we pass the Speed-up motion; or the type of schedule which can take place once we pass the Speed-up motion.

On the 26th which was a Saturday, we had committee hearings; on the 28th we had three sittings and we ended up at 12:35 in the morning; on the 29th we had three sittings and we ended up at 1:00 a.m. approximately. At that time we prorogued the House.

So when you add to that the numerous committee meetings, and I think they have to be read into the record as well, this is the type of schedule you have for speed-up from last year. Now remember we were promised the evenings off; it was suggested that there might be adjourned days during which we could review legislation and we know that there was very complicated, complex and controversial legislation brought forward; and what did we get after all of those fine assurances from the Minister?

On July 3rd we had Privileges and Elections Committee at 10 o'clock in the morning; we went into the House at 2 o'clock and we sat till 11:40 as I said before. On July 4th, which is a Friday, we had the sitting of the House until 5:10 at night and then we had the Privileges and Elections Committee at 8 o'clock. On July 5th, which was a Saturday the Privileges and Elections Committee met at 10 o'clock and met again at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. On July

7th we finished the House at 5:30 and we went into the Law Amendments Committee which takes up a large number of the members time at 8 o'clock. On July 8th, three sittings of the Legislature, as indicated. On July 9th we finished the Legislature at 5:30 and went into Privileges and Elections at 8 o'clock. On July 10th we finished the Legislature at 5:30 and Privileges and Elections and the Law Amendments Committee met 8 o'clock. On July 11th, I have given you those figures for the Legislature sitting until 10:20. On July 12th the Law Amendments meeting started at 10 o'clock, that was a Saturday. On July 14th the House ended at 11:25 at night; as well we had a Law Amendments Committee meeting at 2 o'clock and I believe one at 8 o'clock. On July 15th, Legislature all day. On July 16th we start at 10 o'clock again; at 2 o'clock we have Statutory Regulations and Orders; we have that again at 8 o'clock and at 8 o'clock as well the Private Bills Committee was meeting. On July 17th the Legislature adjourned at 12:30 in the afternoon; Private Bills Committee met at 2 o'clock and 8 o'clock and the Statutory Regulations and Orders Committee met at 8 o'clock as well. On July 18th, a Friday, we adjourned the House at 12:30; Municipal Affairs met at 2 o'clock; Private Bills met at 2 o'clock and Private Bills met again at 8 o'clock.

On July 19th — and this shows you what happens during speed-up, Mr. Speaker, because I am certain that you will recall July 19th as soon as I mention the date, this is what happens during speed-up — the House sat for one minute. Why did the House sit for one minute? Because we were so groggy and so confused and the wires were so crossed and everything was so hectic that, in fact, we screwed up so badly that we had to call you here, we had to call the House here to sit for one minute. Now, the reason I hesitated somewhat while making that statement, Mr. Speaker, is the Minister for Natural Resources was saying that it was all perfectly clear to him. Well that frightens me, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly because I think it was all perfectly clear to him — it was not to us and very few other people in this room — but I think he understood it most well at any rate.

Where are we? We are now on the 21st. I must say one thing, we did have Sundays off throughout the whole process, small solace but in fact those were the days when we were getting ready for the next week. The Legislature on Monday next, the 21st, adjourned at 11:30 p.m.; 2:15 a.m. the next day. On July 23rd — now we're coming into the home stretch, Mr. Speaker — on July 23rd the Legislature starts at 10:00 a.m., adjourns at 12:30 or 1:30 and we have Agricultural Committee and Private Bills Committee at 2 o'clock; we go back into the Legislature at 8 o'clock. On July 24th the Legislature starts at 10 o'clock; at 2 o'clock we are into Agricultural and Private Bills Committees and we are out of here at 12:45 a.m. On July 25th, which is a Friday again, we go from 10 to 12:30; we go into Private Bills at 2 o'clock; we go into Privileges and Elections at 2 o'clock and at 8 o'clock again; then we go into Statutory Regulations and Orders at 8 o'clock.

Soft schedule eh] On July 26th which is a Saturday, we go into the Legislature for 5 minutes and Law Amendments in the morning. On July 28th

the Legislature sits from 10 in the morning to 2:35 a.m. and of course I indicated earlier, on the last day from 10 in the morning to 1:00 a.m. and many of us are here most of those times.

I am not giving you that outline of the schedule last year to carp or to complain, I am giving it to you because at the beginning of the speed-up last year we had exactly the same assurances from the Attorney-General as we have gotten from the Member for Morris in the Minister for Government Services this year. If we shake our heads in disbelief at those assurances if we say given the past record we don't think that is the case, can you blame us, given this particular hectic — and I think the Member for Logan at that time called it an annual trek into madness, I think those were his exact words — given that sort of a breakdown of the legislative process that we should accept the assurances this year that are very similar to the assurances of last year? I don't think that we should; I don't believe that we should. I don't believe that speed-up should be used automatically to bring the session to an end.

As I said before there may be times when you need it. This year is certainly not one of those times. (Interjection)— Well the Minister of Highways says that's wrong. Well let's look at the record then; let's look at the number of sitting days; let's look at the amount of time spent in Estimates; let's look at the legislative program of the government and we will find that this has been a very light session, a very easy session in comparison to other sessions and we can probably finish this session just as expeditiously with speed-up as without speed-up. As a matter of fact we could perhaps finish it sooner without speed-up than we could with speed-up. Why is that?

Well when we go into speed-up, Mr. Speaker, remember that we can have up to three sittings a day during the speed-up. (Interjection)— Well the Minister for Highways says we get an extra question period. The fact is that we got, in some instances last year and in many instances last year, we got two extra question periods and I can assure the Minister of Highways that I intend to use the time that is allocated to us in those question periods in order to examine the government's programs, to examine the government's policies and to put on the record as plainly as can be, the failings of that government over the past three-and-one-half years. So we will be using the time, let there be no doubt about that, let there be no question about that, we intend to use the question period time that is given to us in order to be more effective and more efficient in explaining to the government exactly why it is they have failed so miserably over the past three-and-one-half years. (Interjection)—

The Member for Emerson has entered the debate and I only hope that he will take the opportunity to stand in his place and put on the record his comments, his thoughts and his suggestions once I have sat down and have finished my 40 minutes — count them — 40 minutes on this particular motion, Mr. Speaker, because I intend to take the full 40 minutes in order to put on the record as categorically and as clearly as possible, my opposition to speed-up in general and my opposition to speed-up in specific for this year.

Let's look at the Business of the House this year as compared to years previous. Last year, Mr. Speaker, we were involved in Estimates for a total of 358 hours and five minutes. (Interjection)— The Member for Emerson says that's an all-time record and he's absolutely right, it was an all-time record although it was not that out of line with the year previous 1979, during which we spent 337 hours and 35 minutes in Estimates. So that's the second year of his government. In 1978 we spent a total of 317 hours and 35 minutes in Estimates, which compared to 228 hours and 10 minutes in '77; 235 hours and 15 minutes in '76 and 194 hours and 45 minutes in '75 — and I believe the Minister of Natural Resources can correct me — I believe that's when the changes took place in respect to the number of hours which could be spent in the Estimates Debate. So that's the most accurate record which we can have to review.

This year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have spent a total to date and I think this is probably as accurate as can be, 280 hours and 30 minutes. So we have spent less hours in Estimates this year than we have in any previous year in Opposition and given the record of '78 when we spent 317 hours and 35 minutes, I doubt if we will exceed that by very much.

So the Estimates process during this legislative session has been conducted as expeditiously as is possible. (Interjection)— It's working well says the Minister of Natural Resources and it's one of the few times I agree with him wholeheartedly — although there are other times on occasion — but this is one of the few times I agree with him. We have been efficient, responsible, responsive and have conducted ourselves in which I believe to be an exemplary manner as legislators when examining the record of this government and you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who have sat through many of those sessions — and I know that you, Sir, have given your full attention to that which we have said — I know, Sir, that you will have to agree that we have been concise, we have been clear and we have acted in brevity at all times.

We have in fact, Mr. Speaker, outdone ourselves in respect to trying to move this session along as quickly as possible for a reason — let me tell you why, Mr. Speaker — we would like an election and that has to be said when talking about the Speed-up motion. We wanted to get through this particular session so the government could go to the people and so that we in fact could put to the test their deplorable, despicable record of the past four years; that's what we wanted. So we felt if we acted conscientiously but in all due haste in respect to examining their Estimates we may in fact have brought the legislative session to an end in time to have a spring election. We would still like to do that, Mr. Speaker, if in fact they could give us the assurance that once we prorogued the House we will go to the people then I can give them my commitment that I would suffer through the long, onerous hours of speed-up in order to get to the people as soon as possible because I don't think Manitoba deserves to stay one minute longer under the Tory government then they have to.

I am concerned, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the longer they stay in power the worse it is for the people of this province. So if that's what they're saying to us — speed-up has been brought in so we

can go to the people — then I in fact will support that but only on that requirement, only in that way. Otherwise all they are attempting to do is to fatigue us, to break us down and to slip through some legislation without critical debate, without critical review and to try and bring the session to an end, not because we have . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Minister on a point of order.

MR. ENNS: No. I'm just enquiring as to whether or not the honourable member would permit a question.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the honourable member permit a question at this point?

MR. COWAN: I would permit a question at the end of my speech if there is time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: So, —(Interjection)— the Minister of Finance says I'm having trouble filling it up. Well if I were having trouble filling it up, Mr. Speaker, all I would have to do is talk about the Budget and I can tell you that I would have no trouble at all bringing to the public's attention the desperate activity of that government in respect to trying to govern this province.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Five minutes.

MR. COWAN: I'm sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I only have five minutes left because I had quite a bit more to say but I will use the last few moments — and I must indicate that I will take leave if offered — that I will spend the last few minutes of my debate in stating very specifically, very categorically, very clearly my views in respect to speed-up generally and in respect to speed-up in specific in this session. I am repeating myself somewhat and I do so because I want to give the members opposite a concise statement to be able to quote back at me if in fact the tables are reversed in the near future, because believe me, Mr. Speaker, if in fact we are on that side and we are bringing in speed-up and I am bound by a caucus decision to support speed-up — I will do so because I believe in team work — but I will do so only because of caucus solidarity, Mr. Speaker, and not because I think the speed-up will in fact hasten the process; nor do I believe the speed-up will in fact expedite the closing of the session; nor do I think it makes us better legislators or does it make this a better Legislature, all it does is it breaks the back of the Opposition. That's the sole intent and purpose of it because if it were to make the session move more expeditiously then what they would need to do is ask for leave on numerous occasions in order to accomplish the same purposes. They would not need to sit until 2:15, 1:00 o'clock, 3:00 o'clock and so on into the morning.

In Estimates whenever we're hitting a Minister in Estimates and they want to bring those Estimates to a closing they make us sit till 2:00 and 3:00 and 4:00 o'clock in the morning and when they do that they know it's going to hasten the end of Estimates and they do that for a reason.

The Member for Inkster said one time when talking about speed-up how he was having trouble getting a concurrence motion through the House — and I'm not familiar with the whole process because it was before my time — but I understand that they needed to get that concurrence motion through the House in order to prorogue. He said that they were having a great deal of difficulty. I don't know whether he accused the Opposition of obstructing or not but he certainly said they participated fully in the debate and he said, we sat them here till 3:00 o'clock or 4:00 o'clock in the morning one day and it was if by — and these are his words — "A magic wand waved over the Legislature the next day and we prorogued".

It wasn't any magic wand. They broke the back of the Opposition. That's what happened. I think it was wrong then and I think it would be wrong if this government does it. I think it was wrong when they did it last year which they did. I think it will be wrong in every instance because it does not make for better legislation; it does not make for better government and it does a grave disservice to the people of this province who rely upon us to be able to debate fully and intelligently the legislation which is brought forward.

So let there be no mistake about it. The speed-up is brought in, not to make us a better Legislature, not to make us more efficient but in fact to destroy the will of the Opposition to fight back. If the government has in mind the bringing forward of speed-up this year in order to do that and not to call an election which is becoming more and more apparent every day that they don't want an election; that they're afraid to go to the people; that they know they can as well as we do gauge the will of the people; they're not going to go forward and they're bringing it forward just to drive the session to an end for their own personal gain, then I believe that speed-up is not in the best interests of the people of this province and it's not in the best interests of us as legislators, as you as Deputy Speaker, Sir, and not in the best interests of any person who wants to see this province governed more effectively, more efficiently and more fairly. I think if they want that they're going to have to put a new government in place. But failing the opportunity to do that then at least allow us the opportunity to criticize, to comment, to analyze and to try to help this government as much as is possible because it is sorely needed to govern better in the interests of all Manitobans.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: I'm wondering whether the honourable member would accept a question at this time.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: By leave only. Does the honourable member have leave?

The Honourable Minister. The Honourable Minister has leave.

The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Churchill was indicating to us that they would perhaps be willing to accommodate an early end to this session on the condition that we move towards an election call thereafter. My question to the

honourable member is, whether or not this is the advice that he and his party is receiving from one out-of-province national organizer by the name of Robin Sears who I understand, is currently in the province advising the NDP on election strategy. Could he indicate that this is indeed the case?

MR. COWAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to answer that question because I can indicate to the Minister that I have not nor have I talked to anybody who has relayed information from that gentleman to myself in respect to an election call, however I have talked to numerous people throughout this province and in each and every instance they tell me that this government must go; that this province must be rid of the Progressive Conservative government at the earliest possible opportunity if this province is once again to flourish and is once again to become the great province that it should be. So it is not one individual but it is thousands of Manitobans who will make their voices heard on election day, who are encouraging this Opposition to put pressure on that government to make them call an election so we can have sensible, sane and good government in the Province of Manitoba once again.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Late in October of 1977 after the election I had a phone call from a constituent who said, could you please arrange for a new election to be held, I couldn't make the last one, and the people everywhere around want to make sure that we re-elect the previous government? Please arrange for a new election.

I want to assure the Minister of Natural Resources that we've been champing at the bit since October of '77 to have an election called. We are now and have been all along and we're dying to have an election in case he doesn't know it. just like he is dying at the thought of having one.

Mr. Speaker, I want to put this preamble on what I have to say, that I am sure from this side of the House — probably all members on this side of the House but I can't speak for certain members — that if there were an assurance that there would be an election held before July of this year we could pass the Estimates in no time and we could be out of this House in sufficient time to ensure a proper election. We are anxious to do it and let there be no doubt about that. I think everyone of us would do everything possible; sit 24 hours a day and take turns napping in the caucus room if we can ensure an election this spring. Let there not be any doubt that there be that position.

Mr. Speaker, I've lived through many years of this Legislature and I don't recall a year when we did not have speed-up, although it may be that we have been able to manage on some occasion without speed-up, and I point out to you that I have not found it too difficult and yet, Mr. Speaker, never have I heard an argument that really blocks the logic of every person who has spoken against speed-up. In other words, I think they are right and yet we've done it; I've seen various governments do it; and one of the reasons it's done which is absolutely justified,

is the need to hold an election. Other than that, there are occasions when the Opposition becomes recalcitrant and usually for good reason, when the Opposition just doesn't want to wind up the session.

For example, Mr. Speaker, we've had stonewalling on the side of government to such an extent that if I could as one person, make sure that somehow or other we could get a meeting of the Public Utilities Committee or of the Privileges and Elections Committee or any other committee that will force the government to enable the truth to come out on the whole Hydro stonewalling — Hydrogate — if we could force them just to tell the truth, Mr. Speaker, I would do everything possible to get that out, but we can't do that, Mr. Speaker, and that's why I am sure that the session will go into speed-up. I can live with it, Mr. Speaker, although I don't enjoy it.

I've been through it enough times and I do recognize there are occasions when maybe it has to be done but it is important that every time speed-up is proposed, that it be considered and debated as if it were a brand new idea, otherwise what's the sense to the rules we have? We have rules — if you go by the rules — that are there to expedite the Business of the House and they don't contemplate speed-up. The essential part of speed-up is to set aside rules and whenever you set aside a rule, it is a very important step and normally requires unanimous consent.

Here, because of the fact that notice is given we don't need unanimous consent in order to set aside rules that have built up over the many years and have become part of the tradition and nevertheless as was pointed out, the rules have substantially served us well. At least we've been flexible enough where we've changed rules from time to time and learned to work together and that's one criticism I have to make, Mr. Speaker, that there are times when we cannot work out procedures by agreement and usually it's because the parties failed to discuss; that is, the two sides failed to discuss an orderly way of proceeding. Usually, Mr. Speaker, that could be prevented if there were a discussion in advance between the House Leader, between the Leader of the Opposition, between any other independent members to understand and agree as to what procedure would be held.

I point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that my interpretation of the Speed-up motion, if it passes and when it passes, is that we must have three sessions a day, that's my impression. I don't think the House Leader speaking on behalf of the majority of the members of this House can cancel out a meeting, any one of those three sessions, once this resolution passes. I've been studying the resolution from that standpoint. But it's my impression as the Member for Churchill spoke, that we could insist on every sitting of the three sittings a day to be called to go through the question period, the routine proceedings and on Orders of the Day to then adjourn into whatever committee is wanted, that's my impression. I think I'm right. I suppose I'd have to study it more carefully but it does provide that the House have leave to sit in the forenoon, at 10:00 a.m., at 2:00 p.m. and again at 8:00 p.m. and each sitting be as a separate sitting and have the same rules as Monday. I believe it's only by the consensus or even the agreement by unanimity, that we don't

bother to call the sitting three times a day and instead go into various committees.

So I'm pointing out that it is necessary for there to be an agreement arrived at, formal, sometimes informal, on procedures and if you do that then it is possible to get your business done well. That's why I think one should have to consider every time the rules are changed, one should consider the almost traditional motion to move into speed-up. One reason is to iron out certain problems, another is to assess whether or not speed-up is necessary.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I do agree with those members who have said they don't think speed-up is necessary this year unless there can be an election this spring, in which case it is not only necessary it's essential that we complete the Business of the House and not force the government not to pass its Estimates and to go running to the people as was done in 1969 by the Conservative government at that time.

In my opinion it's not necessary because, Mr. Speaker, if one looks at the Order Paper one finds very few bills, very little House business that is really outstanding. In the main it would be quite possible to move into committees every morning, to go into committee Wednesday evening, to go into committee Friday afternoon to get the work of the House done and still do it in a more rational and relaxed manner and there's nothing wrong with doing business in a rational and relaxed manner.

What we've heard from the Member for Churchill and from the Member for Logan earlier, is that this mad rush does do harm to the legislative process to the extent that I have seen bills put in sloppily, bills not adequately debated — and I might mention, Mr. Speaker, I'm speaking from memory and that always means I'm subject to correction — that last year the bill dealing with the change in the base on the property tax credit, my impression is that it came in really at the end of the session, maybe in the last few days of the session. I remember very well when we discussed what was going to happen, when we said the Conservative government was changing the ground rules for the property tax credit in such a way that it would damage people of low income, we did debate it. I know we discussed it, we knew it was coming and yet when the tax bills came this spring, people were shocked to discover they were losers by the Conservative government's change in ground rules. When I went back to the debate to satisfy a constituent who phoned about it, to see just what was said remembering as I do that it was discussed, I found there was hardly any debate at all. When I looked at the date I realized the reason; we were not only in speed-up, we were already worn out to a large extent. I imagine the debate that I remember was the Budget Debate. If that's the case, I can understand why the public and this constituent in particular had no recollection of our having debated this issue in such a way that the constituent knew about it. So there are really faults in the speed-up and yet I've said, Mr. Speaker, that I can live with it although I think it's not necessary in this session.

The committees are now meeting; Statute of Regulations met this morning I believe; Law Amendments is due to meet tomorrow morning, Mr. Speaker. If there was any indication of more business required for committees I am sure the bills

on the Order Paper could be passed rapidly. I think we've already indicated we could pass even the Private Members' bills rapidly if we put our minds to it.

Now I step to the next thing. As I recall, Mr. Speaker, there have been occasions in the past when a House Leader has given undertakings. I remember occasions when a House Leader has undertaken that every item on the Order Paper will be dealt with. I remember other occasions when there have been undertakings that all bills on the Order Paper will be dealt with. Mr. Speaker, this year we cannot get a commitment from this House Leader about the dealing with private resolutions and private bills. The best I got out of him was that he would discuss it with Opposition members. I asked him if he was prepared to undertake that it would be discussed before this resolution passes, he did not give that undertaking. One reason, Mr. Speaker — and this is a personal one — is that —(Interjection)

Let's get this little by-play clarified, Mr. Speaker. I was asking the Honourable Attorney-General, I think it was on the occasion when he had just concluded the introduction of this particular resolution, if he would undertake that the Order Paper will be dealt with. He said he would discuss it with the House Leader of the Opposition. As a matter of fact one of the independent members pointed out that they too had a right to have a discussion on that. I asked him if he was prepared to undertake that he would at least discuss it before this resolution passes and his answer was, "Can you tell me when the resolution will pass?" That was his answer, a question. I think that's begging the question by asking a question and that in fact we still do not have an undertaking from him.

So during the question period today, Mr. Speaker, I referred to a bill in which I have a particular interest. The reason I have that particular interest is because I had introduced legislation back in 1974 with regard to the enforcement of revenue statutes. At that time there was a great deal of debate as to whether or not the government in those bills and in legislation already on the books had not gone too far and acquired powers which were in excess of what was proper. In 1974 I undertook to have this matter reviewed by the Law Reform Commission and they brought in their report on October 19, 1979. It took more than five years to get a report from the Law Reform Commission but it came in October of 1979 and I waited right through until this session to bring in legislation in accord with the Law Reform Commission, but I did it because the government was doing nothing about it in that period of time, nothing overt.

Mr. Speaker, if I know anybody well it is the Department of Finance personnel and if there's any group I respect greatly for their administrative confidence, it is the Department of Finance Personnel. I feel sure in my mind from my past experience with those people that when the Law Reform Commission would make a report, they would not just sit around ignoring the report but rather they would start reviewing it, start making reports to their Minister indicating their reaction to the recommendations which they might think would be adverse to the interests of the government in carrying out its revenue collection. I believe from my

knowledge of them and my respect for their devotion to their job, that they would have done so long before I brought the bill before me. But I know governments are busy; governments have to set aside certain matters in a sense of priority and I have thought that in over a year they would have dealt with this matter and would have been prepared to bring in their own legislation, or to bring in other legislation that would differ from the recommendation, but would deal with it.

Now, I also know there was a change in Ministers but that took place quite a while ago and that really has nothing to do with it. As I pointed out to the Honourable, the Attorney-General, the department goes on regardless of who the Minister is and that the department will have prepared its work whether it was for the last Minister or the present Minister and that, I believe, only from my knowledge and experience with these people, that a report must be ready and must be sitting on somebody's desk, probably the present Minister of Finance's desk or in one of his filing cabinets or within his reach.

What do we find, Mr. Speaker? When I brought in this bill and I spoke out on it I pointed out that I had not had any input into the bill at all. I honoured my commitment by taking the Law Reform Commission Report and turning it over to the Legislative Counsel and requesting that a bill be drawn in accord with all the recommendations of the report and I did that deliberately to carry out my commitment of long ago and to ensure that we are able to discuss the Law Reform Commission Report. When I spoke about this in the House and the Attorney-General responded he even, Mr. Speaker, commended me for not waiting for government to move but proceeding myself to bring in the bill. He commended me, Mr. Speaker, and then he undertook to check it out with the Minister of Finance. I read the exact words during the question period but he said that he had sent them, he had asked for a recommendation and he was now hoping that he would get it soon, which means if they communicate at all and if they have any sense of responsibility or duty to the legislative process that they would have discussed it and made a decision.

Mr. Speaker, if they came along and said we don't agree with the Law Reform Commission; if they called Bill 5; if the Minister of Finance got up and said, I've reviewed, I've had a report on Bill 5, I don't accept them, I'm going to vote against them and sat down I would say that that is not adequate but sufficient for his purposes. But they are not even undertaking to do that, Mr. Speaker, and on that basis, on their failure to undertake, just to undertake to deal with this bill in some fashion, which would mean not letting it die on the Order Paper, on that basis alone I think that it is incumbent on me on this stage to vote against the Speed-up Motion because the way it is now we would continue to have Private Member's Hour five days a week. On every second occasion, I believe it is, the bills would come and Bill No. 5 would be called and somebody would have to get up and say, "stand" and for that I believe, Mr. Speaker, when somebody asks the bill be stood — again I'm not sure, but I suspect that it has to be agreement by unanimity — it is usually granted.

I may be wrong, Mr. Speaker, but the tradition is that someone can speak, even if it stands. At least if

I saw that the government was stonewalling this bill, which is not a matter of great principle, it's just a matter of integrity to respond and say, yes, we are, we are not, give reasons. That's integrity, not just to me personally since I brought in the bill, but to the Law Reform Commission and to all the time and effort they put into it; to all those members of the House who were in the Opposition in 1974 who made speeches saying they want this to be reviewed; to all those people. It's a matter of integrity for the government, which has been in possession of this Law Reform Report for maybe 17 or 18 months, to respond in an official way and report because that's substantially the essence of democracy and that is to debate matters, instead of just to let the slide. We have examples from the front bench of the Conservatives, how they refused to debate; we have examples where you ask questions and they don't respond; we have an example of an Order for Return that's been outstanding for over two years and all they do is shrug their shoulders and pass it off. In a complete dereliction of responsibility to the people of the province in terms of honouring your own undertaking an order for return is passed by this House. That means it's an undertaking by government that it will respond.

On that point, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Roblin is always very quick to stand up when we ask for the Order for Return to be made. He stands up quickly and says where is the Order for Return that I presented some seven years ago and he knows very well, as do most of the members of this House, that at that time the rules were such that they did die, the Orders for Return died with the end of a session. Then the rules were changed and frankly I don't remember, it's not not important that I should remember, whether the rules were changed under the New Democratic government or under the Conservative government but the fact is they were changed to provide that henceforth all Orders for Return, once accepted, stay on the Order Paper and I suppose they stay there until prorogation although maybe the rules are that they continue beyond that. The Member for Roblin always creates this phony issue to cover what? To cover the fact that he too did not honour a commitment that he made to this House and that was to file certain bills that he was talking about which I believe he reported falsely.

So to cover that up, he refers to that and he is typical of Conservative attitudes of this session. That's why I deplore the urgency on the part of government to force this resolution through and, as I said, Mr. Speaker, I've lived through them many times before and I can live with them again. But at a time when there is very little business to go before the House; at a time when there is no undertaking or even expectation that there'll be an election, you know, Mr. Speaker, if the First Minister came in and announced an election would be held I would be surprised, to be held this spring. I would be thrilled but I would be surprised and I would rather be thrilled and surprised than have the government continue as it has.

All right, since there is no urgency in my appreciation of this matter and since one of the ways they accomplish a further stonewalling, as to Hydrogate, as to the crazy issue, and mind you the Hydrogate issue was crazy, to refuse to ask Hydro to

get answers to questions they asked of their lawyers and their lawyers having offered to have them answered in a certain way; to refuse to do that is crazy, Mr. Speaker. To fool around with an annual report, a printed report of Hydro and to give answers that are not responsive is crazy, Mr. Speaker; it's just, not stupid, it's just wild; to be written up in the newspapers for having done that is stupidity, just not crazy.

Now, the way in which they could use speed-up, I'm not saying that's the reason their bringing it in, they can use it as to prevent these matters being referred to during the session and they want out, Mr Speaker, they want out of this session as quickly as possible and not for the reasons that we want out. I want out because I'm tired of being here; I want out because I'd like to relax in the sun; I want out because there are others things I want to do. I really want out for an election and if I was promised an election we'd be out fast.

So we come back to the fact that the Conservatives are making use of this resolution in order to block further embarrassment on any number of issues, one of which is the dealing with Private Members' Resolutions and Bills. I would switch my vote, Mr. Speaker, before I have a chance to make it against this, I would switch my vote if they had the intestinal fortitude of getting up and saying: We undertake or I, the House Leader, undertake that Bill No. 5 will be called and dealt with. That's all he'd have to say but he hasn't even that, Mr. Speaker. I've asked him several times if he would say that and he's not said it. I suspect that what he could do is say it will be dealt with, he could keep us here until 4:00 in the morning on the final day and call Bill 5 and I assure him I will debate it at 4:00 a.m., if necessary. But at least, Mr. Speaker, it will be dealt with and on that basis I would switch my vote. I can live with it just that carefully and I could live with that just that easily, live with speed-up, although I again say, Mr. Speaker, at all times when I was on both sides of the House, I always agreed that the logic of those people arguing against speed-up was on the better side of the illogic and compelling argument.

Mr. Speaker, therefore, I would like to think that when a House Leader wants to bring in an extraordinary resolution, even though traditional, extraordinary to set aside the rules, he ought to have the, I was going to say good sense but I really mean the, administrative capability of discussing the procedures henceforth with the Opposition who are an integral part of any democratic legislative session in order to agree on certain rules. For example, Mr Speaker, I don't remember many occasions when we met Saturday evenings. I think under the rules we can be compelled to meet Saturday evening. It would be really sensible, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of probably the government more than this side because the government probably has more members living away from Winnipeg than we do on this side, it would, since Sundays we don't meet and can't meet according to the change in rules, it is so unusual to expect that we would be meeting on Saturday evening that it would make good sense, Mr. Chairman, for the House Leader to say, I would expect that Saturday evenings we will not meet so that the members, especially those who have some distance to travel to go home for Sunday, will be

able to leave Saturday afternoon without absenting themselves from the Business of the House. But even that has not been done, Mr. Speaker, and I think that's foolish and I think that it is not taking advantage of a democratic system that we all pay allegiance in varying degrees.

The next thing, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that it has lately been the practice to call Committee meetings in the evening, which means that the whole House doesn't have to be present, just members of the Committee, that if a session is called for an evening and does not proceed into Committee, which could meet as late as possible, that the session itself at least should adjourn at the normal 10 o'clock in the evening time and Committees may go along. That would make sense and that could be by arrangement, that could be by agreement. But I have the impression that this Conservative government doesn't want to consult with the Opposition except when they want something. I've noticed that, when they want something they're available but otherwise they go on their own way and, on that basis, I think it's unfortunate that they haven't been able to arrive at that kind of co-operative manner of dealing with Business of the House. Of all of the matter, Mr. Speaker, I would like to see Private Members' Bills dealt with; of all the matters I'd like to see some sense as to how we conduct ourselves of those six days a week and finally I would like to make sure that at least we end the sitting at 10 o'clock.

For that reason, Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan

That the resolution be amended by adding the words and figures, "to 10:00 p.m." after the words and figures, "in the evening from 8:00 p.m."; and by deleting therefrom the following, "and the Rules with respect to 10:00 p.m. adjournment to be suspended".

Which would mean, Mr. Speaker, that we would end at 10 o'clock if we are sitting in the evening.

MR. SPEAKER: It's been moved by the Honourable Member for St. Johns, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan, that the resolution be amended by adding the words and figures "to 10:00 p.m." after the words and figures "in the evening from 8:00 p.m" and by deleting "from the following and the rules with respect to 10:00 p.m. adjournment to be suspended". Order please.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In hearing the motion read I think there was a word that read "from the following" and it should have read "the following". I wonder if I could see it so I could correct it if the wording is not quite correct.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that agreeable? (Agreed)

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It says "and by deleting therefrom" and I didn't hear you read the word "there". I thought you read "from the following". I think it's correct the way it's written.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to be very long. I do think this whole exercise

is rather insane. If we hadn't had this resolution we probably would be just about finished with the Urban Estimates by now.

I must say I agree with some of the comments that have been made in reference to speed-up after having experience one speed-up session, 1980 — I gather the worst ever — but I think that was really in many ways a futile exercise. I think one of the things that bothered me about that was the deterioration in the conduct of the members, including I'm afraid myself, from sheer exhaustion and frustration at what was going on around us, therefore I think that the amendment is an improvement because at least there will be a reasonable time to conclude at night.

But I feel, Mr. Speaker, I don't think anyone else in the House agrees with me on this, but I feel that having three question periods a day is rather unnecessary. I do feel it's important that members should be able to ask their questions while the session is in operation, that's important. I think perhaps it can be achieved through having two question periods a day and the evening session perhaps the third question period could be eliminated. I wish that at some time before this resolution comes that somebody on the government side could get together with the Official Opposition and with representatives of the independents on this side of the House and work out a reasonable compromise whereby speed-up can be introduced and passed fairly quickly without a prolonged debate on the matter and in rather civilized circumstances, a more civilized way of doing it.

Just last week we found — and we're not even into speed-up yet — an acceleration in the insults to members of the House. One member of the Official Opposition accused in fact of being disloyal to Canada and I forget the words "a lackey of a foreign government", Mr. Speaker, and this kind of thing in my experience last year was that it was accelerated and exaggerated during speed-up because everyone gets so tired.

I also think of course, that the committee meetings could perhaps be held either in the mornings or in the evenings as has been suggested so that all members do not have to be here all of the time. But obviously there have been a number of suggestions made which I think the House Leader perhaps should investigate — obviously it's too late this time but before another session rolls around — and see what kind of accommodation can be reached so that a more civilized way of achieving speed-up might result. I will vote for the amendment. If that fails, I will vote for the resolution.

QUESTION put on the amendment to the motion, MOTION defeated.

QUESTION put on the main motion, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call second reading of Bills No. 57 and 60?

SECOND READING — PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 57 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE TEACHERS' PENSIONS ACT

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli) presented Bill No. 57, An Act to amend The Teachers' Pensions Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. COSENS: It's my pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to introduce Bill 57, An Act to amend The Teachers' Pensions Act. Members will recall during the 1980 session of this Legislation, legislation was passed amending The Teachers' Pensions Act to allow teachers to receive pensions based on the average of the best five-year salary for all service after July 1, 1980. At the time I introduced the bill I stated that discussions would continue with a view to developing a method whereby teachers could convert service prior to July 1, 1980, from the average of the best seven years' salary to the average of the best five years. The principal concern was to develop a plan which would protect the teachers' retirement allowances fund.

I'm pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that discussions between representatives of the Civil Service Commission and the Manitoba Teachers Society have resulted in the development of a formula whereby teachers wishing to convert pre-July, 1980, service may do so upon payment of a special contribution. Members will appreciate that when an amendment of this nature is proposed, a number of related sections of the Act must also be amended. That is the case in Bill 57. All the amendments are related to the principal amendment which is to allow for the conversion of pre-July, 1980, service from the average of the best seven years' salary to the average of the best five years.

This bill brings to a conclusion five years of discussions between officials of the government's task force and members of the Manitoba Teachers Society. These discussions have been marked by goodwill, co-operation and a willingness to make adjustments in order to achieve a settlement which is mutually acceptable. I recommend this bill to your consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rossmere, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 60 — THE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT (1981)(2)

MR. MERCIER presented Bill No. 60, The Statute Law Amendment Act (1981)(2), for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, as the bill indicates obviously the second Statute Law Amendment Act explanatory notes have been distributed to all members with respect to an attempt to explain the

various sections of the Act. Mr. Speaker, I would at this time like to ask the page to distribute a further proposed amendment that we will ask members to consider at the committee stage.

This is an amendment, Mr. Speaker, that unfortunately was delayed in being prepared. It would be an amendment to The Highway Traffic Act which would allow the province to adopt appropriate portions of The Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act as well as to adopt whatever of the federal regulations are deemed necessary by the Minister of Highways. The Minister of Highways, Mr. Speaker, will be prepared to discuss this matter further, either while this bill is being considered in the House or at the committee stage, but what is being distributed is a copy of the proposed amendment which we would ask members to consider at the committee stage.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to make a few remarks on this bill and then I think that we are prepared to have the bill go to committee. First, I want to thank the Minister for providing us with the note on the bill as he did for the first Statute Law Amendment Act. I see again that we also are in this Act correcting mistakes that we have had in the past when we've been hurrying; that's an unfortunate thing and that seems to be one of the things that seems to crop up all the time; that when we come to the end of a session we are in a hurry and we are trying to get bills through that unfortunately we make these slip-ups that have to be changed the following year. (Interjection)— Well, this happens, Mr. Speaker, regardless of who is in government because when you're working under the time element such as the speed-up, long hours, people are not as astute and as wide awake and things do happen. That's the unfortunate thing.

Most of the amendments here are changes that are required because of changes of legislation, especially in education and The Education Administration Act which in turn cause other changes to have to be made to Acts that have some dealing with those Acts.

The one dealing with The Surveys Act, I realize that inflationary costs have risen but I see that the costs for repairs to survey monuments, especially in the times of high inflation, I didn't realize that inflation had risen 10 times. Since this in turn will have to be borne by the taxpayers regardless of what level it is at, I just say to the Minister it seems to be the costs that are going to be now assessed against municipalities for repairs or replacement of survey monuments from \$100 to \$1,000 seems to be rather high. Perhaps when the Minister is closing debate on this bill he could tell us when and why the costs of the amendment to The Survey Act is so high.

With respect to the further amendments that the Attorney-General has given us today I anticipate we will have questions when we get into committee. I accept what the Minister said that these are dealing with the transportation of hazardous goods. I think any change that comes about because of Federal changes in their regulations are ones that we pretty well have to go along with. I just hope that when we are dealing with this bill at the committee stage, in Law Amendments, the Minister of Highways will have

his departmental people there to make any explanations that are required by members on his side. As far as the official Opposition is concerned this bill can proceed to committee stage.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Deputy Speaker, perhaps I might just make a comment about government business. The Speed-up Motion having been passed, Mr. Speaker, I would be of the view that if we can pass some of the bills on the Order Paper we would be in a position to be able to proceed with committee meetings Wednesday morning, at least, and probably Thursday too, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, would you call Adjourned Debates on Second Reading Bills 12 through to 58 on the second page of the Order Paper?

BILL NO. 12 — THE MUNICIPAL ACT

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill No. 12, An Act to amend The Municipal Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Inkster.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I've looked at this bill and I see in it a beneficial motivation in terms of having improvements done in a business area which are then assessed against the business area itself and do not become a charge on the general community and become charged to the business assessment only. At least that's what I derive and I think the desire, in the passing of the bill, is that if people wish to make an improvement in one part of the city and that part happens to be a business enclave, that that be done.

Mr. Speaker, I see some problems with this legislation, and I'm not in any way going to suggest that those problems should not let it go to committee, but I do see some problems in that it tries to break up a municipality into areas of assessment for improvements. It was quite some time ago, Mr. Speaker, I think there probably still is local improvement areas where the assessment is charged against the area rather than against the community generally. I think that many roads in Greater Winnipeg were built in that way. (Interjection)— Pardon me? Cemeteries. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Point Douglas is in an area where his expertise far exceeds mine and I'm not going to venture into those paths. Yea though I walk through the valley, if we're talking about cemeteries.

I am concerned and I would like to have it explained, Mr. Speaker, as to how this legislation originates — I'd like this done at committee — and how the Minister is satisfied that it won't result in similar types of things happening with respect to other areas. If one part of a municipality wishes to improve its park area that it do so, putting the assessment on itself and not affecting other areas of the community. If you did that, Mr. Speaker I'd be very worried that part of the municipality that could afford it would have fine improvements in the area and the part that couldn't afford it would remain, in fact, in a disadvantaged state. What is the impetus

which removes the Minister from the principle that any improvement in a municipality affects the entire municipality and therefore should be paid for by the entire municipality because I think, generally, Mr. Speaker, that is a good rule; that an improvement in the business area should affect the amenities in the entire municipality and therefore should be paid for by the entire municipality.

If, Mr. Speaker, that sounds like I'm trying to relieve the business area, please understand that I'm trying to do exactly the opposite. What I'm worried about is that the municipality will vote against general improvements and general conditions because the improvements they really want can be handled by a special improvement area designated by the municipality within the area itself. I am worried, in principle, about this type of legislation resulting in special assessment and special payments for special improvements in particular areas within a municipality. I do hope, Mr. Speaker, the Minister will do something to indicate that my concerns in this area need not be as strong as they sound at the moment. I'm putting it, Mr. Speaker, in the strongest way because I want answers to be made at the committee level.

So, Mr. Speaker, on the part of the Progressives in the House, may I say that we will certainly let this bill go to committee but we would not want to see municipalities broken up so that taxes could be levied and charges made and improvements made in one part of the town while other parts are ignored because the people in that area are not prepared or not able to pay the taxes for improvements in their end.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill No. 34, An Act to amend The Consumer Protection Act standing in the name of the Honourable Member for St. Vital. (Stand)

Bill No. 35, An Act to amend The Planning Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 38, An Act to amend The Child Welfare Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 42, An Act to amend The City of Winnipeg Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 51, An Act to amend The Fires Prevention Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 52, An Act to amend The Insurance Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 56, An Act to amend The Education Administration Act and The Public Schools Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 58, An Act to amend The Agricultural Lands Protection Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge. (Stand)

The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, what I would propose is that I move the usual Motion to go into Supply but then, having done that and having passed that motion, perhaps there could be agreement that we

will move right into Private Members' Hour, perhaps giving members an opportunity to be called from their respective caucus rooms to deal with the matters before Private Members' Hour. Then at the end of Private Members' Hour I will be able to make the usual motion that the House adjourn and resume in Committee of Supply at 8 o'clock, at which time we would be considering, Mr. Speaker, just the Urban Affairs Estimates. I indicated to the Opposition House Leader earlier today that the First Minister I believe, will be prepared to deal with his Salary under Executive Council to complete consideration of that item tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: The suggestion of the House Leader that we now proceed into Private Members' Hour is agreeable to the Opposition.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I therefore move, seconded by the Honourable 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.

MOTION presented.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Point Douglas.

MR. DONALD MALINOWSKI: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of personal grievance.

Mr. Speaker, in my 12 years in the Legislature I have never risen on a point of personal grievance. Over the years it was with much consternation and I listened and observed Tory antics concerning Manitoba Hydro. However, in light of recent developments with the Aluminum Company of Canada, I feel deeply compelled to stand and voice my opinion and that of my constituents.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin by reviewing the Tory story of Manitoba Hydro. This proud and efficient utility which has served the people of Manitoba well since its establishment has been subverted by the Tories twice. The first time was in early 1969 when the Tory government deliberately violated the recommendation of the Nelson River Study Board. They abandoned the recommendation for the harnessing of Lake Winnipeg because they feared there might be some criticism from cottage owners. Therefore they decided to draw the necessary water from South Indian Lake.

Mr. Speaker, the Tories have had much fun accusing the New Democratic government of political interference in Manitoba Hydro. Of course we were involved in the planning of the future of Manitoba Hydro. When the government must underwrite the balance of a utility and when the future economic development of the province depends on that utility then obviously the government must interfere. Even Judge Tritschler recognized that.

But there is a difference between that kind of interference for the purpose of planning and interference for purposes of politicking.

The only blatant political interference with Hydro was by the Tory government in 1968 and 1969. That

was when the Tory government instructed Hydro to ignore the recommendation of the Nelson River Study Board. That was when the Tory government ignored the proposal for the regulations of Lake Winnipeg and went instead to High Level Diversion. It was a monstrous program, Mr. Speaker. Not only because it meant piling 30 feet of water on South Indian Lake and drowning over one million acres of land, but because it would not work.

The Tories of the time knew the water would not flow during the winter precisely when it was needed. Therefore rather than invite the possibility of losing a few votes in Gimli and Selkirk constituencies by using Lake Winnipeg as a reservoir so they could get the necessary water flow during the winter, they added a bit of insanity to their stupidity.

They decided, Mr. Speaker, to build a bunch of coal-burning plants to compensate for the power they would not have during the winter. Being Tories, they assumed that the public would not notice. But the public did notice and the Tories with all their disgraceful works were defeated. They learned a great deal in their eight years in the wilderness. This time they will not do their own fighting, Mr. Speaker. This time they are getting a retired judge and a political hack they appointed as a Chairman of Manitoba Hydro to do their fighting for them, or at least so they thought.

It appears that following the appointment of the paper Lyon as Tory leader the Tory planners started a serious search for some piece of dirt that would defeat the New Democratic government. Mr. Speaker, their thinking was as follows: Premier Ed Schreyer is too popular; to defeat the NDP we must discredit Schreyer but how can we attack him? Well, how about Hydro? Few people know anything about what is actually happening there so we can say anything and if we say it often enough people might believe it. So Wally Dennison of the Free Press wrote a series of some sublimely repetitious stories about how Hydro rates had doubled since the NDP was elected.

Mr. Speaker, oil prices have tripled; coal prices quadrupled during the same period of time but that did not bother Mr. Dennison.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hour is 4:30. We're now in Private Members' Hour.

Mondays the first order of business in Private Members' hour is resolutions. Resolution No. 5 standing in the name of the Honourable Member for The Pas. The honourable member has 11 minutes.

RES. 5 — ASSISTANCE TO NATIVE PEOPLE, WINNIPEG'S CORE AREA

MR. McBRYDE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to briefly conclude my comments that I was making many moons ago when this resolution was last before the House. The point I was trying to make to the members of the government and to the House was the nature of this resolution which appears to be for the province to try and extricate itself from any responsibility at all to Native people — what the member who drafted the resolution refers to as Native people — which the resolution itself seems to be referring to in fact, Mr. Speaker, is Treaty Indians.

The position on this side of the House is that the Province of Manitoba still has responsibilities for Native people and for Treaty Indians and that the Federal Government also has a responsibility in this area. The resolution wants to place all the responsibility it appears with the Federal Government and accept none of the responsibilities for the Provincial Government. What this means, Mr. Speaker, is that this government wants the Federal Government to do things for people that are their responsibility, namely Treaty Indians, when the province has failed miserably and drastically and fallen flat on its face in terms of their responsibility which is the other citizens of Manitoba and especially the non-Treaty or Metis population in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the Native people that are the responsibility of the Provincial Government that relate to the Provincial Government, have clearly been let down, ignored, neglected or punished by the Progressive Conservative party in government. This shows their attitude and their approach to the situation of Native people which they try and somehow overcome with the resolution before us, putting the blame entirely on the Federal Government and not with the province where it belongs.

The approach that we believe in that should take place on this side of the House and the course of action we were following when we are in government and the course of action we will more and likely follow when we return to government after the next provincial election, is a tripartite or a tripartite discussion between the Federal Government, the Provincial Government and the Treaty Indians in the Province of Manitoba through their organization and through the elected councils. That, Mr. Speaker, appears to be a reasonable and effective approach that can be taken by the province to work with the Treaty Indians in the Province of Manitoba, to work with the Federal Government and clearly establish what responsibilities the Federal Government will be taking and what responsibilities the Provincial Government will be taking in discussion, consultation and negotiation with the Indian people and the other levels of government.

So, Mr. Speaker, this resolution that we now have before us is basically an excuse by the Conservative government in the Province of Manitoba, to do nothing or to do little and to continue to cut back any programs that relate to Native people, to continue to ignore the plight and concerns of Native people in the Province of Manitoba. The best example of this of course is the direct government action in terms of the Manitoba Metis Federation in their efforts to punish the Manitoba Metis Federation for taking political action on behalf of their members; to point out how this government in fact affected the employment and lack of jobs in Norway House and Northern Manitoba and had to be punished for making that public — publicly embarrassing the Provincial Government and therefore any funds to that organization were cut off without reason or without excuse other than the excuse — the apparent excuse they had taken political action that embarrassed the Province of Manitoba and the Conservative government.

So, Mr. Speaker, since the resolution does call for some action on the part of the Federal Government

and we believe that action should be taken, I think that we'll be supporting the resolution. But, Mr. Speaker, with the realization that the Provincial Government does have responsibility for Native people, that the Provincial Government does have responsibility for Treaty Indians and the best way that this responsibility can be pursued is through tripartite negotiations with the Treaty Indians of Manitoba, the Federal Government and the Provincial Government. Those are my comments, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

RES. 19 — NORTHERN AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES (1)

MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 19 — the Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Speaker, I move seconded by the Member for Point Douglas that:

WHEREAS medical evacuation procedures and practices for residents of Northern and remote communities are an essential part of medical services in the North; and

WHEREAS the quick evacuation of injured or ill persons to medical centres is often a major factor in the recovery of patients from Northern and isolated communities; and

WHEREAS it is commonly accepted that all Manitobans should have full access to the provincial medical system regardless of their place of residence;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT this Legislature urge the provincial government to consider the advisability of establishing and basing a fully equipped and trained northern air ambulance team and evacuation aircraft in Northern Manitoba on a permanent, full-time basis.

MOTION presented.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. It's been suggested by some that this resolution has been made redundant as a result of the purchase of the Citation Jet by the Provincial government last month for the purposes of medical evacuation in Northern Manitoba.

I've talked to a number of members from the government side who have suggested that has probably addressed the issue and their contention basically is that a speedy and hopefully an efficient aircraft has been purchased and because of that there is no need for establishing and basing a fully equipped and trained northern air ambulance team in Northern Manitoba on a full-time basis. I would suggest to them that that is not the case at all. However, those events of earlier in the year have so clouded and confused the intent and the purpose of this resolution that they must be addressed previous to going into an explanation of what I would hope that service would do and how I would hope it would operate.

You will recall that the resolution was placed on the Order Paper during the period of time when the province was without suitable medical evacuation aircraft for Northern Manitoba. There was some

debate at the time as to what was suitable and what was not suitable and the province indicated because they had two Aztecs, one based in Winnipeg and one based in Thompson to accomplish medical evacuation when necessary, that they did in fact have in place a suitable service. But there were numerous others including many Northern residents and many Northern medical personnel who stated categorically that that was not the case.

So while we had the MU-2 incapacitated by hard landing in one of the northern airstrips and we were using the two Aztec medivac airplanes we brought this resolution forward. We brought it forward for two reasons, one reason has been resolved. We brought it forward because we felt or at least I felt that the Provincial government was dragging its feet on purchasing a replacement airplane. We had a great deal of debate and a few questions in question period and throughout the Estimates procedures on just when it was that MU-2 would be replaced. That was to my way of thinking, an urgent and long overdue action on the part of the government. So it took a great deal of pressure and I hope that this resolution was in fact part of that pressure at that time.

It took pressure from the members of the New Democratic caucus, especially the Northern members, although the pressure was not confined to those individuals. It took pressure from interested members of the public, both in the north and in the south and it took a great deal of pressure from the medical profession before the government finally purchased the present aircraft, the Citation Jet.

Now I don't want to take away from the government any credit which they deserve for purchasing that aircraft. On the basis of the information that is available to myself — and it must be said that I'm not privy to all the information that the government has in their possession or all the information that the Minister has in respect to the operation of that plane — but in light of the information which I do have I think we can make the judgment that the plane is suitable for the operations for which it was intended. Time may prove us wrong on that but I don't want to put the Minister or the government over a barrel in respect to expending a great deal of money to purchase that plane. I think it was money well spent and I think that if a risk was taken as to the suitability of that plane then that risk had to be taken because we were in desperate need of a suitable plane.

I want to commend them for the action which they took, however I am still extremely critical and wish to condemn them for the length of time which it took for them to take that particular action. But based on the information which we do have it seems to have been a sound decision and we do hope that the Citation Jet does in fact work out well for them. I can say categorically that if that jet does in fact provide better medical evacuation services for Northern Manitoba it is money well spent. It is money that will have great returns, not only in economic terms but also in human terms.

So while that battle to replace the MU-2 has been fought and has been won and there is no need to rehash it at this point other than to paint a historical vignette for the present resolution to provide some of the basic insights which are necessary to understand

this resolution, we do in fact support the government on the basis of the information available to us in respect to the purchase of that plane.

But this request, this resolution, goes beyond the purchase of an aircraft. This resolution calls for a northern based medical evacuation team and for the aircraft to be based in the North as well and that is not the case at all, even with the purchase of the Citation. The Citation Jet is still based in Winnipeg and while it can get to points North probably faster than the MU-2 could in most instances, it still does not provide the speedy service that it would if it were based in Northern Manitoba. It is difficult to understand the government's hesitancy to base a medical evacuation team and the corresponding aircraft in a northern major population centre.

Their reasons — and I'm pleased that the Minister of Highways, who has some responsibility for this, is present — their reasons are somewhat illogical at worst and weak at best. Let's examine their stated reasons for maintaining this service in Winnipeg. We can do this because we have had opportunity during the question period and opportunity during the Minister's Estimates to discuss this matter with him in some detail and according to my review of the transcripts and my recollection of the actual conversations, their argument boils down into three main areas. Firstly, they suggest that the aircraft even when based in Winnipeg, can reach a Northern centre to which it is directed on a medical evacuation basis before the injured or the ill individual could reach the hospital in the community. Now that is a ludicrous statement, Mr. Speaker. It flies in the face of all reality and betrays a total lack of comprehension of the entire situation on the part of the Minister and the government.

Certainly the Minister must have been made aware as have members on this side and I'm certain members of the government, of numerous complaints about major delays in getting the MU-2 to critically injured patients in Northern communities. Those delays came about as a result of difficulty in locating the pilot in the city who was on call, but perhaps had to be found, was not exactly where it was anticipated that they would be during the late night or early morning hours. Once located that pilot had to make it to the airport in Winnipeg and all of this is time-consuming enough; but even after all that is done the plane must be flown to the North where it has landed and where the patient would be picked up.

Does the Minister seriously expect us to believe that in a majority of cases — and I'm not saying there has not been one or two instances where the aircraft did in fact reach the hospital before the patient — but in the majority of cases or even in the significant minority that it would take longer to get a patient across a small northern community — and that would include Thompson, Flin Flon or The Pas which are not spread out that much — to a local hospital or health facility than it would take to get the plane from Winnipeg to the North; that's not the case at all. As I said, in the instance of a mine accident where perhaps you have to get the patient up off a level underground and into the community hospital, it might take more time, but that would be the exception instead of the general practice.

The argument becomes even more absurd when one takes into consideration the fact that oftentimes

the patient is already at the hospital when the call for the medical evacuation is made. So the defence of the Minister in respect to this must be based on a very small number of cases which are brought to his attention and I would suggest to him that there are a far larger number of cases in which the delay in getting the plane to the North has been far more than the delay in getting the patient to the hospital in a small community. That part of the argument is illogical and inconsistent with the actual reality.

As well the Minister has said that a plane based in Thompson would disadvantage other communities throughout the North which are more accessible to Winnipeg. Now any quick examination of a map of the province would prove that such just isn't the case. Thompson is closer to the majority of northern communities. In geographical terms it's easy to see, it's plain to see. It's central to the North and while there may be one or two or even three or four communities that are closer in air miles to Winnipeg that would be serviced by the MU-2, I would suggest to the Minister that in the vast majority of the cases, in most instances the plane would be closer to northern centres being based in the North in Thompson, than it would be being based in Winnipeg. So in fact it could get to those communities quicker from Thompson than it could if it was travelling from Winnipeg.

As well I would suggest to you — and it's a minor point but it has to be stated — that if a pilot could make it from his or her residence in Winnipeg in a certain amount of time to the airport, they could make it in less time in Thompson, just shorter distances to travel. So that argument falls apart under even the most rudimentary investigation.

The final argument of the Minister of Highways and Transportation is of more substance than the previous two — and I would suggest that the previous two are little more than feeble excuses that were brought up at the time to try to deflect attention from the government in respect to their delay in replacing the MU-2 — but the third argument that the Minister uses does have more substance. The Minister indicates that basing a plane in the North is difficult because of the lack of support service in personnel; that is indeed a problem, no question about it.

It is not a problem that is specific to this issue or confined to this issue; it is not a problem exclusively of basing aircraft mechanics and pilots in the North. It is a problem that tests the will of any government in respect to providing services to Northern Manitoba or to rural areas. It costs more on a per capita basis and in many times on an absolute basis to provide those services to the North. The Minister of Health knows that; the Minister of Natural Resources knows that; almost every Minister would agree with that statement. In this instance it would necessitate the construction of suitable hangar and maintenance space. It would mean basing a medical evacuation team including pilots and other personnel in Northern Manitoba.

It would mean added costs, no disagreement about that, however that is only half of the equation. The cost factor is only half of the equation. Those added expenditures would hopefully result in better emergency services for Northerners; reduce response time for medical attention for the seriously ill or the

injured; so the savings would not be in money but they would be in human life; they would be in accessibility to medical care. They would be in equality of medical care for all Northerners so there are two sides to the story. I would suggest to the Minister that those added costs amount to money well spent and are not without precedent in Northern Manitoba where many programs have in fact cost more on a per capita basis than they would in the South but they had been implemented in the North because it provides better services to Northerners. So I believe the justification for the implementation of a northern base medical evacuation team far outweighs that one disadvantage that has been offered by the Minister by way of explanation for his actions so far.

Having addressed the objections to this concept I'd like to use a few remaining moments to talk about, not why it should be implemented because I believe we have made that case fairly well but rather how it should be designed because I think that is as important as building an argument for implementation. Notwithstanding the events which preceded the introduction of this resolution, we are not only talking about an aircraft we are talking about an idea, we are talking about a concept. I visualize a comprehensive emergency response team consisting of professional and paraprofessional personnel operating out of a Northern hospital on a full-time basis, that is not farfetched. I would suggest in fact, it could be an idea concept that could be implemented in a number of rural areas as well because it is important to provide those types of services throughout the province and not just in one major population centre.

I see this team as being trained to travel to emergency situations in remote communities on a need basis so they would not be travelling all the time but if there was an emergency where it was anticipated that their expertise would be helpful they would travel to the community on the medical evacuation aircraft on a need basis. As well they would be able to provide immediate treatment to patients upon their arrival at the hospital; that as well is as important. They would be equipped with all the necessary equipment as would any southern based response team of a similar nature.

In other words what we are talking about is a long-overdue extension of services which are already available to the majority of the citizens in this province. Now certainly it will cost a little bit extra on the part of the government. Perhaps it will cost even a great deal extra but one has to weigh that cost against the ultimate value, just as one had to weigh the cost of the Citation jet against other aircraft and, at the same time, not just say that because it costs more it won't be purchased. But take into consideration the value and the benefits that purchase would provide for northern health care and try to figure out at that point if, in fact, the added cost was worth it. Why I think if that same process is applied to a medical evacuation team in the north the same conclusion will be reached, that the added cost is well worth the added value.

Once that is done, once that thorough investigation analysis has been undertaken, I think even the Minister, who has been hesitant about this concept to date, would begin to change his mind. I

think he would take advantage of the opportunities which are presented to him by the unfortunate accident involving the MU-2; that with the purchase of the Citation which came out of that and I think is a benefit to the province overall, they would add an establishment of a northern-based medical evacuation team and start to prepare the facilities that are necessary in Northern Manitoba to base that aircraft in the north. They can use this incident to accomplish much more than the simple replacement of an airplane; they can use to design an innovative and an imaginative approach to medical evacuation procedures in Northern Manitoba. I'm looking forward to hearing the response from the Minister in respect to these comments. I hope that he will take it as a constructive suggestion which should be worked upon and should be proceeded with, not immediately to full scale but should be started at this point to be developed, so that in a short number of years we can have that type of service in the north which is essential to proper medical care for northern Manitobans. So I commend this resolution to the Minister and with those few remarks anticipate or hope to hear from him a positive response to the concepts and the suggestions included within.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to respond to the Member for Churchill and I want to respond in a couple of areas, now knowing the direction he has taken with this resolution. First of all, Mr. Speaker, he mentioned on a couple of occasions a delay in replacing the MU-2 with another aircraft. I suppose, in absolute terms, taking some, I guess, two-and-a-half months to replace the airplane seems inordinate but when you become faced with the cold hard realities it's not such an inordinate amount of time. I might point out to the Member for Churchill that during that time, and we never made any reference different, we were not satisfied with the Aztecs that we had on standby but they were on standby in Winnipeg and in Thompson to provide emergency medical evacuation. It was not optimum; we knew that. The Aztec is certainly not a suitable replacement plane although I understand other jurisdictions use them on a regular basis for that medical evacuation but, compared to the MU-2 and aircrafts of similar capability, the Aztec leaves a lot to be desired. We encountered delays and some problems of convenience and some patient discomfort upon occasion with the Aztec I'm informed but, by and large, the service did operate on a standby basis until we had found a suitable replacement aircraft.

I might point out that in running through the gamut of potential replacement aircraft, we looked at a number and, given the kind of unique circumstances that we have in Manitoba for our Northern Medical Evacuation Program, you very soon come to the conclusion that you could narrow down the types of aircraft available to not all that many. One of them being an MU-2, of course, which we had and, as members opposite well know from their times in government and the amount of time that the government's MU-2 was down for repairs and unavailable for service, there was some hesitation on my part to replace the MU-2 with another one. I

don't think anybody disagrees with that. To replace it with an MU-2 we did, Sir, have to go to, I believe, a 1976 model because models since that time have not been certified for use in Canada. That presented a less than attractive alternative to myself and was not highly recommended by the department. We investigated a number of other aircraft; we had some of them in to test fly them. All of them had very excellent capabilities in their own regard but when it came down to an aircraft which would meet all of the unique circumstances that we have in Northern Manitoba it became quite evident, after a number of weeks of investigation, that an aircraft of the Citation type was the —(Interjection)— I'm getting to that. Patience is a virtue, my friend. The Citation turned out to be the aircraft with the combination of capabilities that would meet, as far as we can see, all of the needs for medical evacuation in Northern Manitoba.

Now having decided on that aircraft, it then takes another amount of time to get one because they are not that common an aircraft. I believe that selection of aircraft proceeded very rapidly and was a decision made by this government on very fast circumstances, so that I don't accept in any way, shape or form the kind of criticism that the Member for Churchill has unnecessarily levelled to myself, as the Minister and as the government, to say that we delayed the replacement of the aircraft. I can appreciate why he's doing it because after all he has to get elected in Churchill in this next election and so this makes for good press headlines for him. Naturally, if I was in his position, I'd be standing up and criticizing the government for a delay, etc., etc., but it just doesn't wash because that replacement of the MU-2 was done very quickly and I think very competently by the department. This government certainly, when presented with a recommendation by myself, the Cabinet had no hesitation in agreeing to that recommendation. So that the criticisms that the Member for Churchill has levelled are totally untoward and I, once again, emphasize that during the time that we had the Aztecs on standby there was no serious medical problems of any evacuee that we are made aware of so that the concerns he had, that he spoke about upon occasion in the House and in question period, in fact didn't materialize.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with the other issue of the Thompson location of the medical evacuation aircraft. Now this takes on several dimensions. The Member for Churchill says my previous statement that sometimes the aircraft would arrive before the patient did. Now he chooses to say that doesn't happen very often, however, it does happen upon occasion. Mr. Speaker, we are now talking about an aircraft that has 100 miles per hour greater air speed than the MU-2 in the Citation, so that flying time I'm advised from Winnipeg to Thompson is about an hour and 15 minutes. Location of that aircraft in Thompson — it's not just the aircraft, it's the concept that the member is talking about — would mean moving a substantial number of pilots, probably six, maintenance crew and arranging for facility out of Thompson to locate that aircraft because it has to be inside; it has to be in a heated hangar for very obvious reasons in the winter. Those kinds of facilities would add

considerable cost. The pilots, for use with the Citation for medical evacuation, as I say, would probably be six of them.

Mr. Speaker, when the previous administration acquired the MU-2 with a slower flying time than what the Citation has, they located that MU-2 in Winnipeg; they based it in Winnipeg and they operated out of Winnipeg. Now the Member for Churchill in his role in Opposition is saying that we should move immediately and locate that aircraft and its services in Thompson. However, had the administration that his party was part of for four years did nothing in that regard and I might point out, Mr. Speaker, with an aircraft 100 miles per hour slower with longer flying times required; they did not move that aircraft from Winnipeg to Thompson during their administration and now the Member for Churchill in his role of opposition is saying that we should and is being critical from the standpoint that we don't.

But I'd like to point out to the Member for Churchill that during the time that the MU-2 was in use for medical evacuation out of Winnipeg that administration used the MU-2, not only for medical evacuation which amounts to some 130 to 140 trips per year with that aircraft, they also used it for general transportation; it could be for taking a Minister to a meeting; it could be for taking staff to various meetings but they used that aircraft for general transportation as well. Now, we likewise are going to use the Citation for general transportation. That general transportation, by and large, originates out of the City of Winnipeg so the location of the aircraft pier for any general transportation use is essential. Now the very big difference between our administration and the administration previous, in 1973 to 1977, was that during the years when they had the MU-2, not only as a medical evacuation aircraft but as a general transportation aircraft, they had up to 32 general transportation aircraft located throughout the province. We now have 14. I would suggest the needs today of utilizing an aircraft for dual purposes is more today than it was in those halcyon days of 32 aircraft that the then renowned Red Airforce had on staff. So that, in terms of utilization of taxpayer dollar and investment in an aircraft, the location of an aircraft which is multi-purpose, not only medical evacuation but general transportation, becomes even more key and it become more essential that aircraft be available for as many functions as quickly as possible and with the least inconvenience.

That reaffirms, Mr. Speaker, the conviction that the previous administration had for four years, that that medical evacuation aircraft is better serving the people of Manitoba by being located in Winnipeg and it more reaffirms it now from the standpoint that we don't have 32 aircraft on call; we only have 14. It makes even more sense now because we have an aircraft that flies 100 miles per hour faster than the MU-2 and can accomplish that medical evacuation with much less time required than the MU-2 did. It is our information that also the Citation has a very admirable record of service; very little downtime which we couldn't say for the previous aircraft.

So all in all, Mr. Speaker, we are convinced that the medical evacuation service will be enhanced for the people of Manitoba rather than lessened by

having that Citation in that use, in that role. Furthermore, we're convinced that in the role and operating out of Winnipeg, the utility to the people of Northern Manitoba will also be enhanced compared to the previous role which the former administration, based in Winnipeg, not in Thompson but in Winnipeg, so that I think we have done considerable to improve medical evacuation from Northern Manitoba and will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Now the Member for Churchill talks about another matter and he is not just talking about locating an aircraft, he is talking about locating a medical evacuation team in Thompson as well. Well, that's something that the member can probably better take up with the Minister of Health but I might point out to him that right now a resident in Melita, a resident in Virden, a resident in Russell, Mr. Speaker, from your constituency, a citizen in Swan River does not have as rapid a medical evacuation capability from those communities as what one does from Thompson, because people in Thompson assuming no delay, assuming the idea which we have to assume in the case of an evacuation from Roblin or Russell, assuming no delay, a patient could be in the hospital in Winnipeg from Thompson in as little as three hours. I suggest the drive from Roblin to Winnipeg takes more time than three hours and is considerably more dangerous because they're going to have to use high speeds on crowded highways to get there. So the people of Northern Manitoba have indeed a service available to them and an enhanced service now that we have an aircraft that's 100 miles per hour faster; they have a service that is superior in some regards to the service available to residents of Southern Manitoba in some of our rural communities. So I personally make no apologies for the level of service we've got available to the people in Northern Manitoba.

It has worked well and in the number of years it's been in place, I don't recall any situation where there was a loss of life that could be attributed to the inefficiency of the medical evacuation service. Now with a faster aircraft I think the possibility of that is lessened even moreso, so that the case the Member for Churchill puts forward is excellent stuff for representing the constituency that he does in Northern Manitoba. If I were he, I would be putting the same kind of case forward because I'd like to send Hansard out to my constituents and say, "This is what I'm fighting for on your behalf".

But when you look at the reality of creating that new medical evacuation team and moving the aircraft to Thompson, establishing new facilities, relocating maintenance crew, relocating pilots, you're talking a situation where you have to really ask yourself as to whether in today's day and age you can afford Utopia, because that is the perfect situation the Member for Churchill is talking about. To date the indications have been that the existing service works well, works effectively and provides a high level of service to residents of Northern Manitoba which I once again emphasize, is not available to a lot of the citizens of Southern Manitoba that live in our rural communities.

The optimum naturally would be to have that aircraft sitting there waiting for the 130 flights per year, some of which may be from The Pas in which case you would gain very little time from having the

aircraft in Thompson versus the aircraft in Winnipeg. You might gain some time going over to Flin Flon and you would gain more time coming out of Churchill but in looking at the records the majority of our medical evacuations are indeed from The Pas and to a lesser degree from Flin Flon and Thompson and then other communities fall in for a smaller number of requirements. But the time lag required, Mr. Speaker, to put the plane that we have now into a community to pick up a patient is lessened and we believe the service is better. We believe the service certainly is very good and sufficient for the time being. If we were to get into a situation where there were some 300 to 400 medical evacuations from Northern Manitoba per year — and God forbid that we ever do — then we might have to look at serious consideration to a specific aircraft doing nothing but medical evacuation. But at this time we don't have that kind of a demand for medical evacuation and it would be of substantially greater cost if we had to dedicate an aircraft with the kind of speed and capability, \$1.75-million aircraft, solely to 140 flights per year for medical evacuation.

I think there comes a time when you have to weigh off what is ideal and what is a sensible and logical use of taxpayer dollars. We believe we have done that in the provision of service we have in place today. We believe we very quickly and very adequately addressed the need for a replacement to the MU-2. We believe that we have — and the Member for Churchill has never hesitated in acknowledging that — that our choice of aircraft was a good one. We think we do offer a service comparable to any province in Canada. It's a vastly superior service I believe than our neighbouring province to the west, to the service that Saskatchewan offers. It's equivalent to both Ontario and B.C. and we're quite proud to have that kind of capability available to the citizens of Northern Manitoba.

So, Mr. Speaker, in closing I will tell the Member for Churchill that as on all matters, my mind and the government's mind is not closed on the prospect of locating a medical evacuation aircraft in Thompson. Should the circumstances develop where it would be an efficient, effective and economical service to offer out of Thompson, this government will consider that. At the present time the service that is required is being quite adequately met from an aircraft stationed in Winnipeg and we would think in the immediate future, we can continue to offer that service from Winnipeg. I would not support the member's resolution to move it up there but as is always, we do have that under constant consideration and at such a point in time we would give it serious consideration. But there is, Mr. Speaker, at present not a demonstrable need to make that kind of location of an aircraft in Thompson.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't think it's necessary for me to speak at length on this resolution but because it does address, at least peripherally, a very important health issue I do want to offer some comments.

I'm not going to deal with the specifics that have been addressed by my colleague, the Honourable Minister of Transportation, because I think they have

been handled very capably and certainly handled under the proper departmental umbrella. But I am interested in what the Honourable Member for Churchill has to say with respect to the concept of a fully equipped and trained northern air ambulance team, to be based on a permanent full-time basis in Northern Manitoba along with an evacuation aircraft.

I don't fault the Honourable Member for Churchill for having developed such a resolution and attempting to make such a case. In fact, during examination of my Estimates we had a fairly extensive exchange of views on the Northern Patient Transportation Program generally and that was as it should be.

As the Member for Churchill, he comes from a part of the province that has a very profound interest — and I do not use the term vested interest — but a very profound interest in that program. So I would expect him to be carrying the case for his constituency and for the North where the Northern Patient Transportation Program is concerned. Certainly any discussion of a permanent northern base for evacuation aircraft for medical purposes and for air ambulance teams for northern purposes fits into his area of interest and legislative responsibility.

I want to assure him that we are in the Department of Health, particularly through the Health Services Commission, at work at present on developing the outline and methodology — if one may use that term — of enhancing and expanding our ambulance program in Manitoba generally and that certainly includes Northern Manitoba. There is a good ambulance program in place in this province but there's always room for improvement. In the course of a major study carried out by a subcommittee appointed by the Health Services Commission a year ago to review ambulance services in Manitoba at my request, and to report their findings and their recommendations as the basis for material on which my office could develop possible new initiatives in the ambulance field, we have in front of us some identified areas calling for improvement, some identified weaknesses in the system that certainly deserve reinforcement, shoring up and enhancement.

The system, as the Honourable Member knows, is based and has always been based on the per capita grant concept and on the principle that ambulance services in the main in rural areas are best supported, most innovative and attract the most kind of attention and interest when there is community involvement. As a consequence we have looked for a program and a general approach that meets the imperative of providing some financial assistance based on per capita grant formula, but leans very heavily on the voluntary involvement of the community itself, the voluntary involvement of society in rural areas and rural communities to build, operate and maintain that ambulance service and they do so with a sense of great pride.

In the main, that service has served Manitobans well up to this point and certainly has produced a cadre of volunteer ambulance drivers and attendants throughout this province who take great pride in their community role in that health service.

But as with anything else, developments occur, society changes, technology advances, different factors and aspects of life converge and progress in

unanticipated directions and the demands for a higher, more sophisticated, more skillful, more extensive ambulance service certainly are present and certainly continue to grow. The northern part of this province constitutes a very legitimate voice in that dialogue.

We are looking at establishing a program that would enable us to install in various major smaller centres in the province — and I think in terms of cities such as Thompson, Brandon and possibly Swan River, possibly Flin Flon, possibly communities such as Selkirk, Steinbach and Portage la Prairie — officers skilled in the training of ambulance attendants who can take on the role in those respective communities of recruiting and training ambulance attendants up to a point of skill through which they can reinforce and enhance the ambulance service system we have in place at the present time. That's part and parcel of the direction for the future that we want to take in our department and through the Health Services Commission with respect to the Provincial Ambulance Program generally.

We're going to continue to operate on the per capita grant basis on the one hand; we're going to continue to encourage voluntary participation on another hand; but again on the third hand, we do recognize the desire and the need in rural and Northern Manitoba generally to assure themselves and to be assured for themselves that they have highly qualified, skilled ambulance attendants available to meet those emergency medical needs that arise. In order to guarantee that kind of skill in terms of training and qualification we are in the process, as I say, of developing a program that would be funded by the province, through the Health Services Commission or through my department — it would likely be through the Health Services Commission — to provide those training opportunities. The start would be the establishment of ambulance skills instructors in some or other and, hopefully at some point in the not too distant future, all those communities that I mentioned a moment or two ago and perhaps ultimately in even more communities than that. I don't think we envision the day when we get into skilled ambulance service instructors in every community in Manitoba. We look I think out of necessity on a plan that would specify particular regions with central training bases serving those whole regions. Certainly the north will be included in that and certainly out of that we would hope would come the kind of highly equipped and trained northern air ambulance team envisioned in the resolution proposed by the Honourable Member for Churchill.

I assure him that those are the goals to which we are moving. Those are objectives that I have in mind and which I want to achieve. It's that area of his resolution, or that aspect of his resolution, that concerns me the most because whether or not that air ambulance itself is permanently based in the north, whether it be at Thompson or Churchill or wherever, certainly the honourable member wants to know and Northern Manitobans want to know that ambulance attendants, trained up to a fairly sophisticated level of skill, are available to meet their emergency medical needs.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I offer that contribution for what it's worth to the discussion and

debate of the honourable member's resolution and assure him that if his objective is better trained ambulance personnel and ambulance service attendants for Northern Manitoba and for rural Manitoba generally then we share that objective and we are developing a plan to put that concept and that philosophy in place. I have in my Estimates this year some funding, sufficient funding at least to get it initiated, and certainly it would be our intention to expand it as rapidly and as responsibly as possible.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill will be closing debate.

The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are only a few moments left to me but I would like to comment briefly on the remarks of both the Minister responsible for the Air Ambulance Service and the Minister of Health. I'm disappointed in the Minister of Highways response in that he decided to spend the majority of his time attributing motives for this resolution rather than talking about the content and the substance of the particular resolution. I thought that the resolution did have enough content and enough substance to in fact provide an opportunity for an honest and open dialogue. So I'm disappointed that we had very little from him in respect to his ideas on the concept, his ideas on the problems other than to say that it was motivated by other than a sincere wish on my part to see medical services in the north expanded and enhanced.

I thank the Minister of Health for his comments. I'm not certain that we would proceed towards the same objective in the same way, however I am glad to see that action has been taken or is being taken and will watch those programs with great interest and with a critical eye, I might add, and look forward to discussing their progress at other opportunities.

As well, finally, I do think the record has to be made clear that I do object to the length of time it took to purchase the Citation. However I am pleased, given the information available to us now, that it was purchased and I hope that it serves the north well. Having said that I think it is appropriate to allow this resolution to go to a vote at this time.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour is 5:30 I'm leaving the Chair to return at 8:00 o'clock.