

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 19 April, 1982

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. D. James Walding (St. Vital): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. A.R. (Pete) ADAM (Ste. Rose): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to have leave of the House to table the Report of the Manitoba Assessment Review Committee and the Summary Report of the Manitoba Assessment Review Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could have leave of the House just to make a very brief comment thereupon.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it agreed? (Agreed)

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, the report concludes the review started by members opposite in July, 1979. Going through the report you will note that there are some 165 recommendations contained in the 327-page report. Starting tomorrow I propose to distribute the report and the summary to all units of local government, school divisions and persons listed who presented submissions to the committee. The report and the summary will be made available to interested persons upon inquiry with my department.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D.M. (Doug) GOURLAY (Swan River): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank the Minister of Municipal Affairs for making the Report of the Assessment Review Committee available to us today. I know that all members of the House are interested in looking at this report in more detail as it's evident that there are many discrepancies in the field of assessment, and I'm sure that we'll be all anxious to have input into this to come up with new recommendations for the province.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. EUGENE KOSTYRA (Seven Oaks) introduced Bill No. 19, an Act to amend The Landlord and Tenant Act; and Bill No. 20, an Act to amend The Condominium Act.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we reach Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to

the gallery where we have 56 students of Grade 11 standing from the West Kildonan Collegiate. These students are under the direction of Mrs. Bailey and Mr. Buckler. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

On behalf of all the members, I welcome you here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Concordia.

MR. PETER FOX (Concordia): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the indulgence of the House, I would like to express my appreciation to all the members, friends and acquaintances, who sent me letters of well wishes during my recent illness. I want to indicate that part of the time I was really not lucid and, of course, I didn't appreciate much of what took place at the beginning until later on. I had pancreatitis for the first two weeks. When I thought I was ready to get discharged, they informed me that I would have to have a gall bladder operation and that took place. I just had the stitches out last week, Thursday. My physician has advised me I can come in for a couple of hours a day for the first week or two and, as my strength increases, I'll be participating to the extent that I can. Again, my sincere thanks to everyone and also to the nursing staff and the physicians at the Concordia Hospital. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. HARRY ENNS (Lakeside): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prior to commencement of Oral Questions, I want to certainly, on behalf of members of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, welcome the Honourable Member for Concordia back to the Chamber and wish him full and speedy recovery, not to be all that active in the Chamber with respect to supporting that government's policies from time to time, but certainly as an active backbencher to participate in the debates in this Chamber.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism. Mr. Speaker, it was announced over the weekend the unfortunate situation at Victoria Leather. Today, it was announced that the people would be going back to work and there would be negotiations between the company and the creditors to hopefully resolve the situation. Will the Minister have somebody from her department involved in those discussions from the point of view of the government being of some help to give advice in any way, shape or form so that this company may remain open?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. MURIEL SMITH (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to announce that we've already authorized the assignment of a member of the department to work closely with Victoria Leather in this very difficult adjustment time.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, was there an assessment or a review made of the impact that the minimum wage increase might have had, or might have, on the garment industry in the Province of Manitoba? Was that assessment made by the department and related to the Minister of Finance?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Minister of Finance can give the detail, but in the approach to minimum wage, I do have some data with regard to the hotel industry, and the demonstration that there doesn't appear to be any particular difference in the numbers of tourists attending provinces which do or don't have the special extra minimum wage for those who serve alcoholic beverages.

With respect to the garment industry the principle of this government has been known for a long time, that we don't believe the security or prosperity of any industry should be based on lower than fair wages to any of their workers, and that is the principle which we think makes not only good sense for the individual employees but, in fact, makes good sense for the industry as well because employees who feel they are being fairly treated and can pay their daily bills are bound to be more productive in their daily work.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister, the chance to be more productive is probably the most important thing. Mr. Speaker, the garment industry in Manitoba is approximately 8 percent of the industry in Canada; the garment industry in Manitoba does 20 percent of the exports of garments that are exported from Canada. Has the Minister taken a close look at the industry generally from the point of view that the industry is continually in competition with garment industries in other area of Canada, and to make sure that our garment industry can be competitive with people in other provinces?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, I don't know that there's any clear evidence that low wages increase productivity. In fact, increases in productivity seem to have a lot more to do with the attitude on skills of the workers and the amount of Capital investment in the industry. Our garment industry is, I think, making very considerable strides in developing a higher technology in their industry with their computer assistant design and computer assistant manufacturing developments. We look to greater improvements in productivity more from that type of approach and from the climate of working conditions in the plants rather than from the artificial attempt to hold down minimum wage.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I don't recall making any inference that low wages increased productivity. My reference is that the garment industry in the Province of Manitoba has moved ahead to be 8 percent of

the industry in Canada, 20 percent of the exports from Canada, and they have done so on the basis of being able to be competitive with other garment industries in this country. Has the Minister been making an assessment of an industry that's in trouble? Whether she knows it or not there are problems in that industry to make sure that our garment industry remains stable in this province and employs people.

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, it's our opinion that questions of tariffs, questions of degree of modernization of plant and general innovative spirit which has characterized our garment industry are going to do far more to retain the competitiveness of this industry than the mere, as I said before, artificial maintenance of low minimum wage.

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

MR. G.W.J. (Gerry) MERCIER (St. Norbert): Mr. Speaker, on April 5th, the Honourable Minister of Labour indicated in response to a question from myself that when he was in receipt of the report of the Minimum Wage Board he would determine whether or not it will be distributed and when it will be distributed. Could he indicate if he will be tabling that report in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. VIC SCHROEDER (Rossmere): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I expect that it will be tabled tomorrow. I understand that there were some problems with the printing, I believe, it's 90 copies required, but I understand that can be done so that distribution will be made tomorrow.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister for that response. On April 5th, he also indicated that the Minimum Wage Board traditionally holds hearings with respect to or prior to making any recommendations for increases in the minimum wage but did not hold public hearings before making the recommendations that he apparently had. Can the Minister explain why the traditional hearings were not held by the Minimum Wage Board?

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, as the former Attorney-General probably well knows, there have been no hearings held since the mid-1970s and that was on the basis, as I understand it, that both employee and employer representatives on the Board agreed that it was basically not getting them anywhere. They were getting several submissions each time, but they were basically the same types of submissions by the same group and it was a very predictable type of submission that the Board itself felt wasn't being of much assistance and, of course, when the members opposite were in office, they continued with that. They didn't have any public hearings at all and we didn't see any particular reason why on this occasion we should have them. I should note, Mr. Speaker, that on the occasion when the tip differential first appeared, that issue was never discussed by the Minimum Wage Board, nor was that taken to

the public.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, in view of statements made within the past few days about the possible effects of the announced increase on employment and jobs for young people and, particularly, in view of the difficult state of the economy, is the Minister considering asking the Minimum Wage Board to hold some form of hearings to hear representations on this subject?

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, we've heard comments with respect to, first of all, the young people. I should point out that our neighbouring province, Saskatchewan, has no differential; that is, in Saskatchewan young people under 18 are receiving \$4.25 an hour in terms of employment here. We did, of course, look into the matter of employment and discovered, as we had expected, that employment in a given sector did not seem to have any correlation; that is, there is an assumption by some people that if you have lower minimum wages that automatically means you will have more jobs. That is not necessarily true.

Just for instance, in the employment in hotels, restaurants and taverns with 20 or more employees, and this is from Statistics Canada, there is an indication that between 1979 and 1981, we have a decrease of 2.3 percent in the number of employees working in that field in Manitoba. That's at the very same time that in Saskatchewan there was an increase of 12 percent; in the Atlantic region there was an increase of 7.1 percent; in Alberta 18.8 percent, etc. We were the province, at the same time while we were instituting a tip differential, we were the province that was heading downward in employment and the others were the ones that were heading upward.

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

MR. MERCIER: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I merely asked the Minister whether he was considering asking the Minimum Wage Board to hold public hearings, yes or no — and he wants to use it, Mr. Speaker, but it was a very simple question.

MR. SPEAKER: I believe the Honourable Minister's reply was somewhat full. Has the Honourable Minister finished his reply?

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, what I was trying to do was get to the reason why — I will be answering that question — but I just want to get some of the reasons in, because there is some indication by the member opposite that this would do some good. I'm pointing out that one fact. I'm also pointing out that in the Province of Manitoba we have union agreements in effect with a number of hotels — 15 with, for instance, the Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartending International Union Local 206 — where beverage service employees are getting \$6.55 an hour. They seem to be competing quite well in those hotels in this province where they are paying a decent wage and so, in total, it seems to me that there is no necessity today to ask for public hearings to determine a question which we have already as the elected

people in this province decided.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Labour. I wonder if he could tell the House, in light of the record unemployment levels we're facing in this province, the problems in the garment industry and many other related industries, I wonder if he could tell the people of Manitoba whether he will be removing the sales tax on items such as clothing purchased in the Province of Manitoba to try and stimulate some more consumer spending in that particular field, as I understand many of the garment people are now faced with fairly large inventories and are probably going to be faced with more layoffs. I wonder if the Minister is going to be reducing sales tax to try and help stimulate the economic structure in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. SCHROEDER: I'm sure the honourable member knows that the time for budgetary discussion is at the time the Budget is brought down. I should point out if the honourable member is concerned about increased employment in the province that there will be, in fact, a wage multiplier effect from the announcement of the minimum wage increase; that is, the people who get those increased minimum wages are going to be spending them on things like food, clothing and shelter that they didn't have the money for before we had the increase. I would suggest to the honourable member that he just take his time and wait until the Budget comes down.

MR. BANMAN: In light of the action, the election promises that this government was going to move and make things happen, I'd like to remind the Minister of Labour that we are facing record unemployment levels. The minimum wage doesn't help anybody that's unemployed. People need jobs and I am wondering if he could inform this House, Mr. Speaker, the question which is on everybody's mind, since we have these record high unemployment rates, what is this government going to do to alleviate some of that problem? In other words, when is it going to bring its Budget down?

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, I don't have a copy here of the election propaganda that the Tories gave us in 1977, but I recall a number of the promises they made about a bright future for Manitoba: we would have more population; we would have balanced budgets, that type of thing. We have been in power now for four-and-a-half months and during that time we have begun to implement our promises. The honourable member asks about what we have done to assist in terms of unemployment, what we are doing in this province. We are, for instance, in a process — you've heard the announcement with respect to CCIL a few days ago, a few weeks ago. We are providing money so that firm can continue in business. We have provided funds for the Credit Union movement; we

have provided funds for those Manitobans who are suffering most from high interest rates in the area of homeowners, small business people, farmers again. Just within the last few weeks, we provided more Capital funds in order to loan money at reasonable interest rates to the farm population in this province and that is another area that the Opposition well knows is one of the backbones of our economy. The honourable member is talking about our election commitments, suggesting somehow that we are not moving towards fulfilling them. I am giving him just a small example of what we have already achieved. We are moving, Mr. Speaker, towards the implementation of our election promises, but unlike the unfulfilled election promises of the Tories of 1977, we have three-and-a-half years left to complete our promises.

MR. BANMAN: I wonder if the Minister of Labour could confirm that since his administration has taken over, we have had an increased record number of businesses go bankrupt and that we now have the highest unemployment rates that the province has had in many many years.

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, I had occasion to meet with some business people from Western Manitoba on Friday. They presented me with some statistics that showed that in Manitoba in the year, 1981, personal bankruptcies were three times as high as they were in other parts of Western Canada, three times as high under the Tory regime. Now, Mr. Speaker, people don't walk to the line of bankruptcy the minute there is a change in government. It takes a lot of time and the people who are in financial difficulty now are the people who were in financial difficulty when that group was in power. They were in financial difficulty three years ago, two-and-a-half years ago, when the Member for Transcona when he was sitting on that side was talking about assistance for homeowners and business people with respect to interest rates. What did they do? They voted it down. They brought nothing in when the Joe Clark government was in and brought in the highest interest rates we had known since the war. That was the type of operation we have had to come and try to rectify.

We had problems. The people of Manitoba recognized in November of 1981 that we had problems, that group wasn't going to deal with those problems and they needed a new government to deal with them.

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I go back to my question with regard to the sales tax and the Budget. All we are hearing from the Minister is a bunch of rhetoric trying to justify his inaction in this field and, Mr. Speaker, the public record shows very clearly that these bunch of bandits across the way here rose to power on promises which they are not fulfilling.

Mr. Speaker, I have another minute-and-a-half to reply to the Member for . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable Government House Leader on a point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

HON. ROLAND PENNER (Fort Rouge): A point of

order, the Honourable Member for La Verendrye says he has a minute-and-a-half to reply. This is not a question of replying; this is question period. — (Interjection)— No, he says he has another minute-and-a-half to reply and I am asking you to rule that this is not a case where a member can stand up and reply to an answer given to a question. He may ask a supplementary question, but it must be a question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: On the same point of order, the Government House Leader has no point of order whatsoever on the basis of the exchange that has taken place in this question period this afternoon and some others, I might say. The Government House Leader says this is question period; it's also answer period, Sir. If he wants to time and measure the non-answers that have been coming from the Minister of Labour to legitimate questions and then try to put that case, it won't sell, it won't wash, we won't buy it, nor will the public, Mr. Speaker. If the Minister of Labour is going to duck the question and skate all around the issue and try to obfuscate the whole matter with rhetoric that is not relevant, then the Member for La Verendrye and every other member in this House has a right to be definitive in their questions and to set the stage for a question that will hopefully extract some information from the Minister.

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

MR. PENNER: On the same point of order, I would ask you, Mr. Speaker, to rule whether or not a member having asked a question and received an answer, may then simply make a statement in reply, or whether they're limited to a supplementary question. I would ask you to rule on that.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank both members for their comments. They are quite right in noting that this is question period, and I would remind all members that this is question period and ask all members to govern themselves accordingly.

The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I thank you for those words. I come back to my question, after four minutes of answers, and I would ask the Minister when he's going to bring down the Budget, which will hopefully go ahead and provide some relief in the sales tax field for people in the Province of Manitoba, so we can stimulate some of the industries which are now facing record unemployment levels.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. SCHROEDER: Soon, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. CLAYTON MANNESS (Morris): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address my question to the Minister of Natural Resources.

I understand it is the government's intention to meet with officials from the municipalities and the towns to the south tomorrow afternoon for the purpose of discussing funding proportions regarding the Valley dikes, and I'm wondering if the Minister could tell us whether it is the government's intention to assess towns or municipalities at 1.5 percent of Capital cost-fee formula for maintenance.

In the case of Morris, I represent some \$45,000 per year simply for the maintenance of that dike.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. AL MACKLING (St. James): Mr. Speaker, it is not my intention to discuss the discussions I will have with representatives from the towns here until those discussions have taken place.

MR. MANNES: Can the Minister then indicate whether a detailed analysis has been performed so as to determine the true costs of maintaining dikes, or are these percentage estimates the latest of which I've heard being 1.5 percent, or were they just simply shots in the dark?

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, in my discussions with representatives of the communities, I will be acting on the best advice available to me.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. DAVID R. (Dave) BLAKE (Minnedosa): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

I wonder if he could inform the House if the applications for funding on their Main Street-Manitoba Program and the covering regulations and guidelines have now been finalized and have gone out to the municipalities.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. ADAM: No, Mr. Speaker, they have not been finalized at this point in time: While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, the Acting Minister of Municipal Affairs took a question as notice from the Member for Swan River, and I would like to reply to that question if I may.

The question was whether the terminations of the previous Municipal Board had been terminated, and I would advise the member that as of March 30th, all the members of the Municipal Board, the terms were terminated. Six new board members have been appointed and formalized and there are further appointments to be made, Mr. Speaker, and they will be finalized, I expect, within the next week or two.

MR. BLAKE: Back to my first question, Mr. Speaker, could the Minister maybe advise when these applications will be going forward to the municipal authorities.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, I am hoping to have the program, all the parameters of it, and the conditions involved with the program should be available before

the end of the month.

MR. BLAKE: It's a good answer, Mr. Speaker.

I have a question for the Minister of Industry and Commerce. I wonder if she could inform the House if she has had communication or meetings with Manitoba Pool Elevators in relation to the rebuilding of the Pool Livestock Yards in the City of Brandon.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, we have been in telephone communication with them, but the Minister of Agriculture is taking the lead on that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Health. I would ask him whether he has issued a proposal to the Manitoba Medical Association, either through his office or the Manitoba Health Services Commission, to return to the bargaining table on fee schedule negotiations.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. LAURENT DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): No, Mr. Speaker, I haven't been informed officially of the decision of the MMA. I haven't received anything; I've just read the paper and I don't intend to do anything until I receive an official notification from them.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, can the Honourable Minister advise the House whether he is, in fact, prepared to resume bargaining on the fee schedule independent of the discussions with respect to the binding arbitration proposal, which seems to be the substance of news reports emanating from the MMA meeting over the weekend?

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I've always said that this is exactly what we wanted, to have independent bargaining, and then this first question of binding arbitration, but this is not the sole issue here now. If the information that I receive from reading the news report, if they are going to go on some strike or partial strike, that's something else, and this is something we'll have to look at, but as I said earlier, I'd want to see what the official position is and I'll wait until I receive that from the MMA.

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

MR. KOSTYRA: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I received a question about a week ago from the Honourable Member for St. Norbert with respect to the grant to the Logan Community Committee, and I indicated at that time, I believe the additional grant was in the neighbourhood of \$17,000, and I would endeavour to let him know the exact amount of the grant and report that the grant is in the sum of \$17,500.00.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for

Sturgeon Creek.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. Has the Minister of Labour had any discussion with the Honourable Federal Minister of Employment and Immigration, or with anybody that was a member of the Commission that was put together to study having an Aerospace Technology Centre in the Province of Manitoba? Has he had any discussion with any of those people regarding that centre coming to Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. SCHROEDER: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, is the — and I appreciate the direct question and answer, Mr. Speaker. It's very refreshing to have that happen after so many months. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister after having had those discussions with one or the other, and he might tell me which one, the Minister or the gentlemen in charge of the study, what the status is regarding that Aerospace Technology Centre being built in Manitoba. I mean a very large building employing people and training Manitobans and other people from all parts of Canada. Is it coming to Manitoba?

MR. SCHROEDER: Mr. Speaker, I would hope just as the honourable member does that it will come to Manitoba. I give any assurances but I can say that I have spoken with an individual from the group he refers to and I have spoken with the Minister with respect to the matter as well. As the honourable member knows it is within the area of the Federal Government to make that decision and, as the member knows, there are, unfortunately, members of the Federal Parliament from other provinces who are also lobbying and that is one of the facts of life.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary. As the Minister is aware, the report clearly recommended that come to Manitoba, and because of the Federal Quebec Caucus, it has been stopped because they feel it should go to Quebec. Has the Minister made his feelings very clear to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, and even the Prime Minister of Canada, if necessary, that should come to Manitoba as recommended?

MR. SCHROEDER: I have made it very clear to the Minister of Employment; I have not made it clear to the Prime Minister although we certainly could do so.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Highways. My question to the Honourable Minister of Highways is why has he shelved and put aside all the reconstruction plans for Provincial Road No. 518 which runs by my ranch?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Lac Du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that I'm not aware that 518 runs by the former Minister's ranch, and I'm also not sure why it's shelved, if it is shelved. I'd have to take that question as notice.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, before I ask you to call the Business of the House, the government business, I would like to remind members that the Rules Committee will be meeting tomorrow at 10 a.m. in Room 255; and that on Thursday of this week the Committee on Privileges and Elections will be meeting at 10 a.m. in Room 255.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the Honourable Government House Leader.

Does the Honourable Member for Virden have a point of order?

MR. HARRY GRAHAM (Virden): Could I ask a question of the Honourable Government House Leader with respect to the Rules Committee tomorrow morning? Will there be any people from the media who are charged with the responsibility for the television coverage of the Chamber: Will they be at the Rules Committee Meeting tomorrow morning?

MR. PENNER: I have no way of knowing. I don't know why they're not here today. Perhaps someone can tell us where they're lost, or why they're lost, or for how long they will be lost.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADDRESSES FOR PAPERS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. J. WALLY McKENZIE (Roblin-Russell): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member from Rhineland:

THAT a humble address be voted to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor praying for copies of all correspondence between the Minister responsible for Co-operative Development and MANCO since November 30, 1981, pertaining to the possible sale of MANCO surplus cheese stocks stored at MANCO plants in Manitoba.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. McKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rhineland:

THAT a humble address be voted to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba praying for copies of all correspondence between the Minister of Economic Development and MANCO since November

30, 1981, pertaining to the possible sale of MANCO surplus cheese stocks stored at MANCO plants in Manitoba.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa:

THAT a humble address be voted to Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba praying for copies of all correspondence between the Minister of Agriculture and MANCO since November 30, 1981, pertaining to the possible sale of MANCO surplus cheese stocks stored at MANCO plants in Manitoba.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. PENNER: I was going speak to that motion.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden on a point of order?

MR. GRAHAM: On a point of order. If the honourable member wishes to speak to the motion it should be transferred for a debate.

MR. PENNER: ... if you'd wait for it, I'm not opposing the motion, I just want to make it clear that with the other two I've had a chance to confer, Mr. Speaker, with the Ministers in question. The Minister for Agriculture is not in the House and I'm not in a position to make the same undertaking with the Minister for Agriculture not being in the House. I would simply like to say that it would to this side of the House be agreed subject only — well, the obvious condition of course, if there is any, but that need not hardly be said, but that if there is, it will be a question of whether any of it is privileged but subject only to that, we would agree on this side of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: If that matter is agreed to.

ORDER FOR RETURN — NO. 8

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden's Order for Return.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Tuxedo:

THAT an order of the House do issue for a return showing the following information, as of the date of acceptance of the Order:

(1) The location of each parcel of land owned by MACC for which one-year leases have been issued for the year 1982.

(2) The names and addresses of each of the successful bidders on each parcel where tenders have been called.

(3) The names and addresses of each of the successful lessees for each parcel where tenders have not been called.

(4) The names and addresses of the highest bidder

for each parcel where tenders have been called.

(5) A copy of the tender form used in each case.

(6) The amount of rent paid for each parcel

(a) where tenders have been called; and

(b) where tenders have not been called.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: Accept the Order.

ADJOURNED DEBATE — CROW RATE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. PENNER: Mr. Speaker, would you please call the adjourned debate on the proposed motion of the Minister for Transport standing in the name of the Member for Roblin-Russell?

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Minister of Government Services, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. McKENZIE: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to make a contribution to the resolution put forth by the Highways and Transport Minister on a subject that is extremely important and deserves the full attention of not only this House but, I daresay, everybody across Canada. It's a subject, Mr. Speaker, that has gained the attention recently of the political parties of this country moreso than I would have hoped. I would have thought that maybe the farm community and the grain firms and those that are directly interested in the grain industry, and the farmers, could have resolved that matter of the Crow, but it appears that now it has got into the political arena, and once it's arrived in the political arena, I certainly feel sorry for the Crow.

Mr. Speaker, there are reams and reams of words and documentation and papers that have been put on the record of this country on this important subject matter, and it's a very difficult thing to debate because of the fact that the players, the statistics, the economics and everything that's related to the Crow changes almost on a daily basis from day to day. One only has to look at the press release that came out in Saturday's Free Press of the latest words of the Chief Consultant, Dr. Clay Gilson, who is conducting those hearings in our great city and our great province to indicate how things are changing, how the debate is changing, and the whole conception related to the Crow matter has come about. But, at least, Mr. Chairman, I am satisfied and I am sure every member in our caucus is satisfied.

If the Honourable Jean-Luc Pepin, the Minister of Transport, wants this matter to be handled and handled skillfully by some of the more learned people in the field of agriculture in this province, he couldn't have picked a better person than Dr. Gilson, ably supported by Dr. Tyrchniewicz as well, as I under-

stand it, who is putting his contributions into the hearings and aiding Dr. Gilson.

As I said in my remarks earlier in the debates in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I questioned several Ministers in this government who are sitting across the room from us if, in fact, this government and other governments across this country are not prepared to stand up and defy this double digit inflation that we face in this country, the Crow is meaningless. The Crow is meaningless, because if we can't possibly show more initiatives than we have up to now in dealing with double digit inflation and the high interest rates that the farmers are facing in this country today, I don't see that the farm industry will need a transportation system because they'll likely be all out of business. It concerns me that more and more members on the government side haven't come out and shown us some of the positive indicators that they have in their Treasury Benches, that they are prepared to stand up and attack inflation to help the grain industry, and to help the farmers in this most difficult plight that they are facing today.

I have raised that about three or four times in my contribution to this Chamber since the session started, Mr. Speaker, and as I stand here today, I don't have anything to assure me that the government is, in fact, even looking at inflation because, as I've said, I raised the article and the remarks of Mr. Lorne Hehn, the new President of the United Grain Growers, and he raised that subject matter in Rossburn speaking at a delegates' meeting and that, of course, concerns me.

Mr. Speaker, I would think in our contribution to this subject matter that the Ottawa proposal, as it has been placed before the farmers in Western Canada, is not acceptable. It is not acceptable and the reasons are many. I don't think very very few, if any, in the west trust the Government of Canada that's in Ottawa today — and why should we trust them with readjusting the Crow rate? Because we only have to look back at the historic chain of events that has taken place in our great country in the last year-and-a-half or two years to see what damage and severe economic problems that government in Ottawa has created for us in the west, and that, of course, includes the farmers and the grain industry. So why at this late hour would we as westerners, or the farmers especially in the whole farm industry, trust the Federal Government when they come and lay papers on a table, cap in hand, and say, we're going to finally take a look at the Crow rate and try and help solve the transportation problems that we have faced in this country for decades.

Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering about where the members opposite sit with regard to the position that one of the great grain giants of our country, a farmers' co-operative, the United Grain Growers, the position that they have taken on the matters of the Crow? I'm wondering where the government stands with relation to where the Pool Elevators, another farm co-operative, huge membership in this province, where they have taken the position that they have taken on the Crow? I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, where the government stands with regard to the oil crushing industry which is so dear and near to my constituency in Birtle-Russell and the new crushing plant at Harrowby, and questions raised in the House the other day by myself and the Honourable Member for Morris

indicate to me, Mr. Speaker, that this government has done little of any study on that subject matter. Mr. Speaker, I'm wondering about the full development of the Port of Churchill, and what plans that this government and the Ministers opposite have to add to the thrust of the former Minister of Agriculture and that government who had done so much to promote and develop the Port of Churchill?

So, Mr. Speaker, we welcome the opportunity here what Dr. Gilson will bring in his report when he brings it in on May 31st. I don't know what likely will be, although Saturday's edition of the Free Press gives us some indication of what Dr. Gilson may offer as a solution to it, but when he takes that resolution back to Ottawa is when I get scared. And I raise my flag today and I tell the farmers of Western Canada, and tell this House: beware, beware, because that government that's in Ottawa today has a reason to be good to us in Western Canada. The reasons are quite simple because we don't have any representation west of the City of Winnipeg.

So, Mr. Speaker, on February the 8th when the Minister of Transport, Mr. Pepin, made a major policy statement on western rail transportation on behalf of the Liberal government in this fair city, our capital city, to the effect that the government proposes substantially to alter an historic and statutory provision which affects not only the producers of Canada, but the whole economy of Western Canada, the implications of that became very clear to me, and they are enormous. At the outset, I would say, Mr. Speaker, that we protest in the strongest way possible the fact that the Minister came to make that announcement outside the House of Commons. Why would the Minister of Transport not make that statement in the House of Commons? Was he afraid of the questions that would be raised? Was he afraid of the debate that would be raised by the members of the Opposition in Ottawa at the time, or what were the reasons, Mr. Speaker? That is a matter of vital importance, not only to Western Canada, to all Canada, the fact that the announcement wasn't made in Parliament. I would have thought, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister would have at least the common decency and common sense to stand in his place in Parliament and make his announcement and he would have been available for questioning by the members that were sitting in the House of Commons.

So it appears to me, Mr. Speaker, that Parliament and parliamentary committees are going to be ignored in this process and this debate that is taking place with regard to this important matter. It also appears to me as I stand before you today, Mr. Speaker, in the next four to five to six months, a back room deal will likely be negotiated in private. I suspect that is likely what's going to happen. The Parliament will stand idly by while a group appointed by the Minister, the Minister of Transport, strikes up a deal in camera, and I don't think that is a fair way to deal with the important subject matter of the Crow because I do not think that type of a forum can ably handle that kind of a matter, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, the Honourable Jean-Luc Pepin has told us and he's told the farmers, if we don't like it or we don't agree — what did he say he was going to do? He said, Mr. Speaker, he is going to proceed unilaterally.

Now, that again, we should press the panic button and become most concerned when we hear a Minister from that government in Ottawa telling us that if we don't agree, if we don't line up, he's going to go unilaterally. In other words, the terms of the agreement will be imposed and the government will go ahead regardless of what I say here today or regardless of whether the Minister had put this resolution on the Order Paper or not or regardless of hundred of other things, Mr. Speaker. So, the manner then, Mr. Speaker, in which it is being handled again, as I point out, concerns me greatly.

Mr. Speaker, I would think surely that the Minister does not expect members in the House of Commons or, in fact, this Legislature to stand idly by in such a rubber stamping process, and that is why I do congratulate the Minister of Transport in this province for putting this resolution on the Order Paper so that we can, each and every one of us, have a chance to make our contribution and put it into the record. I suppose that you could say on the other hand, as some members have said, that surely he does not expect the farmers of Canada to accept may I say, what, a pig in a poke, such the manner in which this matter has been embarked upon, imposed upon. So, therefore, I have two counts on this process on which the Minister has embarked, two counts by which it should be rejected emphatically, Mr. Speaker.

First, it should be rejected because he has chosen to circumvent the parliamentary process which is so near and dear to this country, and thereby denying the elected members of Parliament an opportunity to speak and to have a say in what the Crow should be.

On the second issue, Mr. Speaker, I would say that I believe that the process should be rejected because it denies the food producers, the farmers of this country, their legitimate right to be heard. Certainly, Dr. Gilson is holding hearings in this city, but I do not see how I, as a member of this Legislature, can be heard. I do not see how the Member for Pembina or the Member for Morris can go down and ask to be heard at that forum and let their views and opinions be put on the record. Mr. Speaker, they cannot, and so I cannot emphasize too strongly that the policy that is being implemented and will have a most profound effect on all the producers of Canada is not being done in a fair and square manner. So there's naturally that the farmers and people like myself have fear, anxiety and apprehension because it could have been done another way. So I'm concerned secondly, Mr. Speaker, because of the way the policy is involving and how the legislation will be drawn up and the fact that, as Mr. Pepin said, whether you like it or not, he is taking it back to Ottawa and we will be facing his views and opinions in that manner. So today, Mr. Speaker, as I stand before you, I certainly warn the Minister of Transport that his actions and the way he is conducting this thing is only fueling more fires of suspicion, fires of mistrust, that exist in Western Canada today, and we certainly have enough of them in Canada today with the actions of the Government in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to deal briefly with the main objectives of the proposal that has been introduced by Ottawa. First of all, Mr. Speaker, the proposal to abandon the existing statutory freight rate. It commits the government to a level of funding equal to

the 1981-82 railroad-revenue shortfall, and it calls upon the producers of Western Canada to meet any future cost increases beyond the 1981-82 shortfall in negotiations with the railways. It is interesting to read Dr. Gilson's, or the summary that was in Saturday's edition of The Free Press on that subject matter, and I was wondering, Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, what chance would producers have to negotiate this rate with the railroads? What chance would the Minister of Co-op Development, of Municipal Affairs, have to try and go and deal with the railways on this subject matter? What chance would I as an ordinary citizen have to go to deal with the railways? It would be very, very difficult indeed, Mr. Speaker. Large corporations in this country have tried over the years in an effort to gain fair freight rate and have not succeeded. So that is a very serious weakness of the proposal that we have before us at this time, Mr. Speaker, with regards to the Crow.

I have heard people say, Mr. Speaker, that they cannot accept a freight rate structure which will have a wide open-ended escalation clause that would result in increased charge being put on the backs of the producers. Of course, there are opinions being expressed all different ways on that subject matter, but I would say, Mr. Speaker, I don't see how I, as the Member for Roblin-Russell, can accept the removal of statutory freight rate assurance unless I have all the cards on the table and know exactly what we are going to get for the future of our great country and we are not going to get that, Mr. Speaker. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that would have the effect of relieving the railways of a continuing obligation and shift it onto the backs of the producers of western Canada and I cannot accept that in any way, shape or form.

The proposal also, Mr. Speaker, sets out to place a thick ceiling on further Federal contributions, and that would mean that the government would be relieved of any additional burden over and above the 1981-82 shortfall, while the producers would be bearing the brunt of the inflationary costs or the cost increase that are associated with the movement of grain, the energy costs, the taxation costs and all the other costs that go with the system, Mr. Speaker.

The other interesting thing, Mr. Speaker, there is a sort of a rift in this argument between two Ministers of the Federal Government, Hazen Argue and Pepin. That scares me that here we have the Crow being pushed in this manner, and yet we know from evidence that's already been publicized and words that have been spoken, that those two Ministers do not agree on the way that this should be handled. So that alone should create enough uncertainty in the minds of western farmers and producers who are worrying about this subject matter that even two Ministers that should be in a position to agree, they can't agree, and I am sure both those Ministers, Pepin and Argue, are watching the debates that are taking place across this country.

I wonder where Mr. Whelan stands. Of course, he's not very popular at all in the eyes of the Prime Minister of this country today and I wonder where he stands at this time. It is very unclear as I stand here today, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, when methods are being developed to establish a system of periodic reviews to provide railroads with adequate compensation and, in

fact, to remove the statutory protection, I become alarmed.

We must ask ourselves another question, Mr. Speaker, what is the implication for the producers or what is the basis for calculating railway revenue shortfall? And that subject now has been changed in the last few days. New evidence, new information has been brought forth to the committee even that figure that was being bandied around for the last several months, now that figure is in great question. We have also heard comments to the effect, Mr. Speaker, that any future increases to producers may be well tied to the increases in grain prices and that type of a sentiment seems to be expressed in the comments that Jack Francis got from his interview. What are the implications, Mr. Speaker? We look at Snavely's last report and, of course, that's not accepted as I stand here today. So I just say simply and bluntly that farmers should be very very aware and very alert as to what things are taking place and what figures are being bandied around in this debate.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to know and I think producers should know, must know, what the Minister had in mind when he asked Professor Gilson to consider the application of variable freight rates. I would sure like to know what he had in the back of his mind when he threw that hooker into the debate. We should like to know, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly would like to know, how the government sees the subsidy being distributed; who is going to get it? I would like to also know, Mr. Speaker, what the Minister would like to see in terms of how that 600 million will be distributed and, unfortunately, we will not get those answers, I suppose, until Mr. Gilson brings in his report.

I would also like to know, Mr. Speaker, what the Minister had in mind when he referred to the guaranteed mechanisms to assure adequate performance and capacity. Will it only be through legislation, or what are they talking about; or will it be through penalties or a performance bonus? What about investment guarantees, Mr. Speaker? That's a question that has been raised with me many, many, many times. Producers of Canada, the farmers, the No. 1 industry in this province, Mr. Speaker, needs assurances that investment provided through the funding of the Federal Government goes into the beefing up of the railway system rather than shopping centres and oil companies and hotels, etc. etc. I would also like to know, Mr. Speaker, what mechanisms the Federal Minister has in mind to remove the existing freight rate anomalies, and to provide semblance of parity between the processed and the unprocessed products, and I certainly have a vested type of interest in answers to that because of the fact that the Manitoba Pool and Saskatchewan Pool have seen fit to build the oil crushing plant at Harrowby. I would like some knowledge or enlightenment, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister talks about economic diversification, I think, is the way it was put. How will economic diversification help the farmers of this province, the farmers of Saskatchewan or the farmers of Alberta? There is much at stake, Mr. Speaker, much to be left at the table of a negotiator even though Dr. Gilson has all the credibility and the integrity to deal with those things.

Mr. Speaker, the enunciated policy was extremely

vague in many areas and it is open to so many interpretations which I am sure every member of this Chamber is aware of. You would think that it could have been more clarified and come out in a better form, so there would not be so many different ways that it could be interpreted. I also, as I said earlier, I would think we should insist in this Legislature that Parliament and its members should be active participants in the debate before this Crow is finalized. There should be no doubt about it in my mind that the producer should be involved because they are the ones that are going to be directly affected. It's an issue, Mr. Speaker, that's far greater than the simple freight rate adjustment that we are debating under the terms of this question. It strikes right at the very fabric of the social and the economic lifestyle of every westerner, every citizen of Western Canada.

The other point of course, Mr. Speaker, is that the western farmers especially are in a very rebellious mood as, may I say, at this particular time. There's a feeling of unhappiness and volatility out there that I haven't seen for some time. It's going to be rather interesting to see what comes out of the election that's taking place in our neighboring province of Saskatchewan because the Crow is certainly an issue with the farmers in that province. While it may be not the number one issue in their election campaign, I'm sure that they are going to express their volatility and their rebellious mood in some form or other.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, the move to dismantle the Crow's Nest Pass freight rates is perceived by a lot of farmers as yet another attack upon western Canada by the east and a further escalation of the climate of confrontation that we have witnessed for the last several years by the government in the east and in Ottawa today. That, of course, has created intense mistrust and suspicion amongst nearly every westerner. We look back through the history of the grain transportation system, the mess that the grain transportation system was in when Clarke's government took over for those few months. I think we'd just come through a year of a billion dollars loss worth of grain sales because of breakdowns in the transportation system and that government certainly by appointing a railway co-ordinator, they worked, I think, very closely with the railroads and they promised some action on the Port at Prince Rupert. Action was taken and we were promised some action on the branch lines in this province and across western Canada and branch lines were in fact preserved. At that time there was a reasonably positive mood existed amongst — not a negative one such as we witnessed today. In fact, some of our farmer friends even will go so far as to say that the mood that we have experienced in western Canada is one of desperation.

The other thing I'd like to question, Mr. Speaker, is the question of the mandate. Does the Liberal Government, does the Trudeau government, have a mandate to abandon the Crow's Pass freight rates? Of course, it does not, Mr. Speaker. The Liberal Government not only failed to live up to his promises to provide such things as cheap energy, energy self sufficiency, low interest rates — (Interjection) — yes, double track, a well managed economy, jobs. They promised adequate housing and a healthy agricultural climate, but they failed, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion

to tell Canadians what they intended to do.

For example, they didn't tell Canadians during the election campaign that they were going to embark upon a policy of confrontation which is literally tearing the country apart with the way they handled the Constitution. They didn't tell the people of Canada that they were going to spend the first 18 months of that government's reign debating and railing and ranting about a Constitution while the economy of this country collapsed. We, today, face the highest unemployment that this country has ever seen and the most difficult economic problems that Canadians have ever experienced. They didn't tell the Canadians in that election campaign they were going to bring in that devastating national energy policy, Mr. Speaker, which has torn the heart out of western Canada and implemented taxes unbelievable on western Canada. Mr. Speaker, they didn't tell Canadians that they were going to tax them to the hilt during that election campaign, directly or indirectly, and literally double the price of energy. They didn't tell Canadians in the time of that campaign they were going to destroy DREE. At least, I never heard it, Mr. Speaker, or destroy the private sector which they have so skillfully done. They didn't tell western Canadians they were going to dismantle 20 percent of Via Rail or that they were going in fact to abandon the Crow's Nest rates, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask the members of this Assembly and I ask the members in Parliament if, in fact, whether the Liberal Party would have obtained its mandate from the Canadian people if they'd told the truth. —(Interjection)— no, Sir, never, Mr. Speaker, no never they certainly wouldn't. Many of these crucial policies, Mr. Speaker, that I have just espoused affect western Canada where there are no elected Liberal members west of the City of Winnipeg today and those are the ones that it's hurting as I stand here.

So, Mr. Speaker, is it any wonder that this mistrust or alienation or suspicion resides out amongst our people today and this debate certainly hasn't helped to alleviate it. Well, Mr. Speaker, what is the Liberal policy? Has anybody got knowledge of what the policy is? The Liberal policy, Mr. Speaker, on the Crow, as indicated in the Liberal manual as late as 1980, —(Interjection)— Well, read it. If you read the Liberal manual as of 1980, Mr. Speaker, you would find that they were committed to preserving statutory freight rates spelled out loud and clear. As late as July the 4th, I think it was, to 6th, 1980 at that great Liberal party convention, it was stated emphatically to the people of Canada that the Liberal party again reaffirmed its determination to preserve the statutory Crow rate.

Mr. Speaker, I turn now to our members opposite in the New Democratic Party. The Federal NDP Party say they want to retain the status quo, yet they want on the other hand the implementations of Hall. They want them approved. You can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker, I don't see how they can. If the Hall recommendations are implemented, Mr. Speaker, that's not status quo; that's quite a change. I would say the NDP shouldn't argue that, because they should be saying they're in favour of maybe other change, I don't know. They offer a sort of a panacea, the Federal NDP, into improving the system; they talk about nationalizing the CNR. I have heard that espoused at some great

length but somehow, Mr. Speaker, they seem to be more interested in pursuing a sort of philosophical objective than improving the grain transportation system.

So, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, to nationalize the railroad would have cost billions of dollars. Billions and billions of dollars and what would that do for the grain industry? We'd still have to go and build the tracks. We'd still have to go and put the system in shape and it wouldn't move one additional bushel of grain, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Transport in Saskatchewan, as well, he says he doesn't want any change, but he is advocating change by recommending that we follow the Crow recommendations. MacMurchy too, he wants to buy a railroad, Mr. Speaker, and Mr. Thatcher, the Premier of Saskatchewan — read some of the words that he said on the subject matter over the years.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's difficult. Premier Blakeney favours a statutory rate but not necessarily the Crow, as I read him. He says he's prepared to negotiate a future cost increase as long as the producers keep the benefit of the Crow. Then he signed a document some few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, saying that he's not prepared to accept any change.

So how, Mr. Speaker, can the NDP actually be taken seriously when they say they're going to fight, but when the crunch comes, they merely appendage to the Liberal Government office. In fact who, Mr. Speaker, put the Liberals back in power at that time? Who were the ones that put them in and gave them the authority to come back with this nasty change in the Crow rate, Mr. Speaker? It certainly wasn't us, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, but when the chips are down, the NDP fall in line with the hopes of the Liberal Party. A party, of course, which as I said earlier occupies the Treasury Bench but which is bankrupting this country and Trudeau wouldn't be there today were it not be for the supporters of the New Democratic Party. They and they alone are the ones that put him in office; they are the ones that gave him the authority and the power to decimate this country.

So I say to you, Mr. Speaker today that if this country is in a mess today, the NDP Party must share the blame. They must share the blame. I say to you as well today, Mr. Speaker, that if farmers of Canada lose their statutory rights, they must blame the NDP as well as the Liberals because the NDP are the ones that put them in office in Ottawa.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. ADAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to take part in this very very crucial and important debate that we have on the Order Paper today; that is, debating the resolution to maintain the Crow rate for the benefit of the farmers of Manitoba and, of course, Western Canada as well.

Mr. Speaker, there have been many questions that we've listened to. Two speakers now, I believe, from the members of the Opposition and we still don't know where they stand. We don't know what their intentions are insofar as supporting or opposing the resolution that is before us, Mr. Speaker. It's an enigma; we don't know what's happening out there.

It's a mystery, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)— We've listened to the Member for Lakeside and he made a beautiful, flowery speech and we could not detect, after he was through with his comments, whether he was going to support the resolution or oppose it.

We have just been subjected to another speaker from the Opposition, the Member for Roblin-Russell and we are still at a loss to determine where the Opposition is going to go on this particular question, Mr. Speaker. They speak of retaining the benefit; the Crow benefit for the farmers of this province in Western Canada, but at the same time they would like the railways to be compensated. They want the railways to be compensated fully for the movement of grain but, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the position of the Federal Liberals and the more we hear members opposite speak, we see that it's not the NDP and the Liberals that are in bed, but on the Crow rate issue, it is the Liberals and the Conservatives that are in bed together. If you will look, Mr. Speaker, at the literature that the Conservative Party in the Province of Saskatchewan is passing out at this particular time — because there's an election over there — you will find that their position is almost identical. They don't say it, Mr. Speaker, they just hold back on one or two words, but it is almost identical to the position of the Liberal Party in Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, we are still at a loss and we'd like to know; I was not here on Thursday or Friday, because I made an on-sight inspection of the fire at Brandon, both on Thursday and Friday and there may have been some debate in the House at that particular time that I missed. There may have been some speakers, I do not know, but nevertheless what I have heard is that we don't know where they stand. We still don't know where they stand, Mr. Speaker.

There have been many who question the position. There are many who question my own position, for instance, and that of the National Farmers' Union, and have been most adamant in not wanting to negotiate the change of the Crow. They've been very adamant about that and, Mr. Speaker, if you sit down to negotiate, the moment that you sit down, you are already admitting that you want to see a change. The position of the Farmers' Union has been that they say it is not negotiable. It is not negotiable because to enter into discussion would be contradictory to that principle and it's understandable. Now I've heard the Member for Roblin first of all say, you know, here are the Pools, they speak for the farmers, they talk for the farmers out there, they are the farmers. The Member for Roblin is there in his seat — and later on he said that he was criticizing the Pepin group and the Federal Government for not going out and talking to the farmers, to allow them to have a chance to speak and there's a contradiction if you have one, Mr. Speaker.

In the first instance, he indicates that here you have the Pools speaking for all the farmers and later on he says, we want the farmers to have a chance to say something. Well, you know you can't have it both ways. I say to the Member for Roblin-Russell, you cannot have it both ways. Either the Pools represent the farmers or else the farmers represent themselves and they should be the ones that are speaking because there is a silent majority out there, Mr. Speaker. I would say to you that there are a vast

majority of the farmers today who belong to the Pool who are opposed to any change in the Crow rate. Nevertheless, the Pools are on record of wanting to sit down and negotiate.

I don't believe that is the position of the majority of the farmers out there because they fear the unknown; they don't know what's out there, what is waiting for them, but now we are receiving more information as time goes by. We can see the handwriting on the wall for the farmers if the Crow goes, Mr. Speaker, and that is why the Farmers' Union have taken a leadership on that position and have been criticized by members opposite, and many other groups out there have been criticizing the National Farmers' Union for not wanting to bargain the traditional rights of the farmers of this province and the farmers of western Canada.

I think Mr. Gibbings, the Commissioner on the Wheat Board, had even put that in better context, Mr. Speaker, when he said that he would not attend the day of infamy in Manitoba, February the 8th, when Mr. Pepin made his announcement. February the 8th, 1982, that was the day of infamy for the farmers of Manitoba and Mr. Gibbing said he would not go to that press conference that Mr. Pepin when he had it in Winnipeg here on February the 8th and here is what he said. He said, he refused an invitation to attend last week's news conference at which Transport Minister, Jean-Luc Pepin, announced that the statutory Crowsnest Pass rates will go up; I wouldn't go because if you voluntarily go to be raped, then it's consent. He told about 200 cheering farmers at the Wheat Board's district meeting, Mr. Speaker. He didn't say it in those words, but that is the position of the National Farmers' Union. The moment you sit down you know what you are going to get. So, I ask members opposite, where do you stand? We don't know yet. We know that the former Minister of Agriculture who sat in this chair, I believe, when he was on this side of the House issued press releases to say, yes, they wanted a change in the Crow rate and they wanted to still benefit, the Crow benefit, that was the word, to be retained for the farmers.

Mr. Speaker, we know and they know and everybody else knows that the Crow benefit is going to last for a year or two and after that it is going to be — (Interjection) — even the next year. The first year, the Federal Minister has indicated that he would be willing to put the shortfall, which is presumably \$612 million; he would put in that much money to pick up the Crow gap. That is the Crow gap; he is prepared to do that up to 1985. —(Interjection)— That is not what the report said and the member who just spoke before me said that wasn't the case. Mr. Speaker, that is the sleeper there because in 1980 there was 128 million bushels of grain delivered out of Manitoba. At the Crow rate it cost \$12.3 million to move out. Now, six times Crow, which has been the figure that has been bounced around over the years, at six times Crow it would have been \$74 million that farmers would have had to pay to transport their grain an increased cost of \$64 million, Mr. Speaker. That is the Crow gap; that is the shortfall between the Crow rate which is 12.3 and the \$64 million shortfall for the compensatory rate, so that is the shortfall, Mr. Speaker, and that is what Mr. Pepin is prepared to put up, so he says.

Mr. Speaker, the member who spoke before me said

he didn't trust him over there and I want to say that I don't trust him either. I trust the Crow rate because I know what we have. I know what benefits the farmers are receiving under that legislation.

The sleeper is that next year - and these are 1980 figures - but after the new agreement is put in place we will want to negotiate with the railways the inflationary costs and that will be based, not on 12.3 but on \$74 million, so that will be, whatever that is, 15 percent inflationary costs, so we tack on 15 percent of 74 million. The next year, what would that be? about \$10 million, \$12 million in inflationary costs, so next year you will be negotiating again with the railways for \$84 million, 15 percent on \$84 million. Then we'll be negotiating with the farmers how much they want to pick up of the inflationary costs, year after year after year after year, Mr. Speaker. It does not take very long, Mr. Speaker, and you do not have to be an Einstein to figure out what is hanging on the end of the noses of the Manitoba farmers under that kind of a situation. By 1990 or the year 2000, Mr. Speaker, you will be looking at \$2, \$3 a bushel to transport grain out of the Province of Manitoba and right across for the western farmers as well.

Mr. Speaker, these are the reasons why we, on this side, say that the Crow must remain; it should not be tampered with. If there are problems out there, if there are problems as far as transportation, we have to find other solutions to those problems. We have to find other solutions and not on the backs of the farmers because, Mr. Speaker, it would make no difference whatsoever if you never ship one bushel of grain to the coast. They would still have to upgrade those railways. They are unable to handle the increased traffic that will be taking place in regards to other commodities; commodities that seem to now have a higher priority, Mr. Speaker, and that is the vast amounts of coal and potash and other commodities that will be transported to the west coast and sure, it will be a benefit to Canada, I suppose. It will benefit primarily British Columbia. To a much lesser degree, it will benefit Alberta. It certainly will be of very little benefit to the Province of Saskatchewan; it will be of no benefit to the Province of Manitoba. In fact, it will be a disaster for the Province of Saskatchewan and it will be a disaster for the Province of Manitoba.

So, we say that the Crow is not a negotiable item. It must be kept and we must find other ways of improving our transportation system in Canada if we want to have an improved system to the west coast. We do have sufficient rolling stock and sufficient trackage to move grain to Thunder Bay, to the head of the lakes, and that is where the majority of the grain from Saskatchewan and Manitoba moves to is to the eastern points and as well, we would want to try and see more grain moving out of the Port of Churchill. That is very essential.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell mentioned about the CSP Foods, the Rape-seed Plant at Harroby, and he mentioned that there was a problem - I'm not sure whether he said it in those words and I'm only paraphrasing - but he said that they had to have parity. Now, I don't know what he meant by parity, whether he wants parity for the raw product and the processed product and that he is going to achieve that by getting rid of the Crow. We

were unable to find out just what the member is saying when he makes those statements, but I want to say that I believe that the CSP Foods, when they met with Mr. Gilson, that they did not ask that the Crow rate be abandoned. They asked for parity, right. They are not necessarily saying, well, you get rid of the Crow and we are going to have parity because they know that may not happen, Mr. Speaker and they are not sure of the other ramifications of losing the Crow. Will they have parity as far as processed oilseed go and the raw product, the rapeseed? Will they have parity there or will the price of rapeseed drop? That is the question; those are unanswered questions, because of the Crow rate being - Do they know what's going to happen in Eastern Canada, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Pepin is already on record as saying that removing of the Crow rate if it has any detrimental impact on the crushing industry in the east and the livestock industry, that he would subsidize those industries. So, that brings the crushing industry in Manitoba back to square one. We are still in a noncompetitive position. If they are going to subsidize the eastern crushers and, by the way, one of the major crushers of rapeseed in Ontario is owned by Maple Leaf Milling, which is in turn owned by none other than the CP Investments, Mr. Speaker.

So, you start getting the scenario, start getting the puzzle back into place, Mr. Speaker. What is happening? You find that Paul Desmarais of the Power Corporation, who is a very, very friendly adviser to the Federal Cabinet; this is a long standing relationship that Mr. Paul Desmarais has had with people like Mr. Pepin and Mr. Trudeau and the Cabinet there. In fact, Mr. Desmarais is recognized as an advisor to Cabinet. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, we find that the Power Corporation is the largest shareholder in CP. Now, the puzzle falls into place. You've got a big jigsaw puzzle; you find the little separate pieces and you just slip them in to where they are supposed to go. We also hear that, not too long ago, Mr. Pepin was a director on the Board of Power Corporation. Now I'm not trying to impute motives, Mr. Speaker, but surely you will say that I have a right to be somewhat suspicious. I have a right; there are grounds there to have some suspicion. I see the Member for Fort Garry nodding his head in approval, Mr. Speaker.

What does all this mean? We have heard another outspoken person, the very person that I have had a lot of admiration for and he was the former president of the United Grain Growers, great man. I have always had a lot of admiration for him, but you know, he has been an outspoken person, outspoken voice, against the Crow rate. He said that the Crow had to go. Mr. Speaker, we find that the former president of the United Grain Growers is also a director on the CP Board.

Mr. Speaker, the puzzle is almost complete; there are no more pieces. They are all falling into place. We find what is happening, the scenario is becoming clearer and clearer. I wonder if the honourable members opposite want to risk the destiny of the farmers of Manitoba to try and lock horns with that group, Mr. Speaker, and that scenario that we see happening and that has happened and that is continuing to happen. We suggest that you should not; we suggest that the cost is too great to the Province of Manitoba.

The Honourable Member for Roblin says what is going to happen to the Port of Churchill? Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you what is going to happen to the Port of Churchill if we do not have equal rates for equal distance. If we lose that we know what is going to happen to Churchill; it is not going to be there very long, Mr. Speaker, it will be gone. And that alone, Mr. Speaker, even just that one item alone, that one issue, is enough to say, leave the Crow alone. When Mr. Pepin says, the Crow must go, I say Pepin must go; he is the one that I want to see go. —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, the honourable member says, why did we put him there? Mr. Speaker, we did not put him there, it was the Conservatives that put him there because they couldn't even run a Parliament; they don't know even how to run the Parliament. They called a crucial vote when they knew didn't have the majority in the House, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they never even walked over to ask the five Social Credit members where they stood. Now, Mr. Speaker, they have the nerve to say that it is the NDP that joined the Liberals to put them out of business; they never even walked over to make a deal with the Social Credits which are very close to the Conservative Party in the first place. I have never been able to tell the difference between the two and I don't think anybody else has, as far as party is concerned. But you know, Mr. Roperts, who is the Assistant to Mr. Pepin says in an article that I read here just recently that if the rates go three times Crow the farmer should be happy, that is a bargain for them.

Mr. Speaker, I object to that because I know that we are not talking about three times Crow here; we are talking ten times Crow. That is what we are talking about by 1990 maybe or the year 2000, we are talking about ten times Crow and maybe 13, Mr. Speaker. So let not the Member for Morris be deluded and say, oh well, you know, they are going to charge me 25 cents a bushel and I can absorb that or else maybe 50 cents a bushel. Let him not be deluded by that because what we are talking here is \$2 a bushel, not three times Crow. We are talking about ten times Crow, 13 times Crow. The sleeper in this whole issue, of course, is the the guarantee of \$612 million which is under question. The Manitoba Pool has questioned those Snavely figures very, very critically and the fact is that the Snavely report never took into account the cost of cars.

So, Mr. Speaker, after we have had a change in the rate and we are going to have four times Crow, or whatever the rate is, then the railways can come back and say, well listen, you never took into account that we have to buy cars. We don't have any money to buy cars under the Crow rate, that was never figured into the Snavely report so now we want to have money to buy cars.

Getting back for a moment to the crushing industry, Alberta and Saskatchewan subsidize the cars for the crushing industry. Now, when I met with the CPS Foods here and the Honourable Minister of Economic Development, it was brought to our attentions, Mr. Speaker, and we said that we would have to review that question whether the financial capabilities of the Province of Manitoba are able to buy cars for the industry. That is something that we will have to look at, I'm sure but, nevertheless, despite the fact that the

Manitoba Pool has questioned these figures very seriously - the Snavely report was questioned very seriously by the Manitoba Pool - nevertheless Mr. Pepin says that he is going to accept those figures anyway, regardless. Whether they are right or wrong, he is going to accept them anyway. So this is what we have facing us.

Mr. Speaker, when you consider the fact that the railway in the first place, when it was constructed, when we had the railways with government help placed across Canada, it was never intended that they would be a profitable organization; that was never the intention of a railroad. The reason for having a railway was to provide service and to open up the country and to make sure that there was transportation to take out the raw materials and to bring in manufactured goods. That was the idea and it was very soon recognized that it would not be possible for the railways to make a profit, so The Railway Act was amended, Mr. Speaker, to allow the CPR to diversify into other areas of endeavour because it was recognized, even in the early years, the first year, the second year after the railway was built they were right back to the government and saying, look, we can't make money on this, we can't make a profit. So they said, well, all right, we will allow you to branch out in other endeavours; you can go into mining; we will allow you to go into coal; we will allow you to go into port facilities; we will allow you to go into hotels; we will allow you to go into many, many other areas of endeavour and that was to compensate for the losses that they were taking on the railways, Mr. Speaker and that holds still, today.

The reason why CP Investments have been able to build the largest conglomerate in Canada was because of the amendments of the Act. It recognized that you can't make a profit transporting goods, so they allowed them to branch out and when it came the time to build stations for the CPR and the CPR came back to the government and said, look, we need a station here because there are a few people here that are now homesteading here. We've got to have a station here and then we have got to have another station over here, but he said, you know, we don't have the money to build these stations. So the government said, well, we'll give you \$5,000 each for each station that you construct and they gave a grant to the CPR to construct the stations, but they charged the \$5,000 per stations on the debt of the CNR and that debt is still there. When the CNR goes in every year to ask for a rate increase to cover their costs the costs are still based on the \$800 millions that they have got in debt from many, many years ago and the CPR just sits back there and they just have to have a free ride on what the CN is doing, Mr. Speaker.

That is the situation that faces us today, but the crunch is whether we want to see our farmers go down the drain here and our small rural businesses along with it in the rural areas of this province. That is the crunch and that's where you separate the men from the boys in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I want to know where they stand. We want to know where they stand because we want to know where we stand and the farmers out there that we are talking for and speaking for today want to know where they stand, too. So, I will be looking forward to see whether they are going to support this resolution or vote against it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon): The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

MR. ABE KOVNATS (Niakwa): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Assiniboia, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself in a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Flin Flon in the Chair for the Department of Health; and the Honourable Member for River East in the Chair for the Department of Economic Development and Tourism.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY — ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

MR. CHAIRMAN, Phil Eyer (River East): The Committee will come to order. We are on Item 1.(b)(1) Executive Salaries.

The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Chairman, I said on Friday that we would move off this very quickly. I just have a couple of brief comments to make on the subject that I was on. It was regarding Alcan. I just wondered if the Minister was aware that Alcan had studied the tax situation that IMC had used in Saskatchewan, in that IMC had a system of distributing the tax base from the plant throughout the several municipalities that would be supportive of the refinery, and naturally the tax base from that plant would be very extensive to do a lot of the infrastructure work that would be required for those municipalities.

Also, I would say that the Minister has mentioned in an article, and I think she did during the Estimates, that the percolator effect of the previous government was working from the top down and they are going to work from the bottom up. I firmly believe that the Minister will have to consider the small business in Manitoba, which she says they want to have developed first, desperately requires something to build on. The programs that were being looked at by the previous government, would as I said \$3 billion, the Potash, the Alcan Refinery, the Power Grid, which would lead to the extension of the construction of the power plants along the Nelson, all of that would be at least a 25-year project if we were able to have those large industries locate in Manitoba, and which would lead to at least 25-years construction along the Nelson.

So, I believe that small business has to have a base to build on in Manitoba. They will be able to go after the Alberta business and the Saskatchewan business that's there, but I can see no reason why they shouldn't have the opportunity to be building their businesses on projects that are happening in Manitoba where we can have a lot of say as to where the purchasing goes, and that the equipment and everything that they will have to buy will lead them into being able to quote on other businesses and I've stated that before.

We have never been all that successful in getting business out of Ontario. The manufacturers of Ontario are capable of supplying their big projects. The reason for the small business in Ontario is because they have had the opportunity to be suppliers to large corporations that have invested in Ontario and I think the same thing should happen in Manitoba. I would say to the Minister that those considerations while looking at the new projects should be first and uppermost in the minds of this government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madame Minister.

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, I thank the honourable member for raising the question of tax base distribution throughout several municipalities. We are aware of that possibility. In fact, we've discussed a proposal from representatives of the affected municipalities, at least those who would be affected by the current Alcan site and I think it's a good principle.

With regard to the approach to Economic Development, I believe that our government is in favour of both small business bottom up development and megaprojects, provided there is net benefit to the people of the province. I don't believe we have said we are against megaprojects. We are for a studied and planned approach to their development and that would include building in the Manitoba purchase, so I think the areas of disagreement are narrow. They have regard to the necessary homework and planning to be done by the public authority before moving into the proposed megaprojects, not a rejection of megaprojects per se.

I would suggest, Mr. Chairperson, that we have had fairly lengthy discussion, that we move into the line-by-line discussion.

MR. JOHNSTON: No problem. I had said I just had those few comments to make. I would ask a question on the Salary item that we're on. I notice that there is an increase and there were five staff of the Minister's office previously and two in the Deputy Minister's office for a total of seven. I imagine the increase is because of the executive assistant; I didn't have a person specified as such. Is that the reason?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, I don't have the numbers that you are looking at.

MR. JOHNSTON: I'm looking at my last year's numbers that I have; I don't have this year's numbers. There were seven before and I noticed there is an increase by approximately 30 percent from 217 to 281. I was just questioning what the increase is.

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, on the adjusted vote, three persons had in fact been added to the Minister's office and what we are recommending is no change in that number.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, then it is now 10, is it?

MRS. SMITH: Yes.

MR. JOHNSTON: The executive office, the special advisor to the Minister, Mr. Bergman, I wonder if the Minister could give us a reason why Mr. Bergman was let go.

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, it is customary for the special assistant to the Minister to be a person who is sympathetic with the political and economic approach of the government in power and that was the basis for the change.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, it was not customary in that position during our time. Mr. Bergman had previously worked for three different governments or three different political parties in his positions with the Provincial Government. Mr. Bergman, I don't ever think was there to be an adviser to the Minister as far as I was concerned.

From the point of view of politics he was a tremendous ambassador who knew everybody in Manitoba, certainly with the Manitoba Chambers and many small business people in Manitoba because of his experience previous to being with the government and after he came with the government and was an exceptionally good person to be able to go out and dig down to the bottom of any problems that might be out there and be able to advise the Minister on them.

I was asked if the change that has been made — and I know the person that has taken his position does have a sympathy to the present party, he's the vice president of the NDP party and as a matter of fact was a candidate who ran against myself — but I would hope that the replacement of Mr. Bergman is such that you have the continuity with the Chambers of Commerce throughout the province and the small business that he had because he was able to be called on at any time to go out and work very hard to solve any problem and advise the Minister.

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, I respect the fact that each Minister has different needs and views the office and their advisory needs in a different light. I think that's quite appropriate. I respect that the previous Minister chose to give highest priority to the role that he had Mr. Bergman play. I choose to give high priority to someone who's philosophy and economic approach I'm in sympathy with and my party.

I find this touches on an issue that I raised in my inaugural speech in the House and that is, there seems to be a belief among many Conservatives that they see the world the way the world is, whereas NDP's see it through an ideological or philosophical bias. I made the point then and I believe in it very strongly that both approaches are legitimate. They are honestly held by groups of people that it's not improper for an elected Minister to seek help from someone who shares and understands the general

philosophy and economic thrust to the party.

I chose to appoint as senior policy adviser, a person in whom I had confidence. I find that the relationship with the community is one that is an important one and I personally have been more than happy and active in going personally to meet Chambers of Commerce, small town groups, small business people. Not only that, I have had a steady procession of representatives of those groups visiting me in my office and I intend to continue with that open-door policy to the extent time and energy permit.

So, in my case I chose to give high priority to the type of consultant that I have appointed and it is with no disrespect to Mr. Bergman. I think he did a very able job in a field that he had a lot of experience and backing and I respect him for that. I chose to make a different appointment and I feel that I made a wise appointment for my needs.

MR. JOHNSTON: Then there was a special assistant before and there is an addition of three staff and as I mentioned, I believe, the Minister has an executive assistant which was not there before. Who are the other two or what are the other two?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, the previous Minister had filled the position of administrative officer and an ADM, and it's now to be officially the ADM of Strategic Planning. The other, the position of executive assistant was vacant and we have filled it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(b)(1)—pass; 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 1.(c)(1) Finance and Administration: Salaries—pass; 1.(c)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 1.(d)(1) Economic Research and Analysis: Salaries — the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, I am very aware of what this group does. They are exceptionally good at their jobs, I might add. I just want to ask the Minister, there was work being done on what was called the Manitoba Ten-Year Economic Review. I would wonder if that is continuing to be done because the statistics were, I believe, just about finished and there was work being done on the writing for the Ten-Year Economic Review. Is that being continued and if it is, when can we expect it?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, yes, that very valuable work is just about complete. The final approval should occur the first week in May. It will take a few days to check the data and it will then go to the printer and it should be available in printed form by mid-June.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(d)(1) Salaries—pass; 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 1.(e)(1) Manitoba Bureau of Statistics: Salaries — the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. JOHNSTON: There is not much of an increase in this department, Mr. Chairman, but the Minister outlined in her opening remarks that the Bureau of Statistics would be taking a more active role and I believe she said, an active role in the — I'm not sure whether it was gathering of statistics and in the statistics required for the strategic planning and maybe I haven't got that

right — but I would ask the Minister if she could just very briefly outline that new role. Also, is it the intention of the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics to start putting out a quarterly report as they did previously?

MRS. SMITH: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, the Economic Accounts Project is continuing in co-operation with Finance Department, so that it did not represent a great financial load on our department. The question of using the available resources in an effective way is one that we intend to take seriously and we will be setting priorities for the work done by this group. We are interested, in terms of expanding the data available, to secure more distributive data, not just aggregate data. That is, to see if we can find out the impact of programs on different groups in the community with a little more sensitivity. It may be we will find this kind of data collection is not within our means this year, in which case we will make a tighter plan and include a proposal for that in the following year.

MR. JOHNSTON: Will they continue to work closely with the sourcing programs as far as gathering statistics for those programs from a point of view of what will be required on large projects in western Canada?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, a simple answer to that is yes, we will be including our sourcing data base to include non-manufacturing firms, commencing with the industrial services. That is repair, maintenance, custom welding and machining and we will be including the western projects requirements.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(e)(1)—pass; 1.(e)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 1.(f)(1) Manitoba Horse Racing Commission Grant Assistance — The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. JOHNSTON: This has been increased, Mr. Chairman. It is very obvious why it has been increased. I know the very detailed technicalities that have to go on before this figure is arrived at with the estimates of horse racing days, purses, etc., and of course the new announcement that there would be an extra five percent on the triactors. The breakdown, as the Minister knows, of the 7.5 went to the province and the horse racing industry, but is it the intent to give the extra 5 percent in triactors all to the horse racing industry, and what will the percentages then work out to be from the point of view of the breakdown of the 7.5 on all racing and the extra 5 percent on the triactors?

MRS. SMITH: Mr. Chairperson, as you know The Parimutuel Tax Act is being changed in order to permit the larger takeout. The Tax Act, itself, does not designate the purpose of the money other than for industry development. The new Commission have been meeting with the groups affected and getting them to work out, in co-operation to the extent they can, a consensus as to what their joint needs on the industry are. I have been informed this morning that they are very close to a decision that there has been a high degree of consensus achieved, if not 100 percent, and that the other aspect of the process has been that the groups involved have been most appreciative of the opportunity which they say they haven't

really had for a long time if ever, some are saying, to sit down together with the Commission and take the time to go through their different needs and then to understand one another's needs, so that the recommendation they can then make to the Commission bears with it much more mutual understanding and sort of developed a spirit of co-operation among them. I feel it augurs well for the effectiveness of the new Commission and I will leave it to them to make the actual announcement of the division of the tax. They will, of course, consult with me to ensure that it has my approval, but I expect that I will be able to support the solution that they arrive at.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour.

Committee rise

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY - HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon): The Committee will come to order. I would direct the members' attention to Page 71, considering the Estimates of the Department of Health, Item No. 1, Executive Function 1.(a)(1), Minister's Salary.

The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, before I introduce the Department of Health Estimates for 1982-83, I should like to say how deeply in debt I am to the dedicated people who work with me. When I resumed this office in December, I saw many familiar faces as well as some new ones. I have found them as a group much as they have always been, a body of men and women devoted to raising the standard of health care in Manitoba. No Minister and no government could be better served than by people committed to an ideal. I wish to single out for particular tribute one of the most deeply committed, my Deputy Minister, Mr. Reg Edwards. During the past five months he has been a strong and steady support. As Executive Director of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, a position he still holds, he brings a compassionate mind and valuable administrative experience to a complex department. Manitobans are fortunate indeed to have such a person as their Deputy Minister of Health.

I wish also to acknowledge with thanks the help given to me by Dr. George Johnson who has held this office before me and who is responsible for the introduction of many of the successful programs still in place. I am thankful that he has accepted to remain with the department and to continue to contribute his wide knowledge and experience as medical consultant.

I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my personal staff. They are competent and industrious; they are loyal to me and to the department and I wish to thank them most warmly for their help and faithful service.

I must also express thanks to all the health care professionals and volunteers who serve the health needs of Manitobans outside government in our hospitals, personal care homes, universities, community

agencies and organizations. I know, Mr. Chairman, that they are men and women of courage and commitment and I want them to be assured that we need and appreciate every one of them.

I should also like to take this opportunity to thank the Opposition Health critic, the Honourable Member for Fort Garry. During the debate on the Speech from the Throne, he made a memorable speech devoted mainly to our Health Service which was under his direction during the previous administration. It was a fine speech and I welcome it as much for its form as for its content. It was sincere and honest and it raised many provocative issues about the future of health care in Canada. I want him to know, Mr. Chairman, that I take him at his word. I want the help he so generously offered. In the years ahead I must address many of the provocative issues to which he referred and I will welcome his ideas and his constructive criticism. To be of real value to the people he serves, a Health Minister must depend on critics whose concern for the general good can transcend political gain.

The honourable member said in the speech that he hoped I returned to this office to find the Department of Health in good shape, good spirit and reasonable comfort. I should like to assure him on that score. I find myself in agreement with a number of programs advanced during his term as Minister and this is par for the course because many of them had been either initiated or placed on the drawing board during the Schreyer administration. Some of these programs will progress without marked change. If we have to change the shape of others, we will do so with a minimum of discomfort and no loss of spirit.

Our goal, Mr. Chairman, is better health for all Manitobans. We will do what we have to do to achieve that goal. The Member for Fort Garry dwelled at some length on what he described as omissions from the Throne Speech. I assure him that he need not have any fear that the questions he raised will go unanswered for lack of attention or failure of energy. Our attention has been sharpened by the deficiency we have uncovered; our energy has increased because we have found so much work to be done.

One of the questions the honourable member asked in his speech was, where is the recognition of the long-range planning capability on which we were starting? I'm glad he asked this; it is an important question. It is, in fact, one of the first questions I asked myself when I assumed office. Our health system has become so complex and so costly that no Health Minister can function adequately without long-term planning. So where, I asked myself, was the long-term planning capability the previous Minister had so often mentioned? Where were the planners? I could not find them, Mr. Chairman, but I assure you and I assure the honourable member that they will soon be functioning.

We have set aside over \$2 million for new programs and for the expansion of the existing programs. Included in this amount is a substantial amount for the expansion of health planning, including new staff man years and a transfer of existing staff man years to this area of high priority. Our plan group will identify health priorities, formulate appropriate policies, goals and strategies for achieving these goals, both imme-

diately and long-range. They will also commence a systematic review of existing programs to ensure that Manitobans are continuing to receive effective services at a reasonable cost. We are not marking time, Mr. Chairman. We are going to infuse new strength into the best of our old ideas, adding 42 staff man years to the department's complement; 27 of which will be allocated to our Community Health Division for direct field services for public health nursing, home care and mental health services.

We are aware, Mr. Chairman, that if we are to successfully defend Medicare against rising costs, we must concentrate a larger share of our limited resources on planning preventive measures accompanied by health promotions. For this reason, we will seek an additional \$400,000 for our Community Health Services Division and an extra \$35,000 for health promotion activities. The total expenditure for 1980-83 for which we seek approval is to be \$913 million. This represents an increase over 1981-82 of \$188 million or 26 percent. In any event this, Mr. Chairman, is a staggering sum.

The Honourable Member for Fort Garry reminded us last month, that some critics feel that we cannot afford Medicare as it was originally conceived. My reply, Mr. Chairman, is that we cannot afford to let our health programs deteriorate because of under funding. A healthy population is our most precious natural resource; on it depends everything else. This government intends to provide not only the health facilities and resources needed by our population to restore health, but also the personal incentives that help to maintain the kind of productive good health everyone needs and wants.

I would also be asking for approval of funds to establish a rural Audiological Centre in the Interlake area; the last one of the rural regions to be provided with a modern hearing centre. Our plan is to ultimately provide such hearing centres in Winnipeg as well, and the first of these centres will, in fact, be established in this coming year.

We will ask for funds to provide for electronic technical service to collaborate and repair hearing equipment and to extend a Luther Control Centre Program for the profoundly deaf to offer service to persons in rural Manitoba. Other medical public health services included in our Budget include a medical consultant to establish the provincial protocol on home oxygen therapy, additional support for our Venereal Disease Program, additional funds to complete pilot projects of computer-assisted immunization monitoring, a program to offer nutrition education to Native families.

A prominent place is being reserved in my department for strengthening the Continuing Care Program. We recognize home care as the logical alternative to expensive institutional care. Indeed we recognized this back in 1974 when the previous NDP administration started their Home Care Program, which has since become a model for all Canada. We intend to continue strengthening because we can foresee increasing demands for this service. For example, we are requesting funds for equipment and staff to expand the Home Oxygen Program to rural Manitoba. We also recognize the need to plan carefully and to involve strategies to enrich and support the lives of our increasing elderly population. Since a

major proportion of home care is for the elderly, this group will serve our plans to increase the numbers of regional home care and nursing staff, but this is only the beginning of our plans for the elderly. Our long-range planning group will review all present programs for senior citizens and will advise us on such matters as the training of professional in geriatrics and gerontology, the expansion of day hospitals, adult day care and respite care, provision of enriched housing for senior citizens and other matters of importance to the welfare of the socially significant segment of the population.

In conformity with our election promise, the Manitoba Health Services Commission Estimates will include provision to subsidize eyeglasses for the elderly. Similar provisions will be included in the next two to three years to provide assistance to the elderly in the areas of hearing aids and dental services. Again, in conformity with our election promises, we will take steps this year to expand children's dental services. I will elaborate in this in greater detail, Mr. Chairman, when the item in question is being debated as a supplement to the Estimates.

For our Mental Health Division, we will be asking for funds for additional staff to meet the health needs of geriatric patients, as well as increase staff for both Brandon and Selkirk Mental Health Centres. In our Capital Budget, that is the government's Capital Budget, we will be asked for \$3.3 million to improve facilities at both these centres.

As I said earlier, Mr. Chairman, the overall budget of the Health Department is up by \$188 million over last year's \$725 million or 26 percent. The programs of the Alcoholism Foundation of Manitoba have increased in cost by \$1 million or by 16 percent. The balance of Health Department Programs are up nearly \$12 million or 18 percent. The Estimates of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, which comprised the major portion of the department spending, are up by \$175 million or 27 percent. We should not forget, Mr. Chairman, that we inherited a \$44 million deficit of Manitoba Health Services Commission's spending from the previous administration. However, even after adjusting for this substantial shortfall, we are projecting increased spending for Manitoba Health Services Commission of 19 percent.

Mr. Chairman, I will announce the details of the Manitoba Health Services Commission Capital Program when dealing with that particular line in the Estimate review. The program will not only take into account the legitimate requirements of the residents of Manitoba, but will be phased in, in such a way as to provide stimulus to the construction industry, bearing in mind the ability of the province to fund construction projects.

I should also like to mention some new and expanded programs to be funded by Manitoba Health Services Commission, during the upcoming year. The out-patient obstetrical screening services at the Health Science Center in St. Boniface General Hospital are to be expanded to provide service to rural communities.

Diagnostic ultrasound, which will include continued upgrading at the two teaching hospitals and new services at the Grace, Dauphin and the Pas hospitals. At present we maintain ambulatory electrocardiography

monitoring services called Halter and Monitoring at the two teaching hospitals in Winnipeg. During 1982-83, we propose to decentralize the service by providing it at five hospital locations. Surgical intensive care unit at the Health Science Centre will be renovated and expanded to enhance post-operative management of high risk surgical patients.

During 1982-83, we will further expand the provincial dialysis program operated from the Health Science Centre in the St. Boniface Hospital. The expansion will apply to both in-patients services and own dialysis services.

Physiotherapy staff will be increased at Brandon and Winnipeg hospitals to accommodate a growing number of out-patients.

During 1982-83, Manitoba's cardio-vascular surgery capacity will be expanded to meet the need for increased open heart surgery. The expansion will be based on the findings of a review committee that will be reporting to me, shortly.

We are also replacing major items of hospital equipment including radiological equipment. We will upgrade and expand nuclear medicine equipment. These items, provided for in our Estimates, are expected to cost in excess of \$7.5 million.

Included in the Estimates of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, is a general increase of 13 percent of the Municipal Ambulance Grants Program to help municipalities provide this necessary service.

Also included in the Estimates, are funds for the City of Winnipeg to assist them in implementing proposed improvements to their Emergency Health Response System. These funds will be applied toward the costs of upgrading staff training as part of their improvement program. Projected spending for the Northern Patient Transportation Service has been increased by \$685,000 or more than 40 percent. This government, through this and other programs, is committed to ensuring that northern residents benefit from standards of treatment comparable to those offered in the more populous south.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I think it is plain from the foregoing remarks as it will be from the detailed Estimates, that we are supporting a wide range of complex services. These services are designed, not only to provide medical and institutional support for the sick and the troubled, but to keep people free from the avoidable burden of disease. We propose to plan carefully and to keep our sights fixed on the future. We know that this will take political commitments, co-operation from everyone in the health field as well as every consumer of health care, concerned action from individuals and groups in and out of government and above all appropriate choices. The ultimate test of our strategy is the improvement of health. We do not see this as mere pious hope; we are convinced we are embarked on a winning battle.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the members of the committee. I tried to provide the Health Critic for the Opposition with different information that I think would be helpful to him, such as the staff man year and the different agencies that we deal with.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to pose a challenge to the members of this committee without trying to force anything and it might be something that will prove difficult to the Health Critic for the Opposition and to

myself, but I wonder if we could show the example of as much as possible, if we could try to refrain from smoking during the debate of these Estimates. It is something that I think that we should a little bit to show that we are concerned and maybe that'll help expedite the —(Interjection)— Well, I will do that for myself and if it works I'll tell you.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would like to thank the members very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I welcome the opportunity to embark on the examination of the Estimates of the Department of Health for 1982-83, and to respond to the opening statement just delivered by the Minister.

I want to say, first of all, that I congratulate him of course on his appointment as Minister of Health, his return to that office, which is an office that he occupied capably and well during the 1975-1977 period, the last two years approximately of the Schreyer administration. I envy his reappointment.

As he has said, Sir, he has the privilege and the honor of working in an extremely conscientious and committed community of public servants. No one seeking to serve the Province of Manitoba could ask a better environment than that of the Department of Health with its related arms, divisions and agencies such as the Health Services Commission and the Alcoholism Foundation. No one could look for a more loyal or helpful personal office staff. No one could look for or hope to find anywhere more dedicated and expert personnel ranging from the position of Deputy Minister, now occupied by Mr. Reg Edwards, whom I also congratulate through the special assistantships such as are held by Dr. George Johnson, who was so helpful to me, through the Assistant Deputy Ministries and down through the ranks of the Division Managers, Branch Managers, Program Directors, and all personnel serving under them and with them in the field.

It goes without saying that of course that dedication and that gratifying loyalty and sense of service is also found far and beyond those specific individual departmental positions and functions; it exists throughout our entire health system, in the health facilities themselves, in the external agencies, in the boards and advisory and administrative bodies that direct them and help to guide them in the whole public health field and in the field of volunteerism. So, I endorse on the basis of my own happy and gratifying experience of some four years, Sir, the comments of the Minister with respect to those persons, those individual Manitobans and their dedication and I wish to associate myself with the accolades that have been extended and that are so richly deserved.

I also want to thank the Minister for his kind references to my attempts during the debate on the Speech from the Throne to articulate some very important issues and challenges as I see them in the health field. I want to assure him that, like him and like many others, I am keenly interested in the health field, remain keenly interested in the health field. Only the role has changed, not the interest. I am just as deter-

mined as chief Health Critic for the Opposition as I was as Minister of Health for the Government of the Day, to contribute what I can to a strengthening and an improvement of our health spectrum in Manitoba and indeed hopefully beyond that, beyond Manitoba to the national arena because the Minister, I'm sure, would concede that there is a very important role to be played in terms of the challenges facing the whole Canadian health care system by individual provincial Ministers of Health. Because of the way our division of responsibilities is structured in this country under our Constitution, there are a great many things with respect to health care which the Federal Government and the Federal Minister cannot directly influence. There are a great many challenges in which the Federal Minister and the Federal Government cannot and does not immerse itself.

The battleground for the confrontation by government and by all of us with the dynamics of the health care system, the issues and challenges that exist in the health care system, is really within provincial boundaries, Mr. Chairman. It is really the provincial Ministers of Health and their personnel and those personnel who work in those provincial health networks who carry the responsibility, who meet the challenges every day, who work with the troops in the field and who have to contend with the pressures and the difficulties that naturally arise in any such enormous social program as our health care system.

Really, the Federal Department and the Federal Minister are somewhat removed from those day to day challenges and dynamics, so a great responsibility devolves down to the individual provincial Ministers to develop initiatives, to create leadership positions and to help influence the direction of health care in the country. No individual provincial Health Minister can do it alone. He or she, of course, needs the co-operation of other provincial Health Ministers, but he or she has the opportunity through the ongoing contact that he has with his counterparts in other provinces to seek to develop that kind of consensus, that kind of co-operative approach, that kind of cohesive action that can indeed lead to a national improvement in health care financing, health care administration and delivery and health care modernization.

As I said in my remarks during the Throne Speech Debate, I believe that Opposition health critics can participate in that role too and I really see it as the role in large part of Opposition health critics today because of the magnitude and the complexity of health challenges all over the world and certainly in North America and certainly in Canada, to help to contribute to the solution of those problems, to participate as positively and constructively as possible in tackling those problems, addressing them and working for solutions.

No answers to the great challenges facing the system will be achieved without a considerable degree of that kind of co-operation. That doesn't suggest for a moment that there won't be battles and confrontations between a Health Minister and his or her chief critic on the Opposition side of the House, wherever that House may be in Canada, in this case our House here in Manitoba. Of course there will be because there will be sincerely held differences of opinion as to the directions being taken or the directions being

evaded. But given that — and that's a natural and very necessary part of our free democratic parliamentary system — there should also be, Sir — and it's my intention hopefully to help create such an environment — a climate of working co-operation that goes beyond partisanship to come face to face with the very crucial issues that are challenging our universal Medicare system and our universal hospitalization system in 1982.

I believe if we don't face up to them, if we don't work together to resolve some of those challenges, if we don't meet the pressures that are closing in upon the system and effectively contain them and limit them, that our whole health system is in serious danger.

I believe serious challenges and really very critical threats face the system and I believe there has to be major change, even if it is traumatic, in a number of our approaches and our attitudes to our much cherished universal health care system if it is to survive the 1980's and if it is to be equipped to meet the challenges and health care realities that are certain to be upon us in the 1990's and beyond.

Mr. Chairman, I know that I have a few minutes left in which to offer my response to the Minister's opening statement, but it's being 4:30 on the clock. I yield the floor, Sir, and hope to resume when Committee resumes at 8:00 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is now 4:30 p.m. and time for Private Members' Hour, so I am interrupting proceedings of the Committee and will return at the call of the House.

Call in the Speaker.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

RESOLUTION NO. 2 - COMPULSORY METRIC SYSTEM

MR. SPEAKER, James D. Walding (St. Vital): Order please. The time being 4:30 p.m., Private Members' Hour.

On the proposed resolution of the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell as amended by the Honourable Member for Gimli. The Honourable Minister of Health has 20 minutes.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister of Health would like to have this matter stand, by leave. He has just come out of Estimates and he has a commitment. He would like to leave it stand.

MR. SPEAKER: As the Honourable Minister is no doubt aware, matters are not permitted to stand at Private Members' Hour and if the member is not present, another member can continue the debate and if debate is not concluded, then the matter drops to the bottom of the list, if the Honourable Minister of Health is not going to be present in the next minute or two.

The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. DONALD ORCHARD (Pembina): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to speak on this Resolution, but I had truly hoped that the MLA for Thompson in seconding the amendment might have given us the

benefit of his wisdom in seconding the amendment made by the MLA for Gimli. That often, Mr. Speaker, is a tradition of one seconding an amendment to a Resolution of importance to the people of Manitoba, and possibly we'll hear from the MLA for Thompson yet this afternoon because there are only 20 minutes of contribution that one can make to such a Resolution. We certainly hope that the MLA for Thompson sees fit to justify his support of the amendment proposed by the MLA for Gimli.

Now, Mr. Chairman, we on this side of the House are very curious as to what prompted the amendment by the MLA for Gimli, why they chose to amend the Resolution that is currently of great concern to a number of Manitobans, not only in the farm community, Mr. Speaker, but also of great concern to the merchants throughout the length and breadth of this province?

And it's very curious to see the government, through their backbench members amending this Resolution, urging the Government of Canada to honour the main tenants of the White Paper on metric conversion in Canada. That's why I really wanted the MLA for Thompson to justify, because his colleague the MLA for Gimli didn't justify the nature of that amendment and I thought that the wisdom to justify that lay entirely with the MLA for Thompson and in his silence we have to assume otherwise until we hear from him. But we will listen intently for his very wise and sagacious contribution at some later date.

Possibly the MLA for Thompson when he makes that presentation to us and tells us why he is supporting the Federal-Liberal Government in their imposition of federal metric on us, he might answer some of the very serious questions that have arisen from the metric conversion — the forced metric conversion from the deviance of the Federal Government from the White Paper in 1971 on metric conversion — and he might tell us why at this stage of the game the N.D. Party of Canada, as well as of Manitoba, are supportive of the efforts of the Federal-Liberal Government to impose metric upon the people of Canada against their will in the majority. It's a very interesting position for the NDP to find themselves in — not an uncommon one I might say, Mr. Speaker — because if there are bed partners in politics they are the Federal Liberals and the Federal NDP, and if there are provincial partners in politics the bed partners are the Provincial Liberals and the Provincial NDP. They tend to flock together and get shot as crows together.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the MLA for Thompson addresses us and he gives us his words of wisdom and contribution on the metric motion, I'd like him to answer one basic question. I'd like him to tell me, how many centimetres there are in a . . . ? That is an issue that is of burning importance in that great sister province, how many centimetres there are in a . . . and that is an issue of burning importance in our sister province of confederation, Newfoundland? I'd like the MLA for Thompson to give us that information so that he can help all of Canadians understand metric better.

But what the NDP have suggested in this amendment, Mr. Speaker, is that we support the White Paper on metric conversion. Now that might have been a usable position because all three parties agreed with

the White Paper on metric conversion in 1971, but what has happened is that the Liberals in Ottawa have chosen to ignore the White Paper and along with them, tagging along on their coat tails, are the Federal NDP and the Provincial NDP supporting their forced conversion of metric in Canada — mandatory, compulsory conversion to metric in Canada — not at all like the recommendations in the White Paper on metric. So this amendment posed by the MLA for Gimli and seconded by the MLA for Thompson shows how completely in bed with the Federal Liberals the NDP have now become in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote another gentleman who has considerable prominence in the length and breadth of this province and that is an M.P. by the name of John Crosbie who describes the Federal NDP as the red rump of the Liberal Party, and that's exactly what they are when they support and amend the Resolution in agreement with the Liberal Government of Canada.

What did that 1971 White Paper say, Mr. Speaker? It said on Page 1, "That there should be voluntary switching to metric in Canada" — voluntary. It said on Page 4, "That we should not move to metric conversion in Canada out of step with our major trading party, the United States of America," and what have the Federal Liberals and the NDP in support dragging along on their coat tails given us? Compulsory switch to metric. The imposition of metric with the threat of jail terms, fines, and, Mr. Speaker, that is the amendment that those two backbenchers in the N.D. Party gave to us last week on this metric, that's the amendment they gave us; something that is not happening, will not happen, because they prefer to drag along on the coat strings of the Federal-Liberal Party. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, the red rump of the Liberal Party is speaking over there in the person of the Attorney-General, the true red rump of the Liberal Party.

Now, Mr. Speaker, having seen that their amendment is totally out of touch with what is happening, I can only assume that the Federal NDP agrees with the Liberal Party and so does their provincial counterparts. Do you know why, Mr. Speaker, do you know why the N.D. Party in the province is agreeing with the metric conversion? Because the National Farmers Union in the Province of Manitoba says, metric is all right, and those are the only people that the N.D. Party of Manitoba listen to, is the National Farmers Union. All of their policy comes from them on the Beef Income Stabilization, on compulsory enforcement of the metric, that is who they rely on for their policy in the Province of Manitoba, the NFU, the NFU and the NDP, another bed-partner combination.

Now, let's take a look, Mr. Speaker, at what is happening in metric today. It is not a voluntary program as was suggested in the White Paper. It is not a program in phase with our major trading partner the U.S., as was recommended in the White Paper. No, no. It's forced conversion to metric at the threat of fines and jail terms and the merchants in this country of Canada right now are in opposition to the conversion to metric in their stores, metric scales. And why are they opposed, Mr. Speaker? Well, they don't happen to want to spend \$3,000 on a scale to sell a few pounds of produce and a few pounds of meat per day to their

consumers, but they're being forced to convert, and the merchants in this country are en masse protesting the conversion to metric, the forced conversion to metric.

Mr. Speaker, why are they opposed? They're opposed because they know those costs of metric conversion are being passed on to their consumers in the form of higher prices for the goods they sell in their stores, and that is what the N.D. Party in Manitoba is supporting. They are supporting higher prices to the consumers of Manitoba and the consumers of Canada via backing the Liberal adoption of forced metric conversion in Canada and in all the provinces.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want the MLA for Rupertsland to go to Red Sucker Lake and tell his people that the store in Red Sucker Lake has to put the prices of goods up higher than what he has already complained about in this House because they have to buy a \$3,000 metric scale. I would like some of the backbench members in the City of Winnipeg to go and explain why metric conversion is going to be a great thing for their mom-and-dad corner store when they convert to a \$3,000 metric scale. Go and talk to them and find out whether they think the program is voluntary. Ask those merchants if they have received a threatening letter from the Federal Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, advising them to convert or else, and it's coincidence that today, as we debate this resolution with the amendment from the ND party, that today in Calgary, there is a court case going on and you know what the court case is about? It is the Federal Government taking an independent merchant to court and you know why the Federal Government is taking him to court? Because he dared to have labels for the packages he sells in his store printed in Imperial only. He dared to have Imperial measure only, Mr. Speaker, and the Federal Government now has him in court imposing their will on that man in Calgary. There are two pending court cases from Vancouver and right now, there are a group of merchants in Ontario that are banding together and there is up to about 35 of them now and when they get to be 100, their petition is simply going to say, "We will not convert to metric. Put us in jail." Mr. Speaker, that is going to bring the metric conversion in the retail trade to a head where the Federal Government is going to have to make a decision as to how many merchants they want to put in jail to force metric on Canadians.

You know, in some small way, this forced metric conversion agrees with ND party philosophy because who does it cause the greatest imposition on in the merchant and the retail trade? Well, it imposes the greatest hardship on the small independent retailers, the mom-and-dad corner stores, the people that don't have the volumes of the Safeways and the Loblaws. The smaller stores are the ones that cannot afford to convert and those are the small-business backbone that so often the ND party has talked about in such glowing terms, but they are supporting metric conversion for those people and the metric conversion in no small way will contribute to their demise in the business community. What does that lead us to? That leads us to the retail trade going to the Safeways, to the Loblaws, to the major chains, just the very kind of retailing outfit that the ND party so opposes and is

so aberrant to.

Mr. Speaker, I can simply say that this metric resolution plays into their hands nicely because they want to eliminate the small independent businessmen in the Province of Manitoba and in the country of Canada and then they want the major business to be done by the multinational chains, the Safeways, and then they can say after the Safeways have it, "They are not good corporate citizens so we will nationalize them." That is what they are telling us about CPR right now and that is what they will do in the retail trade. The Attorney-General of this province will be the foremost advocate of the nationalization of industries in this province. It is his philosophy; it is what he believes in; it is what he ran for in 1957 and he still believes today, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. ORCHARD: So, we have the Liberal Government in Ottawa —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I bring to all members' attention that no member should impute motives to another member. I hope that the Honourable Member for Pembina will bear that in mind in making his remarks.

MR. ORCHARD: I accept your sound and sagacious advice, Mr. Speaker. The metric conversion, Mr. Speaker, has cost Canadians to date untold millions of dollars and there are three very prominent aspects of the metric conversion that grates every single Canadian in this country. First of all, there is the bureaucracy that Ottawa has set up to administer the metric conversion and that bureaucracy is large. It is at the expense of the taxpayers, the individuals that the ND party of Manitoba tells everyone they care for. It is the little guy that pays the taxes to support the bureaucracy to force metric on Canadians. The very people that the ND party so care for, they allow the Liberal Government in Ottawa to trample on the rights of Canadians in forcing metric down their throats, and they support it, Mr. Speaker.

The second thing that is costing Canadians substantial amounts of money is the Metric Monitor, that little piece of paper that we get, propaganda, one of my colleagues says, from the Federal bureaucracy telling us how sweet and lovely metric is and how smooth the conversion is and how beneficial the conversion is.

The third thing that we get delivered to us every single day of the week is an ad on metric paid for by the Federal Government on the television stations, in our local newspapers, on our radio station, millions of dollars spent on converting to metric when our major trading partner has, in its wisdom, decided not to convert. Mr. Speaker, I submit that the conversion to metric in Canada out of tune with the United States is a direct slap by the Liberal Government in Ottawa, supported by their bed-partners, the ND party of Canada, to the United States, our major neighbour and trading partner. Because the U.S. hasn't gone, they are going to go and they are going to force every single import for consumer consumption in Canada to have metric labeling on it. I only remind you, Mr.

Speaker, of the crisis in 1978 when the beer strike was on and beer drinkers in Manitoba were deprived of beer from the United States because the cans were in ounces only; they did not have metric measure. That is the kind of slap in the face to U.S. imports that metric imposition has given us.

I want to deal just briefly, Mr. Speaker, with the farm community. This country was laid out on the British measure system in miles, sections, acres. Our grain was sold in bushels. Now, we were told that metric was necessary to make us more competitive in the export world. Well, grain; do you know what our elevators do in grain nowadays? They buy the grain from the farmers in tonnes and they pay us so many dollars per tonne and the grain ticket is written out in metric. Then, they convert the metric tonnes for the railroads back to bushels, so the railroads can know how many bushels of grain they haul down to the Lakehead. Once the grain gets to the Lakehead, it is converted to tonnes so we can tell how many tonnes of storage we have and then, when they load it out on the lake boats for furtherance to the eastern St. Lawrence ports, the boats haul bushels.

Now, what did metric conversion do for us there? It added layers upon layers of paperwork and cost and that reduces the net income to farmers, something that the ND party is very concerned about in their motherhood statements and they're telling how they want to save farmers money. Where were they standing up and speaking against metric conversion that cost farmers money? All of our chemicals are now in litres. You know, there is a great deal of confusion on litres, and litres and hectares, and you know why? Because every single one of us as farmers bought our sprayers in 60-foot widths, not metres, but 60 feet, 80 feet. All of the nozzles were designed to deliver so many gallons per acre at so many pounds per square inch pressure, not litres per hectare at so many kilopascals of pressure. That means nothing to the standard way in which farmers have put their chemicals on and in which our United States counterparts in farming are putting their chemicals on.

What has all this done? It has raised the cost of chemicals to the farm community. It has imposed additional costs. In an era and a time when competition is very keen internationally, our farmers are being forced to pay for the conversion to metric by the Federal Government and we are losing export markets because of it, because it takes more dollars to recover our costs in Canada because of metric. That isn't enhancing our competitive position internationally. The United States are laughing up their sleeve at us right now, while they export bushels of grain, double their exports in the last 10 years and we sit back with an 8-percent increase and say we're doing a great job.

Mr. Speaker, the United States decided in their wisdom not to convert to metric, because their whole surveying system, their highways system, everything - their buildings were built in the British system. There are 8-foot walls, not 3.2745 metres. You know . . .

A MEMBER: Don't use the word British, use the word Imperial.

MR. ORCHARD: . . . Imperial system, that's right. But the Imperial system has a great deal of frightening

implication for the ND Party, because anything Imperial might signify something back to previous glorious days.

But, Mr. Speaker, the metric system should not be imposed upon Canadians. It should be voluntary. It is well beyond that, and we had hoped in introducing this Resolution that we would have the support of the ND Party in Manitoba, who claimed to be consulting with Manitobans and in touch with what Manitobans want and to represent Manitobans in their wishes and desires. Well, clearly, already with this one Resolution, we know the ND Party has been listening to the NFU and they are indeed out of touch with the average Manitoban when they support metric conversion as they do; when they support the Federal Liberal Government as they do, they are out of touch with the average Manitoban; they are out of touch with the farm community; they are out of touch with the merchants in this province who are being forced to convert. We had hoped that at least on this one issue alone, we would have had unanimous support in this House on the metric conversion and hopes with a unanimous support in this House on government and Opposition side, that we would have some impact on the Federal Government and help to deter their head-long binge into metric conversion. But alas, Mr. Speaker, we have seen that we on this side of the House representing the people as we do, cannot count on the support of the ND Government in our fight against forced metric conversion in Manitoba.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Before we proceed, I wonder if I might direct the attention to the loge on my left where we have the Minister of Transportation from Newfoundland and Labrador with us, the Honourable Ron Dawe.

On behalf of all of the members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

SUPPLY - HEALTH (Cont'd)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. STEVE ASHTON (Thompson): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm indeed pleased to speak on this issue and speak in support of the amendment moved by the Member for Gimli last week and which I, of course, seconded. I wanted the opportunity actually to hear some of the debate from the other side and see if perhaps the tack taken by the Honourable Member for Arthur would be perhaps changed upon reflection of exactly what the amendment says, but I notice it hasn't. The Honourable Member for Pembina has just proceeded to repeat much of the same sort of sentiment as the Member for Arthur and I think that's a big mistake on their part and I'll get to the specific reasons for that later.

I would like, before getting into detail on this particular issue, to commend the Member for Gimli for pointing out some of the fallacies that have been made public recently, in regards to this particular issue and to commend him for the research on this issue. I find it unfortunate that the members from the

opposite side of the House have not seen fit to do their own research on this particular issue, and for their benefit perhaps I'll go a bit into the history of what has happened in regards to metric in Canada.

As was pointed out and I will give credit to - I believe it was the Honourable Member for Minnedosa, who was mentioning, or pardon me - for Roblin-Russell, who was mentioning the fact that metric is not new to Canada. It first was introduced in 1871 by a Conservative Government under Sir John A. MacDonald. That was introduced in the form of The Metric Weights and Measures Act and was consolidated into The Weights and Measure Act of 1873. So, it's nothing new, the metric system as such. And, indeed, prior to the introduction of the Federal White Paper in 1970, the metric system was adopted in many different sectors, particularly in terms of scientific research, so metric is nothing new to Canada.

The key area which we're concentrating on under this Resolution and indeed the amendment, is the more recent broadening of metric in Canada and this began, of course, in January of 1970 with the introduction of a White Paper, which I will also be getting to in a few minutes. This led to an update of The Weights and Measure Act in April of 1971. In June 1971, a Metric Commission was established by the Prime Minister and there was considerable debate in the House of Commons, contrary to what has been suggested by certain people; for example March 1975, there was considerable debate in the House of Commons on the setting of guidelines for the Metric Commission. Also November 1976, there was debate on the Omnibus Bill C-23, which included a number of items of concern to the metric area. There was also debate in June, in fact June 10th of 1980 to be exact, on a non-confidence motion put forward by both Opposition parties and supported by both Opposition parties, that being the Conservative and NDP parties at the federal level.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, there has been considerable discussion of this issue at the federal level, contrary to what has been suggested by some. Now my area of specific concern in the amendment, of course, is the White Paper itself. I should point out that this White Paper was tabled as I mentioned, early in 1970, was accepted by all three parties. In fact Jed Baldwin of the Conservative Party made a speech in which he also supported the basis of the White Paper and I would recommend that speech to the Honourable Members opposite, so that they might refresh their memory on where their party has stood over the years on this particular issue, and that is where I come to in the amendment.

The whole question of the metric issue really is not one of whether we're going to have the metric system or not, but it's the introduction of the metric system. If you will read the White Paper, you will find that many of the sections are a direct concern, a direct concern about this particular issue. Now it's apparent from the previous two speakers that they had not read the White Paper, nor had they consulted with their federal colleagues who in keeping with the principle of this White Paper, have criticized the government quite strongly, which has diverged from the White Paper. I will point out in a few minutes, some of the particular areas where they and the NDP federally has criticized

the Federal Government, areas which were contained in this White Paper which were not followed by the Federal Government, the Federal Liberal Government.

I must say I'm somewhat surprised, for example, when I heard the Member for Arthur state quite clear, that he is going to vote against this amendment, because this amendment embodies exactly what the federal Conservative Party has been saying about the entire metric issue, as well as the federal NDP. I'm surprised to see that. I wonder if this has got something to do with the influence of Western Canada Separatists in that member's riding; perhaps he is somewhat concerned about their breathing down his neck; perhaps as has been the case in the past, the member hasn't done his research. Whatever - I find it rather strange.

I also find it rather strange to see the Honourable Member for Pembina bashing the metric system so solidly. I happened to pick up a highway map the other day. This is the 1981-82 Official Highway Map and on the back there is a slight - well I guess it's a message - from the former Minister of Highways and Transportation, who is now the Member for Pembina. Now if you open up this document, it's rather a considerable size, I haven't measured it, either in the Imperial system or the metric system, but it's about 100 centimetres I think. If you open up this document, all the distances are in kilometres, all of the distances. There is a small conversion table, much as one sees on one's speedometer, but all the distances are in kilometres.

Well here we have, I think, a rather strange situation, when a member as a Minister was publishing, using the metric system, and then he comes in and bashes it and bashes it and bashes it continuously. I find that rather hard to accept. But to get back to the major part of the amendment, that being the White Paper, I would like, for the benefit of the members opposite and particularly for the benefit of the Member for Arthur, the Member for Pembina, to read certain sections of this White Paper which I think are directly of concern to the debate here today.

To begin with I think the general commitment was made quite clear in the White Paper and in Section 1.5 it states "the government believes that adoption of the metric system of measurement is ultimately inevitable and desirable for Canada." Later on in that section it states "the government believes that the goal is clear; the problems lie in determining how to reach this goal so as to ensure the benefits with a minimum of cost" and it was general acceptance of that by all three parties.

It goes on to talk about the cost versus the benefit of this change. For example, in Section 1.3: "to make such a change in a modern industrial nation entails cost and inconvenience, however, many have concluded that the benefits offered by the metric system more than justify conversion." Section 1.6 is also of a similar vein: "the government accordingly accepts eventual conversions definite objective Canadian policy proposes means of studying consultation whereby the pace and the methods of change may be determined in the national interests."

Now here I think is one of the areas, in this particular section, where there has been considerable divergence on the part of the Federal Liberal Government

and what this whole debate is really about. It goes on to say "no legislative action is contemplated which would make mandatory a general use of metric in place of inch-pound units, although some legislation may prove desirable to foster familiarity with metric units.

In other words, it was to be a voluntary conversion. That is not, in fact, what is happened and this is one of the reasons the Honourable Member for Gimli proposed this motion, one of the reasons I seconded it.

To continue, Mr. Speaker, I think you will find throughout this document a number of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. Does the Honourable Member for Minnedosa have a Point of Order?

MR. BLAKE: No, I just wonder if the member would submit to a question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. ASHTON: I'd be glad to entertain a question at the end of my comments, Mr. Speaker.

To continue with the White Paper, there was further on a lot of references to the need to avoid compulsory change and, in fact, there was a lot of reference to the need to avoid an overall change. There was talk of doing it sector by sector and I should quote in this regard Section 2.6 "whenever conversion to the metric system is contemplated each industry sector must weigh the benefits of an internationally uniform and coherent system of measurement against the costs of changing from the existing system. The balancing of costs and benefits will influence the pace of the conversion process." And in Section 2.7 "experience abroad has shown that it is not essential that conversion should proceed equally and evenly in all sectors." So they talked of going sector by sector.

Later on they emphasized the need to have proper education on this particular issue and, in particular, in Section 3(1.3) "planning and preparation in the public and private sectors should be encouraged in such a manner as to achieve the maximum benefits at minimum costs to the public, to industry and to governments at all levels." Section 3.2 says "information about the metric system should be disseminated to the general public and introduction of the system should be fostered where it will have the maximum educational impact with relatively low costs."

They also stressed in the White Paper the need to co-ordinate the introduction of the metric system with its introduction in the United States and I quote, in particular, Section 4.1.4 "because however the inch-pound system is dominant in the United States and was so previously in Britain, the proportion of goods and services produced under this system is higher than population figures might suggest, in fact, industrial capability and technological leadership of the United States leads to dominance of inch-pound design specifications in many fields"; and specifically in 4.1.7. they stated "because of the close ties between the United States and Canada, in science, technology, industry and commerce, each country has a special interest in the course likely to be followed by the

other in respect to metric conversion." This is indeed another area where there has been a divergence from the White Paper because there has not been much attention paid in recent years to the trend in the United States, which is our major trading partner.

Another aspect repeated again in the White Paper towards the end of the document, was the importance of having a voluntary conversion and importance of using discretion in that voluntary conversion and I should quote in this regard Section 4.5.4 "in all such circumstances a voluntary approach to metrication of industrial standards appears to be necessary and a wise course, with wide areas left for discretion to be exercised by management." This was another area where I think they moved rather too quickly and basically forgot about the White Paper in the process.

To continue in the document they also stressed once again the need for public understanding, and I should note under Section 5, proposed actions, 5.2 "it will be an important element of the process of conversion to ensure public understanding of the desirability of the objectives of the nature of the changes intended and of the complexity and timing of the process of change."

Well I think, Mr. Speaker, if one reads this document one can see why both the Federal Conservative Party and the Federal NDP, in 1980, proposed a motion, which is actually a motion of non-confidence in the government; both parties supported it, the Liberals voted it down. I would say, for the honourable members opposite who perhaps haven't heard of this resolution, or aren't in good communication with their Federal counterparts, that it is available from the Legislative Library. It's June 10th, 1980 and there's a considerable amount of coverage here of rather good debate.

I think the honourable members might benefit from the practise of reading it themselves; they don't seem to have read too much else on this issue, but I must say, after having read the White Paper myself and after the Member for Gimli having read the amendment, that we find it surprising, we find it really surprising that the Conservative Opposition has decided to take this as another moment for partisanship, they've taken it as a chance to somehow bash the NDP and that's I think, largely, what the Member for Pembina did in his speech. I find it very surprising because, here at the Federal level, the two Opposition parties voted in support of this motion, voted in support of a motion that aimed at getting back to the principles of the White Paper. They combined in a spirit of nonpartisanship on an issue of concern to their constituents, and here we have provincially the Manitoba Conservative Party forgetting about this, forgetting totally about what their party is saying federally and trying to use it as a crass partisan political issue. I find that shameful, Mr. Speaker.

As a new member in this House, I expected better. I expected debates to be well researched; I expected debates to be consistent. But the Honourable Member for Pembina and the Honourable Member for Arthur, I think, have shot down my expectations rather much these last few days, rather much.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Gimli and myself proposed this amendment, not out of crass partisanship, but out of our honest concern

on this particular issue because I have heard many a time people say that they feel that metric is being imposed on the people of Canada, that it's being imposed rather too rapidly and it is causing a financial burden to small businessmen, farmers and many other people.

We introduced this amendment because the White Paper on metric conversion, which was supported by all three parties, specifically addressed itself to these particular issues. But the Federal Liberals, as they often seem to do, ignored their own stated goals; they ignored the agreement from all three parties; they tried to introduce it rather too rapidly and that is why we introduced this amendment.

So in concluding, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am surprised at what the Honourable Member for Pembina and the Honourable Member for Arthur said in their debate on this particular amendment. I had expected that they would have supported it because it is consistent with the White Paper that was supported by their political party federally. It is consistent with the June 10, 1980 motion in the House of Commons which they supported, and it is consistent with what they, I think anyway, what they are trying to express here, that they feel that metric is being imposed rather unfairly on some and rather too quickly.

I would urge them to reconsider, Mr. Speaker, and support this amendment because we, on this side of the House, we feel that on issues such as this that there is no need for unnecessary partisanship, that where there is a general agreement of a problem that we can sit down and in this particular House bipartisanly — and I suppose at the federal level you have to include the Liberals as well — we can sit down and speak to this issue as representatives of our constituents rather than merely mouthpieces for our particular political parties. I would urge the honourable members to adopt this amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. BLAKE: I wonder if the honourable member would submit to a question at the end of his remarks, Mr. Speaker. To preface it, as someone in this House once said about the Minister now of Immigration and Manpower, that he's a fine young man, but his mother kept him in school too long. As the member will find, some people have to go out and earn a living in this world, and I would like to ask the member if he supports the provision for prosecution to those who do not convert to the metric system in places like Red Sucker Lake, Garden Hill, Basswood, Manitoba, or Wabowden, that merchant that doesn't put \$3,000 or \$4,000 metric measuring system into his little store, does he support the prosecution of that person?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. ASHTON: Mr. Speaker, I believe that particular law that the member is referring to is not actually part of the metric process but is part of the more general Weights and Measures Act, I'm advised by the Member for Gimli. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that the question is rather a non sequitur because it is the law and I would

hope that those responsible for enforcement of the law would use a bit of discretion. I personally think that penalty is far too harsh.

As I mentioned, I believe the whole process is being rather unfair to a lot of people in this country and rather than myself or the Member for Minnedosa exchange this sort of thing here, I would suggest that we send this message as an outline to the amendment to the Federal Government, that we're not happy with the way the introduction to the metric system has been proceeding.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, indeed it is interesting to listen to the Honourable Member for Thompson and the arguments that he puts forward in his own contorted thinking when he says that he is opposed to a motion which would delay for at least a decade, the compulsory or the mandatory metric conversion, or until the metric system becomes mandatory in the United States of America, and he's opposed to that. He's told us that quite emphatically and I would imagine that as being a member of a good American union he would want to support American policies, but I notice that he has a resolution on here where he's talking about dogmatic, monitorist, economic policies, Reaganomics. I somehow get the impression that's another resolution, but I see the member is thoroughly confused and cannot really get his priorities straight.

The problem that we have seen in Canada is one that has emerged over the last 10 years and the honourable member consistently refers to the last 10 years in the House of what happened in Ottawa, what happened in 1970 and '75 and '77 and again in '80, but he is not in touch with what is happening to date.

Now, the Honourable Minister of Health is in touch with what is happening to date. He didn't want to debate the issue at all and I think he has a very good reason, because when you talk about metric you're usually talking about weights and measures and I know he has an aversion towards weights and measures, so I don't blame him for not taking part in the debate at all.

But to hear the Honourable Member for Thompson get involved and to say that he is opposed to a delay in the metric conversion when you see what effect it is having on people, and he refuses to look at what is happening in society today, but instead buries his head in his books and his Hansards of 10 years ago, and reads reports. I've got the report too. I'm only going to quote one line from it, one line only. Section 3(1) Sub (1), and this is the purpose of the whole thing, "That the system of metric units should be acknowledged as inevitable and in the national interest" — in the national interest to create division, confusion, persecution," is that in the national interest? But this member here loves to see people prosecuted. He doesn't mind if a grocer is prosecuted, he says that is the law. He says it comes under The Weights and Measures Act. Any metric conversion embraces, embodies The Weights and Measures Act, but no he doesn't mind if people are prosecuted. —(Interjection)— Yes you did, that's what the member said. The member said that he supported the law. He would

hope that they would be a little lenient but he didn't say that he would oppose it. He didn't say at all that he would oppose it and that my friend, is something that you will live with for a long time to come. You will live with that for a long time to come because my friend, the people in this country, the people in Canada, whether it's in the Province of Manitoba, the Province of Prince Edward Island, the Province of British Columbia or even the North West Territories, they find great difficulty when they see that the cost of a product rising immediately when the unit of measurement is changed, when the price of a product in pounds is converted to metric it's amazing how the price of the product increases at the same time and that is what this member is supporting.

He is supporting increased consumer costs, increased penalties to the citizens of Manitoba and Canada and also at the same time he appears from other activities of his to be anti-American. Now maybe that is the reason why he is.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Does the Honourable Member for Thompson have a point of order?

MR. ASHTON: A point of privilege. I must explain my newness to the roles but I don't recall casting aspersions such as describing myself as anti-American is proper in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Metric in its implementation in this country has caused untold problems. You've heard some by the Honourable Member for Pembina talking about the farm industry. It's not only the cost of conversion but in the farming industry the application of chemicals is a very exact science and if the farmer is unfamiliar with the measurements and the standards used he could commit an error and by one small error he can totally destroy his crop. That is a cost not only to the farmer, but to Canada as a whole because production declines and Canada's balance of payments falls further in arrears.

Mr. Speaker, the original intent of the metric proposal was one that was voluntary. In fact we lived for well over 100 years with a dual system, both imperial and metric were legal and used simultaneously in Canada for over 100 years without any major problem.

I can tell you as a farmer that I exported grain 30 years ago in metric measurement. It wasn't forced on me by government because industry knows that a product that is desired by a customer, that they will provide it in the form that the customer wants and they don't need legislation.

If the customer wants wheat shipped in tonnes the Canadian farmer will ship it in tonnes. If they want it shipped in bushels he will run a chance of running afoul of the Canadian law and provide it in the measurement that the customer wants. So there is no reason for a mandatory conversion to metric.

I believe that metric eventually will be a desirable standard and I'm not opposed to it, it's always been in our statutes but at the present time we have seen daily the growing antagonism that is coming to the front in our country here in Canada as metric is literally forced down people's throats.

It's symptomatic of a greater danger. That government activities today are very seldom acceptable to people — and I don't know when governments are going to learn to listen to the people, they have to — the public quite often in most cases doesn't want what government is trying to do to them. That applies to all political parties, to municipal, provincial and federal governments, to all levels of government but governments so far have not, in this country, listened to what people are saying. That is not quite the case in the United States of America.

The people of California stood government on its ear several years ago with their Proposition 13, and the results of that surprisingly were beneficial to the state. It was a new learning process for the state legislators to find out that the people were right and the state was wrong.

So there is an opportunity here for the legislators to listen to the people and the people are telling you right now that we don't want metric forced on us. But the Honourable Member for Thompson isn't saying that; the Honourable Member for Gimli isn't saying that. They are saying that we go ahead with the orderly implementation of metric conversion as outlined in the White Paper because as the White Paper says, "it is in the best interests of the nation." It is in the national interest.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that metric conversion at the present time, is not in the national interest. And we will find out when we come to a vote, because the very reasonable proposal of the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell to phase it over, set it aside for at least 10 years or until the metric system becomes mandatory in the United States of America is a very valid reason.

At the present time, by far the largest proportion of export business that Canada does is with the United States of America. The States are our biggest trading partners and if that is our largest trading area, surely we should be providing goods and services in a standard of measurement that is acceptable and used by those people. I don't object to using metric when you're dealing with, say, France or some of the European countries; if that is the standard of measures that is used there, fine. The traders, the exporters will provide it in the measurement that is requested by the importers, but we don't need this mandatory metric, pushed down the throats of Canadian people at this time.

I'm sorry, but I cannot support the motion of the Honourable Member for Gimli; nor can I support the argument put forward by the Honourable Member for Thompson. I think it was ill-conceived; it's a textbook speech, paying no attention at all to the real needs of the world and the real needs of people and I have to say that I cannot, I cannot accept that.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I was concerned about in the speech by the Honourable Member for Gimli occurs on page 1517 of Hansard, and I'm quoting from the speech of the Honourable Member for Gimli, "During the 1977 debate, the NDP managed to have the conversion of acres to hectares excluded from the bill." Now I don't know whether the Honourable Member for Gimli has ever talked to a farmer in his constituency or not, but that is the number one concern of the farmers today when you keep using

hectares and he has told me, according to his speech, that hectares were excluded. If that is the case, why are they still using them? I don't believe the honourable member has really done his homework; I don't believe he's talked to the farmers, because the farmer today who will be applying chemical on his land in the next ten days to two weeks, is going to find cans of chemical with the instructions of the measurements on the can, forced on him by federal legislation and he is going to have to attempt to make those calculations in terms that he is not familiar with at all, and if he makes one mistake in those calculations it could cost him his entire crop in that field.

No wonder the farmers and concerned and they should be concerned, because they're not easily adjustable to these sudden changes that are thrust on them. So when the member makes mention of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time being 5:30, when we next reach this amendment the honourable member will have two minutes remaining.

The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

MR. PARASIUK: I move, seconded by the Member for Inkster that the House do now adjourn and that the Committee of Supply reconvene at 8:00 p.m.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow afternoon (Tuesday); and the Committee of Supply will reconvene at 8:00 p.m.