



Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

31-32 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Second Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ADAM, Hon. A.R. (Pete)	Ste. Rose	NDP
ANSTETT, Hon. Andy	Springfield	NDP
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BANMAN, Robert (Bob)	La Verendrye	PC
BLAKE, David R. (Dave)	Minnedosa	PC
BROWN, Arnold	Rhineland	PC
BUCKLASCHUK, Hon. John M.	Gimli	NDP
CARROLL, Q.C., Henry N.	Brandon West	IND
CORRIN, Q.C., Brian	Ellice	NDP
COWAN, Hon. Jay	Churchill	NDP
DESJARDINS, Hon. Laurent	St. Boniface	NDP
DODICK, Doreen	Riel	NDP
DOERN, Russell	Elmwood	NDP
DOLIN, Hon. Mary Beth	Kildonan	NDP
DOWNEY, James E.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert	Emerson	PC
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
EVANS, Hon. Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
EYLER, Phil	River East	NDP
FILMON, Gary	Tuxedo	PC
FOX, Peter	Concordia	NDP
GOURLAY, D.M. (Doug)	Swan River	PC
GRAHAM, Harry	Virden	PC
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry M.	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HEMPHILL, Hon. Maureen	Logan	NDP
HYDE, Lloyd	Portage la Prairie	PC
JOHNSTON, J. Frank	Sturgeon Creek	PC
KOSTYRA, Hon. Eugene	Seven Oaks	NDP
KOVNATS, Abe	Niakwa	PC
LECUYER, Hon. Gérard	Radisson	NDP
LYON, Q.C., Hon. Sterling	Charleswood	PC
MACKLING, Q.C., Hon. Al	St. James	NDP
MALINOWSKI, Donald M.	St. Johns	NDP
MANNES, Clayton	Morris	PC
McKENZIE, J. Wally	Roblin-Russell	PC
MERCIER, Q.C., G.W.J. (Gerry)	St. Norbert	PC
NORDMAN, Rurik (Ric)	Assiniboia	PC
OLESON, Charlotte	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald	Pembina	PC
PAWLEY, Q.C., Hon. Howard R.	Selkirk	NDP
PARASIUK, Hon. Wilson	Transcona	NDP
PENNER, Q.C., Hon. Roland	Fort Rouge	NDP
PHILLIPS, Myrna A.	Wolseley	NDP
PLOHMAN, Hon. John	Dauphin	NDP
RANSOM, A. Brian	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Burrows	NDP
SCHROEDER, Hon. Vic	Rossmere	NDP
SCOTT, Don	Inkster	NDP
SHERMAN, L.R. (Bud)	Fort Garry	PC
SMITH, Hon. Muriel	Osborne	NDP
STEEN, Warren	River Heights	PC
STORIE, Hon. Jerry T.	Flin Flon	NDP
URUSKI, Hon. Bill	Interlake	NDP
USKIW, Hon. Samuel	Lac du Bonnet	NDP
WALDING, Hon. D. James	St. Vital	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 31 January, 1984.

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports By Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

ORAL QUESTIONS

Société franco-manitobaine - official spokesman

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Honourable Government House Leader. Can the House Leader confirm that he has made a statement to the effect at an informational meeting in his constituency and repeated to the general public via the news media that this Legislature passed a piece of legislation in 1969 designating the Société franco-manitobaine as being the official spokesman and the only party that any future government could deal with, with respect to Franco-Manitoban matters?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm that I said that the SFM was the only party that governments could deal with with regard to the Franco-Manitoban community, but I can confirm that I did say that the SFM was incorporated by the Legislature of Manitoba at the first Session in 1969 and is the spokesperson according to that bill for the Franco-Manitoban community in Manitoba and is recognized, particularly with regard to political issues. In fact, it very specifically says that they will engage in and be and operate as a political organization in addition to the other activities that are condoned in the preamble of that bill.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Government House Leader whether he would not now want to take the opportunity to correct the actual statements made as taped on a radio station, where he states that the Weir Conservative Government passed a statute of the Legislature designating the Société franco-manitobaine as the spokesperson for French people in Manitoba and that has been recognized by each succeeding government. We haven't had any choice; it's a statute passed by the Legislature of Manitoba.

I refer him specifically to Statute 26, which is the statute, essentially a change of name, change of title statute, setting out the broad interests of that society, but I would ask him if he would not now want to clear up that misinformation that he first uttered at a so-called informational meeting, Mr. Speaker?

HON. A. ANSTETT: No, Mr. Speaker, I would not, because the quote the member first attributed to me was that I said that they were the sole organization and spokesperson and the government had to deal with them.

Mr. Speaker, de facto, they have been the only organization, that's why the government has dealt with them, and they were set up by that piece of legislation to which the member refers, and I would direct his attention to the preamble therein which specifies the purpose as, "For the purpose of encouraging, promoting and furthering the economic, political, cultural and educational interests of the French-speaking population of Manitoba."

Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the suggestion contained in the member's question that that was just a change of name is incorrect. The suggestion contained in the member's question that it was just a change in name is denied in the Hansard of the day when the Member for St. Johns of the day, Mr. Cherniack, pointed out that two words had been added to the authority granted to this association and its change of name was quite substantive, in that sense, in that it had - and I quote from Page 1112 of Hansard, dated April 9, 1969 - ". . . that the purpose of the organization originally founded by legislation passed in 1964 by the Roblin Government, but in existence since 1916, existed in the sense of furthering education and culture; and I would think that it is in the interests of all groups to further their economic and political interests, if they are done well and they are done for the benefit of all the people of the province."

That was further on a question he asked the member who had introduced the bill as to specifically what the change made in the bill, over the previous bill, implied, and that implication was, as the Honourable Minister of Health, then the Member for St. Boniface, Liberal Member in the opposition at that time I think, quite possibly.

"Now the times have changed; now they want to do a little more than that and they have, after carefully selecting delegates all over the province," etc., "and to take a very active part in the affairs of our province."

They specifically requested and received approval to become a political organization above and beyond being just an educational — (Interjections) — above and beyond being just an educational and cultural organization.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I know that the honourable member's research is sufficient enough to know that he could also read from bills, on any number of private member's bills such as the one that set up the Mennonite Museum in Steinbach, that sets out the same kind of hopes and ambitions to further the culture and economic well-being of the Mennonite community but doesn't suggest they were the official spokesperson.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. H. ENNS: But, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister is, and I ask him to just level with the people;

you were trying to give out information at that meeting. In response to a question asked to him at that meeting that suggested that the SFM didn't speak for that person, your response was - is this true or not? - "However, Anstett replied that the Weir Government in 1969 passed a statute making the SFM the official spokesperson that any future government could deal with." Is that not what you said?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. It is an improper use of the question period to ask a Minister to confirm something that appears in the newspaper or something else. Perhaps the honourable member wishes to rephrase his question.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. Part of the problem that we've had in this whole issue is getting out accurate information.

I ask the Honourable Government Services Minister if he also believes, as other spokesperson in his group have tried to tell the people of Manitoba, that the Lyon administration passed legislation making English and French the official languages of the Province of Manitoba, which is another lie?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member did not have a point of order and he also knows that he is supposed to use parliamentary language at all times in this House.

Health Sciences Centre - redevelopment program

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Health and has to do with the 10-year \$138 million redevelopment program at the Health Sciences Centre, which was launched by the former Progressive Conservative Government of Manitoba in June of 1979. Given the fact that a few short months from now Phase I, the \$75 million first phase, will be coming to a conclusion, can the Minister advise this House and the Province of Manitoba whether the \$65 million second phase of that redevelopment program will go ahead as hoped for and as intended?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Cabinet is in the process of looking at the estimates, and during this exercise I will be bringing in my recommendation to Cabinet for the five-year capital project, as we do every year, and that will be announced as soon as possible once a decision has been made.

Increased funding - Clinic

MR. L. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise the House whether or not he has received a request from Clinic, the community clinic on Broadway Avenue, for a substantial, additional increase in funding to take care of purported space difficulties on that community clinic site?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, like most other facilities, they have requested more money. In this case, they

would like money for a capital project also, and that also will have to be considered in the five-year capital project. There are many more also that will be considered at the same time.

Health care system - hospitals

MR. L. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise the House to whether he has, in his own mind, prioritized his approach to the pressures in the health system at the present time, and given the difficulties that, for example, the Health Sciences Centre is going through; given the difficulties in maintaining beds at an adequate level in operation in the Intensive Care Unit at the Health Sciences Centre; given the difficulties in attracting certain staff and retaining it, which have some financial reasons and causes among other reasons and causes, will the emphasis in terms of the health care needs of Manitobans be prioritized on the basis of what is needed at the Health Sciences Centre and the two major tertiary care hospitals in this community, to begin with?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, this is more than a question and you have to be very careful how you answer that question without necessarily agreeing with everything that was said before. Yes, of course, we are prioritizing, and the department and myself, as usual, as any Minister of Health does or should do, will make recommendations. Now will we be successful? That's another matter and time alone will tell. As I say, we will make recommendations, as I know it's in a hurry.

Accreditation of Ophthalmologists

MR. L. SHERMAN: A final question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister advise when the accreditation team from the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons will be arriving in Winnipeg in the month of February, which begins tomorrow, to assess and evaluate the ophthalmology unit at the Manitoba Medical College, for continued accreditation or a de-accreditation?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I don't know of the exact date, I've never been informed. I know, as I mentioned yesterday, that a committee has been named here and is working to looking at the situation to bring in the necessary changes if that is needed.

Government funding - ARM Industries

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Community Services and Corrections.

Last August, the government made a grant of some \$341,000 to ARM Industries of Brandon, and since that time the government has essentially taken over the operation of that organization in Brandon, and in her press release of December 16th, the Minister promised that all outstanding bills would be paid.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that there are unpaid bills owing to ARM Industries that have been

outstanding for many months or close to a year? Can the Minister give some assurance to the House and to those people who are creditors, when those bills will be paid?

A MEMBER: Pay the bills, Muriel.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Mr. Speaker, until December 31st, the affairs of ARM were under the operation of a private board. Since then, the government has taken it over, has scheduled repayment of the debts and has undertaken to pay all creditors. If there is any outstanding creditor whose bill has not been dealt with, I would appreciate receiving that information from the member opposite.

Television film - withdrawal

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Finance.

Last night, a film entitled "Excuse Me, but There's a Computer Asking for You" was shown on The Journal. In my view, Mr. Speaker - and I might say that film was made by the National Film Board and sponsored by the Department of National Revenue - in my view that film was an insensitive, insulting and arrogant presentation. Mr. Speaker, the defence of that film offered by Mr. McDonald, the Deputy Minister of the Department of Revenue, and Mr. Howe, from the National Film Board, was a typical defence made by bureaucrats who don't understand the feelings of common people who are attempting to make a living despite bureaucracies.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. B. RANSOM: My question to the Minister of Finance is, will he appeal to the Minister of National Revenue to have that outrageous film withdrawn, the sole purpose of which seems to have been to prove that indeed Orwell's 1984 has arrived?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I should first take a good look at the film before I would undertake to say that I would contact the Federal Minister. Certainly, I'm not sure how such a film would, in any event, achieve anything. I take it the purpose of the film was to make people aware that they were required to pay their taxes. I don't know. If it was an insult to taxpayers, then clearly we wouldn't want it shown, although I would question how they would go about showing it to taxpayers in the first place. So, we'll take a look at it.

Brandon University Board of Governors - Vacancies

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I address my question to the Minister of Education. Presently

how many vacancies are there on the University of Brandon Board of Governors?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Speaker, I believe there are three that we are presently in the process of filling.

MR. C. MANNES: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask how many people have been approached by the government to fill these positions and how many people have refused to take the position?

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any refusal.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Speaker, I then ask the Minister, what has the government said to prospective board members that it may have approached re their personal liabilities should Dr. Perkins, the fired former president, bring a lawsuit against the university and its board of governors for wrongful dismissal?

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure that I am clear on the question, but if I am, we have not said anything to the present board members about their liabilities, legal liabilities. I think that we all know that this is a matter that is in the hands of members of the legal profession, that there is legal advice being given, and I assume that it will follow the normal and fair judicial process, which we do not intend to interfere with.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Speaker, all well and fine, but I am wondering, certainly the government must have a position. Prospective governors would naturally want to know their liability under this particular situation. Again I would ask the Minister to indicate what the department and the government is saying to prospective governors as to their potential liability? Obviously they have to know that.

HON. M. HEMPHILL: Mr. Speaker, I said that the Department of Education was not saying anything on that matter to respective members or potential members of the board. I think that, as I indicated before, this is before the members of the legal profession, but to my knowledge there has been no filing, there is no court case, there is no pending legal case, so I don't know on what basis the members opposite are raising this concern.

Agricultural publications

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. I have received information, Mr. Speaker, from a constituent that the Department of Agriculture are going to cease sending him out the weekly market report, which this constituent indicated to me was useful and informative as to the weekly market conditions of oil seeds and livestock. The last letter which was received there was an indication that due to government restraint that they would no longer

be forwarding that letter to the farm community. Will he reconsider the decision of the Department of Economics branch, Mr. Speaker, to cancel that and continue on with it as it has been useful to the farm community?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'll take the question as notice and review the procedure in terms of that publication, but I believe that type of information is available on a daily basis in terms of the market news and the like. I want to check the honourable member's comments and provide him with the information.

Task force - motor transport industry

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

Some time ago the Department of Highways had hearings into the regulations and deregulations of the highway transportation carrying-companies or system in the Province of Manitoba; and recommendations came from a former member of the government, or Deputy Minister, Bill Johnson, recommending that the farm community have the purple gas privileges taken away from them and the truck licences could in fact go up as high as 800 percent. Under his responsibility as the Minister of Highways and Transportation, will he assure the farm community that that will not happen, Mr. Speaker, that those privileges will be carried on under his term as Minister?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 21st, the former Minister of Highways, Mr. Uskiw, made it very clear in a public statement that that was not part of the terms of reference of the task force.

It has been clearly stated, it's been stated publicly, even though perhaps members of the opposition are continuing to provide that kind of stimulus to the people out there and to get them concerned or worried about something that won't happen, this government has clearly stated that the matter of purple gas, as it applies to farm trucks, is not part of the considerations of the task force and that has been made clear and it stands as it is now.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Highways confirm that he is receiving, as we as members of the opposition are receiving, resolutions from the Union of Municipalities requesting that no changes be made? I think it's important that this be put to rest by him as a new Minister and I'm pleased that he's done that and I just want him to confirm that it's not us that's agitating this, Mr. Speaker, but confirm that he is receiving resolutions from municipal people which is a follow-through from the Union of Manitoba Municipalities' meeting in Brandon earlier this year.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, we're receiving correspondence from a number of groups who would

be affected by any change in regulation in the trucking industry and municipalities have been one of those sending in resolutions. However we've made it as I said, and it was publicly stated clearly, that there were no changes with regard to purple fuel.

The task force is reviewing the recommendations that came about as a result of the hearings that were held throughout Manitoba. We will be receiving their report soon and reviewing that as well to decide on what action we will be taking in this very complex area that certainly needs addressing - and the opposition is quite aware of that from the years previous and their involvement in the government - that it has to be addressed. The report has not been received by myself as yet.

However, clearly, that area is not going to be affected and I think the honourable member can go about telling his constituents and municipalities in his constituency that that is the case and make sure that he's providing facts only and that there is no concern there with regard to purple fuel.

Government policy - farmers' income

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

I would like to ask the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs if it is the policy of the government to include old age pension as part of the income of farmers when it comes to the assessment of their farm buildings for taxation purposes? Is it the policy of the government to include old age pension as part of the income, off-farm income, to determine the eligibility for exemption or taxation purposes?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the nature of the question of the honourable member. I would draw to his attention that this matter to which he alludes, and to which he alludes correctly, is not a matter of government policy. It is a matter of statute of the Province of Manitoba, first adopted by the House, I believe, in 1892 and reconfirmed in 1924, when a more specific statement with regard to chief source of income, was placed into The Municipal Assessment Act.

I would draw to the honourable member's attention the recommendation of the Weir Commission which proposes that all residences in the province be taxed and that the exemption to which he alludes being removed from pensioners, be removed from all farm residences in the province.

I can tell the honourable member that that one recommendation alone is one of the ones which is requiring significant analysis and research by this government with a view to making some meaningful progress on assessment reform, but I thank the honourable member for the question.

MR. H. GRAHAM: A supplementary question. Can the Minister tell me how much old age pension was paid in 1892 and 1924?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I don't think the subject matter of that question is within the administrative competence of the government.

The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. H. GRAHAM: A further supplementary question then to the Honourable Minister. Since the Federal Government provides increased exemption from taxation for old age pensioners, would the Provincial Government consider doing the same, providing increased exemption when it comes to the assessment of farmers' property, for the consideration of whether or not their farm buildings are taxable? Would he give the same consideration to the farmers in the Province of Manitoba as the Federal Government does to all old age pensioners in Canada?

HON. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, the question the members asks - again, I'm not completely clear and would certainly appreciate clarification from him by a further supplementary if I don't give him the full answer - but I believe the question he's asking relates to increasing exemptions under The Municipal Assessment Act in some way. I can only respond to him by saying that the government has made a firm commitment to assessment reform at the local level in Manitoba, that that commitment flows from, not only the MARC Report, the Weir Committee Report, but also from the report of the Standing Committee in which I believe the honourable member participated and in the recommendations of that committee, one of which - both in the Weir Commission and in the committee discussions - was that the use of exemptions under The Municipal Assessment Act should be minimized to the greatest possible degree or, if possible, completely end it to provide, as former Premier Weir said, a fairer way to share.

MR. H. GRAHAM: A final supplementary question to the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs. Since he has had the Weir Commission Report for two years, and there has been an increased problem, particularly in the urban area here in Winnipeg with the freeze that has been placed on assessment, how long is it going to be before we can expect some positive action from this government on changes in assessment practices here in the Province of Manitoba?

HON. A. ANSTETT: Well, Mr. Speaker, the question has two parts. Certainly, I believe that the senior citizens of this province were receiving pensions between '77 and '81, that the awareness of that particular problem was very much in the minds of members opposite when they were government, but they recognized, as does this government, the complexity of the problem, but also the inadvisability of proceeding with a further patchwork on The Municipal Assessment Act. That is why they didn't proceed and why this government will not proceed to enhance or in any way expand exemptions without doing a thorough review.

The second part of the question relating to the City of Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, relates to a problem which is, to a large degree, very much of the City of Winnipeg's own making in terms of their appeal system and their refusal to deal with the border revision process, and

there are several answers which can be addressed in that context.

The Province of Manitoba in 1980, under the direction of the Member for Virden's colleague, the Member for Swan River now, brought in the assessment freeze in the City of Winnipeg. There was some question as to whether or not the border revision process was frozen as part of that legislation. That freeze was continued by this government, and Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. H. GRAHAM: As long as you continue to do nothing, you'll continue to freeze.

HON. A. ANSTETT: . . . the Supreme Court decision - for the benefit of the Member for Virden - is not a complete overturn of that freeze legislation, but does allow individual ratepayers to appeal under certain conditions to the Board of Revision at the local levels.

There have been discussions with the City of Winnipeg as to how to deal with the implications of that decision. Those discussions are continuing, and I hope to have more information for the House shortly.

Affordable New Homes Program

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. H. HARAPIAK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Housing in connectin with the Affordable New Homes Program.

Over the last few weeks, there has been a number of northerners, including myself, the northern industry representatives have been seeking some changes to the program to reflect northern conditions, which include higher material costs and longer colder seasons.

Could the Minister advise this House and the people of Northern Manitoba of any changes that have been made in the program?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Housing.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, in response to requests from the Northern MLAs and requests from the housing construction industry in the North, the real estate industry, last Friday I announced two amendments to the Affordable New Homes for Northern Manitoba: No. 1, the maximum unit cost to qualify for the Affordable New Homes Program has been increased from \$68,000 to \$72,000, reflecting the higher costs in the North; and, secondly, to reflect the difference in climate, the deadline by which the footings have to be in place has been delayed from May 15th to June 15th for Northern Manitoba.

Housing - welfare recipients

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Community Services.

Does the Department of Community Services have a set of guidelines that would assure that people on welfare would not be placed in substandard housing with inadequate heating systems?

A MEMBER: They wouldn't do that, this caring government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Employment Services.

HON. L. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, the policy with regard to payment of social assistance to families who are sometimes referred to as welfare recipients is a policy of allowing those families to have the maximum freedom to choose the kind of dwelling that they wish to live in. In other words, it has been a long-standing policy of this government, and I believe of previous governments, to allow welfare recipients the opportunity to choose the particular kind of residence that they would wish to live in.

A MEMBER: Why would you pay the rent that you do for those shacks? Shame on you!

MR. A. BROWN: My question is to the same Minister. Can he tell me why the family in Amaranth . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. A. BROWN: . . . who are on welfare and whose house burned, why they were placed in a substandard house with a dangerous heating system?

HON. L. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Honourable Member for Rhineland didn't hear my previous answer. The department did not place that family in any specific residence. That family chose that particular residence, as is in keeping with our policy. Families who are recipients of social assistance in Manitoba are free to choose the residence in which they wish to live, and we believe that there should be some responsibility on the part of those individuals. As I indicated, it's a policy that has been in effect for many a year.

Midtown Bridge closure

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. V. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for River Heights asked a question the other day with respect to hours of work of civil servants during the time that the Midtown Bridge is closed, and I would like to answer that and indicate that there is a government policy regarding branches or divisions of departments which are now allowed to determine the most suitable arrangement of hours of work for their employees. Variations in employees' hours of work may occur as a result of staggered starting or finishing times, or an alteration in the time allowed for lunch.

There are some outside parameters; that is, starting ordinarily in the office no earlier than 7:30 and having finished no later than 6 o'clock, and somewhere in-between that people can work out within their divisions or branches some alternate hours which might be a good idea for that five or six-month period that the Midtown Bridge will be closed.

Information Services

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Premier, on the assumption that he is still responsible for the Information Services Branch in the government. — (Interjection) — I'll try it, Mr. Speaker.

In any case, this has to do with a publication the government puts out, entitled "Manitoba Facts." I think he is familiar with it. It has a golden boy on the cover. The 1982 edition has, under a section entitled "People of Manitoba," a listing of the various principal ethnic groups from which Manitobans come, and it starts off with British 373,000, and so on. It goes all the way down to the Polish at 43,000 and further down to Hungarian at 5,000, and so on.

The same book, published in 1983, has again the listings of the various cultural and ethnic groups, beginning with the British, and so on, and has no listing whatsoever of any people of Polish origin in Manitoba.

My question to the Minister is, has there been a sudden exodus of people of Polish extraction in Manitoba since . . .

MR. L. SHERMAN: Just the Member for St. Johns, that's all.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. G. FILMON: Has there been a sudden exodus, Mr. Speaker, of people of Polish extract or is there some other reason why his department is reluctant to acknowledge the existence of so many people of Polish extraction here in Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

A MEMBER: They're afraid the Pope will take over.

HON. H. PAWLEY: I'm glad that the honourable member has raised the question since my wife comes from Polish descent. I certainly would want to check out the question before she poses that question to me.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, both on behalf of Adele and myself may I ask then that he'll ensure that the 1984 edition does give recognition to the many people of Polish extraction who are in Manitoba today?

Local governments - nominations to housing boards

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Mr. Speaker, in the past it has been the practice of the government to allow the local government authority to make their own appointment to the local housing authority boards. My question to the Minister of Housing is, when has he lost confidence? At what point did he lose confidence in the local governments to make their own appointments to these boards?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Housing.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Yes, I'd like to assure the Member for Turtle Mountain that I have all the confidence in the world, of the municipal jurisdictions to nominate their nominees to the housing authorities. I would suggest that the member read the policy manual for MHRC and he will see that there has not been one iota of change.

The policy manual indicates that municipal authorities are to submit a list of nominations in order of their preference to the Minister for his consideration. We are simply following through what has been in the policy manual for a good number of years, certainly for the last 10 years, since I recall I was on the housing authority board in the early '70s. The same procedure was used at that time.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister give us the assurance and many local governments throughout the province the assurance, that when their list consists of one person whom they consider to be qualified to fill that position, will the Minister accept that as an appointment?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated the policy in the manual is quite clear.

MR. B. RANSOM: Never mind the manual, what would you do?

A MEMBER: He's telling you what he'll do.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: The municipalities are asked to submit a list of nominees in order of preference and the Minister will consider those nominations. It is hard to make a decision but certainly when the municipalities have submitted lists of two or three nominations, all nominations have been considered.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, perhaps you can make a direct appeal to the Minister to recognize his responsibility as Minister. In a situation where the local government district makes a recommendation of a person who has served in the past on a housing authority . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. B. RANSOM: . . . and a knowledgeable contractor in the housing business and is once again recommended by the local council, will the Minister accept that person as an acceptable person to serve on the local housing authority?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: I believe it is about the third time the same question has been asked.

MR. B. RANSOM: Well, give us an answer.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: This Minister intends to follow through with the policy of the MHRC manual, which has been in existence for a good number of

years. The manual very clearly indicates - and I know the previous administration followed that manual, or should have followed that manual.

A MEMBER: No, we didn't.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Well, I'm sorry they haven't followed that policy manual. That's their problem. The policy is very clear that the municipalities are to submit a list of nominees. A nomination of one person does not to me constitute a list.

A MEMBER: Freedom of choice.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise us what constitutes a list? In the view of the municipality they have submitted a list. What constitutes a list in the Minister's eyes as he goes about practising this outrageous patronage?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Well, Mr. Speaker, to me a list would indicate more than one. Secondly, with respect to patronage, I fail to understand how nominating a person to a responsible position without any pay can be considered as patronage.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions having expired, can I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery. We have 20 students of Grades 1 to 5 standing from the Harrow School. The students are under the direction of Mrs. Belanger and Mrs. Bingham and the school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

HANSARD CORRECTION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to make a correction of Hansard, Volume 169 at 2 p.m. on Thursday the 26th, on page 5772. In the question period I questioned the Minister of Agriculture on the publications of agricultural magazines and I mentioned the weed control guide and the crop recommendations - it's recorded in Hansard as the wheat control guide in one or two areas. If they would change that to weed control guide.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MRS. D. DODICK: For Privileges and Elections, the Member for Wolseley substituting for the Member for St. James.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, before I ask you to call the Orders of the Day I have a brief statement with regard to House business.

It is proposed, Mr. Speaker, that the House would not sit this evening but would instead adjourn at 5:30 p.m. and that the Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections would sit at 8 p.m. this evening, so that many of the public who have been waiting since Friday to appear before the committee can be heard. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that this will contribute to expediting the business of the House.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON RESOLUTION CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AND SUB-AMENDMENT RE: OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

HON. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, I would propose to call the resolution, standing in the name of the Member for Thompson as the order of business. I would remind honourable members that it is my understanding that the notice I gave last week with regard to our Rule No. 37 still stands, to be given at some future date should it be necessary.

So, Mr. Speaker, would you call the motion on Page 2, at the top of the page, standing in the name of the Member for Thompson.

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General and the amendment thereto proposed by the Honourable Government House Leader and the subamendment thereto proposed by the Honourable Member for Fort Garry, the Honourable Member for Thompson has 22 minutes remaining.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say it's a pleasure to once again be able to debate this matter. I must say that I would prefer to have debated last week shortly after I first spoke on this issue, but once again, Mr. Speaker, members of the opposition have shown that they are not interested in really debating this matter. They're interested in proceeding with their continuing abuse of bell ringing and procedural wrangles to frustrate in answering the members of this House who do want to finish with this matter and get on with other business.

Well, it's not surprising why they don't want to debate this matter that much, Mr. Speaker, it's not surprising why. They spoke nearly 100 times on this issue already and they've said virtually nothing, Mr. Speaker, nothing of substance. I think the only theme that one can pick out of those speeches - out of those nearly 100 speeches on this issue from members opposite - is the fact that the members opposite intend to use this issue for reasons of political opportunism; political opportunism I would suggest of the worst kind.

As proof of that, Mr. Speaker, I would submit that members in those 100 speeches have failed to come up with one consistent argument against what the government is doing, one consistent argument on the

substance. They've argued, Mr. Speaker, about official languages, for example, but for those members who have done some research on this matter, those arguments rang rather hollow. We all know that in 1980 that they passed a bill which declared in this act official language means the English language or the French language, and that was an act respecting the operation of Section 23. What are we debating today, Mr. Speaker? An amendment to a resolution on Section 23. So, their arguments on official languages don't really hold that much water.

It's the same thing, Mr. Speaker, with their arguments about us not proceeding with the present course in letting the Bilodeau case go to the Supreme Court. They've made this argument that we should send it to the courts, but at other times they've said, we in the Legislature should decide this matter, we shouldn't be hamstrung, for example, by entrenchment. They've made that argument, Mr. Speaker. Where is the consistency in that? To say on the one hand that we don't want the courts to decide, but then again we do want the courts to decide. Well clearly, Mr. Speaker, that is inconsistent.

Now the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, may be inconsistent on this point. We, however, have attempted to be consistent on this, that's why we've come up with this particular package which does separate the resolution and separate out the question of services because it would allow the Legislature some control on those services while giving some protection to some basic level of French services in this province. That's a consistent stand, Mr. Speaker, a consistent stand that members opposite certainly don't have.

It's the same thing, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to their suggestion that this resolution would extend and expand French language services in Manitoba. The Member for Virden, as I pointed out last time, said quite the opposite in committee; he said it limits French services in the province. Now where is the consistency in those statements? I haven't heard the Member for Virden withdraw those comments.

I know the former Leader of the Opposition, the now Member for Charleswood, had to resort to that, Mr. Speaker, to withdrawing comments, attempting to rewrite Hansard when he was caught on one of his inconsistencies in regard to his statements on official languages, but I haven't heard the Member for Virden do it. So I can only assume that members opposite are either divided on this question, or they just simply don't know what they're talking about and I would suspect it's the latter.

Well let's go, Mr. Speaker, let's go even further. They said from the start that our concerns about Mr. Bilodeau's case were not legitimate, they said that. Yet, in debate, less than two weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, they'd changed course. The Member for Charleswood and the Member for Turtle Mountain got up and they said, yes indeed, Bilodeau might actually be successful in court. They went to the second thing which they'd rejected totally throughout the initial debate in the summer and that was any suggestion that we needed, validation of our statutes.

The Member for Turtle Mountain got up and stated quite clearly, Mr. Speaker, that he felt when discussion was proceeding to the present subamendment before us, that indeed validation might be needed. What's the

consistency in all this, Mr. Speaker? Nothing of substance but one overall theme and that overall theme is political opportunism.

What the members opposite are trying to do on this issue is to use substance only to delay; to use substance only to give them further time to attempt to make this an issue which will continue for many years in Manitoba; an issue that they think can elect them as a government next time; that's the real reason, that is the only consistent thing that members opposite have.

I have a word which I would use to describe a tactic such as that, I would say it's a sham, it's a sham. There's no other word that can describe it. What they are doing, Mr. Speaker, is they are throwing out any suggestion that they have any principled reasons for posing this. They're throwing out any suggestion on that simply to attempt to use this issue for political purposes.

But let's look at that, Mr. Speaker. Is this a major issue of concern to Manitobans? Is it the No. 1 issue facing Manitobans today? Is it? Well, let's put it in perspective. Traditionally in this province, as I pointed out when I spoke on this last time, the No. 1 concern of Manitobans has been the economy, that's the No. 1 concern of Manitobans historically, and I would suggest it's No. 1 concern today.

In 1984, why did members opposite lose the election? I would suggest to them they lost it because the people of Manitoba simply did not accept the way they had performed economically over that period in which they were in government. I would suggest that to them as the reason why they lost the election in 1981. I would also suggest to them too, that what will decide the future of this government will largely be its economic performance. Now members opposite will have their views on that, Mr. Speaker, and we will certainly have our views on that, but it will be the people that will decide. I think if you look at it and if you talk to people today, you will find that it is still the case in Manitoba.

I've talked to my constituents on this issue, people who have views on both sides of it, but there's one consistent theme that I pick up from it and that is, that while it may be an issue of concern, it is not the major issue of concern. As I said last time, I was out knocking on doors during the fall and it ranked as about No. 5 in terms of mentions, and that was on people both sides of the issue, Mr. Speaker, those who supported the government and those who opposed what the government was doing; but No. 5, and of the major concerns, 1 through 4 were all economic in one way or another. So let's put the politics of this into perspective, Mr. Speaker.

Let's also not forget the fact, as members opposite do, that those referenda which were held in the province throughout October - while they may indeed have been on one general question although they obviously had different wording - related to the first package brought forward by this government. Now members opposite may say, oh no no, they're still opposed to what you're doing. Well, I have a question I'd like to put to them, Mr. Speaker, and that is, do the members of the public really support what the Conservatives are doing? Do they support this sub-amendment? Do they support the stand put forward by members opposite, that they are in favour of French services, but somehow against entrenchment? Do they support that? Do they support some of the various stands they've taken on their

various flip-flops on this issue over the last eight months? Well, I would suggest to you, no, Mr. Speaker.

When I was in committee, Mr. Speaker, I listened to many people who gave submissions against what the government is doing and I asked them straightforwardly; I said, well, do you support what the Conservatives are saying? Are you in favour of French services, but against entrenchment, and about three quarters of the people I asked, Mr. Speaker, answered, we're against both. That should be made clear; that should be made clear, Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the political ramifications of this.

This is one of the reasons also I think the members opposite are pulling a sham in this province at the present time and that is because they're not even really saying what the people who are against this issue are really saying either. They're trying, Mr. Speaker, and have several faces on this issue, one for Brian Mulroney and the federal Tories, most of whom, even here in Manitoba support what the government is doing.

One face here, Mr. Speaker, one face in Quebec and another face to those members of the public who appeared, for example, at the demonstration here last week, a different face altogether. On the one hand they say, well we're against the government. Don't worry, don't worry, we're going to block them, we're going to fight them, we're going to make this dramatic last stand. That's what they say to the people who are adamantly against what we're doing. But what do they say to their federal colleagues? I suspect, Mr. Speaker, then out comes the other face. Don't worry, they're probably saying to Mr. Mulroney in Ottawa, we're just doing this for political reasons here; eventually it will blow over. We'll get the political benefit and you don't have to worry in Quebec. We'll have two faces on this issue and everything will be okay.

Mr. Speaker, that kind of strategy only works so long; it only works so long, and they found that when they attempted to move the subamendment before us at the present time. They found that out, because no sooner had they moved that, Mr. Speaker, and no sooner had the word gotten out that the Conservatives had actually moved toward the government's stand, then they received, according to their own leader, many phone calls from people who were adamantly against that proposal, and I've heard rumours that they may yet again move another amendment to this issue, another subamendment.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is the same question that one of my constituents asked me on this issue about two weeks ago. He said, how many faces do the Conservatives have on this issue? That is something I would like to find out, Mr. Speaker, because it seems the number of positions that they can take on this issue is never ending.

I think that has to be considered as part of the political ramifications as well, because when people select a government one of the key factors they look at, Mr. Speaker, is how far they can trust the individuals who are seeking office; and I would say, Mr. Speaker, based on this issue, that they cannot trust the present Leader of the Opposition because he has flip-flopped. He has put up so many faces on this issue that they don't know where he stands and if they can't trust him on this issue, they can't trust him on anything. I would suggest to members opposite that that will play a political role in the next election.

That will play a political role, because that's one thing I've even heard from my constituents as well, Mr. Speaker. They've said, who is this new Leader of the Opposition anyway? He came in with so many promises and he turns out to be nothing more than a Bobsey Twin of the Member for Charleswood, the former Leader of the Opposition. He says different things, Mr. Speaker, but he's the same basic person. That's something that has to be kept in mind when one looks at the political side of it.

Let's accept for a moment, Mr. Speaker, that there are indeed many Manitobans who are concerned about this issue. Let's look at it. Why are they concerned about it? Because of the substance, Mr. Speaker, because of the arguments put forth by the members opposite on this issue? Clearly not. Their concerns have been clear throughout. They're concerned that it might be similar to federal bilingualism; they're concerned that it might impact in terms of civil service hiring, in particular, and they're concerned, Mr. Speaker, about the cost. I've heard that. Also they're concerned that it might lead to expansion.

We've addressed those concerns, Mr. Speaker, and if ever there was proof of that, look at the position of the MGEA. They certainly expressed some concerns about the original package before us here today, but they are now largely satisfied with the government's new proposals and they're the ones directly affected. They are the ones who would be affected, in the Civil Service. They're the ones who would have the first concerns about whether this was federal bilingualism in another form. They've looked at our proposals, Mr. Speaker, they've looked at the amendments we've made and they agree that it is an acceptable package as far as the members are concerned.

That's one thing I think that has to be communicated to members of the public who also have this concern, and that is the fact that if the government employees themselves are satisfied, then surely the government has made some substantial change in this area and has substantially listened to the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I could list those concerns, but I know it wouldn't do any good with members of the opposition. I know it wouldn't do any good at all, because really they're not concerned about those particular concerns. They have not, in any of their 100 speeches, done anything other than get up and say, well, there is a perception, there is a concern; they haven't addressed that, Mr. Speaker. Very few of them had the guts to get up and even say they have a personal concern about it.

The Member for Charleswood, for example, said there's going to be a perception that we're ramming French down people's throats. He never said, that's what I think; he didn't have the guts to say that, Mr. Speaker, because it's so easier to use concerns that way, to use somebody else's concerns and then have your two or three faces on the issue, go to Brian Mulroney in Ottawa and say, well, I didn't say that; I said there was a perception, so we're all okay on this issue.

Let's look at it, Mr. Speaker. What is the real bottom line of this? The real concerns of Manitobans? No. What it is, it's a sham, it's an attempt by members of the opposition to develop fear within the people of Manitoba about this particular issue. That is the bottom

line, fear for purposes of political opportunism and fear, Mr. Speaker, certainly has been expressed on this issue. It is a fear of the unknown, a fear that it might lead to the dire consequences; but I will say quite clearly that I do not have that fear.

I have supported the government's position on this quite clearly. I've stated so in my constituency. At the first series of informational meetings, before about 75 of my constituents, I was asked, "Where do you stand on this?" and I said, "I support what the government is doing." I stated it then and I will state it again. Let members opposite not play this game of, oh well, let's have a free vote; let's have a free vote and find out where you really stand. I'll tell them where I really stand. Free vote, no free vote, under any conditions, Mr. Speaker, I support the clear intent of the Government of Manitoba as expressed through the original package and upon consultation with the people of Manitoba by the new package.

I would like to just point out one thing, in terms of fear if I could, Mr. Speaker, and that is, I think, one of the most interesting factors in this whole issue; and that is that the people who fear this the most are the people who the opponents of this particular issue would suggest have the most to fear and that, Mr. Speaker, is young people, young people in general, the people of my generation, you know, as the youngest member in this House. The people of my younger brother's generation, I've talked to them on this issue, Mr. Speaker, and I found that there is strong support amongst many young people for what the government is attempting to do, in attempting to reach an important, historical compromise, an important recognition of French language rights in Manitoba. There is a lot of support amongst young people for this.

Their future is the future that will be affected by this. Do you know why there is such support? It's because they don't have the same fear that some people do on this issue. They have the competence that we in Manitoba can have the good faith and the good will to work out this particular matter. That's something, I think, members should learn from, Mr. Speaker, and that is as much as they can tempt to whip up fear, as much as they can tempt to use this as a political issue, it won't last; it won't last because the dire consequences that they predict will not happen in two or four or six or eight or ten years, Mr. Speaker. They will not even happen in 20 years and the young people of today who have that faith in our ability to deal with this matter, they will be proven right.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, and I just heard from the former Leader of the Opposition, not sitting in his seat today but in another seat, saying something about, oh well, will I be around? Mr. Speaker, I want to address that for a second. Well, they so no, Mr. Speaker. I've got news for them. When he was in government, Mr. Speaker, he tried to fool the people of Thompson on many issues. They didn't buy it, Mr. Speaker, that's why I'm here today. I remember when he tried to tell us our population was 19,000 when it was about 14,500. He didn't have any more success with that particular effort then he's going to have on this particular issue either. But, Mr. Speaker, I think any elected representative has to be willing to ask the question. That is whether he is willing to face the voters on this. As I said, I faced the voters, Mr. Speaker. I'm willing to live by the consequences.

You know, I can stand here today, Mr. Speaker, I can stand tall on this issue, because I think the government is doing the right thing. As much as I can say, Mr. Speaker, that my constituents don't feel this is a major issue, it's up to them really to decide. It's not up to me to say, it's up to them to decide. But I think those members opposite should perhaps recognize, Mr. Speaker, why this side is so strong on this issue, why they've become stronger, to a certain extent, actually when our political back is against the wall. That is because, Mr. Speaker, what we represent here today is a historical thing within our party; that is, a commitment to principle, Mr. Speaker, and a commitment to justice, of doing the right thing.

We did that, Mr. Speaker, with the Japanese during the Second World War. We did it on The War Measures Act, Mr. Speaker. Those things were not popular at the time. We've stood by that and we're stronger because of it. If members opposite, Mr. Speaker, think that we're like them, that we're only interested in political power, they're wrong. We are as much a political movement as a political party. I know, Mr. Speaker, whether or not I'm re-elected, that somebody else will carry on the fight either in this Chamber or out of this Chamber for what is right and what is just.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I have no fear on this issue, but lest anybody say that I am admitting the possibility of losing, well, they've got the wrong idea about me. I fight on this issue. I fight for what is right. I fight for my constituents too, Mr. Speaker. I can tell them - they better know - that if they're going to pull a sham on this issue, they're not going to do it in my constituency. That is why last time I spoke I challenged the Leader of the Opposition to debate this issue in my constituency, Mr. Speaker. I want him to debate this issue. I want him to debate his stand on the economy because that's what I think is a real issue. I want to find out where he stands on the North, Mr. Speaker. I want to know where he stands on things like rent controls, because we all know he's opposition to that, Mr. Speaker, which is, I might add, supported by the vast majority of Manitobans.

I want him to come, Mr. Speaker, to my constituency because I am confident that it will be shown to be a sham. I think the Member for Springfield deserves credit for doing that in his constituency. I think he did an excellent job in dealing with the concerns of his constituents. I will say, Mr. Speaker, that I am ready to do the same. I am ready to debate that so-called Leader of the Opposition any time on these and other issues.

Let's talk about fear, Mr. Speaker, let's talk about it. Let's get it out in the open. Let's deal with it. Let's deal with their concerns and for God's sake let's get on with the real business before this province, the real issues of concern, Mr. Speaker, to people like my constituents and that is issues like jobs, the economy, northern development, the real issues before us and not this bogus sham that members of the opposition are trying to foist on the members on this side of the House and the public of Manitoba in general.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak on the sub-amendment to this resolution proposed by my colleague, the MLA for Fort Garry. I also appreciate the opportunity that the Government House Leader has provided us today to proceed with the debate on the resolution. However, I can't help but mention the minor threat that he left with the introduction that we would be able to further debate the resolution, that we would be threatened with Rule 37 that this could be imposed on us at anytime in the days ahead. Just listening to the last speaker, the Member for Thompson, indicated that we had spoken on this topic for some hundred speakers or thereabouts. This is absolutely nonsense.

We spoke a number of times on the deferral motion, insisting that this government go to the people and listen to what they had to say by having hearings held throughout the province. This government was not interested in having hearings as you recall last summer and they had to be badgered and hounded into holding these hearings throughout Manitoba so that we could hear from the people as to what they had to say about amending our Constitution.

We never had the opportunity to debate the resolution to any great extent. We've only had a few number of speakers and then, zap, the House Leader he wants to put on closure so that they can wind up this mess and send it off to Ottawa and amend our Constitution forever, something that the people of Manitoba absolutely are opposed to. It's just absurd that the Government House Leader would invoke closure on the resolution to muzzle the members on this side from representing our constituencies.

The Member for Thompson says that we're political opportunists. I would say that if that is listening to your constituents and coming back here and debating this issue, representing what our people are telling us; if that's political opportunism then that's what I'm all about.

Certainly the people of this province are being heard every day in growing numbers that they are absolutely opposed to what the government is proposing. Then the members of the government say, well, you know the people don't understand, really the people don't understand what we're trying to do. Yes, we have the support of the people of Manitoba in what we're trying to do.

Mr. Speaker, there's something absolutely wrong in this whole issue because certainly the people in my constituency had an opportunity to vote on it. Part of the municipality of Swan River, which represents a fairly large segment of the Swan River constituency, and they voted 88 percent in opposition to what the government is doing. This was multiplied, I think, 16 times or 16 municipalities throughout the province representing well over half the population because the City of Winnipeg had a referendum. We all know how the results went on the City of Winnipeg referendum where you have a broad cross-section. The NDP hold the majority of seats in the City of Winnipeg and yet some 75 percent of the people are objecting to what this NDP government is trying to ram down the throats of Manitobans.

Now, to introduce closure in this House so that we would only have some eight hours to further debate the constitutional amendment is, as I say, absolutely absurd. Most of us, I think, have belonged to many

organizations throughout the province, whether it be political or whether it be 4-H or curling clubs or service organizations, and most of those organizations if not all, have their constitution and bylaws. As I recall, anytime you want to make some constitutional change to your organization you have to at least two-thirds approval from your membership. But here this NDP Government, they don't even want to debate this resolution, they want to put closure on it so there is no further word to be spoken on it, they want to shove it off to Ottawa, they want to get rid of it because they know it's a dicey issue and one that they should never have gotten involved with in the first place.

There's too much to really be concerned about to rush the constitutional amendments through. It involves all of the people of Manitoba. They want to have an opportunity as to what this really means.

The Member for Thompson and other members on the government side have said, "but this is not federal bilingualism that we are introducing." We all know the dicey mess that the federal bilingualism policies have brought upon us. I had indicated, when I spoke on this resolution before, about the situation that we find in the RCMP, that we find in the military, that we find in the customs offices, that we find in the post offices, and the members opposite say, but, no, we are not going to get into that kind of mess; that they are not able to give us any kind of an assurance where this can be stopped, and it can be stopped.

There is too much fodder to digest that has been brought forward to us by the people of Manitoba on the hearings that have been conducted throughout the province and the hearings that are going on at the present time. You can tell by the number of people that have indicated a desire to speak on Bill 115, which is closely related to this resolution; and that is another issue that certainly has to be tidied up before this could even be thought of being approved and sent on to Ottawa because we're not sure of the final outcome of the resolution in view of the fact that the government may not wish to scrap this whole resolution. Bill 115 really ties into the final outcome of the resolution and we certainly don't know what that's going to be yet. So really, what is all the hurry?

The Member for Thompson said that in his area and the people of Manitoba are saying that the majority of the people that he talks to are 100 percent with this constitutional amendment and they want to rush on with this and get on to more important things. I will certainly agree that there is a lot more important items that we should be discussing at the present time, but that is the only one before us at the present time in the House, is the cleaning up of the holdover from the current Session. We really should be discussing unemployment and the economy and the things that people are really concerned about in this province.

A MEMBER: Address it quick, Harry, because we won't be around much longer.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Well, the government is anxious to get on with this constitutional amendment and send it off to Ottawa so that we can sort of appease Mr. Bilodeau. I don't think that we are obligated to work under any timetable of Mr. Bilodeau. He has indicated

that he will proceed to the Supreme Court if there isn't action taken quickly, but that is his prerogative.

This is an important issue to all Manitobans and we have to take time to listen to the concerns of the people so that if there really in fact is a need for a constitutional amendment on the bilingual question, then certainly that can be done over a period of time and certainly with the will of the people and not something that is being forced on the majority of Manitobans.

I mentioned the public hearings that were held in September throughout five, or six, or seven locations in Manitoba. In my particular area, in Swan River, they were held - we were pleased to have the hearings there - but they were held at a time when harvest was under way, and that particular day the weather was good and a lot of people who would liked to have made presentations at that meeting were not able to do so because of the harvest situation.

We have the hearings now, as I mentioned, going on, on Bill 115 and there are hundreds of people that would like to be heard. I know that many people from Swan River would like to come in here to make presentations. Last weekend, the weather was not good and people who were trying to get in could not make it because of road conditions. Certainly, there are many people still to be heard on Bill 115.

There is the Grassroots organization that is growing like Topsy everyday because of their concerns with this whole bilingual question.

The Premier mentioned - I believe it was last Friday, January 27th - and I would just like to quote a question that was presented to the Premier. He answered, and I quote, "Mr. Speaker, what would be more irresponsible but to go to the people on what would be about No. 58 in 61 issues of importance to the people of the Province of Manitoba, No. 58 by way of range of priority and importance? What are the important issues in the Province of Manitoba and the issues indeed that we will proceed to obtain a mandate from the people of the Province of Manitoba upon is: (a) how this government manages the economy, and how better this government has managed the economy of this province than did the previous administration; and (b) Mr. Speaker, how well this government has created jobs in the Province of Manitoba; how well this government has created jobs in comparison to how they, the present opposition, Conservatives in this House managed job creation; how during the term of this government of Manitoba enjoyed a population boom rather than a population depression as existed under that group.

"We will be proceeding to the people of Manitoba at the appropriate time to discuss the quality of life issues in this province: health, education. Those are the issues that are important to Manitobans, Mr. Speaker. Manitobans are saying to us in increasing numbers, get on with the job; get this matter dealt with; get on with the real tasks that face and confront Manitobans."

Well, this is an interesting comment from the Premier who says that this item is No. 58 in his list of 61.

A MEMBER: 58! Unbelievable.

MR. D. GOURLAY: That's pretty near the bottom of the barrel and yet we have been debating and

discussing this issue since last July, and as a result of the - the Premier says this isn't important - but we just have to review the facts. He has lost one MLA over it and there are obviously other MLAs in his caucus that, if they were really listening to their constituents, they would be up in arms and supporting the Member for Elmwood, because certainly he is obviously listening to his constituents.

A MEMBER: There's no doubt about that.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Certainly, there's going to be a lot of other MLAs on the government side that are in a very dicey position because of their stand on this particular issue. They are not listening to their constituents.

A MEMBER: Springfield is only one example.

MR. D. GOURLAY: There's another good example. I understand the MLA for Springfield, his constituents called a meeting with some 500 or 600 people, and I think he got the message that they were not happy with what he was doing. But he said, well, you know when I got elected I didn't say that I would act according to your wishes at all times, there would be some difficult decisions for me to make, and obviously, this is one of them. Certainly, he hasn't got the support of his people. Who elected him? Who elected the guy? Who elected the MLA for Springfield? Was it some people from outside of the Springfield constituency?

Well, I hear a chirp from the Member for St. Johns, and I would just be interested in hearing the comments of the MLA for St. Johns because I'm sure that he has a lot of constituents that are not happy with what is being proposed by this government. I would be very surprised if he has many supporters that support what the government is trying to do. It would be interesting to hear his comments when he gets up to speak on this resolution.

A MEMBER: When are you speaking Don?

MR. D. GOURLAY: I mentioned that the Premier says that this item is not a very important issue and it's number 58. This is an absolutely ridiculous comment to be made by the Premier of the province who is trying to ram this thing through. Certainly he is not putting much importance to it, because he would like to see it over and done with and he has not had much comment about it. He usually turns it over to his Government House Leader or the Minister responsible for piloting this project through the House.

But certainly the Member for Thompson just indicated that this political opportunism will not stay around, that soon we'll know the real facts and that we will have wished that the opposition would support the government on this very important issue.

I would like to mention to the people or the members in this House that this item will be around for a long, long time. This item will not go away very easily. The people of Manitoba are very upset and disturbed on what this government is doing and their concerns are growing day by day. You just have to go home on the weekends to find out what the people are saying. —

(Interjection) — I hear the Member for The Pas making some comments from his seat. It would be interesting to know just how the people in The Pas really feel about this issue. I know that the Member for The Pas - he was raised in the constituency that I represent - and if he would just go home to his home town community of Cowan, he would find out that that community, who normally vote very strongly in support of the NDP, are having very serious concerns about this one particular issue.

There are other issues too that these people are concerned about, but we are discussing the constitutional amendment this time. The people of Cowan, the community that I represent in my constituency, the majority of those people do not support what the government is trying to do. The community of Mafeking, another community of a couple of hundred people, that normally vote 50/50, but I'm getting calls from people that have voted NDP all their lives there they tell me and there with us on this issue. They said they've had enough of the NDP on this one issue alone.

Now I'm happy to represent the people of my constituency and if they voted NDP in the past, that's fine; I respect that. But certainly if the people of my constituency are saying, "Hang in there and if you have to let the bells ring, let the bells ring." As a matter of fact, they're saying, we're afraid you're going to cave in and not let the bells ring when they should be ringing.

A MEMBER: Freedom bells.

MR. D. GOURLAY: That's right. That's the comment that's coming out now in every phone call I get; hang in there and stick to your guns, this is a very important issue and let the freedom bells ring. Certainly, I can't understand and the people of my constituency can't understand what's in it for the government. Why are they so insisting on pushing this item through?

A MEMBER: A Senate appointment for Howard.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Well, you know the Minister of Government Services said it's a matter of principle. Well, that's very interesting. It's the first time I've heard the NDP were ever concerned about a principle. Certainly, when you talk about principles and what has happened on this issue, this government has lost a lot of their good strong supporters, some of the grassroots people that have worked for a long, long time in the NDP Party. I'm not talking necessarily about the Member for Elmwood, but I think he has been an important cog in the overall success of the NDP in the past decade or two, but I'm also looking at people with the stature of Mr. Green, who sat in this House for a number of years and made a tremendous contribution to our parliamentary system. I'm not an individual who had a love for Mr. Green, because when he was in this House he didn't care who he took a swipe at and he stoop up for his rights. On that basis, I think, he contributed a lot to this Legislature over the years.

But just looking in the Hansard, I would just like to quote what Mr. Green had said when the Member for Ste. Rose, the Minister of Government of Services, talks about principle and Mr. Green I think had a lot to

contribute to the NDP. He still thinks and believes in that philosophy, but he couldn't hack the members in the government today and he had to leave that party. He formed his own party, but basically he's still and NDPer at heart. But just to quote what Mr. Green says, "Mr. Chairman, I appear here as a citizen of the Province of Manitoba whose maternal language is neither English or French. I grew up in this province and went to school and when I attended school I was taught the English language. That is the only basis upon which English is my official language. Had I been taught French when I walked into the same school room, I would be speaking the French language and that would be my official language.

"Throughout my career in politics, I don't think it can be questioned that it was my view that one of the most valuable features of our Canadian society was the fact that we were not founded on any one ethnic or cultural basis. That was an accident. It wasn't something that we were clever about, it just happened to us. This was a valuable feature of our society and throughout the years that I was in politics, active politics in the Legislature, the citizens of Manitoba in a healthy atmosphere and with great good will extended the use of the French language in the Province of Manitoba in a far more important way than is suggested by this bill on several occasions."

To go on with Mr. Green's comments and I quote, "Now, Mr. Chairman, I had high hopes for the enhancement of the use of more than one language in this province and particularly the French language and the English language. I worked very hard in that respect and I say that those hopes were based on the fact and can still be based on the fact that the people of the Province of Manitoba wanted to improve their lot by the advent of this new dimension. Where there is a will, Mr. Chairman, you do not need a legislation. Where there is no will, the legislation won't do you a bit of good."

Just to go on a little bit further, "So what you're looking for is the good will of the Province of Manitoba, not legislation. What you've got is a creation by this government and it didn't exist prior to two years ago, bad will on the part of the Province of Manitoba towards this end. I say, Mr. Speaker, that there is a bigger tragedy created by this government than any previous tragedy - economic, social or otherwise that I can remember having experienced in the Province of Manitoba and they continue with it."

Those are the words of Mr. Green who sat in this House for a good many years as a member of the NDP Party and I believe the latter year or two he sat as an independent and then subsequently as a member of the Progressive Party when several other members of the NDP Party left that party and joined Mr. Green.

Then, we have another individual, who I believe has worked hard over the years for the NDP Party, and he didn't choose to leave that party, but I understand that he got thrown out of the party not too long ago by the executive, they didn't want him in their party anymore, and that's Mr. Herb Schulz. I'd just like to quote one paragraph from a presentation that Mr. Schulz made.

"The government justifies closure on the grounds that the legislative opposition was deliberately delaying the business of the province. The simple fact is that the legislative opposition would never have dared this

delay had they not known that the vast majority of the people of Manitoba were opposed to what the government is doing. Closure to enact legislation is not unusual, however. It is used when the government believes it has general support of the populace, but this government that listens has taken the unprecedented step of invoking closure because it knows its legislation is not acceptable to the people of Manitoba." This is not from a Conservative, this is from Mr. Herb Schulz. — (Interjection) —

So, here we have the people that have contributed greatly to this party over the years that are speaking forthwith and every day we hear of NDPers that are tearing up their cards because of what this government is doing. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say that the members of this government can support our subamendment by removing 23.1 and getting on with what is left of this amendment.

Just interesting, last week - I believe it was last Wednesday - the Minister who was formerly responsible for charting this constitutional amendment through the House, the Attorney-General, he was speaking and it was very interesting to listen to the comments from the Attorney-General, the difference in the tone and what he spoke in this House last week compared to when he introduced the constitutional amendment back, I believe it was, early July or late June.

It was interesting to hear his comments and he spelled out the areas on where he had gone wrong. I don't think this government has learned anything after the Attorney-General had spoken and he outlined the various issues, that they should have been a little more gentle and not tried to ram this thing through. They should have indicated right at the start that there would be an opportunity for hearings to be held throughout the province where people would have a definite input where they could be heard and amendments could be based on the input from the people. He was very gentle on it. Unlike when he stood in his place back some eight months ago and he rammed and he said there's nothing that can be changed in this amendment. We've had secret meetings with the SFM and the Federal Government and Mr. Bilodeau, and there's not a word can be changed. We will have informational meetings, but there won't be input from the public, and that's the way it's going to be. — (Interjection) —

HON. A. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, P. EYLER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. A. ADAM: Well, I heard the Member for Swan River indicate that the Attorney-General had made a statement in the House that he had had secret meetings with the SFM, the Société franco-manitobaine, and the Federal Government. I would ask him to review that very carefully because I don't think that the Attorney-General ever made those statements in the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was the Minister of Government Services on a point of order, or was he asking a question or just interrupting, I presume?

The Minister is saying that there were no secret meetings with the SFM, is that what the Government Services Minister is saying, that there was no secret meetings held by the SFM and the Attorney-General, and the Federal Government, and Mr. Bilodeau? Because I am of the opinion that there were several meetings held by these people. They weren't advertised, they were held in secrecy. I'm not sure that all members of the government knew that these meetings were going on. Certainly, we didn't know these meetings were being held. But the Attorney-General said, we cannot change this agreement because we made it with the good wishes of the SFM and the Federal Government and Mr. Bilodeau. Nothing can be changed. We'll have informational meetings to explain it to the people. We'll pass it . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. D. GOURLAY: . . . it'll go to Ottawa and that will be the new amendment to our Constitution. Some way to deal with our first amendment to our Constitution.

Well, I'm wondering now, we have a new Minister. He hasn't learned from the comments obviously made by the Attorney-General because here we have a new Minister who up until a few months ago was a backbencher, and now he is Minister responsible for this bilingual issue and he's also the Minister of Municipal Affairs, but certainly all of a sudden he becomes Mr. Know-It-All. I give the Minister credit. I think that he has stood his ground well and he has put up a very good argument, albeit certainly he hasn't got the support of his constituents obviously, hasn't got the support of the people of Manitoba, that he has been the one, the Minister, who has invoked closure. We've heard the bells ringing here for a number of days. They wanted to wrap up this debate on the resolution and get it shipped off to Ottawa, so that this would be amended forever because I'm not certain that any government in the future would ever want to get into this kind of a situation, if what we've had in the past few months is any example.

Now, who is the government really helping with this constitutional amendment? Certainly, the people of Manitoba are not with the government, and certainly the SFM are not happy with what the government is doing. They've watered down and they've changed and rehashed this proposed amendment so many times that they're not really sure that they've got something that they really want. So it's kind of interesting to know what is behind the government in their forcing of this issue through the way they are doing.

The A/G, when he was speaking on this resolution, he explained what has gone wrong; the way they introduced the resolution in the first place there would be no flexibility on it; there would be no room for change; there would be no opportunity for the general public to have any input into it because they had made a deal with the SFM and the Federal Government, so why go through this exercise if they couldn't make the necessary changes.

We found that many amendments have come in, many changes. They've even withdrawn some of the amendments that they made earlier they couldn't live with. Anyway, the no provision for the people to be

heard, well, of course, we know that they had to change their views on that and hearings were held. I think that there was a reasonably good turnout of people to make their cases known. Obviously - and I indicated before - I felt that the SFM were in a conflict of interest in making presentations to this hearing because they were party to the agreement and yet they chose to have people going to all the hearings defending their case, but that was okay. I just think that they upset a lot of people throughout the province because of the fact that they were party to the agreement and they were sending representatives to the hearings throughout Manitoba even though there was no SFM people in some of those areas.

The Attorney-General admitted that they were wrong and the government didn't use the right approach, but what the Attorney-General didn't really dwell on was the fact on how poisoned the system has been as a result of the actions of this government. The people do not trust this government because of what they have done. They absolutely are very nervous what's happening. The government are saying that people don't understand what we're trying to do, but the people very well know what's happening. They understand very well the issues at hand and they certainly don't want to have English and French officially entrenched in our Constitution. I think they feel that by and large the procedure that had been followed up until the time being has worked fairly well, but what we've heard from this government in the last eight months has poisoned the system to the extent that it would be very difficult to go back to even what we've had in the past, because of the distrust of the people and where neighbour had been pitted against neighbour on this issue and certainly this whole package has become a very emotional concern of the people of this province.

When the Member for Thompson says that we are political opportunists for speaking out against this constitutional package, well, all I can say is that we are listening to our constituents and they are saying, hang in there, and if it takes ringing of the bells until the next election, you'll have to do that. We want to stop this government in its tracks and — (Interjection) — Someone mentioned, is that what we're going to do. It depends on how this government proceeds. We started today with the threat that maybe tomorrow closure will be invoked again and we will only be given some eight hours to further debate. We have, I think, a lot to contribute on this Constitution and certainly we want to be heard.

I would just like to take a moment to indicate why the people have reacted the way they have. The Member for Thompson and some of the other speakers have indicated on the government side that the people are with them on this issue, that they want to get this thing over with so they can get on to more important economic issues to deal with unemployment or what have you. I believe that the people do want to get on to more important issues, that they feel that this constitutional amendment is very important at this stage of the game because of the way the government has brought in this and wanted to pass it very quickly. They are very suspicious of the actions . . .

HON. B. URUSKI: Come on.

MR. D. GOURLAY: The Minister of Agriculture is saying, come on, but I would just like to ask the Minister of Agriculture his true feelings about his constituency. You must be in an area where there is a lot of opposition to what the government is doing, and how does he justify going against the wishes of his people when he is sent into this Legislature to represent them, just like the Minister of Municipal Affairs is here to represent the interests of the municipal councils in this province?

I would just like to relate what the Attorney-General identified. The government tried to force this issue through and this is what has upset the people; the speeches of Serge Joyal, Minister of State, last March; this is what has upset the people of Manitoba. You will recall that when this accord was struck the Minister of State, Mr. Serge Joyal, came to St. Boniface and spoke to some 600 people. I think I should just mention here what Mr. Joyal did say and I think the members of the government can say that, no, we are not introducing federal bilingualism into Manitoba, but when you hear what Mr. Joyal has to say, it scares the people that this is going far beyond what the government had indicated to the people of Manitoba.

To quote Mr. Joyal, he says, "You know the idea, the challenge, the ambition of making Canada a French country, both inside and outside Quebec, an idea some people consider a bit crazy." The people of Manitoba have some concerns about it. Maybe they don't think it's crazy, but they think it's something that they don't want to have any part of. It's something a little beyond the ordinary imagination. You have to have intense conviction, you have to have an ideal insight to turn around and look back at 200 years of history, 300 years in Nova Scotia's case, and thank God, when you ask yourself and when you try to define the stages of the process, you realize clearly that there are many pitfalls.

Mr. Joyal - I can't begin to read this speech into the record, but I think he made a few comments that scare the people of Manitoba. They are looking at something far beyond what this government is saying they're proposing. You just ask practically any people in this province and you'll certainly get the answer. You can listen to radio shows; you can pick up the newspaper; you can go to the hearings. Everywhere you go, people are saying, you know, I voted NDP for a number of times, but I've had it with these people, they're not listening to what we're trying to tell them. It's all because of the way this whole thing has been handled and I've been trying to point out some of the areas and why people have reacted.

To go on, just to quote another little bit here from Mr. Joyal, "With all its programs and Manpower and Immigration or any other department that has economic impact, the government must realize and ask itself to what extent these programs directly affect the growth and development of Francophones in their province."

That's quite an abrupt change in attitude. "As hard as it was in the '70s for some of our fellow Canadians, who speak the other language, to accept the fact that Canada is a French State, is going to be, or it may be equally hard to convince that Canadian government that has a comprehensive responsibility toward French speakers and the strengthening and the status of French extends well beyond the responsibility of the Secretary of State." Mr. Joyal had a strong message there.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have only one minute left and I would just like to finish up by saying that this

government should really go to the people with an election rather than pushing through this constitutional amendment, because in the '81 election they put out a document here of some 12 or 15 pages and you can go through it with a fine tooth comb and there isn't one sentence in here where it says that they're going to amend the Constitution and to make French and English official languages of this province.

I strongly will support the wishes of my constituents in opposing what the government is trying to do, but I support the subamendment that my colleague, the MLA for Fort Garry, has brought in, to delete making English and French the official languages of this province.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MR. W. STEEN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is my privilege at this time to say a few remarks regarding this amendment and the subamendment on the constitutional matter.

I would like to begin, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by covering some of the background that we, as members, have been faced with over the past number of months, and touch on some of the history behind this constitutional amendment.

Sir, there has been much said in this Chamber about the fact that the Progressive Conservative Government in 1980 passed a bill at that time that was going to make it possible that French services could be made available to Manitobans. Sir, as a supporter of such legislation, I think that it would have been ideal legislation when passed, and would be legislation that could serve Manitobans well today and for years to come.

What the intent was of such legislation at that time was that, for example, in the community of St. Pierre, if the government offices there would have somebody available that could speak to a person within that community in their mother tongue, could communicate to them in French, and this would be done in other areas where there was a sufficient need to have somebody working in government offices that could communicate to the citizens of Manitoba in French.

There are, Mr. Speaker, still persons residing in Manitoba who do not speak English and that do require assistance when dealing with government services in their own tongue. This also applies to other languages. There are pockets in Manitoba where the German people are heavily populated, as well as the Ukrainians, and, to me, it makes sense that government offer those services in those communities, government services to those people in their language and the language that they can communicate to government and get their services.

Also, in 1980, it was passed that in the courts of Manitoba and the Legislature French would be an accepted language, but, Sir, I hear the Member for Inkster - the brainchild of the NDP - chirping away in the background as this being our policy. I say, Mr. Speaker, that it is a common-sense policy that Manitobans have French services where sufficient demand presents itself, that such services be made

available for people in those communities. I also say that services in both German and Ukrainian should be offered in communities where such a demand presents itself.

The people talk of 1870 where Manitoba was to be French and English only, and that in 1890 the French aspect was taken away. I don't believe any member, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in this Chamber, has ever said that the wrong that was committed in 1890 is agreed by anybody in this Chamber. We all recognize the fact that a correction should have been made. A correction, in my opinion, in 1980 was made after the parking ticket incident. I don't think that anything further to that was really necessary, and the political hassle that we have been going through for the past eight months was totally unnecessary. What has resulted from this past eight months of political debate?

We see now today - we are at the end of January of 1984 - we have had hearings on the resolution as of Friday and Saturday last, as of yesterday morning, and again this morning. What we have seen on a constant basis is people appearing before the legislative committee saying that Manitobans are a divided group of people. They have been divided by this legislation and by this government wanting to force this piece of legislation through this Legislative Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, when one talks about them forcing the legislation through, you must again look at the fact that they have, on a number of occasions, used closure as their means of getting it through. The Member for Elmwood, who spoke on this matter when closure was used on Bill 115 at second reading, mentioned about the famous closure debates in the House of Commons back in 1956 where the then Liberal Government led by St. Laurent tried to get the pipeline debates through through closure.

MR. H. ENNS: Actually, it was C.D. Howe.

MR. W. STEEN: Well, C.D. Howe was perhaps the architect of the closure motion. He was perhaps the House Leader at the time, and now we have a new C.D. Howe some many years later in the new Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Government House Leader, the Member for Springfield.

But the Member for Elmwood made reference to the fact that, in his opinion, two great and well-known members of the former CCF Party, now the NDP Party, in the names of Stanley Knowles and M.J. Coldwell, both fought extremely hard fights against the C.D. Howe-St. Laurent team for bringing in closure in 1956.

What was the result of the closure? The bill did pass - yes, Mr. Speaker - and the bill in this Chamber is going to pass as well. The Liberals of 1956 had a majority in the House of Commons at the time, and the NDP have a majority in this Chamber. It's only a matter of time when this bill will pass. But in 1956, after the St. Laurent Government used the method of closure, which is seldom ever heard of in parliamentary terms, Mr. Speaker, what followed from that was a Diefenbaker victory in the election of the spring of '57, and then a landslide victory when he didn't have a majority in the winter of '58.

What this government has done, Sir, is put itself in a position where we are seeing, day in and day out,

persons coming before them, whether it be at committee or in private meetings; and now some of these so-called private meetings are getting on television where people are confronting their members, the NDP members of the Legislature, and saying that they want to give back their cards, their memberships. They are telling the people that's not the government or the party that they voted for, and that this resolution was not in their propaganda in the fall of '81 during that election campaign, and that during that election campaign of '81 there was no talk on the part of the now-present government of introducing such a resolution or a bill such as Bill 115. We are seeing regularly, day in and day out, people confronting these members opposite, saying that this is not what they want or expect from their government or from members that they voted for.

We have been saying, Mr. Speaker, members on this side of the House, for months, that the majority of the people are not in favour of this proposed legislation. It was proven this past fall during the municipal plebiscite.

Members opposite say, well, we are talking about something differently now. I say, Sir, that if almost 80 percent, or 80 percent of the people that voted in the municipal elections and voted against the proposals of that time are still 80 percent against this proposal and that the people opposite, I don't know what it takes, to get it through to them that they are driving down a one-way street and they are driving themselves into nothing but trouble. Besides many persons who, as I have said, have made representation before committee, who have talked to members of our caucus, who have talked to individuals from our caucus have said that this proposal is driving a wedge between Manitobans and they are dividing Manitobans to the extent that they have never been divided ever before.

We have seen in this Chamber in the past, some legislation that has caused concerns with Manitobans. We saw Family Law proposed by the Schreyer administration. We saw the Family Law Bill that was proposed by the Lyon administration to make some amendments to that legislation. We saw The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act of 1970 before this legislation, and we have seen bills that have got to the people and have disturbed people in the past. Sir, I don't believe that any of those pieces of legislation I have spoken about ever caused the concern and the divisiveness amongst Manitobans that this proposal has. — (Interjection) — I believe I hear opposite somebody saying, do you think that we should back down now or I hope you don't believe that we'll back down now. No, I don't expect they'll back down. I'm sure that when C.D. Howe had a bushful of grain thrown on the stage at Morris when he was speaking down there that that didn't deter him and he proceeded and forged ahead with his idea of the pipeline debate, and it only took the people of the country of Canada at a general election to tell him that he was on the wrong course, and to tell his government that they were on the wrong course and that's when the Government of Diefenbaker came in with a minority government, followed by a great majority.

I would go so far as to say, Mr. Speaker, that this government will lose the next election and will lose it over this issue, if nothing else. Even though the First Minister says that this item is not an important item

and that there are economic issues that are of greater importance to he and his government and many other issues, that this one, I believe, he said the other day was 58th on a list of 61 items that were before him.

I would say to him if this is 58th and we have had the public reaction that we have had to date, I would hate to see it ever be in No. 1 or No. 2 position. Goodness gracious, we've had tremendous public outbursts concerning this to the extent that in a few cases it's gotten rather ugly. If this was a high-priority item with the government in the eyes of the First Minister, god only knows what would happen.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from a letter that Mr. Sidney Green, Q.C. wrote the First Minister on January 12, 1984. In this letter I believe he points out a number of areas that he at that time in writing to the First Minister, asks the First Minister if he would consider. He concluded the letter by saying that he would welcome any reply from the First Minister regarding his statements within that letter, and I would like to refer to some of the areas in the letter where he says: "Mr. Premier, I acknowledge receipt of your letter of December 30, 1983, wherein you advise that you would like to keep me up-to-date on recent developments regarding The Manitoba Act."

He goes on to say that - this is Mr. Green - that he wishes to indicate the following and the first one is: "The present proposal before the Legislature does not, as you appear to believe, respect the views of Manitobans. The best evidence available as to the views of Manitobans is that they do not desire any amendments to The Manitoba Act."

Mr. Speaker, in repeating myself, this is exactly what I have said, that Manitobans over the last eight months have been telling this government, they have been telling members of the opposition, that they don't want any changes made. I say that we have all kinds of proof from Manitobans besides the provincial plebiscite, as well as the numbers of calls and letters that members of the Legislature, regardless of which side of the House they're on, are receiving from Manitobans.

He goes on in the second paragraph to state: "Your stated objective is to have a legislative rather than a judicial decision. Your present proposal will fail to realize this objective and will result in greater uncertainties regarding the use of French and English languages than presently exist."

I've been one of the persons, Mr. Speaker, that has said from Day One I would prefer that members of the Legislature be the persons that guide the destiny of Manitobans for the years to come, as well as at present, rather than have the judicial system or the judges from the Supreme Court, if a matter was to go to the Supreme Court, be the persons that dictate to Manitobans what should be the case for us.

At least, we, as Manitobans have the right at election time, Sir, to defeat a government if we disagree with their proposals, but if we differ with the judges, we have no recourse whatsoever. The judges have been appointed and in many cases they're appointed for life or until age 75 and they are there and they will render decisions that they wish to render and whether they are within the keeping of the majority of the Manitobans or a small minority.

He goes on, Mr. Green, to say that: "Your proposal will open the door to more judicial decisions than are

presently available at the present time. You are apparently unaware of the fact that the purpose of entrenchment is to remove legislative power and to place authority in the hands of nine judges in Ottawa."

Mr. Speaker, I think that this is an important issue when you move authority from the Legislature and put it into the hands of some nine judges in Ottawa of which we would be very fortunate if one of them came from the Province of Manitoba. Currently, there is one from Manitoba and the other eight are from outside of Manitoba and they would be in a position to tell Manitobans what is best for us. I say that I would rather have my destination in the hands of the Legislature of Manitoba regardless if it were from the Progressive Conservative Party or not, rather than have it in the hands of nine federally-appointed judges in Ottawa. — (Interjection) —

"The present proposal," Mr. Green goes on to say, "in no way reflects the political consensus of the 1980s. The proposal is being made after the English language has been used officially in Manitoba for 90 years. It is likely that the political consensus of the 1980s would unfortunately result in reduced, rather than increased, French language rights. If you do not accept my view in this connection and you wish to avoid misjudging the political consensus, I suggest that you test the political consensus by calling an election with your government proposal on this issue."

We have heard many members from this side of the House suggesting to the government that call an election if you don't believe us, that the people of Manitoba are opposed to this resolution and to the language rights being brought forward in this manner.

Mr. Speaker, if we reflect back to 1890 when it was the Liberal Government, and I like to always refer to it was a Liberal Government at that time that took away the rights of the French people at that time, and as I've said, that all members in this Legislature disagree with that action that was taken at that time, but perhaps one of the reasons why the people of 1890 did make such a change was that the French population in Manitoba, which had been at least 50-50 in 1870, was starting to decline and decline greatly on the English-speaking population was increasing. History will tell you that people that were immigrating and moving out to Manitoba at that time were basically coming from English-speaking Ontario and that Manitoba was receiving very few French-speaking people who were at that time were moving to Manitoba. Perhaps that's the reason why the Government of the Day did make such a change, but I say that with hindsight some 90 years later that - and I have said this before - all members of this Legislature say that that decision at that time was incorrect and that the rights should have been restored and they were restored in 1980 by the Lyon administration.

A MEMBER: Sure they were, sure they were.

MR. W. STEEN: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Green goes on and says that he is certain that "the Federal Government will assist in the translation services without pressuring the province into enacting a constitutional amendment."

This is one of the areas, Mr. Speaker, that we've heard many speakers opposite say, that without

proceeding on this course that they would be forced into translating some 4,500 statutes, and by following their action they will be able to reduce that to some figure of 600 and therefore save the taxpayers of Manitoba great sums of money.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that I doubt very much that the Federal Government would ever have forced them into translating all 4,500 statutes; we would have gone for years and years into the future without having to change them. Perhaps statutes that were being used each and every day of the week by the population of Manitoba, yes they should have been translated, and the Federal Government, I'm sure, would have assisted in the financing that was involved in making these changes.

One of the problems that I know that faced the Lyon administration was, where could you get qualified persons to do the translating? These people were just not available and it was going to take a great period of time to get sufficient people to make these changes and to get this translation work. I'm sure that members opposite are going to find the same is going to be the case, that people who have the skill of doing translations are just not available in great numbers.

Going back to Mr. Green's letter, "The present proposal," he says, "can be interpreted so as to embody the entrenchment of many more services than were provided for in the original proposal. The position of the government has the people of Manitoba somewhat confused. Six months ago people who opposed the government's position were referred to as bigots and/or ignorant. Now the government is doing its best to convince Manitobans that it seeks no enhancement or no expansion of entrenched French services." He goes on and says, "Have the government members joined the ranks of the bigots or the ignorant?"

That's just my case and my point there is, Mr. Speaker, that we don't have to enhance and expand the entrenchment of French services, the legislation of 1980 is sufficient. What we could have done for the last eight months is dealt with matters as the First Minister says that are of greater importance than this matter, because he's got this matter 58th on his list of 61, and we could have been dealing with many other matters pertaining to everyday matters and concerns of citizens of Manitoba.

What has happened though, as a result of the proposals, is that we have, as I have said before, divided Manitobans and have Manitobans arguing with their neighbours and with their friends over an issue that has never had such importance before in their eyes for argumentative purposes.

Mr. Green further in his letter said to the Premier just two weeks ago, "You appear to rely on Sterling Lyon for endorsement. You mentioned that Mr. Lyon made a statement that both English and French are official languages. Your advisors have apparently not explained to you that the statement referred to was adopted by the Legislature without opposition and had to do with the interpretation of statutes. It was not a constitutional amendment. It could be repealed at anytime if interpreted by the courts as being or going beyond its intent. Your determination to make the constitutional amendment out of a statement in a statute would indicate to me that you require to be kept up-to-date on this matter."

So obviously Mr. Green is offering his legal advice to the First Minister and trying to help him out with this matter.

He goes on to say, "You indicate that only English laws will be validated." Then Mr. Green asks the First Minister, "When they declared to be invalid? You apparently have not had brought to your attention the fact that the Court of Appeal of Manitoba has already rejected a case seeking to declare our laws invalid.

Mr. Speaker, this goes on to point out again the fact that this proposal is not necessary and that we could have easily have lived with the actions taken in 1980. I say that we have done for the past number of months is that we have seen the Attorney-General, the former Government House Leader, introduce the resolution back in May, have it discussed in the Legislature on a number of occasions during the latter part of May and part of June. I believe it was mid-June that he decided in his wisdom to go out and have public forums where he could talk to Manitobans and tell him what the intent of the government was. I say, tell them what the intent of the government was, not go out and discuss with them and hear feedback from the Manitobans as to what they thought about the proposed resolution, but he was going to go out and lecture them, teach them, and train Manitobans as to how to react to his proposed legislation.

I recall being at the very first meeting. It was a noon-hour meeting in the constituency of Dauphin, in the town of Dauphin, and there was slightly better than a hundred persons in attendance. About 11 or 12 persons were, at the end of the meeting, granted permission to state their views although this was not the intent of the government to have persons from the audience be given an opportunity to state their views, and of the 11 or 12 persons at that meeting who spoke on the issue, every last one of them were definitely opposed to the ideas of the Attorney-General. So much so, Mr. Speaker, and I don't ever feel uncomfortable or feel sorry for members opposite, but the Member for Dauphin, the Minister of Government Services at the time, was in attendance at the meeting and I have never seen a politician so uncomfortable as to be in a room with better than a hundred constituents and almost to a man, women and child being definitely and strongly opposed to what his government was proposing.

When I say that I witnessed that, I was not present the other day, but I did see it on television when our new Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Government Services Minister was confronted by a number of his constituents and perhaps put in a rather uncomfortable position. I did as I say, Mr. Speaker, attend that Dauphin meeting and I did see the Member for Dauphin in a very uncomfortable position.

I would say, Sir, that speaking of Dauphin, that with a community that likely has better than 50 percent of its population who are of Ukrainian background, that this now Minister of Highways, I am sure was taught a valuable political lesson on that hot, sunny afternoon, that you don't take thorny issues into your back yard unless you have tested the waters and he obviously was taught a great political lesson that day. When the government did eventually listen to the opposition and accepted the idea of holding a committee, intersessional hearings on this matter, they chose not to go back to Dauphin, and obviously because they had been there once before on their informational circuit and found how uncomfortable it could be, they went down the road somewhat to Ste. Rose.

The Member for Dauphin, I'm sure, has been taught a great political lesson in the year 1983, and that is you don't take a French issue home to your home town of Dauphin and try and ram it down the throats of your citizens and your electors, especially when more than 50 percent of them are of Ukrainian background and haven't perhaps got the need or the use or the value for having French as their second language. They would rather have Ukrainian or English as the second language and I would hope that Member for Dauphin has perhaps been taught a good political lesson and perhaps in the fall of '85 or the spring of '86 he'll get the results of that political election back in his home town of Dauphin.

Mr. Speaker, I made reference to the fact that in 1890, when the changes were made by the Legislature of Manitoba, and said at that time that what the government did was not correct and that at that time Manitoba's population was growing and growing at a rapid rate, but it was growing with English-speaking persons predominately and not the French people. — (Interjection) — I hear the Minister of Municipal Affairs over there chirping away. I made reference earlier, Mr. Speaker, about that Minister who has the distinction of being likely the only former Clerk of this Legislative Session every to become - or Deputy Clerk - an elected official in this Chamber, and then he is the only person in years to have ever advanced a motion of closure before this Legislature. I say, Sir, that he is going to go down in the history books of Manitoba, if for nothing else other than the fact that he is the man that moved closure, and yet it was strong proponents and supporters of the party that he subscribes to in M.J. Coldwell and Stanley Knowles that, many years ago, fought so much against the use of closure in our federal House of Commons, and yet he has seen fit to introduce it here in this Legislative Chamber. He's done it on a number of occasions. Today he has chosen not to do it, which I compliment him for, because it is important to get on with the hearings and without his normal closure motion at 3:00 o'clock or thereabouts each day, we can have a committee hearing this evening and perhaps, if necessary, again tomorrow morning and we can get on and continue on with the debate on the resolution and the subamendment.

As I say, Mr. Speaker, this Minister who is piloting this legislation before this Legislature, is going to go down in the annals of history in Manitoba and he will be remembered for years to come, and I would think that he will be the person, along with the Attorney-General, that will likely have the greatest impact on the voters at the next General Election and it won't be his leader likely that will be responsible for the loss of the election. I say, governments don't win elections, government lose elections and that the NDP Government will lose the next election over this piece of legislation in itself and it shall sit on the shoulders of the Attorney-General and the now Minister of Municipal Affairs for years to come as being the two persons that were the architects of this legislation and wanting to ram it through, and when they wanted to muzzle the opposition, then they used the closure method of trying to do it.

They, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure, thought after Christmas they would call back the Legislature and in a matter of a few days they would have their legislation through this Chamber and be out and on their way within a

matter of a few weeks. I say that I'm sure the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who is schooled in the art of political science from Waterloo University, but perhaps hasn't had a great deal of practical experience in politics, has had one lesson and one lesson brought to his attention very clearly and that is that you don't steamroll over top of the opposition your piece of legislation. You try and work with them, and especially, Sir, if you're trying to propose legislation that only has the support of approximately 20 percent of the people out there, and the opposition has 80 percent of the people on their side, it makes it much more difficult for them to get their legislation through.

I say, Mr. Speaker, that we will all recall on the evening after the polls close at 8:00 p.m., whether they call the election in the fall of '85 or winter of that year and go through until the spring of '86, that when this government is defeated, that the Member for Fort Rouge, the Attorney-General, and the Member for Springfield, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the two great architects of this proposed legislation will be the two persons that will be held responsible for this party being defeated.

Mr. Speaker, being seated in this particular seat, I get to know my friend here, the Member for River East, and he's a nice gentleman. I like the way he goes up and relieves you from time-to-time and assists you in running this Chamber. I hate to see him or the Minister of Finance, two persons from the East Kildonan area, being defeated in the next election over this piece of legislation. They're both nice people and they're goners, Sir. You would think the Member for St. James, who has had lots of experience in this Legislative Chamber and at the municipal level, when the bill that brought in the unification of the City of Winnipeg was brought in by the former NDP Government and annoyed the people of St. James to the extent that it did, that it cost him the '73 election. You would think that he would have added his experience and wisdom to that caucus and said to the fellows, look it, you're going uphill, it's difficult swimming uphill. Why don't we just forget about this — (Interjection) — swimming upstream, my friend tells me and not uphill. It's running uphill, which is difficult. Swimming upstream is very difficult, Mr. Speaker.

You would think that the wise one from St. James over there would have said to his colleagues in caucus that we're bucking a no-win situation and that we should withdraw this legislation or let it die on the Order Paper and get out of this Legislature with as much grace as possible.

Mr. Speaker, not only are we dividing Manitobans over this issue, but we are seeing the destruction of a government over this issue, and over the next few weeks as this draws to a conclusion, the last nails will be put into the coffin and it will be just a matter of time between now and the next General Election when the Conservatives will be back in office on the other side of the House.

Now I see the Minister of Finance and I'm glad to hear him present, because I was just saying earlier that this legislation is going to be damaging to him in Rossmere and to his good friend, the Member for River East, and they are what I call goners in the next election as a result of this legislation.

But anyway, the Member for River East suggests I run against him. The other day he suggested that they

would make an even trade - the Member for Elmwood for me from River Heights - an even trade. They wouldn't even throw in any future considerations; they weren't even necessary. I said to him at the time that I am happy to stay in River Heights as a Conservative because I know that the next election in River Heights will be easier to win than the last one was, and any previous one, and that it will be an easier election, Mr. Speaker, for the Conservatives at the time that the government musters up enough courage to go to the people because the Conservatives, under their new leader, will form the next government and the people of Manitoba will be throwing a government out - not electing a government - but throwing a government out because they went against popular opinion and brought in bad legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to this government if they are pigheaded enough to forge on ahead with this legislation, that they are committing political suicide. It's a matter of time that the people of Manitoba are going to remove them from office mainly because of this legislation and not only because of their bad management policies, but this piece of legislation is going to be throwing them out. It has pitted Manitobans against Manitobans in an angry fashion that has never been done before and I say that these people will receive the benefits of the people at the next election and it will be out of office for the NDP.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, J. Walding: Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, the matter before us is a constitutional amendment, the first of its kind ever dealt with by this Legislature since the new Canada Constitution Act was passed in April of 1982.

When I first spoke on this resolution back in July of last year, I made mention of the fact, Sir, that it was incumbent upon the members of the House to remember that they were considering the first constitutional amendment; that the effect of it would be largely irreversible when it was passed by this House and subsequently approved by the Parliament of Canada; and that, thirdly, we should be considering establishing some form of operation for the handling of amendments which would not see them dealt with in terms of unseemly haste no matter what the motivation of the Government of the Day, of whatever political stripe it might be, would be, because constitutional amendments are important.

Constitutional amendments are not mere acts of a Legislature that can be corrected and changed the year after. Constitutional amendments are there, for all practical purposes, forever. When you stop to consider, Sir, that in a House of Commons, consisting of some 274 members or thereabouts, Manitoba has only 14 members. So the likelihood of Manitoba being able ever to make a change in a constitutional amendment, which it finds it has gone wrong on, against the House of Commons composed of some 260 members who are not from our province, that likelihood - without suggesting any perversity on the part of those members at all - that likelihood is very thin that Manitoba would

ever be able to correct things done in this Chamber to a constitutional amendment.

Well, Sir, I rehearse that ground again because in the course of the debate that has occurred since July of last summer, some of us may well have lost sight of the facts that I have just spoken about; some of us may well have lost sight of the fact that what we are doing - what this government is asking us to do here - is fundamentally important for future generations of Manitobans. Some of us may have been so caught up in the emotional argument which has undoubtedly surrounded this question; some of us may have become so caught up in that kind of argument; and some, like the House Leader, so keen to establish themselves as petty tacticians, that we lose sight of what we are dealing with.

So I want to make a few comments today, Sir, and remind the House again that notwithstanding the flips and the flops and the weaving and the slithering and the oiling about perpetrated by this government since it brought in this ill-fated document, and all of the changes that this government has made to that document, notwithstanding it, and the 90 percent retreat that they have made on the constitutional document, without trying to admit it to anybody, that it is still a fundamentally important document which has to be perfect, or as nearly perfect as a Legislature can make it, because we will lose our chance of correcting it once it passes through this House.

Now having made that point, Sir, let me express in terms that I thought I would not ever have to use in this House, my utter and complete abhorrence at the tactics which this NDP Government have used in pursuing the passage of this constitutional resolution. Sir, the very act of imposing the closure motion on a constitutional resolution is abhorrent to the whole parliamentary system.

Mr. Speaker, I say from my seat, and for those who may want to read Hansard in years to come, that this government has not established a civilized and a principled way of dealing with constitutional amendments. I say to those who will follow us in this Legislature that if they want to find out how to handle a constitutional amendment, do everything about 90 degrees different from how this government did it and you will be just about right. Do the opposite of what this government did and you couldn't be too far wrong.

They have established a heinous record, Sir, in dealing with something as fundamentally important as a constitutional amendment, and it will accrue to the everlasting contempt that this generation of Manitobans will hold this government in because they know, when these kinds of back-alley tactics are used with something as fundamentally important as a constitutional amendment, that this government cares not so much about the Constitution as it does making deals, perpetrating shady tactics in this House and otherwise misleading the people of Manitoba on the fundamental importance of what they are doing; trying to paint a picture of something and saying something is innocent in its purport when it isn't innocent in its purport; avoiding initially as they did, the fundamentally good advice that they were given by their law advisors; and then finally coming along, creeping along - skulking is the term that I think is most apt for this government - skulking back to a position on this constitutional

amendment which is about 170 degrees different, Sir, from what they started out with.

These are the people, Mr. Speaker, who stood in their places last year - the Attorney-General - the First Minister - the Minister of Resources, when he wasn't busy parading in front of the American Consulate on behalf of some left-wing group in Central America, the Minister of Natural Resources, telling us that we had to pass these immutable words that they had carved into stone and that they had negotiated so carefully with the Franco-Manitoban Society and the Government of Canada, and what a bunch of ignorant, racist bigots, anti-French, and so on - those were the catcalls we heard; if not from them, from some of their editorial supporters across the country - we were in opposing it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that they've changed 170 degrees, now that they have a constitutional resolution which still has corrections and improvements to be made to it, but which is a world better than what they started out with, now that they have backtracked that much toward reasonableness and common sense, what do we hear from them now? We hear from them now, you've got to pass it immediately. They bring in a motion of closure to give effect, Sir, to the kind of second-storey tactics, like ordinary con men would use, in dealing with something as important as a constitutional amendment. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, I hear again the Minister of Resources. Back in July of this summer he was harping away too, because he can't stand the heat. He indicated, Mr. Speaker, the other day to the people of Manitoba what he thought about them and the committee, and he subsequently had to apologize when he called them a bunch of rednecks, and he had to apologize in the committee. So, we know, Mr. Speaker — (Interjection) — he has no point of order . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. S. LYON: . . . I tell the truth.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, the Chair will decide whether or not there are points of order.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources on a point of order.

Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

I admitted that I made a slip and I apologized. I certainly did not intend to refer to anyone else other than the former Leader of the Opposition as a redneck. It was in keeping with his face. I made a slip, I referred to others, I meant only him, and because I made that slip I apologized and the honourable member should not be referring to it.

MR. SPEAKER: If the phrase was made and withdrawn and apologized for, I think it would not be proper for other members to discuss the matter.

The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

HON. S. LYON: On the point of order, Mr. Speaker, it's not right for other members to mislead the House as to what was said, particularly when it's on the record.

When the honourable member said, "Your face is just as red as their necks are, some of them," that's what he said.

MR. SPEAKER: I did not hear all of the member's point of order, does he wish to repeat it?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. There is no point of order before the House.

The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

HON. A. MACKLING: I was referring to the honourable members of the opposition, but . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. S. LYON: Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Manitoba know what the Minister of Natural Resources thinks about them anyway, notwithstanding his apology. His former colleague, the Leader of the Progressive Party, Mr. Sidney Green, used another example of just how he treated that apology from the Minister of Natural Resources, which is also in Hansard and which needs to be read by everyone on that side of the House to show the depths of depravity to which these people have fallen, Mr. Speaker, in their ravenous attempt to force something upon the people of Manitoba that was neither required historically, legally, or constitutionally. They made a gaff, Mr. Speaker, of immeasurable proportions that they're now trying to recover from. In the course of trying to recover from it, one of the misdirected things they have done, one of the most abhorrent things I've seen this government do, is to try impose the muzzle of closure upon this House as they try to shuffle through the remnants of their ill-starred document.

Mr. Speaker, I know very well that my honourable friends are used to breaking up meetings with their Marxist-like tactics that we hear right now. I know, I know that they are. They're well trained in it. Most of them come from that ilk of society but, Mr. Speaker, you have a job and I have a job. My job is to make my speech, their job is not to use Marxist tactics in the House. Mr. Speaker, I never object to good heckling. What I object to, Mr. Speaker, is just sort of jungle mumbblings that we hear from honourable members across the way, who lack either the wit or the power of articulation to express themselves.

Mr. Speaker, the amendment that we now have, remember we started out with the Attorney-General's first statement in the resolution, which was that English and French are the official languages of Manitoba. Now, the Attorney-General having been unceremoniously kicked out of the job of having the carriage of this matter, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the petty tactician, has now come up with a new amendment, and the new amendment says this, Mr. Speaker. I read to you what he would have us enact. Remember, this, if we enact it, is going to become chiseled in stone, practically irreversible. Here's what he says, 23.1, here's what he wants us to pass, here's what he wants to put

closure on and not have us even discuss. He thinks it's so perfect. "As English and French are the official languages of Manitoba, the freedom to use either official language enjoyed under the law of Manitoba in force at the time this section comes into force shall not be extinguished or restricted by or pursuant to any act of the Legislature of Manitoba." That's the fundamental clause in which there is still, if I may say so, Sir, a fair amount of cancerous drafting to be cut out.

We have, therefore, moved, Sir, that the amendment be amended by striking out that clause and substituting therefore the following, "by striking out the proposed Section 23.1 of The Manitoba Act as set forth in the subamendment brought forward by the Minister of Municipal Affairs." That's where we are today. We are asking that this reference, which is historically false, inaccurate, that English and French are the official languages of Manitoba, we're asking

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. S. LYON: Oh, Mr. Speaker, just like hungry trout, they rise to the bait all the time. They have, Mr. Speaker, about the same mental agility as the same trout that come up for the feeding once a night.

We say strike out that section because it is not historically accurate. English and French are not the official languages of Manitoba, except only insofar as Section 23 makes them the official languages of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, I have as great an authority as the Attorney-General of Manitoba, speaking in the Estimates of the First Minister of this province this past year, saying yes, that is true, and that if the Civil Service — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, if the inarticulate babbling from across the way could somehow or other be turned down, perhaps we can get on with a reasoned discussion of this rather than some of the ape-like calls we've been hearing from across the way.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, it was the Attorney-General of Manitoba himself who said that English and French were the official languages only for the purposes of Section 23 and that the Civil Service Commission when they published a certain bulletin - I have it here it's all in Hansard - saying that English and French were the official languages of Manitoba had gone too far, because that restriction always has to be put into place.

Now, Mr. Speaker, from across the way and you know . . .

HON. A. MACKLING: All right, give us the official position now.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. S. LYON: Well, my honourable friend wants the official position. We know what my honourable friends official position is vis-a-vis the United States. He hates them. He goes and helps to burn flags in front of their . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order.

The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources on a point of order.

HON. A. MACKLING: Point of order, Mr. Speaker. The honourable member, standing in his place, indicated that I had some involvement in the burning of a flag. Only the Honourable Member for Charleswood gloatingly admitted that he was involved in a flag burning. I never made any such admission. I clearly indicated that I had nothing to do with the burning of a flag, did not agree with it nor did I agree with those people who burnt a flag.

Only he, Mr. Speaker, liked flag burning and admitted so, and he must withdraw that statement that he said that I participated in any flag burning. That is false.

A MEMBER: What were you doing there, Al?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I thank the honourable member for that explanation; it was not a point of order. The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

HON. S. LYON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I can well appreciate, Sir, the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I raise a point of order that the honourable member has accused me of doing something which I have not done, which he knows to be false, because on the record of this House I have stated otherwise. He knows the rules, he knows that despite the fact that he tries to change the facts otherwise, I have indicated as fact . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. It has been made clear in this House before that the disagreement as to the fact between two members does not constitute a point of order.

The honourable member should know he should not argue with the Chair. The honourable member will take his seat.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, it is the rule of this House if an honourable member . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member will take his seat.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

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

MR. H. ENNS: Well, Mr. Speaker, surely the former House Leader on the government side is well aware that there is a procedure for resolving the issue if he wishes to proceed. If he wishes to challenge your ruling

on the point of order that he has raised, which you have already given, he is open to challenging you, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

HON. S. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'll put my honourable friend at ease knowing how very tender his flesh is on that point, I'll put my honourable friend at ease. I'm sure he didn't put the torch to the flag himself; he was just there cheering them on, that's all, Mr. Speaker. He hasn't the intestinal fortitude to do the act.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

HON. A. MACKLING: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member now makes an accusation about me, that I was cheering someone on doing an improper act. Now, Mr. Speaker, surely honourable members are not allowed . . .

A MEMBER: He was grinning in the television camera.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: . . . to make statements which they know to be false.

A MEMBER: Poor Al.

HON. A. MACKLING: Poor Al, nothing. Poor troubled Member for Charleswood whose gutter tactics have lead that party downhill and are continuing to do it. Mr. Speaker, I call upon you to ask the Honourable Member for Charleswood to withdraw those remarks.

A MEMBER: What remarks? What are you talking about?

HON. A. MACKLING: Remarks where he suggested that I did something I did not do. I cite to you Beauchesne, Citation 323 "Unparliamentary words may be brought to the attention of the House either by the Speaker or by any member. When the question is raised . . .

A MEMBER: Wrong section.

HON. A. MACKLING: "When the question is raised by a member it must be - all right, sorry.

Mr. Speaker, I was citing the wrong one in my concern - 322.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: It's pretty obvious why we feel sorry for you, Al.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: Well, the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek is troubled. Well, he should be, his

shirt's too tight again, that's why he is so red in the face.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I read Citation 322. "It has been formally ruled by Speakers that a statement by a Member respecting himself and particularly within his own knowledge must be accepted, but it is not unparliamentary temperately to criticize statements made by a Member as being contrary to the facts; but no imputation of intentional falsehood is permissible. On rare occasions this may result in the House having to accept two contradictory accounts of the same incident."

Mr. Speaker, I have made it quite clear . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: I have made it quite clear, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable member . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

HON. A. MACKLING: I have made it quite clear, Mr. Speaker, that the honourable member made those statements knowing them to be false and therefore must withdraw them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside to the same point.

MR. H. ENNS: No, Mr. Speaker, I just appeal to you that this interlude will not be taken from my colleague, the Member for Charleswood's time, the normal course of his debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Charleswood to the point of order.

MR. S. LYON: I'm quite happy to say, Sir, that if he says he didn't do something, I have to accept that he said that he didn't do it, and I am prepared to accept it.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Oh you're funny; the genius is funny.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I think it will serve the best interests of the House if I take the matter under advisement to read in Hansard exactly what was said.

The Honourable Member for Charleswood may continue his remarks.

HON. S. LYON: I'm struck, as I am sure you are, Sir, by this sudden concern of the government for integrity and accuracy about remarks that are made, particularly when sensitive skins are affected by the flames of past events.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to accuracy of statement, I wonder what members on the other side thought. I wonder what the Member for St. Boniface thought when, in a newscast statement, the Minister of Municipal

Affairs, his colleague, beside whom he sits, said and I quote, "Does this meeting speak for all Springfield? Does the SFM speak for all of the French-speaking people in Manitoba? I can't tell you that, but what I can tell you is that in 1969, the Weir Conservative Government passed a statute of the Legislature designating the Société franco-manitobaine as the spokesperson for French people in Manitoba and that has been recognized by each succeeding government. We haven't had any choice; it's a statute passed by the Legislature of Manitoba."

Mr. Speaker, that is a form of Orwellian newspeak if ever I heard it. Here we are with the statutes in question, Bill 31 - it was a private bill - it was moved, I believe, by the Member for St. Boniface and all it was doing, Sir, was changing the name of L'association d'éducation des Canadiens Françaises du Manitoba into the Franco-Manitoban Society and it gave it certain powers. It was a private act of the Legislature and this Minister of Municipal Affairs goes to a public meeting, Mr. Speaker, and tries to say that the Weir Government passed a bill in 1969 that conferred that kind of status on the Franco-Manitoban Society and they come into this House and talk about the truth.

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

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I just wish to make a correction. That bill did not just change in name. It was a completely new — (Interjection) — It did not. The member is absolutely right. I moved this bill and it did an awful lot more than change — (Interjection) — All right, it was the Société Franco Manitobaine, according to what the statement that was made, replaced the L'association d'éducation and L'association d'éducation dealt with educational matters only; it wasn't the same thing at all, so I just want to make that correction.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister did not have a point of order.

The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

HON. S. LYON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister though has amply demonstrated that the statement made by his colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, was false, inaccurate and misleading, because this was a private act that was passed by the Legislature of Manitoba. It wasn't passed by the Weir Government. It was a private bill that was passed. The officers of the company were sent forward. It's a private bill, the same as the Kinsmen Club, the same as the St. Andrew's Society. It was long before, Mr. Speaker, we were treated to the snivelling tactics of the Minister of Municipal Affairs in this House trying to mislead the people of Manitoba.

So I say, Mr. Speaker, I'm finding some encouragement in this manifestation now of concern by the government about accuracy in statements and I hope that the Minister of Municipal Affairs will maybe tell his constituents and the people of Manitoba the truth about this bill when next he's saying that they had to deal with the Franco-Manitoban Society because the Weir Government passed a bill in '69. That's an

outright lie, Mr. Speaker. He knows it and he shouldn't repeat lies.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member knows that those are unparliamentary words and he should withdraw them.

The Honourable Member for Charleswood.

HON. S. LYON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw. The Minister of Municipal Affairs is often guilty of terminological inexactitude.

Mr. Speaker, we were asked to agree, to pass this whole raft of constitutional amendments last summer, because the deadlines had to be met, the agreement was chiselled in stone, not a jot or a tittle could be changed in it. We were either going to be for it or agin it, and now we've got this new version, which is still, as I say, dangerous, and my honourable friends across the way are imposing closure on our subamendment.

Why do we want 23.1 removed from the constitutional resolution? We want it removed, Mr. Speaker, because, first of all, it's an historic inaccuracy to say that, "As English and French are the official languages of Manitoba." I repeat, Sir, they are not the official languages of Manitoba except only for the purposes of Section 23.

My honourable friends across the way have a little bit of fun, they think, when they come to deal, Mr. Speaker, with Bill No. 2 that was passed in this Legislature, moved by our government in 1980. In Chapter 3 of that bill, Mr. Speaker, what does it say? "It's an act respecting the operation of Section 23 of The Manitoba Act in regard to statutes," and there is a preamble to that act, and I read it into the record so that the terminological inexactitude of the First Minister and a few of his colleagues can be corrected in this regard as well.

What does the preamble say? The preamble says, "Whereas it is deemed advisable to make certain provisions for the proper implementation of Section 23 of The Manitoba Act, being Chapter 3 of the Statutes of Canada, 1870. Therefore Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Letislative Assembly of Manitoba, enacts as follows," and we proceeded then to enact a largely administrative act and, for the purposes of that act, a definition of official language, "In this act, official language means the English language or the French language for the purposes of Section 23."

Mr. Speaker, even such blunted intelligences as those that face us every day across this House should be able to grasp that fundamental point. I'm glad that my honourable friends raised it for the umpteenth time and I hope that now perhaps that's been put to rest, along with some of the other misinformation, misstatements that are made daily, weekly, by this collection of people who still plead to be referred to as a government.

Mr. Speaker, the other day we heard a brief in the committee from the Manitoba Government Employees Association, and they dealt in part with the constitutional amendment that is before us. What did they say?

Well, they said, Mr. Speaker, and I'm quoting from their general comments of the brief presented by Mr. Gary Doer to the committee last Friday afternoon, "In terms of the proposed amendment to Section 23, the

MGEA supports the concept of a preamble in 23.1, rather than a declaratory statement to the effect that 'French and English are the official languages of Manitoba.' We feel the concept of a preamble," - what was used in Chapter 3 in 1980, the concept of a preamble, "is consistent with the government's intent on this matter." I hesitate to say, Mr. Speaker, how anyone can divine what this government's intent is on anything, God only knows.

I carry on with the quotation, "We further support the fact that the word 'freedom' is used in Section 23." Then, he goes on to say, Sir, "The Association submits that the wording in this section could be improved by the government in a manner consistent with their stated intent by the following: Proposed additions (underlined), 23.1," here's what the MGEA is saying to them, "Whereas English and French are the official languages of Manitoba as provided for in Section 23 and 23.2 to 23.9 inclusive, the freedom to use either official language enjoyed under the law of Manitoba in force at the time this section comes into force shall not be extinguished or restricted by, or pursuant to, any act of the Legislature of Manitoba."

Mr. Speaker, that's the Manitoba Government Employees Association saying to the government you still haven't got it right on the constitutional amendment, and for God's sake, before it passes through this House, let's get it right.

So, we've come along, Sir, with an amendment which says you still haven't got it right and that's true, that's true. We say wipe it out because you don't need it, 23 stands in the Constitution of Manitoba that English and French may be used in the Legislature and in the courts, and that the statutes shall be printed in both of those languages. It's there. Why try to improve upon it? That's where they get into trouble, that is where the lawyers keep telling them, the more words you keep adding to a constitution, which is irreversible, the greater the chance of your getting into trouble.

So, Mr. Speaker, the other day they had to have another lesson read to them by Mr. Green. Other people have said the same thing in this House and outside of it, that the words, not only are these words not declaratory, no court is going to look at those words with that kind of veil over its eyes and say, well, the Minister of Municipal Affairs of that day, now a private citizen residing in Podunk Corners, Ontario, the Minister of Municipal Affairs may have said something or other, but we can't look at what he said. We have to divine the intent of the amendment by what it says, not by what was in the cluttered minds of those who moved it.

So, Mr. Speaker, the words are very important. Manitoba Government Employees Association says you haven't got this resolution right yet. We say you haven't got this resolution right yet, and they move closure on it to try to clean up the debate on it in eight hours. What kind of perversity is this, Mr. Speaker? What kind of a legislative perversity perpetrated by these people across the way?

Let me say just one word, Mr. Speaker. Then they have the consummate gall to go out to the press and to go to the public of Manitoba and say, look at those terrible Tories, look at those anti-parliamentary tactics that those terrible Tories are doing. They're ringing the bells so that we can't get on with the business of

muzzling the Legislature of Manitoba. That's the business that they had at hand, like a bunch of second-storey men. — (Interjection) — a bunch of second-storey men, Mr. Speaker, running around here trying to muzzle parliament.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. S. LYON: . . . a bunch of ordinary legislative con men . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

HON. S. LYON: . . . trying, Mr. Speaker, to rush something through the House that they haven't got right yet and that the MGEA tells them they haven't got right yet, that I tell them they haven't got right yet, that we tell them they haven't got right yet, that the people of Manitoba telling them in their tens of thousands that they haven't got right yet, and they have the gall to try to pass that in this House in eight hours to suit their own jaded political partisan purposes.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I say in language which I think will be understood by all Manitobans and if it's unparliamentary I withdraw it, I will withdraw it, but I say to hell with them and their works. To hell with them and their works. We will, as my Leader has said, we will continue to stand up against the muzzling of Parliament on a constitutional amendment where they have the consummate gall to move closure. We will stand up against that if we have to ring the bells, if we have to use every parliamentary device that's available to stop that kind of petty totalitarianism from going on in Manitoba. — (Interjection) — We will, we will, Mr. Speaker.

Who is the anti-Democrat, who is anti-parliamentary? The person who rings the bells to stop a misguided government from perpetrating a totalitarian type of amendment upon this House because they can't get it through any other way? Or the opposition which says we are going to stop you from muzzling Parliament because you haven't got it right yet? By gad, Sir, they're going to get it right before we finish with them or they're going to be going to the people.

Mr. Speaker, I read Mr. Twaddle's opinion and Mr. Twaddle says that there is less of a chance now than there was under the first amendment. Well, I should hope so. Mr. Twaddle told them in April of 1982 what an abomination they had, they didn't listen to him then. I would hope that the people of Manitoba - I know they understand that there's no reason to take any chance on this constitutional amendment at all. There's no need to, except to satisfy this pack of second-storey men across the way in whatever kind of ill-disguised plan they've cooked up among themselves to try to perpetrate something on Manitoba that Manitobans won't have. Well, Mr. Speaker, we're not going to put up with that.

The First Minister the other day came out and made, I suppose, one of the most unusual statements that this House has ever heard. Here we are dealing for eight months, roughly six to eight months now, on a constitutional amendment because we've had to fight six or eight months to get you to clean it up, that's why. That's why we've dealt with it for eight months,

and the people of Manitoba are going to thank everybody in the opposition, they're going to thank the rural municipalities, they're going to thank everybody who has been opposed to this because they can see now what we've saved them from and the kind of baboonery that is being shouted from across the way by the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources is no answer to that argument. Why did we debate six to eight months?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. S. LYON: To save the people of Manitoba from having that kind of an onerous burden inflicted upon them in a Constitution that can't be changed. That's why, Mr. Speaker.

Then he comes out, the First Minister, the other day and makes a statement that has to rank as one of the silliest ever made by a person in public life in Canada. This has gone on for six to eight months, it's an important fundamental matter, and what does he say? In the list of priorities of this government, of the 61, he said this matter has to rank 58th.

Mr. Speaker, can you believe them about anything now after that outrageous statement has been made? Why are we here on the 31st of January if this is 58th on their list? Why don't they just pass our amendment, pull the whole constitutional resolution would be better, let the bill go back to the draftsman where it has to go because in other speeches we'll be talking about what the MGEA have said about their bill - it's just full of holes, it's like Swiss cheese.

Mr. Speaker, then we're told the ultimate indignity, 58 out of 61 is how they rank it in priority. They let this petty little bureaucrat, turned temporary Minister, inflict closure on this House on a matter, Mr. Speaker, that is 58 out of 61? They let the House Leader inflict closure for that purpose? Well, Mr. Speaker, they can have it one way or they can have it the other way. But they can't, Mr. Speaker, expect to enjoy the credibility of the people of Manitoba if they keep making silly, foolish, inane statements like that on a matter relating to the first constitutional amendment.

Mr. Speaker, the final reason this 23.1 has to be taken out and time is catching up - the final reason is this, because there is an element of entrenchment in Section 23.1 which has the possible effect of entrenching for all time all statutory references to the use of the French language presently existing in the Statutes of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, this letter has already been tabled but I say to the Attorney-General and I say to anyone over there who has an understanding of these matters and there are very few of them there who do, read the opinion of the Legislative Counsel of this Parliament dated January 16, 1984 when my colleague the Member for St. Norbert asked him, what is the effect of 23.1 on entrenching other statutory law in Manitoba? He wrote a three-page opinion, part of which deals with that.

I'll table it again. I hope the press look at it because in the denizens of the editorial board, particularly the Winnipeg Free Press they haven't come alive to this

one yet that there is further entrenchment involved in the wording of 23.1 as it presently appears. So, why take that risk, Mr. Speaker? The Legislative Counsel says frankly he doesn't even know the acts that are involved and we are being asked holus-bolus to entrench any reference to the use of French existing in the Statutes of Manitoba today just because this petty little tyrant, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, wants to get it through to satisfy his political purposes. Mr. Speaker, again verging on the unparliamentary, to hell with him, to hell with him. We're not going to knuckle under to that kind of manipulation.

So I say, Sir, we've heard from across the way reasons why, why are you people asking that 23.1 be repealed? Mr. Speaker, I've tried, notwithstanding the baboonery from across the way, I've tried to give some reasoned arguments today as to why we are opposed, why the Government Employees Association are still opposed to this resolution; why this resolution, Mr. Speaker, should not be under the guillotine of closure, this resolution should be sacked. It should be put back. It should be put in the annals of Manitoba's history and left there.

We should get on with dealing with the important problems of Manitoba. Pull the resolution, Mr. Speaker. I ask the government, pull the resolution, pull the bill and let's get back to working for the good of the people of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise pursuant to Rule 33, Sub 1(b) to exercise my prerogative for unlimited time to debate the sub-amendment to the amendment to the constitutional resolution which is before us.

I begin, Mr. Speaker, by commending the Government House Leader for finally coming to his senses today and taking the opportunity to avoid further delays, further disruptions to the workings, the normal workings of this Legislature, to avoid the so-called paralyzation of the operation of this House and to avoid the further necessity to have the bells ring to not come to a vote on the very very damaging motion for closure on this constitutional resolution. But I say so, Mr. Speaker, knowing that the Government House Leader had the opportunity of course to pursue that direction yesterday.

He had the opportunity presented to him but because of his bullheaded arrogance yesterday, we had no choice but to have the bells ring and to have the business of the House disrupted and to have further opportunity for the people to be heard in committee yesterday evening. Because of his petulance yesterday in not being able to have a question put to him, not being able to face a question as to whether or not he would be calling the committee or giving an opportunity for the committee to sit in the evening as the opportunity had been offered and suggested to him by members on our side, Mr. Speaker, we went through yesterday a further afternoon and evening of bell ringing because the Minister chose not to act yesterday.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Opposition House Leader and I had an opportunity to discuss quietly at committee, off the record, with the Government House Leader, a

proposal which we thought might give opportunity for more people to be heard before committee on Bill 115; to give opportunity for the government to perhaps cool tempers and cool the manner in which the House was being pressed into closure and trampling over the issue of dealing with the constitutional resolution and the amendments thereto.

We thought that there might be an opportunity and - bearing in mind, Mr. Speaker, that we had been sitting for some long hours on Friday and on Saturday - the committee sat from about 2:00 until 5:30 on Friday and then again from 8:00 until about 10:30; the committee sat on Saturday - two-and-a-half hours in the morning and then again another three-and-a-half, three-and-three-quarter hours in the afternoon and thinking about it over the weekend, it seemed logical that perhaps since there were so many people lined up to present before committee that we could have the opportunity to let that committee proceed with its business and to let further numbers of people be heard without having to go to the kinds of divisiveness and acrimony that were encountered by the imposition of the closure motion.

Mr. Speaker, I might indicate that the Opposition House Leader and I did this without benefit of discussion with caucus. We felt that the proposal was reasonable, that it had to do with procedural matters. It shouldn't have been something that necessitated a full-blown caucus discussion. After all, many members of our side are away on the weekend and they aren't in the Legislature on Monday morning early - so, this was an initiative that we took more or less after some brief discussions of trying to find some reasonable method of dealing with the time at our disposal on Monday. We presented, as I said, that proposal informally to the Government House Leader as we sat in committee yesterday morning.

But his response was that he wanted to ask for a limitation on the length of debate, that we might have the constitutional resolution and amendments dealt with in the House. He didn't want to consider conveniencing the members of the public or the process of the House being once again put along in a manner in which it could be dealt with in a fair and a reasonable manner. No, Sir, his response was that the quid pro quo was that we had to commit ourselves to a definite time limitation on the resolution, or the proposal to bring about closure would be put right after the calling for Orders of the Day that afternoon.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Government House Leader on a point of order.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am not sure that it is completely desirable to go through this kind of discussion, but I think the facts should be on the table.

They are that I at no time demanded a specific deadline. I asked for an indication, just an indication of how much time members opposite wanted to discuss the amendment, the resolution and the sub-amendment. I did not ask for a specific time commitment.

A MEMBER: Yesterday in the House you said otherwise.

MR. SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a point of order?

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I assume that there isn't a point of order there. If there is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition may continue.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader continues to put forth the inane comment: "How much time do you want?" Mr. Speaker, we don't know how much time it might take to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. We are dealing with an amendment to the Constitution. We are dealing, Sir, with an amendment to the fundamental rights for the use of two languages in Manitoba; rights that will impact upon all of us today and in future, our children and our grandchildren, and we want to deal with it to the fullest extent necessary to arrive at the right answer. That is what we want, Mr. Speaker.

We don't want a gun at our head. We don't want to be held in contempt as they are holding Manitobans in contempt; we want it to be dealt with.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

I am having some difficulty in hearing the honourable member make his remarks.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, despite the arrogance and the attitude of the people across the way, we will not be forced to deal with this on their timetable. That is the first thing that has to be dealt with. When that is realized, Mr. Speaker, this will continue along through to its conclusion, to the conclusion that is best for all Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, because the Government House Leader felt that he had the upper hand, or wanted to demonstrate that they had a gun to our head, he wouldn't take into consideration the people of Manitoba who wanted to present at the committee. He wouldn't take into consideration the fact that this is a constitutional resolution, a resolution that may indeed not be in its final form because it has many flaws, many holes that still have to be addressed, and is not in its final form; but, Mr. Speaker, he said no.

What was his rationale, Mr. Speaker? Well, yesterday in question period he said, well, it's obvious that members opposite are being pressured; the ringing of the bells, people are getting to them; people are telling them to stop the bells ringing; the public opinion is turning on this matter and it's not with the opposition.

Well, I tell him, Mr. Speaker, that, if anything, the public opinion is strengthening. We are getting letters everyday; we are getting phone calls till our phone can't be answered, saying you are right and you won't be forced, and the people of Manitoba won't be forced into this, and let the bells ring. Let the bells ring; that is what they are telling us, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, if that is the way this Government House Leader wants to deal with it, then he will see what the people of Manitoba think about this, and he will see what their opinions are and how quickly they are changing on it, because they are not changing in his favour. They are changing in favour of the position of the opposition. That's exactly the situation. He will rue the day that he said that yesterday.

So, Mr. Speaker, we continue on this misadventure. We continue on this mishandling that has characterized the government's dealing with the entire process. And why is it, Mr. Speaker? It's there because there is a lack of trust on behalf of the people in the government today. There is no delegation of authority.

Mr. Speaker, I said that the Opposition House Leader and I went with the proposal, but we didn't caucus with our colleagues. We went with the proposal that we thought was for the benefit of the workings of this Legislature and the people of Manitoba who wanted to appear before the committee. It was not something substantive that required a full-blown caucus meeting to discuss a major change in this thing. It was a procedural matter; a procedural matter that we felt would help the Government House Leader to deal with the workings of the House on this matter.

But what happened? Mr. Speaker, he couldn't even discuss it with, let's say, the Premier or somebody who is in charge there. He couldn't discuss it with anyone and give us a commitment back. He said, "I can't tell you anything until I go before my caucus."

Well, Mr. Speaker, who over there is calling the shots? Who over there is pulling the strings, Mr. Speaker? I would like to know that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

MR. G. FILMON: Earlier in this debate and discussion, members opposite said they didn't trust the opposition. Along the way, they have shown that they don't trust the people because the people have told them - 80 percent - where they stand on this issue; but they know better. They don't trust the people.

Now we find out, Mr. Speaker, they don't trust each other over there. Nobody will be given the authority to deal with the opposition here to try and make some agreements, to try and make some arrangements, to try and arrive at some understanding. They don't even

trust themselves, Mr. Speaker. That's the problem; they don't trust each other. So how can we deal with them?

Finally, Mr. Speaker, they have had some sober second thought, and we are finally at the point that we should have been several days ago. The sober second thought has been on that side because now they realize that it is better to continue to debate this resolution and at least have an opportunity of arriving at some reasonable conclusion, because that is what we need, Mr. Speaker, that's what we need; but even there, the Government House Leader had to hold a veiled threat. He said today, in agreeing to debate, we have to remind of course that we've given notice of closure and it will be brought in if necessary. That's what he had to say, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

The time being 5:30, the Chair will accept a motion to adjourn.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, just prior to the motion of adjournment, I wonder if the Government House Leader would assure me that the Clerk's Office has made every attempt to reach those persons still on the list to make presentations, to advise them of the fact that the committee is sitting, dealing with Bill 115, at 8:00 o'clock.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I had made that request and the nod from the Clerk confirms that has been done.

Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Lakeside, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).