

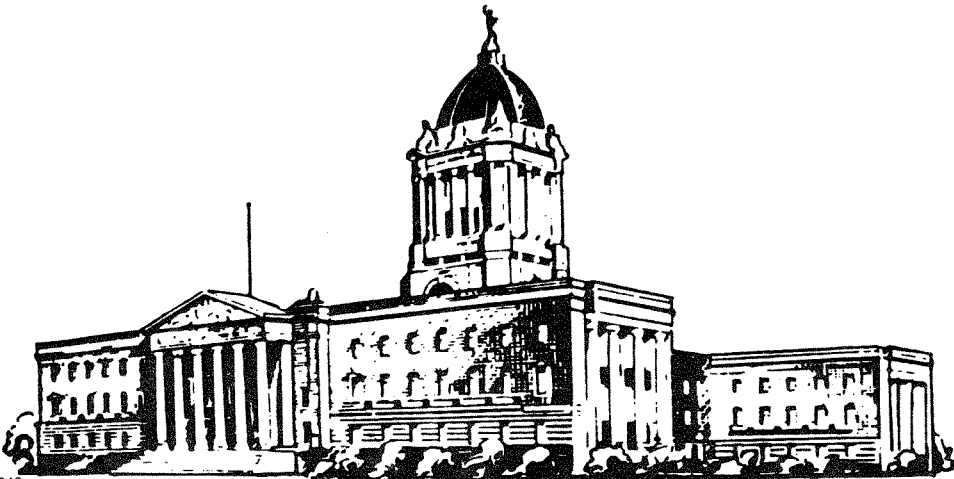


Second Session — Thirty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS

31-32 Elizabeth II

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authority of
The Honourable D. James Walding
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, 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, 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, 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

Wednesday, 1 June, 1983.

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

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River East.

MR. P. Eyler: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same, and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Member for The Pas, that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

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

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. M. SMITH, on behalf of the Honourable Minister of Labour, introduced Bill No. 86, The Civil Service Special Supplementary Severance Benefit Act; Loi sur les prestations spéciales et supplémentaires de la fonction publique. (Recommended by Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor)

HON. J. STORIE introduced Bill No. 84, An Act to amend The Residential Rent Regulation Act; Loi modifiant la loi sur le contrôle du loyer des locaux d'habitation.

HON. S. USKIW introduced Bill No. 85, The Highways and Transportation Construction Contracts Disbursement Act; Loi sur l'acquiescement des contrats de construction de routes. (Recommended by Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor).

HON. J. COWAN introduced Bill No. 87, An Act to amend The Workplace Safety and Health Act; and Bill No. 88, An Act to amend The Workers Compensation Act. (Recommended by Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governor).

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Before we reach Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 45 students of Grade 7 and 8 standing from the Gretna Elementary School under the direction of Mr. Reimer and Mr. Brown. The school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Rhineland.

There are 37 students of Grade 5 standing from the Princess Margaret School under the direction of Miss

Doyle. The school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Finance.

There are 12 students from the Kenton Junior High School under the direction of Mr. Plaiser. The school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Virden.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

Lead-in-Soil Removal Program

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable Minister of the Environment. Can the Minister confirm that his department is considering undertaking the removal of lead-contaminated dust and soil particles from the grounds and boulevards surrounding Weston School for the second time in less than two years?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, I can confirm that we have just received permission from School Division No. 1 to undertake that clean-up and will be proceeding to do so at the earliest opportunity, most likely this weekend. The clean-up should be effected when the students are not present at the school for the sake of not disrupting the school schedule.

We are also going to be sitting with the school division and others after the clean-up to look at ways to mitigate against future reoccurrences of this contamination of the area, and are looking forward to those discussions which hopefully will provide a basis for further action.

MR. G. FILMON: Well, Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this lead-contaminated dust and soil was removed, as I say, less than two years ago - it was the late fall of 1981 - and the build-up has occurred despite the fact that new emission standards have been placed on the lead smelter in the area, what is the explanation for the new build-up of lead in the soil and dust in the area?

HON. J. COWAN: There are a number of contributory factors, probably the most prominent of which is auto emissions. This brings to our focus on another concern, and that is what is happening to other schools on major arteries where traffic is present in those same amounts and where there may be other contributing factors. So what we are doing is reviewing our testing program for other schools. We've undertaken some tests on other schools near major arteries and had not found levels of that significance and have not found levels that exceed the guidelines there, but we want to expand that testing program a bit. We will then be discussing

this matter with the Department of Education and the appropriate bodies there within to determine any actions which should be taken by school boards or by the province to make certain that other schools and other areas are not being affected in a negative way by contamination arising out of automobile emissions.

We are also, because of this, and I have indicated to the Minister of the Environment at the federal level, John Roberts, that we are in support of his actions to reduce or to provide regulations which will reduce the amount of lead content in gasoline. We will be writing him again and advising him of the results of these studies and further substantiating our earlier support, encouraging him to take active action in a comprehensive way very quickly to ensure that we have in place procedures not only to clean up the problem where it exists, but we have in place regulations which will provide protection against the problem from reoccurring.

We are taking those actions in response to what we believe may be a situation that may be prevalent in other areas. We will be testing to determine if in fact that is the case and, of course, will be taking, I think, the more important measure of supporting and substantiating our earlier support for a reduction of lead content in gasoline.

MR. G. FILMON: The Minister seems to be indicating that the new feeling and the new thinking is that the source of lead contamination is no longer from the smelters; whereas, in opposition, that was his contention that it was from the smelters.

My question to the Minister is: Why has he not released the report which summarizes the findings of the results of tests conducted by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited in co-operation with his department last summer? A report, a draft copy of which I understand has been in his hands now for some time and is awaiting printing by the Queen's Printer and does, I think, shed some light on this and is of interest to all of us. Why has he not released that report?

HON. J. COWAN: As the member has indicated, it has been in my hands for a period of time; I think approximately one week or 10 days. The report is being prepared, and the material that would go along with it is being prepared, so that it can be released. I expect that it will be released within the next couple of days, which is not an untoward amount of time for the release of a report of that nature.

I'm certain that the member will take the opportunity to read the report. He will find, in fact, when he does, that automobile emissions are not the only cause for concern, but there is also cause for concern as a result of industrial emissions. I did not indicate in my comments earlier, and I think the record should be clear notwithstanding his attempts to confuse the issue, that automobile emissions were the only emissions which were of concern to us.

What I did indicate was that they were a contributing factor; in this instance, probably the primary contributing factor, but that in no way encourages to reduce our vigilance on industrial emissions which for far too long in the past had been a major contributing factor as well. We will continue to implement that part

of the program of lead control in this province as we have done in the past.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I was not suggesting that vigilance be reduced on industrial sources, but I'm wondering why the Minister indicates he's only had the report for a week or 10 days. I have a report of an industry source; it's a news release to their staff that's been out for quite some time that quotes from a draft copy which the Minister apparently has had for more than a month and indicates, for instance, various things that the lead-in-air levels were lower when the plant was shut down for a three-week period last summer than they were when the plant was operating, and other such things, so I wonder when will the Minister come clean and release the report so that this can be a subject of public concern and discussion.

HON. J. COWAN: As is the case with this member opposite, he plays loosely with the facts. He has continued to do that consistently in the past, and I expect that he will continue to do it in the future, so we must be tolerant of that tendency on his part.

I have had the report in my possession, as I indicated, for a period of a week to 10 days; it may have been two weeks. I can certainly check to see as to the exact date at which I received that report, but my direction to the department at the time I received the report was to release the report, to prepare a package that would be provided with the report so that it can be released to the public in a way so as it will be most informational to them; they are doing that. I understand they are in the final stages of the preparation of that material and as I indicated to him a few moments ago, it will be a day or two before that report is released. I don't think there is anything untoward about that, as I indicated earlier, and I think that it will be released in a fashion so as it will provide to the public the most benefit from that report and that's exactly what we want to do.

I also indicated to the member opposite earlier on that we would be releasing that report so there's been no . . .

A MEMBER: Rip-off, kickback.

HON. J. COWAN: It seems to me I've heard those remarks before over the past few days, Mr. Speaker, in an entirely different format. But what I can give assurance to the general public through the member opposite as requesting information is that the report will be released in the very near future, as I indicated, most likely within the next couple of days.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, just one final question. Does the Minister disagree with the conclusion that is quoted in this report that I have from his draft report that says, quote, "Tests conducted by Atomic Energy of Canada Limited have shown that the lead contamination in the school ground near North Winnipeg schools has been caused by emissions from car exhaust, not by Canadian Bronze." Does he disagree with that statement?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. COWAN: I'd like to see the statement in its entire context. From what the member has read into the record, if that indicates that there has been no other contributing factor to lead in the area, I would disagree and I would suggest that the report will disagree when he has an opportunity to read the recommendations of that. I am certain that he will agree with the disagreement which the report provides and which I've just provided.

MTS- rate increases

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephone System.

Can the Minister confirm that recently the Manitoba Telephone System has increased their customer surcharge to over 23 percent, an increase of almost 4 percentage points?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm that at this time. I'd be pleased to look into that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of the fact that interest rates recently have reached a two-year low and are now just slightly over the 10 percent mark; in view of the fact that at this time the Manitoba Telephone System has decided to increase their surcharge to over 23 percent raising their interest rate, would the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs please investigate to see whether this is good corporate citizenship by the Crown corporation, the Manitoba Telephone System, in its treatment of its customers, or whether this would fall into the category of usury?

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

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. We shall await the confirmation of the allegations; the confirmation from the Minister responsible for MTS. If that is the case then we will take a look at the reasons for the increase.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System.

Can the Minister now confirm that this is yet another indication of the dilemma that government interference has placed the Manitoba Telephone System starting last fall, with their government rejection of the telephone's cost-saving measures, management decisions for cost-saving, and that this increase in the surcharge is another way by which the Manitoba Telephone System is being forced to increase revenue as well as the recent rate increase?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would disagree with the premise that the honourable member is placing before this House, that the interference by the government has had anything to do with the rate increase that has been asked for by the Manitoba Telephone System, or anything to do with the surcharge.

Certainly the member is aware of the economic conditions that are facing all businesses and companies in all parts of Canada and the world; and he is aware that the economic conditions have placed hardships on the income and the traditional revenue that has been arrived at by the telephone system that the telephone system has depended on over the years.

He is also aware that the telephone system did take a number of cost-cutting measures. They undertook those measures last year. These were a reduction in overtime, reduced use of term time, certain other measures, cutbacks in a capital program that did indeed result in a profit position for the Manitoba Telephone System when indeed they had, at an earlier time, projected that there would be a deficit. The honourable member is aware of these points.

He is also aware that the matter of layoffs by the telephone system was a further step that the MTS had considered as one of the options, however by reducing the amount of continued hiring to replace retired employees, there was no necessity to lay off people and they were still able to reduce the total number of employees by approximately 270 employees in the past year. So it is quite evident that the steps that have been taken by the telephone system have resulted in significant cost savings that have prevented the necessity to ask for a larger increase than they have this year.

I should point out to the honourable members, it is quite evident that the rates of the telephone system in Manitoba are lower than any other rates in Canada and indeed North America. The telephone system is still achieving that and expanding service. The honourable member is always asking for increased services, Mr. Speaker. He wants increased services in Northern Manitoba, in rural areas, private lines and extended area service; he should be aware that he can't have it both ways, Mr. Speaker.

MTS - layoffs

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Speaker, it's evident that we should have been asking the Minister a few more questions. He's a little starved for television time today, Mr. Speaker.

Could the Minister, whilst he is indicating all of the wonderful measures the telephone system undertook to control their cost, could the Minister also confirm that last year contrary to his public protestations, that a number of summer students were laid off prematurely last summer as a cost-cutting measure by the telephone system?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The honourable member well knows that there were a number of steps taken by the telephone system previous to their indication that they wanted to look at considering permanent employees, dismissal of or layoff of permanent employees. Some of these were the reduction in the use of term time

and student help that was hired earlier on in the summer, when it became evident that their cost containment measures were necessary, the Manitoba Telephone System did indeed have to cut back on the number of term employees.

However, the issue that the honourable member has referred to and the one that we commented on last summer was quite evidently the issue of permanent employees and the honourable member attempts to confuse the two. What we did with that issue, Mr. Speaker, is refer it to a consultative committee with the members of the unions affected and management, professional engineers, and so on in the telephone system as well as senior management, to sit down and look at the future of the Manitoba Telephone System, employment opportunities, the future for the business that they could expect. From that consultative committee has come a closer dialogue between the workers and the management and they can look at future ways to cut back on costs through that method, Mr. Speaker.

Legislative Building - security

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virten.

MR. H. GRAHAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have some hesitancy about asking a question of the Minister of Government Services, but at certain peril I will proceed. I would like to ask the Minister if there has been any threat to the security of this building or these grounds earlier in this day?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I am not aware, Mr. Speaker, that there has been any threat to the security of this building, certainly this building or these grounds earlier in the day.

Legislative Building - picket

MR. H. GRAHAM: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask the Minister of Government Services if the picket that was forcibly removed from the Legislative grounds this morning was removed on the orders of the Minister of Government Services?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that the people employed in the Law Courts Building were experiencing some interference from the noise that was emanating from that particular situation from the picket that was there. I understand that they did register a complaint with the city police who then proceeded to act on that complaint.

The answer to the member's question obviously is, no.

MR. H. GRAHAM: A supplementary question. This time I would like to ask it of the Attorney-General. I would like to ask the Attorney-General if his office is proceeding with charges against the individuals so apprehended, and if so, what is the nature of the charges?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: I am advised - and I can only put it that way because this is second-hand - that one of the senior judges in the law courts laid a complaint about the noise and that the police attended, as I am advised, with respect to the City of Winnipeg Anti-Noise By-law.

I must say that I am astonished that the police would attempt to affect an arrest under an Anti-Noise By-law and I would certainly want to enquire whether they had any power of arrest under that by-law. I am just as disturbed as the honourable member is that that kind of action should take place. It certainly is no action directed by any member of this government nor is it condoned by any member of this government.

Red River Co-op closure

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister in charge of Co-operative Development and would ask him if he could confirm that some 50 people have been forced out of work because of the closure of the Red River Co-op Retail Store, and that this is the last of the seven closures that we have seen happen over the last year.

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

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will confirm that Red River Co-op will be closing down its Wall Street operation as of June 30th. That is the last of the Red River Co-op Retail Food Stores.

However, I would like to remind members of this House that there is still a very viable and very profitable co-op food service in Winnipeg that goes under the name of Boni Co-op. The decision to close the Wall Street store was an independent decision by the Board and Federated Co-ops Ltd. We've had discussions with Federated Co-op over the months and certainly any attempts that we would have made to maintain the operation of that store could have been construed as interference with management that is properly the right of the Board of Directors of Red River Food.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In light of the First Minister's statement which indicated that the NDP Government would provide security from layoffs and that up to 12 months or compensation to employees would be required in the event of shutdowns or layoffs involving more than 50 people, and since 50 people are involved, what has his department done to live up to this particular commitment that the Premier gave the province?

I think, Mr. Speaker, I have another question for the Minister. His silence on this matter indicates I guess that they will not live up to that election promise.

I would ask the Minister, with the closure now of one of the major co-operative retailers in this province, is this indicative of the kind of problems that the co-op movement is having in Manitoba under this particular NDP Government?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: I'm sorry I didn't respond to the first question. The Member for La Verendrye had made reference to the First Minister and I assumed it was directed to him. That question should have properly been directed to the Minister of Labour. I'll take it as notice on her behalf.

With respect to the closing of Red River Co-op, I perhaps should remind the Member for La Verendrye that I believe about six or ten Dominion Stores are closing or changing ownership in Manitoba as well. That is indicative of the competitive nature of the retail food industry and certainly co-ops are not unlike the private sector in that respect. The fact that Red River Co-op has experienced some difficulties does not mean that the co-operative sector in Manitoba is in difficulty.

I should also mention to the Member for La Verendrye that the gas bar petroleum service will be continued by Red River Co-op and it appears to be very viable. We're informed by the acting general manager of Red River Co-op that given the improvements in the industry, the reorganized co-op should be able to work its way out of its financial difficulty in a few short years.

I should also point out that there has been considerable interest in establishing a different type of co-op, and that is a direct charge or service-for-fee co-op. We certainly will be exploring this with the Federated Co-op Board at Saskatoon later next month. We've also done so with the regional board and we are receiving calls in our office, and that's certainly an indication that there is, in fact, considerable support for the co-operative sector.

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that there are many people that have been put out of work by the closure of this retail business, this co-operative in the province; in light of the First Minister's comments at which time he said that the Interest Rate Relief Program would provide and ensure that small businesses stay in business in Manitoba; in light of the Premier's promise that they would provide an economic climate which would make sure that people wouldn't lose their jobs, could the Minister tell this House what his department has done or what any other government department has done to ensure that the Premier's election promise was lived up to?

Can the Minister of Co-op Development inform the House as to what will happen in this particular case with regard to the shareholders' equity? Are the existing operations enough to sustain that equity, or will there be other problems? In other words, will the government be asked to step in to help out?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: With respect to the latter question, the government has not been approached by Red River Co-op at any time for financial assistance, nor do I expect that we will be approached in view of the indication from the acting general manager that the gas bar petroleum service will continue and that the reorganized co-op should be able to work its way out of its financial difficulties.

With respect to the statement about what this government has done to help small businesses, I can assure that through the Interest Rate Relief Program this government has helped hundreds of small businesses and has in fact probably saved businesses that employ somewhere near 7,000 employees.

MR. R. BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister of Co-operative Development, in light of the 50 being laid off today and the closures at Red River Co-op, could he inform the House what the total number of unemployed now are as a result of the closing of the retail stores of Red River Co-op?

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Well that's a very difficult question to answer. I wouldn't know offhand what the total number of unemployed is at the present time as a result of the 50, just as I can't tell the number of people that have been employed as a result of some of our programs, such as the Homes in Manitoba Program, and has brought about an increase in employment. But the figures will come out in due time and we'll be able to answer that question.

MR. R. BANMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, that's not good enough. I want to know how many people have been put out of a job as a result of the closure of Red River Co-op's retail stores in the Province of Manitoba.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Okay, now that I have some idea what the question is — (Interjection) —

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

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

I'm sure we would all be interested to hear the answers to the honourable member's question.

The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now that I know what the question is, I'm prepared to take that as notice and get the figure. I don't have the exact number.

Winterkill

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Agriculture. Will the Minister of Agriculture confirm the report that his department has put out that the winter kill on pastures could in fact create a severe beef shortage for the livestock producers in Manitoba this coming winter?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, from preliminary reports, and we have not completed our survey as was raised by the Honourable Member for Emerson last week, the heaviest damage seems to be confined to the Central, Interlake and Eastern regions. We have advised, as the honourable member reads from the article, that farmers should inspect their acreages and determine their hay situation and fertilize according to the stand that still exists and, of course, be prepared in this month to plant annual forage crops to supplement the perennials that may be lost.

We should know by next week the extent of the damage throughout the province. I can tell the honourable member that there are approximately between 400 and 500 farmers who have crop insurance. There are staff making an assessment of the situation dealing with crop insurance on those. Once we have a total report, we'll be in the position to ascertain what actions might be necessary, in terms of whether it be further green feed programs or whatever, and we will be able to determine those in a week.

Oak Point emergency road

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact in 1980 when we had a severe feed shortage for the livestock producers in the Province of Manitoba, and there was an emergency road put in the Oak Point area to accommodate the haying of some areas that are along the lake and are somewhat marginal; in view of the fact that the Department of Natural Resources and the NDP Government have now ordered that road bulldozed out; in light of the fact that the farmers in that area are undergoing a very difficult time with spring pasture and could be faced with severe feed shortages, will the Minister of Agriculture stop the bulldozing out of that road so that the farmers can, in fact, feed their livestock and look after their own livelihoods?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member should be aware that the access to that area was provided primarily for one individual, in terms of the crossing. There is no intent to remove the road from the area. In fact, I personally did have consultations with the rural municipality in an endeavour to see whether a compromise could have been reached between the two groups in the area, dealing with wildlife, natural resources and the farming community. There is no doubt that the road in question has suffered a fair bit of damage as a result of wind and water erosion and what would be removed would not be the road, it would be the crossing. We've been advised by staff — (Interjection) —

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, the crossings in the past were used on the basis of going through the water and that's been the source of the difficulty in the area as between the holding back of water that flows from the northern end of the Marshy Point area through the south. Mr. Speaker, if access is required in terms of hay shortage, we have not determined that there will be no hay for the Province of Manitoba this year. It should be pointed out that for years, access to that area had been made available; the farmers were using that area and should be able to continue to use that area.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Agriculture confirm that he is bulldozing a road out where a father and several sons, who operate a large livestock operation, contributing to the economy of the province, is going to lose that road and their livelihood,

to protect a large absentee landowner who lives in Montreal and contributes very little to the Manitoba economy. Is that who he's bulldozing a road out on the behalf of, Mr. Speaker?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, now that the honourable member has confirmed to us, that when they were Minister, they provided this access to one individual, in his statement here, Mr. Speaker, I can tell the honourable member that the decision was not made on the basis of whether it was for one individual or not. The decision was made on the impact of the resources of that area. Access was and is available to all individuals who may want to cut hay in that area.

The honourable member should also be aware that the crossings in that area acted as a partial dam of that area and when the wind action brings the water through the Marshy Point area, some of that hay land does get flooded, in terms of the wind action there as well, because of the restricted outlet in the south end of Marshy Point.

The honourable member should also be aware that the road in question is a municipal road and the question was put to the municipality as to whether or not they wished to retain and maintain that road. The municipality indicated to myself that they were not prepared to put in more money to maintain that road, and as a result, we are removing those crossings.

Grants re Fishermen's Co-ops

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. J. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week and yesterday again, the Member for Swan River directed some questions to me regarding the provision of a grant to the Big Black River and Norway House Fishermen's Co-ops for the purchase of vessels. I indicated to him I would get the information back to him as soon as I had a detailed review of that matter undertaken.

It is my understanding that the government, through the Special ARDA Program, which is administered by the Department of Northern Affairs, did provide a grant last year. The Norway House Fishermen's Co-op received a grant of \$26,688 or 50 percent of the cost of acquiring the vessel, Playgreen Lake. The total cost of acquiring the vessel, which was another question from the Member for Swan River, was \$41,376.00. The Norway House Fishermen's Co-op also took out a loan from CDF at that time for the other half of the purchase price, and it's my understanding that the operation of this vessel has proved profitable to them and although they took the loan out for a longer period of time, they have already paid back the loan in full.

The Big Black River Fishermen's Co-op received a grant of \$80,033.05, or again, 50 percent of the purchase price, which was a total of \$160,066.10. In both cases the grants have been paid out, it's my understanding. In both cases, those vessels are operating. I might also add that this is a Federal-Provincial cost-shared program, it having been administered through Special ARDA, and that the provincial share of the total of \$100,721.05 was

\$18,314.96, and the Federal Government's share was \$82,406.04.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: I thank the Minister for that answer and ask him a further question. Can the Minister confirm that the vessel that Big Black Fishing Co-op had purchased had been inspected by the Federal Inspectors and declared that the vessel was not seaworthy?

HON. J. COWAN: No, I can't confirm that the vessel was inspected by them and considered not seaworthy. What I can do again is request a further report from staff on that matter. Of course, I could have requested that report from the first instance had I been asked the question the first instance, but I'm certainly prepared to request that further information, take the question as notice and report back again.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Just a point of clarification. Did I hear the Minister say that the Big Black Fishing Co-op were using the vessel and it was working out quite well and they'd paid the loan off?

HON. J. COWAN: The only difficulty that I have been advised of, and I did request that information from staff, is that they did lose one load of fish because of bad weather conditions, and that happens, as the Member for Swan River and others who are familiar with this area will realize and that did cost them a certain amount of money, but that is the only difficulty that I was advised of directly by staff as late as of about 1:30 or 2 o'clock today, but I'll certainly take the further question which the Member for Swan River has requested and relay it to them and provide the information he requires in this regard to him at the earliest convenience.

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

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question, Mr. Speaker, for the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, in light of the statements that the now Premier made in the election campaign that we can improve the quality of life in small towns, rural communities; Manitobans are great people; that's a promise we can guarantee.

Mr. Speaker, in light of the startling headlines in today's Winnipeg papers and on the radio stations with headlines such as, "Bailiff, farmers tangle once again," is the Minister of Agriculture finally prepared today to tell the Legislature, and especially the farm community, the names of the long overdue farm debt review panel that he and his government selected to deal with farm bankruptcies?

Bankruptcies - farmers

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised at the honourable member. As he knows that his caucus did

submit names to us, along with other Manitobans, and the panels are names that have been submitted. Those people have been contacted to see whether they are prepared to serve. As the need for the panels come up, the people are contacted and they are serving. Four panels have been set up.

The honourable member should be aware that in terms of our commitment to agriculture in rural Manitoba, there have been a number of very important measures that have been instituted by this government within the short period of time that we have been in office, Mr. Speaker. If the honourable member wants, I will recount them: The long-term Income Stabilization Program for Beef; the first Interest Rate Relief Program in this country for farmers, small business and homeowners; a long-term commitment to the hog industry of income stabilization; fourthly, as well, a . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain on a point of order.

MR. B. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I believe the Minister is expected to respond to the question which is placed to him; not to enter into debate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister to the same point.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The Honourable First Minister to the same point.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would just point out to you that in view of the point of order that's been raised by the Member for Turtle Mountain, if honourable members ask specific questions, they indeed receive specific response. If honourable members phrase their questions in a generality or in a preamble that invites general response, they will receive general response.

MR. B. RANSOM: To the same point of order, Mr. Speaker. I would simply like to point out, it was a specific question dealing with the names of people on the debt review boards.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, clearly, the Honourable Member for Turtle Mountain was not listening to his colleague asking the question. If he had, he would have heard the preamble. He would have understood that indeed the preamble opened up a wide opening insofar as the response. I think it's incumbent upon honourable members across the way, if they are concerned about ensuring that answers are short and concise, that questions that are posed are short and concise likewise. Mr. Speaker, what is good for the goose is good for the gander.

Mr. Speaker, if there is any uncertainty as to the type of question that was posed by the honourable member, I would suggest you take it under review, and you will find that the question by way of its preamble was general in nature and opened the question to a full-fledged response.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. It's been quoted in this House what Beauchesne has to say about the asking

and answering of questions several times. I'm sure that if honourable members would wish to keep their questions short and concise and to the point, they will receive a similar answer.

The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, to finish off the answer that I was giving the honourable member when I was interrupted, which had two parts to it, was the fourth program dealing with the Loan Guarantee Program, Sir.

The honourable member raised questions about specific people who are sitting on the panels. I would be pleased to provide him with the names if he desires and contacts myself. Mr. Speaker, there were two parts to the question; the lack of action and the names of members. I will be pleased to provide him with names of farmers who have agreed to sit on the panels. He can contact me, and in his region, I will provide him with the names of the members in that region.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: I thank the Honourable Minister for his answer, Mr. Speaker. That's what we've been waiting for, for weeks, for some action from this government.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister and the Premier advise the House today if they are satisfied, as a government, and they are satisfied that this farm review board, this debt panel review board, have been fair and square and have done everything they possibly can for these two farmers today who are on the headlines of our newspapers and our radio stations? The farmer at Russell, Mr. Holovach, and Mr. Jago at Reston, are they satisfied that they've done everything possible to save those two farms from bankruptcy?

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member should be aware that any loss of a business or a farm is a tragic loss to the economy of Manitoba. We are never totally satisfied unless the economy is in full bloom, that everyone is prospering; that's when we will be satisfied, when everyone can reach their full and maximum potential.

Insofar as the panels are concerned, the panels are doing, Sir, as much as can be expected in these difficult times. One thing should be clear, Sir, and I have said this when we introduced the panels, is that the panels can have little effect at the point in time when the receiver is at the door or the farm is at a point of foreclosure. That is not the time when an operation can be saved; unless there is consultation, discussion and review of the entire farm operation to see what alternatives there are. Once the receiver is at the door, Sir, there's virtually no hope in terms of saving any type of operation. I have said this when we introduced it.

The circumstance the honourable member speaks of, he should be aware, and if he checks with the individuals involved, part of the dilemma that came into play in his area is part of a problem that the farmer had with his lending institution in terms of certain agreements that he made with them. I think the honourable member, if he wants further information, should contact either the institution and/or the farmer to receive that kind of information.

In terms of the panels' information, I believe that the panels are giving sound advice and are doing about as realistic an approach as can be achieved in these times, dealing with the circumstances that they are faced with.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MS. D. DODICK: I have a committee change, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Agriculture, the Member for The Pas will be substituting for the Member for Burrows. In the Public Accounts, The Member for Burrows will be substituting for the Member for Springfield.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. R. PENNER: First, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce a committee meeting. I am announcing a meeting of the Committee on Economic Development to consider Flyer Industries for June 14th at 10 o'clock in the morning.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. R. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, before we move any further, I wonder if I could make a substitution please. On the Standing Committee on Agriculture, I'd like to replace the Member for Arthur by the Member for Roblin-Russell.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you please call the Adjourned Debates on Second Readings in the order that I have advised you of: Bills 2, 3, 43, 18, 55, 60 and 54.

BILL 2 - THE LAW ENFORCEMENT REVIEW ACT

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General, Bill No. 2, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNESS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I would like to indicate that I, too, consider this bill as a piece of major legislation that has come before us. In some senses, it's probably almost as important as Bill 3, The Farm Lands Ownership Act. I must say though, to start off with, that whereas I recognize many of the negative aspects of Bill 3, my objections to this bill are maybe not based on the same total

understanding of our law enforcement system. Certainly, I am not a former policeman and, certainly, I am not a former member of a police commission. I guess I've had little contact with enforcement officers or courts other than, I suppose, a normal person's speeding tickets of two or three times. In that sense, I believe I am no different than 90 or 95 percent of all the people in this province.

To me, that's the key point, Mr. Speaker, that one has to make when addressing this bill, is that the vast majority of Manitobans have total confidence in the law enforcement system as it now stands and as it is now in effect. Sir, I represent a riding that has total and complete respect for the law and, just as importantly, for law enforcers; particularly police people. It is from this perspective that I'll try to make a few comments regarding Bill No. 2.

I read the comments of the Attorney-General in introducing the particular bill. I also read the comments of my colleague, the Member for St. Norbert, in which, of course, he made a number of points. He talked of the consensus that was necessary of all those involved in administrating and enforcing the laws of the land, and how he felt that they all should be bringing forward input into this particular change of legislation. Of course, he told of the recent changes in internal investigation procedures within the existing police commissions, and that have led to many changes in that light. He also wondered why the chairman needed to be a lawyer and, I believe, the presiding officer of the Law Enforcement Review Board, and I suppose I do too.

I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, I question why that individual has to be a lawyer only because I found myself at one time in a quasi-judicial position as a chairman of an appeal board. Certainly, I wasn't a lawyer, but we had to rule on the basis of some factors and, I think, when it came to the proper procedures, what we attempted to do, we sought some outside advice as to the rules of conducting appeals and we followed them very carefully as a board. We may have made some mistakes, not as far as judgment but maybe as far as process; but then again, we're human. I really question whether the so-called board as its going to be - or has it been conceived and conceptualized whether, in fact, it has to have that type of individual at the head.

Moving on, the Member for St. Norbert, as did many of my colleagues, indicated their concerns with third-party complaints. I share that one most enthusiastically with them, and I'll have more to say about that a little later, Mr. Speaker. Of course, the Member for St. Norbert also mentioned the fact that a number of police chiefs or certainly a couple, at least, had felt that the proposed legislation would impact most negatively upon internal discipline.

I also read the comments of the Member for Sturgeon Creek, and although he covered many of the same points as did the Member for St. Norbert, he also included the trial by media concept. I can tell you, Sir, that as I see what is happening as I read the newspaper and as I see individuals bring forward charges against what are proven to be later innocent people, that third-party complaints, in my view, can lead to a horrendous area of mistrust associated with individuals who have been falsely accused. I can see where once the news of a certain charge becomes public, that indeed the

individual who has been charged will be tried not only by this commissioner, or not only by this Law Enforcement Review Board, but in fact will be tried by the media. To me, that's unacceptable.

I also would want to associate myself with the comments from the Member for Tuxedo, which he felt that the intent of the bill really indicated a number of unwritten factors. First of all, he felt that the NDP Government showed, by bringing forward this bill, that they have little confidence in the police force and the existing police commission. At least, he indicated that must be the case, because implied in this new procedure is the belief that many complaints go unregistered because the public is unfamiliar with the procedures available to them.

Mr. Speaker, it's with those background comments that I would like to offer some of my general viewpoints as to Bill No. 2, and tell you that I am terribly concerned about the opportunity for bringing in frivolous complaints. I know, in going through the bill, that some attempt has been made to address that particular concern, but I am not totally convinced in my own mind, or not at all convinced, not the least bit convinced that there is any way around, once this procedure is adopted, to prevent third-party complaints from becoming frivolous complaints. I think it behooves the government to rethink out that whole area, because I concede many many cases where needless enquiries will be conducted and to where very unnecessary and unfair criticism will be launched upon an innocent person.

Of course I'm also concerned about the fact as to who now the police force, through their superior officer, or through their chief, who will they truly be answerable to. It's almost axiomatic, in my view, that they will fail to want to act on what they believe and in the manner in which they feel that they should conduct the law, but will first feel obliged to take a ruling from this new commission. Well, what are the objects and what are the specific concerns related to Bill 2?

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I support those who say the intent of Bill 2 is to completely usurp the disciplinarian, appellat functions of the Police Commission. I can't see how a politically appointed board, having the powers to sort of make decisions regarding all enforcement aspects as it relates to a specific enquiry, as it relates to the concern of an individual, I can't see how any politically appointed board, in the sense that it comes forward in this manner, could do anything more than usurp the disciplinary function within the existing structure. That's why I find myself totally disagreeing with the comment made by the Member for Inkster the other day when he spoke to this bill, as he was reported to have said in the newspaper article, he said that the public has every right to know and participate in actions where they have overstepped the bounds of good police practices.

I would say, yes, the public of course has every right to know, but at what point in time do they have the right to know? I suppose I would say that maybe the public doesn't have the right to know everything at the beginning, before indeed the individual - a law officer in this case - his actions have been ruled upon before, by way of the media, and I therefore would take exception and I suppose, disagree in that respect.

I know there are certainly many other areas of professional conduct where these investigations are

carried on, supposedly behind closed doors. I don't know whether I find myself arguing or supporting that. But I say certainly when it comes to law enforcement, that indeed these individuals have to be afforded some protection and that's why I would beg to differ.

Well, the Member for Inkster is purported to have said, he believed that this bill would bring things more to the attention of the public. In his view this action would serve to honour and respect police officers. Well, Mr. Speaker, doesn't that sound similar to the rationale that was used in developing the argument for supporting Bill 18, a supposedly Conflict of Interest law? In his view, this action would serve to honour and respect police officers, indeed as Bill 18 would serve to honour and respect probably politicians, public officials.

I have some grave difficulties with that type of comment because it says to me, that indeed there are sectors or factions within our society, politicians, police officers today, who are not held in esteem, who are actually held, in a sense, with little confidence by the people and I don't accept them. Maybe some of the members opposite do, but I don't. If I did accept it, there's no way anybody could make me believe that passing a law, whether it's Bill 18 to supposedly restore honour to those of us that sit here, or Bill 2, to restore the honour of police people, I can't believe that a law restores honour or esteem. So it was with those comments that I found I had to take some exception.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would then say that I also support those who say that the bill is spelling out the total lack of confidence in police commissions throughout Manitoba, and this of course worries me a considerable amount. I'm really wondering what happens when the 90 percent plus constituents in my riding, and indeed I would have to say generally across this province, what's going to be their reaction when somebody points out to them that the main cause, the main factor for this bill, is because the existing system of enforcement and supervision over the existing enforcement system is not adequate.

I'm wondering if that whole degree of knowledge will instill confidence or indeed will it create doubts. I'm wondering if it could result in the very very same end that supposedly Bill 2, by what the Attorney-General has said and by indeed what the Member for Inkster has said, is attempting to accomplish and that is to restore confidence in our law enforcement system. I pose that as a very serious question because I tell you, and it's my view, that politically appointed boards do not inspire confidence and when you take that element of our government system and you impose it upon standards of law, I have some real concern.

Well, the comment is made further as to lawyers and deputy presiding officers over this new established board and again I suppose it begs the question, do lawyers necessarily instill confidence? I wonder, and maybe the Attorney-General again in finishing debate on this bill, can speak specifically to that point, as to why lawyers of a necessity, have to fill those two positions on the board.

Mr. Speaker, I think there are also a number of questions and facts and figures that the Attorney-General should also offer to this Assembly before he proceeds any further with this particular bill and he may have done so already, although I haven't been able to find it. I'm wondering if it would not be possible,

and I think it's incumbent upon him, to tell us how many internal disciplinary cases have been dealt with in 1982, and let's just use within the City of Winnipeg, by the Chief of Police and by the Police Commission. I'm wondering if he could also indicate how they were disposed of and how many appeals were dealt with by the various police commissions. How many police force members have been charged with criminal offenses?

Then I believe it's most incumbent upon this government, and particularly the Attorney-General, for them or himself to give us the best estimate as to how many individuals do not lodge complaints that otherwise they would have if The Law Enforcement Review Act were in place? That may be a tall task, but I think it's pretty important that they at least put on some subjective numbers to how many people they feel would come forward under a change in legislation that otherwise may not have come under the existing program. Certainly the answer more is not a satisfactory answer in my view.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I made some earlier comments about my concern about third party complaints. I honestly believe that no police officer should be subjected to the whims of those who want to destroy the integrity of, first of all, the police in general; and secondly, a specific officer who may, at one time or other, be the benefactor of a grudge that some other individual is holding against that person.

To me the rights of - and I'll incur the wrath of the members opposite by using it - but to me the rights of that fringe element, those people that want to cause trouble just for the sake of embarrassing a force or an individual, and I can't define in numbers, but certainly the rights of that element who want to bring actions against the police cannot be placed ahead of the general confidence that the vast majority of people today, throughout this province, have in their police force. To me those individuals that feel they have rights under this section, which they do, their rights are to me are adequately covered by police commission actions and procedures and regulations today.

I think it's very important that decisions based in this whole area not be made, taking into account the small narrow minority, without first considering the total confidence the vast majority of people today within this province have within their police enforcers. Well — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, could I wait until the end of my presentation? Well, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the question. I hope it's not too legally couched because of course then I would say it was on unfair grounds.

Mr. Speaker, I only make one reference to one specific section, and I won't name it, but that is the one dealing with the discipline code. I don't know if it's the same code that is spelled out in existing Acts that cover this area or not. I don't know to what degree. I didn't have the time to see to what degree it may have been altered or changed but I have some difficulties with it.

One of the areas, or two or three of them, particularly arrest without reasonable or probable grounds, or particularly that subsection, concerns me somewhat, because I'm wondering whether indeed the police officer that is brought forward under these grounds, whether his or her case should really be heard before a quasi-judicial tribunal appointed by a government. I'm really wondering if in fact those sorts of charges should not be heard in court.

Well, I'm concerned also about some of the definitions, particularly the one about a person being present and failing to assist another person in circumstances where there is clear danger. I really wonder how a police officer of today is supposed to act under these types of conditions. Such as that person can be charged if he fails to act, and correspondingly can be charged if he fails or if he takes the wrong course of action. I really wonder, who would want to work under that type of pressure? Maybe there's a better definition or there's a fuller description somewhere that can allow those two ends to be more fully or less at cross purposes because to me there is a tremendous contradiction. I wonder how any individual, who becomes a public servant protecting you and I, can work under that type of pressure.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to offer just some general conclusions. I can by first of all stating, that law and order is one of the primal concerns of the constituents of Morris, probably no different than anywhere else. I think it's fair to say that over the last 10 years, when it comes to priority considerations that indeed it's almost the No. 1 concern of constituents and probably Manitobans, because as we purport to be a society that's improving and becoming more civilized in many respects, we're just inundated with actions, not only in the newspaper, but right within our neighbourhoods and right next door.

I think that throughout all this change in moral standards and the change in respect for the law, that one continuing fact holds and that is, I believe the majority of Manitobans have total confidence and respect in their enforcement agencies, whether it's the RCMP in the country or indeed the town and city police forces throughout the province.

I know there is some concern with the sentences that are being handed down in many cases by the courts, but nevertheless throughout all these factors which seem to work against each other at times, there's one element that seems to reign supreme, that is the confidence that people have within their police force. I believe that when my constituents learn the net effects of this bill, it'll cast doubt upon our law officers and our law enforcers.

When they realize that the police will now become answerable to a politically appointed Board - and that's exactly what I see happening - that they will realize not even the police are sacred and immune from NDP planning and social engineering. I think it says a lot about society when we realize that you have in power a government today that believes that every aspect of our society needs change, even the aspect of law enforcement.

I think on that basis, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest to the Attorney-General, that this bill be withdrawn. I don't believe it is necessary. If the government feels it is necessary, that some thought be given to the comment made by the Member for Fort Garry the other day, that an intersessional committee be looked at or be brought forward to consider the total outcome and the total ramifications of a bill like this, in concert with input from everybody.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. R. PENNER: I hope that's not a prediction of any kind. My question for the honourable member is this. He expressed concern about complaints which may be frivolous or vexatious, and he dealt with both. There are complaints made now. Presumably some of them may appear to be either frivolous or vexatious or both. Who makes that decision now as to what must be a judgment call, that a complaint is frivolous and vexatious and will not be further investigated?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNESS: Well, obviously those complaints or those charges are made and obviously, I take it, it's somebody on the Police Commission that makes that decision.

HON. R. PENNER: No, it never reaches a commission.

MR. C. MANNESS: Well, the Attorney-General says no, so I may be wrong. But the point that I make is that, fine, can we put a definition, or can we put a number to these supposedly great numbers of complaints, vexatious and otherwise, and how many more of them will come in because of this change in legislation? I think it's incumbent upon the government to tell us why we need this whole new law, for how many great numbers of added people will now be prepared and feel freer to come forward?

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?
The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. A. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Roblin-Russell, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 3 - THE FARM LANDS OWNERSHIP ACT

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Bill No. 3, the Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs has 23 minutes remaining.

HON. J. BUCKLASCHUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday when I started my presentation on this bill I dealt with the issues of the proposed Bill 3, reiterating that there would be no limit on ownership of Manitoba farms by Manitobans or by family farm corporations, but that there was a problem with the question of foreign ownership of Manitoba farm land.

I did feel that there had been some agreement between the two sides of this House with respect to that issue but that understanding was somewhat shattered by the contribution from the Member for Assiniboia who had no problems at all with foreign owners coming into the province and buying Manitoba farm land.

The major issue, as I see it, is whether or not Canadians from outside of Manitoba should be permitted to purchase Manitoba farm land and it's an

issue that has been addressed in other provinces. I notice that Quebec has a limit of four hectares for Canadians who are non-residents of the province; P.E.I. has 10 acres as a limit; Saskatchewan admittedly brought in legislation under an NDP Government limiting ownership to 10 acres for non-residents of the province; but I must note that the present Conservative Government has not made any moves, to the best of my knowledge, to remove that legislation. — (Interjection) — They've even tightened it up. So I don't see it as being anything radical that we should propose that, or that the Minister of Agriculture in Manitoba should propose that form of legislation.

As I left off last Thursday, I was wanting to find in the letter some reference to the position by the Manitoba Farm Bureau or to the Agricultural Lands Protection Board with respect to ownership of farm land by persons outside of the province and the difficulty with ownership by non-residents is a difficulty of determining beneficial ownership of the property because of the anonymity of the real owner, or principal shareholders. In fact, that information is difficult to obtain even from within registered corporations in the province, or in Manitoba, and it's much more difficult than when we're dealing with Ontario, B.C., or other corporations.

So basically we would appear to agree on the question of foreign ownership, certainly a difference of opinion on non-resident ownership insofar as Canadians outside of Manitoba, and some difference with respect to non-farm corporation ownership. Now it's interesting that in Minnesota, which is far from being a socialist state, that in 1981 their House passed legislation - Bill 1814 - "requires the majority of the shareholders of an authorized farm corporation holding a majority of the shares, to reside on the farm or be actively engaged in farming." So the idea of the majority or two-thirds of the shareholders of a corporation being actively involved in or living on the farm, is not something unheard of.

As I indicated, the Farm Bureau had seen some problem with respect to corporate ownership of Manitoba farm land and I would like to quote from the November 25, 1980 letter to the former Minister of Agriculture and the Chairman of the Agricultural Lands Protection Board, and states as follows:

"Our board members believe that if the corporate loopholes are tightened up through amendments to the Act, this will then leave some investors to use individuals to make purchases. Our board has identified a few individuals in Toronto, Vancouver, Edmonton, who are willing to invest huge sums of money in farm land for foreign investors and there has been increased activities in these types of investments in the last six months."

So they certainly recognize it as a problem and were calling on the government, at that time, to take some action.

However, as I indicated last Thursday, the opposition would want us to believe that what was an issue two years ago, two short years ago, is no longer an issue. The facts are that there are tens and tens of thousands of acres of Manitoba farm land, some of the best farm land in the province, which are presently not under the control of Manitoba farmers, and under Bill 3, the proposal is, that there be a restriction on future land transfers. There is no divestiture of existing land ownership.

I might indicate that the opposition has stressed the difficulty of disposing of land where shareholders change or ownership changes, that there is a three-year period, it has a very short timeframe. I notice from the legislation in Minnesota that any land that does not comply with their legislation must be divested within 12 months of it coming to the attention of that board.

In summing up, one of the frustrations of being in government is perhaps being unable to act soon enough to deal with the situation. I sincerely believe that the issue that existed two years ago will recur, perhaps not this year, perhaps not next year, but the question of ownership will arise again and again, and I think that it is quite proper and responsible of our government to deal with this situation at this time. Certainly restrictions on ownership of Manitoba farm land will, in my opinion, not be detrimental to Manitoba farmers or to rural Manitoba. In fact, restriction of ownership will be an enhancement of opportunity for Manitoba farmers, particularly for the young farmers and beginning farmers who wish to buy land or expand their present farms to establish more profitable, more viable farm units. It will certainly assist those farmers whose viability has been jeopardized at the present time because of high taxes brought about by inflated land prices, and as a result excessively high mortgage debts. Certainly the legislation when passed will be of assistance for future young farmers in Manitoba. That is why I support and why I urge all Members of this House to support this important bill.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? Bill 3 will continue to stand in the name of the Member for St. Norbert then.

Bill No. 43, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Transportation, standing in the name of the Minister of Agriculture.

BILL 43 - THE TRANSPORTATION OF DANGEROUS GOODS ACT

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, Bill 43, I adjourned the debate for my colleague the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister of Highways and Transportation will be closing debate. The Honourable Minister.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, the Member for Pembina raised a number of what I would consider minor concerns with respect to this bill having to do with the application of the law in this area and its uniformity across the country. I simply want to take a moment or two to respond to that because I believe he probably missed a point or two in my opening remarks when I alluded to the fact that the Government of Canada has passed the umbrella legislation in order that we do have an Act that governs all of Canada. Of course, the provinces' role is to deal only with that aspect that is provincial in nature, or provincial constitutionally. There is no question that there will be some difference in wording between the national act and the provincial acts across the country based on the fact that we have

different responsibilities. But in the end, Mr. Speaker, we, as provinces, have been working very closely with the Government of Canada in an effort to bring together the legislative and regulatory means by which we can all do our part, in order to accomplish protection for the public in this area in a way that is constitutionally proper, federally and provincially.

So, while the point is valid that there are differences, they are only there, Mr. Speaker, because of constitutional arrangement and, of course, the split responsibilities. The provinces have made a commitment to adopt, to a maximum extent, federally prepared regulations, and that process has not yet been completed, Mr. Speaker, but, to the extent that it is practical and relevant to each of our areas or regions, there will be that kind of effort for uniformity.

There is some problem, and I have to acknowledge that, with respect to trying to have uniformity, or complete uniformity, with the United States. We have drawn attention to a number of problem areas with the Government of Canada having to do with our legislation and how it relates to U.S. law. At this point in time, we don't have a commitment from the Government of Canada that there will be any change. My hope is that over a period of time and certainly with the application of the new regulations here, that experience itself will result in whatever modifications are necessary, in order to be as compatible as we can with the concept of uniformity, interprovincially and internationally. That is something I believe that will evolve.

With respect to inspection, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Highways inspectors will be in charge of the placarding and the inspection of manifest, so that we intend to use our in-house capacity to make sure that there is compliance. The system with respect to shipper compliance will be based on the utilization of personnel in the Workplace Safety and Health and Environment in the Department of Labour and, of course, the office of the Transportation of Dangerous Goods. They will have to work together in that area in order to have compliance.

The training of inspectors, provincially and federally, is a commitment of the Federal Government. They are developing a national training scheme which would provide for the same type of training for inspectors of all modes. This training package is in its development stage at the moment, and it is expected that it will be ready by the end of this calendar year.

Mr. speaker, I believe, those are essentially the major concerns that were drawn to our attention by the Member for Pembina. I think that if he wants further clarification that we should deal with that at committee stage, so I recommend referral to committee.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried

**BILL NO. 18 - THE LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY AND
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CONFLICT OF
INTEREST ACT**

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill No. 18, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General standing in the name of the Member for Rhineland.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to express my opinions of Bill No. 18, and I hope that

every member in this Chamber is going to carefully study this bill and express themselves on the contents. Now some members obviously are going to be affected to a greater degree than others.

If a member's only income is the MLA's or the Cabinet Minister's salary, this bill will have no effect. If on the other hand, a member has holdings or income other than his MLA salary, then he or she will be forced to disclose those holdings and the holdings of members of their families. Mr. Speaker, it is easy to see which side of the House will be forced to declare assets while the other side, the side that is implementing or is sponsoring this bill, will not be affected, at least certainly not to the same extent.

Now where is the need for this bill? Do we have many incidents of conflict of interest at the present time? I would say that the answer obviously is, no. What is the bill going to resolve? Is everything going to be black and white after its passage? The answer again is, no. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, this bill is going to create more grey areas than we have at the present time.

In addition, any MLA with any assets at all is automatically painted into a guilty position until such a time as what he has declared those assets and the assets of his father, his mother, his children, his sisters and brothers. As far as I'm concerned, it is a gross invasion of the privacy of MLAs and MLA's relatives' lives.

Mr. Speaker, I very firmly believe that Cabinet Ministers should declare their possessions. They are really the only ones in a position to take advantage because they are the decision-makers.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: They hold the purse.

MR. A. BROWN: All other members really have no say as to where the dollar is spent in Manitoba, so why don't we leave them alone?

The Minister says, and I quote, "The bill aims to promote public confidence in the integrity of the process of government." Mr. Speaker, assets of members have nothing to do with confidence and integrity in the eyes of the beholder, the Manitoba taxpayer. Confidence and integrity can be gained only by keeping commitments, especially commitments made during election campaigns and by passing good legislation. Trust cannot be legislated. Trust has to be earned. This government has done neither of these things and, therefore, has lost the confidence and the trust of Manitobans, and they have lost credibility.

That lack of confidence and lack of credibility will not disappear with the passage of this bill. On the other hand what the bill will do, it will expose those members who have accomplished absolutely nothing other than being able to get themselves elected, they have accomplished nothing else with their private lives. Certainly those people are going to be exposed to the Manitoba taxpayers who will have some concerns about that. That will hardly build credibility and confidence in the eyes of the Manitoba taxpayer.

The probability of Conflict of Interest is much greater in municipal governments. That's where you deal with municipal streets, roads, culverts and so on. If you are a developer and a councillor of a municipality, for

instance, with property to develop, you may be tempted to favour decisions which could be decisions that would favour your particular property at the taxpayers' expense.

I have served on a municipal council many years, and that is mainly where your areas of conflict appear, is in your municipal councils. Areas of conflict certainly do not appear among opposition MLAs because they have no authority to make decisions or to spend money.

As already has been mentioned, the bill will prevent many good people from seeking office, particularly females whose husbands will not want to be bothered with all the disclosures. Mr. Speaker, this bill will resolve nothing, because we have no problem that needs to be resolved.

I believe that the members of this Chamber who have been elected are honest where Conflict of Interest is concerned. Why should we cast a shadow of doubt upon them unless the Attorney-General knows of some individual who is in Conflict of Interest? If he has such information, then let him say so. If he has not, then let him keep his peace and not cast suspicion on members that have some assets.

Mr. Speaker, there is no need for this bill and, therefore, as far as I am concerned, I cannot support it.

Another area of concern is the many amendments which have been distributed on this particular bill which just means one thing, that the bill has been poorly drafted. I would strongly urge the Attorney-General to withdraw this bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Member for Tuxedo.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Virden, that debate be adjourned on this bill.

MOTION presented and carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before proceeding, I would like to direct the attention of the members of the Legislature to the gallery where we have a group of 68 students of Grade 8 from the Virden Junior High School. These visitors are under the direction of Mr. Plaiser. They are from the constituency of the Honourable Member for Virden.

On behalf of all members of the Legislature, I would like to welcome you here today.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON SECOND READING Cont'd

BILL NO. 55 - AN ACT TO AMEND THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY ACT

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Bill No. 55, on the proposed motion of the Honourable Attorney-General, standing in the name of the Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in opposition to Bill 55 at this time. I have a few comments to make on it and my

two reasons for objecting to Bill 55, first of all, is the extra cost that will be incurred upon taxpayers at this time when we are already running a very serious deficit. I'm not sure just how much extra this bill, if it was implemented, would cost the taxpayers of Manitoba, but you can be sure that it would increase the provincial expenditures.

The second point that I am not in favour of is the printing of political propaganda at public expense. I think any political party or any politician that wants to put out pamphlets - and I'm speaking for myself - I like to have on any pamphlet that I'm involved in that it be not printed at public expense. Certainly, I think that many on this side, if not all, would not want to see the garbage being paid at the public expense that we have seen sent out by the members of the NDP in recent years, at least. We all know about, "A Clear Choice for Manitobans," a booklet here that made all kinds of promises in the last election, and it's nothing more than garbage. As a matter of fact, the other day when reference was made to this document, the Premier and the person that has supposedly signed this would not stand up and recognize the fact that he was responsible for sending this out; so obviously he's ashamed of it.

A previous pamphlet that was sent out back in 1980, "Manitoba is Losing its People, its Jobs, its Business, its Future," and again it's filled with many inaccuracies. It says, "Businesses closed: The Tribune, Swifts, Transair, Massey-Ferguson, Glenella Creamery, Brandon Co-op store." It also says, "Head offices move: Wilsons, Shainos, Salisbury House, Grey Goose." It goes on to say, "Sales are down, bankruptcies are up almost 50 percent and interest rates increasing again. Lyon's response was \$10 a month and across the board help for small businesses. Manitoba owned and operated businesses provide most of the jobs in the province. The Lyon Government has abandoned them." Well, this whole article is nothing but garbage and, certainly, I'm sure that people of Manitoba would not want to become involved in paying for the printing and sending out of this kind of trash. Certainly, I know in the case myself, where I have sent out franking pieces from time to time, every effort is made to make sure that the information is accurate and, certainly, I like to put on there too that it's not printed at public expense.

Well, the members opposite laugh at that comment, but I haven't heard of them making reference to any of the pamphlets that we've sent out with respect to our political ambitions. So, primarily, for those two reasons, I can't support Bill 55. I'm really appalled at the comments from the Member for Thompson. He spoke on Bill 55 last week. I'd just like to make reference to a few parts in quoting from Hansard of May 25, and I quote: "In terms of the impact on the situation of the individual member, Mr. Speaker, it will mean actually that individual member will have less take-home pay. One of the changes, Mr. Speaker, which requires that future expenditures under the constituency allowance provision be made accountable, rather than the present system where they are merely added to the member's paycheque. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that an argument could be made that members opposite are the ones who are being greedy; they don't want to lose that constituency allowance on their pay cheque."

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to comment on that. At the present time, we are allowed some \$1,500 for

constituency allowance, and that is to provide for if a member wishes to set up an office in his constituency, whether it be an office downtown or whether he have an office in his home. It also is to pay for the mileage that the members incur when they are travelling around their constituencies. So that \$1,500 perhaps doesn't go all that far. I know, in my particular case, I live out in the country, so I prefer to have a little office in downtown Swan River so that there is a place there that I can meet constituents with problems. I have a phone there with a recorder on it so that when I'm not there, messages can be left, and I have an elderly gentleman who helps me out in spending some time at the office there. So I have to subsidize the cost of this office, but that's one of the election promises that I made when I sought election. I knew exactly what was being provided to the members. I knew that I would at some point in time have to subsidize the cost out of my pay cheque but, certainly, for the Member for Thompson to say that we are being greedy because we wouldn't want to lose that \$1,500 out of our pay cheque, that's actually ridiculous. — (Interjection) — Yes, I will read on.

To quote further: "I just referred a minute ago to the constituency allowance. At the present time, a \$1,500 constituency allowance is paid to all members; it is not an accountable constituency allowance. The change in the bill would make that an accountable \$2,500 allowance." He goes on to say, "I would suggest that a significant number of members will not spend the entire \$2,500.00. I will go further, Mr. Speaker; I will suggest that many members will not even spend the \$1,500, which they are presently receiving, in their constituencies."

Well, that's absolutely ridiculous, because the examples I have quoted, in my own particular case, I spend over the \$1,500 on the office situation alone, to speak nothing of the miles that I travel in the constituency. So once you bring in an item where it's accountable, I'm sure that most people travel around their constituencies and make office facilities available in their homes or wherever; however, \$2,500 does not go very far, and it wouldn't be very difficult to get accountable items to cover that \$2,500.00. So for the member to suggest that there would be a saving because they would not be able to even account the \$1,500 they're presently automatically getting is absolutely ridiculous.

The Member for Thompson said to read on, and I would like to just make reference to a couple of other places. Further on, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to quote: "Now, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I wish members opposite would be a little more courageous in expressing that view. I wish they would get up and say, yes, I feel that the position of an MLA should be a part-time job; that I should come here for the sitting of the Legislature, then go to some other form of employment, and that's it. I do not believe there should be constituency services, and I do not believe there should be constituency offices or any travel allowances in-between Legislative Sessions. I wish they would have courage to say that, Mr. Speaker."

Well, Mr. Speaker, everyone that seeks to become an MLA in the Province of Manitoba does so with a full understanding that it's a full-time job. Certainly, individuals may have other work to do, and they have

to work that in around their MLA constituency obligations. I defy any MLA in this Assembly that doesn't have a full-time job. He may be working at other jobs as well, but I know that I have followed the process for a number of years prior to coming in here.

We all know the kinds of constituency concerns that we get, and we have to address those problems when we get them, otherwise, the chances of getting re-elected are probably pretty slim. So for the member opposite to say that an MLA is only a part-time job, really doesn't appreciate why he's here. — (Interjection) — that's exactly what you were inferring that a lot of people that are here are part-time MLAs. I am saying that's absolutely ridiculous to suggest that because all of the MLAs that I have ever known, on various sides of the House, get lots of constituency calls and they get them all hours of the night. Not, as the member says, from eight in the morning to midnight; you get them 24 hours a day, depending on the course, the time of year.

If you have a forest fire situation, or if you have flood situation, you could name all kinds of problems that come up in a constituency. The phone calls and inquiries are not restricted to specific hours of the day. Certainly that hasn't been my experience as an MLA over the last 6 or 7 years.

So for the member opposite, just because perhaps he doesn't have any other form of employment or position to address, besides MLA, I don't think it's fair to say that people that own farms, or have businesses or positions to attend, certainly have to do that, work it in around their MLA position. The Member for Thompson goes on to say that his constituents are appalled that he has to ride the bus back and forth to Thompson and that he should have more money to spend to represent them. I am sure that the Member for Thompson did not go out on the campaign trail in 1981 and tell the constituents of Thompson that, I am running to become your MLA but when I get elected I want to get up in the House and say that we need more money to be MLAs to represent the constituency of Thompson. Did you say to your constituents?

A MEMBER: You bet your life, he's only a one termer.

MR. D. GOURLAY: If that's his attitude, if that's the member's attitude in this House as an MLA, for sure he's going to be a one-termer. In my particular case, I don't have many other obligations to attend to, other than MLA, although I do have some other interests, but I deal primarily with my constituency problems. I find that I can spend lots of time at it. I am sure that any other MLAs that I know, first of all, are committed to the role of MLA problems and they work them in whenever they possibly can. Certainly that takes priority over many other family matters or employment situations that they may have. So for the member to make those kinds of comments is really upsetting to me and I am disturbed about them.

Just to go on further, the member for Thompson's comments. He said, referring to the Conservative, he says they like the past. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, on this bill there is no better evidence that they like living in the past. They believe that they are in the days of 20 and 30 years ago when MLAs did come here on

a part-time basis. They did come here on a part-time basis, that's what the member is saying and that was it. I would suggest to them, Mr. Speaker, that has changed, not only in the constituencies represented by members on this side of the House, but it's changed in some of their constituencies as well. They better be careful because if they're not providing that level of service, if they're opposing means such as Bill 55, which would allow them to provide that service, they're really opposing the right of an individual Manitoban to have a full-time MLA.

Well, I believe that the members that represented this House 50 years ago were full-time MLAs. They had much more difficult times in the means of travelling and getting around their constituencies, and the problems that existed in those days were maybe very minimal problems if we referred to them on today's standard but they were major problems. There was very little money, and I can recall hearing many stories of the MLA for Swan River that served for some 32 years in this Legislature. He had to walk or travel by horseback, and he carried flour on his back to various constituents, because that was during the Dirty 30s and people didn't really have much to get by with, but certainly I wouldn't say that George Renoff (phonetic) was a part-time MLA. He worked very hard in the constituency; he spent many hours, night and day, under bad road conditions, and under adverse economic conditions as well. Certainly that is one reason that the Conservatives have represented that area for so long was because of the dedicated service given by the member whose name I indicated, Mr. George Renoff.

Certainly, the people that came before me, I feel that they all worked very hard and I have continued to follow that same role. Certainly I don't say that any MLA in this Assembly is a part-time MLA, regardless of what the Member for Thompson may wish to say. He may feel that he is the only full-time MLA in this House, but I can assure you that he's just trying to get, as my colleague the Member for Emerson says, get his nose to the trough. I am sure that is really what it's all about. For him to say that this bill would save the taxpayers money is absolutely ridiculous, as I had pointed out before.

Mr. Speaker, I am objecting this for two reasons. Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Thompson was listening I said that we really can't afford to increase expenditures by bringing in a bill, such as 55, at this time. Sure we'd all be happy to have more money to spend as MLAs in setting up fancy offices, or any kind of any office, and phone service and whatnot and so forth, but what I am saying, this isn't the time to do it. I am just pointing out, Mr. Speaker, that we have a very serious economic situation in this province; that we have a big deficit and any means that we can address that will at least not aggravate that situation, then we should really take a very serious look at it. Certainly, I don't want to go back and tell my constituents that I can't function any longer without getting some more money so that I can serve them better. When I sought the nomination, I knew exactly; I found out how much the MLAs got. It was a heck of a lot less than it is now. I think that we have a built-in system where we are allowed adjustments, indexing from year to year. Certainly, that was identified back in 1977. I don't know just when that part came in, but I believe that the MLAs salary

was something under \$20,000 back in '77 and with the constituency allowance now, it's over \$30,000.00. Maybe not a great sum of money in today's terms, but certainly we knew exactly what we were getting into, and if we are to complain and want more money, then I don't think that should come into play until after another election. We go to the polls on that kind of thing and say this is what's needed.

Mr. Speaker, with those few comments, I am opposing Bill 55. To sum it up again, it's because of the extra cost that it would create to the province at this time; and No. 2, I don't think that propaganda material sent out by politicians should be paid for out of the public purse.

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

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Rupertsland, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL NO. 60 - THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACT

MR. SPEAKER: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Highways, Bill No. 60, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. McKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few remarks to address to this Bill No. 60, An Act to amend The Highway Traffic Act, and some questions to raise of the Honourable Minister of Transportation who has presented this bill to the Legislature.

Mr. Speaker, it's very interesting to see this subject matter being debated in this Legislature again. I think it's what, the third or the fourth time over the years. Some of us have been around here when this matter has been debated and, in the past, it was always left on a free vote type of thing. I think the records will show that under those conditions, it never was able to gain enough support in the House to gain passage.

I wonder, as I stand here today, maybe the Minister can advise the House what new statistics or what data he's got in his briefcase now or in his file to bring this change about. Is there something that's now available - new statistics - or is the Honourable Member for Elmwood, with his second edition of the book, the one that's maybe changed the Minister's mind on this matter? I don't know what the change is. I've been searching through my files to try and find some new figures and new statistics. We've been lobbied extensively by the medical profession and others, and I looked their file and I don't see anything much that has changed over the years this debate has gone on, Mr. Speaker.

Of course, as somebody said the other day, discussing this bill that members opposite are well-known for what they call "social tinkering," and that this may be an example of the famed "social tinkering." I can recall the Member for St. Johns, I guess it was, one time here getting us into a discussion and trying to convince us that everybody should wear green overalls and we

should all have yellow toothbrushes. I can recall, and I'm sure the Honourable Minister of Health and the Minister of Transportation can remember some of those debates.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, it's strange how we as legislators take and use the mandatory provisions that are in this legislation and take the authority to mandatorily put legislation on the people of this province. We've got all kinds of examples of one thing is mandatory and the next thing is non-mandatory. We had mandatory check offs on the beef industry, which I think I raised yesterday or the day before, and now for some reason the Minister of Agriculture has said, no, we're not going to allow mandatory check offs on the beef producers so they can advertise their industry, so he is removing them. At the same time, here's his desk mate, the Minister of Highways, who almost within a few days is putting mandatory legislation back into the records again. One Minister takes it off and the other Minister puts it on. That, Mr. Speaker, is something that bothers me in this debate, to try and figure out just where this government stands. I've searched all through this "Clear Choice for Manitobans" from page to page with a fine-tooth comb and I don't find any definitions in there of what they intend to do with mandatory legislation; nor do I find, in fact, Mr. Speaker, that they were intending to bring this legislation before at the time that document was spread around the province.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, if this legislation is passed, as the Minister has said, Manitoba will be the sixth province, I understand, to have mandatory seat belts and motorcycle helmets and child restraint legislation. Mr. Speaker, as I said there in discussion, the intrusion of the members of this Legislature into the rights of our citizens or the freedom of the man on the street or the man that's driving the car to choose is one that concerns me in this legislation especially.

Mr. Speaker, I raised the matter the other day with the lobby group that was trying to convince me that I should be supporting their position on the mandatory legislation of seat belts. Mr. Speaker, when an MLA such as myself has 72 percent of the people in my constituency recently polled, telling me they don't support mandatory seat belt legislation, do I have the right as a member of this Legislature to stand up and tell those people that they are wrong and say, no, you can't have it that way? I wonder where we as legislators have the authority, Mr. Speaker, or the ability to go against the wishes of our people, or should I stand up here and vote for mandatory seat belt legislation and motorcycle helmets and child restraints, when the people in my own constituency, 72 percent of them say, no. They say no; 72 percent of them say, we don't support mandatory seat belts in Roblin-Russell constituency; and, Mr. Speaker, it's also interesting to note that when the Premier and his delegation toured my constituency last fall on a cold, wet, rainy day, they toured the Town of Roblin, and they met a couple of staunch NDP Reeves on that tour; Reeve Howard Wilson, long-time friend of mine and a great socialist, the Reeve of Shell River Municipality, and Mr. John Perchaluk, long-time Reeve of the RM of Hillsburg, who both met the Premier and his delegation and told them, "Don't bring mandatory seat belt legislation into this place."

Mr. Speaker, here is a letter about that famous trip and this happened to be the Reeve of Shellmouth who was in the crowd when the First Minister and his delegation arrived in Roblin, and he says: "At the meeting held in Roblin," and this letter, by the way, Mr. Speaker, is addressed to the Premier. "You will recall that Reeves John Perchaluk, RM of Hillsburg, Mr. Howard Wilson, RM of Shell River, and myself, pointed out to you that we did not favour compulsory seat belt legislation and that we were speaking for a large majority of our driving ratepayers." That's three Reeves, Mr. Speaker, that reside in my constituency, three Reeves, well-known Reeves, long-standing elected Reeves, elected by the people. So I ask, there is more evidence of three elected Reeves, who have been elected for many years, who are telling me and telling the Premier of this Province, don't bring in mandatory seat belt legislation at this time; and two of those Reeves, Mr. Speaker, happen to be long-time supporters of the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, they go on and say - and they did send, apparently, resolutions to the First Minister. It concerns me somewhat when Reeves, elected people like that, and we, as legislators in this place, pass legislation which this one Reeve says, "I will be among the percentage of Manitobans who will not wear a seat belt." If it's left voluntary, I very well could be one that willingly buckles up, and that's what concerns me, Mr. Speaker, with this type of legislation. The number of times that it's been debated in this House and it was always done on a free vote and it failed. Now the Premier and his government opposite, for some strange reason, without any statistics or data that I have had access to, decided that they're going to make it mandatory. I don't see how, Mr. Speaker, when I have three Reeves from the municipalities that live in the Roblin-Russell constituency who have already indicated that they don't support it in any way, shape or form or, in fact, one says, "I will not wear them." Then I have to stand up and say I would support this legislation, Mr. Speaker? I cannot support this legislation in its present form.

If the bill was broken down into sections, Mr. Speaker, I might be able to support the child restraints for children five years and under. I think that is a very excellent aspect in the bill because I have seen, from time-to-time, children at that age that are not familiar with the driving habits of whoever is driving a car and do get rolled around in the vehicle because of the fact that they're not tied in. So I would have no problem, I don't think, Mr. Speaker, at this time, in supporting the facet of child restraints, but the motorcycle crowd can certainly speak for themselves on the aspect of motorcycles; I shall not get into that.

Mr. Speaker, I've had three letters from what appears to be registered nurses urging me to support the legislation, three registered nurses in the constituency. But I wonder, too, in dealing with this legislation, when we're talking about safety, and we have examples of this Minister of Highways cutting out the safety of our province. I don't think I've ever seen the Yellowhead Highway for the last number of years in the dangerous condition that it's in today, and maybe, if that's the intent of this government, if they're not going to fix the highways, we better all buckle up or some people are going to get killed. I've never seen the Yellowhead between Minnedosa and Neepawa as bad as it is at

the present time and, of course, we know what happens when NDP Governments come in this province because we've seen it before, Mr. Speaker; the first thing that becomes neglected is the roads. So I ask this Minister of Highways, who is bringing this legislation in, how can he possibly impose mandatory seat belts on this province when, with the other hand, he's cutting back the road system, cutting back the safety that these people in this province are well-known to have enjoyed for all those years.

Mr. Speaker, why is he going against the wishes of the Manitoba Motor Association who have been pleading with him to give them the right to have the vehicles checked, so they can put a sticker on a car and check it out and say that car is safe to go on the road. But, Mr. Speaker, no, the New Democratic Party and this Government have turned the Manitoba Motor Association aside and said, no, we're not going to put government inspection of the vehicles in this province under this; but, nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, they're going to make them buckle up, even though those old wrecks, the wheels missed on them and maybe turned sideways, and they don't have any safety inspection, he says, put them in the cars, buckle up and let them go down the road. Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's fair.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that I would like to know in this legislation is what about the person that unfortunately is caught in an automobile accident and due to the fact that he has a seat belt on is the cause of his death. What's the Minister going to do with those kind of cases? Is the government going to be liable? I'm sure that the members opposite have all received this Norman Valgardson, from Gimli, who cites, I think, five cases of deaths that he is familiar with, of people that lost their life as a result of wearing a seat belt.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Go see in every hospital; go ask any medical doctor, you'll get the facts.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Well I tell the Honourable Minister of Health I'll send him a copy of it or read the story of Mr. Valgardson, from Gimli, who spelled it out loud and clear, Mr. Speaker, of stories of people . . . My deskmate here says "rhetoric". This is not rhetoric; Mr. Valgardson is not one known for rhetoric. The question that I'm asking the Minister and the Government is what is going to happen to the people that lose their life because of a seat belt. Is the government responsible? Can the family come back and claim from this government because of the fact that person lost his life as a result of a seat belt. Are they liable? Is this Minister liable? I'm asking the question; do you have legal advice and legal information that can help support, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, the other thing that I would like to ask the honourable Minister in this matter, the subject matter has come up to me time and time again. Why not let's go all out on a program to bring the control of drinking drivers under control and spend some of the time and effort we're going to spend on seat belt legislation dealing with that problem. Let's get out and get after them and make the fines a lot more severe than they are today, Mr. Speaker, because there are all kinds of complaints. I had another one come across my desk today from constituents who are concerned

because the chief cause of highway accidents are liquor related. I heartily agree with that statement, Mr. Speaker; I think, in most cases, you'll see the fatalities of these serious accidents on the road, liquor is related in those accidents, and I think we have a job and a duty here, as legislators of this province to try and correct that problem, rather than monkeying around with seat belts at this particular time. I would think, Mr. Speaker, that should be a lot higher priority of this government and the Minister of Health than the matter of mandatory seat belt legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the last one that I would like to deal with is the policing of mandatory seat belts. Now I understand that polls have been done in Saskatchewan where only 12 percent of the people wear seat belts - that's along our border, there've been some studies done - whereas in Manitoba — (Interjection) — Well, they let it be argued. In Manitoba, the time that it was polled last, where it's not mandatory in this province, 15 percent of the people were wearing seat belts; in Saskatchewan where it's mandatory, only 12 percent. Mr. Speaker, who is going to pay for the extra police forces that's going to chase these people down in the municipalities in my constituency? Is this Minister, is this Attorney-General? We've got problems galore right now with the cost of police services in our rural areas. Who is going to pay for the extra, say - there'll be what? - one in Roblin for sure; be one in Russell; one in Grandview. There'll be three — (Interjection) — Well, that's a wide-ranging area. — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, are they just putting in for the good of it? I would like to know, Mr. Speaker, and the municipalities in my constituency would like to know, who's going to pay for the extra police cost to chase down these people are not wearing their seat belts. Is this Minister going to help supplement the cost for policing these areas or is it the Attorney-General or is the government, or are they just going to try and ride it out with the force that's in place at the present time?

Mr. Speaker, if they intend to try and chase mandatory seat belt offenders in my constituency with the police force that's there at the present time, they may as well forget it, because the forces that are there are overtaxed at the present time. They can't handle what they've got already. Whereas the Minister of Natural Resources here would tell them where we have these groups now who have formed themselves into their own police forces, Mr. Speaker - I call them vigilantes - who are out policing The Wildlife Act, because this government has cut back on the conservation officers and the RCMP can't chase all these offenders. Now we're going to give them the duty of chasing back offenders for seat belts. So I hope when the Minister responds to my inquiry, he'll tell the committee and tell the municipal people in this province who is going to pay for the extra police costs that will be brought about as a result of this legislation, Mr. Speaker?

Well, Mr. Speaker, that was about all that I had to add. There were the questions about the police force, the new data, the new statistics that the government and the Minister have come up within since they took office that now changes it from a position that we've had before in this House; it's failed over those times. Mr. Speaker, I would like him to give me the statistics of the polls that he's got in Saskatchewan and Manitoba where this matter has been checked out. I'm told by

the poll that was related to me here recently that in Saskatchewan where it's mandatory, only 12 percent of the people wear seat belts, whereas in Manitoba here where there was no mandatory, 15 percent of the people, and that was along the borders of the constituencies I represent and over in the area in Saskatchewan.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, thank you. I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Swan River that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

BILL 54 - THE PAYMENT OF WAGES ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. On the proposed motion of the Honourable Minister of Labour, Bill No. 54, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to see that the fact that I'm speaking on this debate causes so much interest amongst the members of the opposition.

The bill that we're discussing, Bill 54, would do a number of things, Mr. Speaker, a number of things which I think are badly needed in the Province of Manitoba at the present time. First of all, one of the basic changes in the bill would be to elevate the priority given to claims for unpaid wages. At the present time, unpaid wage claims often take the back seat to a number of other claims which I will detail a bit later in my comments. The second provision of the bill, Mr. Speaker, would clarify and strengthen provisions relating to the liability of corporate directors in regard to this matter. These two basic thrusts of the bill hand in hand I think will greatly improve the system we have in place at the present time for payment of wages in cases where the firm is closed because of bankruptcy or other such event, Mr. Speaker.

Now getting into a bit more detail in regard to the first thrust of the bill, that being the priority given to unpaid wage claims, I should point out that at the present time, real property mortgages and perfected purchase money security interest are given a clear priority over wage claims. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, any type of security interest registered prior to a wage claim has priority over that wage claim. What this bill would do would be to change that. It would move that wage claim from third or fourth or fifth priority to the top priority where members of this side feel it belongs. I think that's a very important change, Mr. Speaker. In regard to the amount that would be effected by this, Mr. Speaker, this would be increased from the present \$2,000 per employee to a maximum of \$3,500, which I think is just in keeping with the times.

In regard to the second thrust, Mr. Speaker, what it would accomplish would be to indicate more clearly the liability of directors of corporations in the case where the corporation is bankrupt. It makes clear, Mr. Speaker, that a corporate director must comply with any wage

order. This is not clear at the present time. What is more, the unpaid wages in respect of which a corporate director is liable is also being increased. At the present time, director wage liability is limited to two months wages and 12 months of vacation pay. This limit is being increased to six months and all unpaid vacation wages. There's also another provision, Mr. Speaker, which clarifies the role of receivers and receiver managers in such particular cases.

Those are the basic thrusts of the bill, Mr. Speaker. Those are thrusts which I can certainly lend my support to. It's unfortunate however that members opposite do not appear to support those thrusts, as indicated by the comments by the Member for St. Norbert. In his comments, Mr. Speaker, on April 29 he indicated a number of reasons why he disagrees with Bill 54. If one cuts through the rather defensive rhetoric which the member put forward in terms of trying to justify the previous government's passage of the present Payment of Wages Act, and why they did certain things and why they didn't do certain things, if one cuts through the rather defensive rhetoric, Mr. Speaker, I think it becomes apparent that members opposite have a fundamental disagreement with the concept of giving top priority in the payment of wages to wage earners. They have a fundamental disagreement, Mr. Speaker, with that concept. They would prefer to maintain the present system under which the mortgage interest, the security interest, Mr. Speaker, would be protected. They would prefer, Mr. Speaker, at the bottom line of this issue, to protect the banks before they would protect the wage earners. I think that, Mr. Speaker, is quite in keeping with their philosophy. It's quite an indication of the fundamental difference between their philosophy and our philosophy. They say the bank should come first; we say people should come first.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. Norbert did not stop there. He went on further to somehow suggest that the steps that exist in regard to payment of wages presently are adequate and that, therefore, somehow this change is not needed, that wage earners can protect themselves. That clearly is not the case, Mr. Speaker. That clearly is not the case. I mean, if it were, if wage earners were to have the means now to protect themselves, then obviously the Member for St. Norbert wouldn't have been quite so concerned about the shifting of priorities. Certainly, if they had that priority now, it wouldn't be necessary to change The Payment of Wages Act, but obviously that is not the case, Mr. Speaker.

What the Member for St. Norbert is saying is that there are some means there; some means which are very difficult for wage earners to follow; some means which are only partial and, therefore, I would suggest that his entire argument is really somewhat facetious, Mr. Speaker. He went further, however, and this, I think, was also somewhat typical of the approach of the opposition. He went further to suggest that passage of this Act would have a negative effect on development. That's typical of the kind of scare tactic that members opposite use in regard to virtually any piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, that would benefit employees. It's typical of that kind of approach. The member opposite stated for quite some length of time that he felt that now was not the time to have this, Mr. Speaker. He said it would have a very negative effect on

commercial development in the province. It can have a negative effect on interest rates or tougher terms on borrowers and he said that would affect jobs and cost the people of Manitoba.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the comments of the member opposite in regard to this matter are somewhat difficult to take. If one analyzes any investment decision, Mr. Speaker, one would have to allow for the fact that any one given factor would be discounted. There are obviously a series of factors that one would look at: the risk involved and the potential rate of return. One would discount those in looking at the previous decision in making one's investment, Mr. Speaker. In this particular case, I would suggest that one would not be overly concerned about payment of wages. Surely, if one is to be looking at making an investment, one does not account very highly for the prospect of that investment failing. I think any business study, Mr. Speaker, just talking to any businessman, that businessman would indicate that would be the case; that they are concerned about the positive aspects, not the negative aspects. So for the Member for St. Norbert to suggest that this Act, this change to The Payment of Wages Act would somehow have a very major impact on development or any particular investment decision would be incorrect. I will demonstrate that further when I continue my remarks the next time, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time being 4:30, when this bill is next before the House, the honourable member will have 32 minutes remaining.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

RES. NO. 4 - RE PORT OF CHURCHILL

MR. SPEAKER: Private Members' Hour, the first item on the agenda is Private Members' Resolutions. Resolution No. 4 - the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources has seven minutes remaining.

Since it appears the Honourable Minister will not be speaking on the bill, are you ready for the question? The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I gather we're on Resolution 4. I thought we were going to be dealing with Resolution 1.

Mr. Speaker, in rising to debate Resolution 4, I want to commend the Member for Thompson for his thorough research and knowledge with respect to this question, with respect to the future of the Port of Churchill in particular. Mr. Speaker, obviously, members in northern Manitoba are much more acquainted with the issue because it's been an issue for many many decades. In fact, I guess it goes back probably the time limit of a lifetime of an individual. That particular area of Canada was looked upon many years ago as an area of national defence interest more than any other interest, but along the way, of course, we did develop a capacity for other activities and it's with a major degree of concern that we see that we don't fully utilize all of our options in the Port of Churchill.

I want to make reference, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that during the '70s the Government of Canada, along

with the Government of Manitoba, committed many millions of dollars towards the rebuilding of the townsite. Many millions of dollars, and, Mr. Speaker, that in my opinion had to be an irresponsible decision in light of the decisions that were made after that commitment; because after those millions of dollars were committed, the Government of Canada was pulling out its resources, its Armed Forces personnel and many of its government facilities from that particular region or that particular area and was, in fact, affecting a major depopulation of the Town of Churchill.

I believe that when that townsite was planned, we were looking at a population of 5,000 people. Indeed, if anyone has ever been there, one would be impressed with the facility that was built for the servicing of 5,000 people; in particular, the huge complex which involves the hospital, the school and the shopping mall and all the recreation facilities. A marvelous structure; something that any community in southern Manitoba would be most jealous of, Mr. Speaker, but one that was quite appropriate for that northern environment, for that size of community, given that there would be that kind of maintenance and perhaps growth of that community.

But, Mr. Speaker, that has not taken place. We have spent all of that money, built a facility that is vastly underutilized because of a population now that is hovering somewhere in the order of 1,200 or 1,300. Therefore, lies our dilemma with respect to the viability of the community. Mr. Speaker, one of the interesting things that was revealed to us by the CNR, by the representative of the CNR who appeared before the Standing Committee on Agriculture not too long ago.

Some members will recall his response to questions that were asked with respect to what the CNR plans to do with the Churchill line as far as any upgrading is concerned, its future, and why it was that there is no commitment with the new Crow proposal to include something for the Churchill line. The CNR representative at that time made it very clear that as far as the railway is concerned, they have no plans to maintain existing shipments of grain beyond 1986-87. He didn't put it in those words. He simply said that they were not replacing their boxcar fleet and that by 1986-87, they would not be able to maintain present shipments. I may be out a margin, Mr. Speaker, because I speak from memory, but generally that was the thrust of his comment; that the CNR was not planning for continued grain shipments through the rail line to Churchill. In pursuing that with him, Mr. Speaker, he did say that if there is going to be continuity beyond that period, it will have to be on the initiative of the Government of Canada.

So where is the initiative of the Government of Canada, Mr. Speaker? We have a new transportation package tied to the Crow issue that talks about massive government subsidies, massive injections of capital. It would be raised by fairly substantive increases of freight charges on the shippers of grain; an effort which would result in major upgrading of railway facilities in Western Canada, but nowhere do you see any reference to upgrading the rail line to Churchill. So, if the CNR isn't planning to maintain service for movement of grain to the Port of Churchill and if the Government of Canada is not indicating any intention, then one has only to draw the conclusion that things are going to be further demised at the Port of Churchill in the very near future.

That is a matter that does indeed concern the Government of Manitoba and which has resulted in a submission that was put forward to the Government of Canada; a submission requesting that we take a new look and a new approach at Churchill, determine its future and look at upgrading the rail line; look at putting in a power line to service the electrical needs of the community and look at both provincial and national commitments for the Town of Churchill with respect to government initiative; delivery of services through government and Churchill to be looked upon as a major centre in that region. We believe that ought to be looked at anew, and that proposal, of course, has been submitted. We are waiting with a great deal of anxiety and interest as to what the Government of Canada is going to do by way of response. We know that if we are going to commit any new provincial dollars, whether it's the hydro line or other facilities in the Town of Churchill, then we will want some commitment from the national government as to its role.

I think it would be foolish to talk in terms of committing provincial funds, for example, by way of a power line to Churchill unless we had faith that Churchill is going to be there. We don't want to build a power line to a ghost town. That is the concern that has been uppermost in the minds of our northern members, and I'm sure in the minds of members opposite. I don't believe that there is a difference of viewpoint on that issue. I believe it's quite telling, Mr. Speaker, that there's total absence of mention of Churchill in the Crow debate as far as the Government of Canada is concerned. I believe that is quite telling and it is a concern to us, because if that is the extent of the thinking that is taking place in the Government of Canada, then we indeed have to reappraise Manitoba's position.

Perhaps this is the time, Mr. Speaker, to push and promote, given the fact that we are living at a time of economic activity which requires a fair amount of stimulation for job creation. In order to build for the future, it seems this would be the opportune moment to commit governments toward major infrastructure improvement and toward the longevity of the community of Churchill.

I would hope that members opposite are prepared to, in principle, endorse that resolution because I think it requires some unanimity of support in order to convey that kind of message to our federal counterparts. I don't believe anyone here truly believes that this issue can be dealt with on a provincial level alone. I believe that is an impossible costly task for the taxpayers of the Province of Manitoba to undertake.

We need improvements to the port, we need improvements to the railway, and if those are to be put in place based on commitments, we need perhaps a hydro line to be built in order to provide the electrical service to that community. So, Mr. Speaker, it is indeed my pleasure to support the initiatives of the members that have already spoken on this resolution and, indeed, the Member for Thompson who made a major address in this House on this issue.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened with interest to remarks by the Minister of Highways

and Transportation. I am pleased, too, to be able to support this resolution brought in by the Member for Thompson. The remarks by the Minister just now I think are very valid. As the former Minister of Northern Affairs, I had an opportunity to visit the Churchill community on a number of occasions.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to commend my colleague, the Member for Arthur, the former Minister of Agriculture, who spoke on this resolution and, as Minister of Agriculture, always promoted the Port of Churchill every opportunity that he had; as a matter of fact, hosted the meeting of various provincial Ministers and federal Ministers to participate in a seminar and visit to Churchill to try and encourage and promote the further use and further expansion of the Port of Churchill. Now the Minister of Highways had indicated that the Province of Manitoba may have shown some irresponsibility in going ahead with the town centre there, in co-operation with the Federal Government, then to have the people withdrawn from that community. I think that the Federal Government is to be condemned for the actions in, I think, agreeing to lead the province into this kind of expenditure with the town centre and, before that project was even completed, the people were already moving out of the Churchill community, with reference to the people involved in the military and, I believe, some other federal people, as well, were moved out of that community. The population quickly dwindled from - I believe they had a population, at one time, close to 7,000 people - and, as the Minister indicated, that the town centre was built with a long-term population range of about 5,000 people. Today we see the population probably closer to 1,000 people.

The fact is that the CNR has not undertaken to upgrade the railway so that full use could be made of the shipping facilities. The hydro line has not been possible to be installed in Churchill at the present time, although we know that this has been looked at for a number of years in co-operation with the Federal Government to participate in the cost of introducing that transportation line to Churchill. Well the fact that we have the town centre there and, for anyone that hasn't visited Churchill, certainly they have a treat in store to go to the community and look at the community of Churchill, and to see the town centre and the facilities that that provides to the residents and tourists alike. It certainly is a grand facility for that community; it's unfortunate that things have not developed as was expected to have developed so that full use could be made, not only of the port facilities, but the whole community.

The fact, too, just to relate back a few years, the Hudson Bay Route Association I think are to be commended for the untiring efforts that they have undertaken to promote the use of the Port of Churchill. They have never given up on the fight to see that more use would be made of that port. I think that they have provided very good background research to support the furtherance of that port; but, as has been pointed out, the shipping has been cut back because the railway hasn't held up their end of the bargain. Certainly the Federal Government has pulled out other people from that community which would have helped to sustain it. The Minister of Highways and Transportation is right in saying that it's very difficult to undertake the

expenditure of some \$25 million - \$30 million to put the hydro line into the community of Churchill when it's uncertain as to the future of that community and the use of the shipping season.

Now the tourist industry has been promoted and I think that there is a great potential for tourism to the Port of Churchill. Certainly with the town centre that has been established there, and the fact that, I believe, it's over \$1 million now for the maintenance of that facility, and, of course, as I understand the deal with the town centre was that the Federal Government would put in \$5 million a year for some three years, or a total of \$15 million and, after that commitment was reached, and it was reached a few years back, then the province and the community of Churchill would be stuck with the maintenance costs of that town centre. We know that the maintenance costs have been escalating very dramatically the last number of years, and the present total cost of maintenance to the town centre alone is somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$1 million. So the hydro line is urgently required to supply more reasonable energy costs to the community; but to undertake an expenditure of some \$25 million - \$30 million, not knowing what the future is going to be, then this would be irresponsible, too, I guess to put it mildly.

I believe that we have to support this resolution and I think we have to make it known to the Federal Government that they have a responsibility to develop further the use of the Port of Churchill, which certainly is important to the economy of the Province of Manitoba through the shipping and through the tourist business. So I'm very pleased to put these few comments on the record and to support this resolution.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to add my support to this resolution as well, Mr. Speaker. I want to, first of all, congratulate my colleague for bringing this forward and to join with the government policy that is quite clear, with regard to the Port of Churchill and the importance that it is for the future of Manitoba, and particularly for Northern Manitoba. I think that there has been a lot of support in the House for the resolution, however, sometimes I wonder, because of some of the actions that have taken place over the years, whether indeed that support, at least at the federal level, and perhaps even at the provincial level, has always been sincere and a genuine desire at the federal level, particularly, to support the Port of Churchill.

We have seen, I think, successive governments and official opposition in the federal level, continuing to pay lip service, I would say, to the Port of Churchill, to talk about it, to talk about studies at length. I think one of the things that we could indicate there, Jean-Luc Pepin in 1981 said, in answer to a question from Rod Murphy, who has always been a strong supporter for the Port of Churchill, that the Minister of Transport answered the question and said that "there has been, and there still is going to be, many studies of the Port of Churchill". Some honourable members said, "we can believe that"; and Mr. Pepin said: "Yes, indeed, I'm quite sure the

debate will go on even after the studies. The one which is referred to will obviously make a contribution; in the meantime, the Canadian Government does its very best to help in the maintenance and development of Churchill by a diversity of means, I do not want to spell out."

Then he mentions the 250 tonnes through Churchill this year which is just a minimal amount. When he's asked about the CP Rail interchange to allow grain hauled on CP Rail to be diverted to Churchill he said that is being discussed.

So it seems to me that the Federal Ministers, as well as opposition members, have at the federal level certainly not made a sincere effort to support the Port of Churchill. Then, of course, we have to question the sincerity when you see a comment by the Member for Lisgar, the federal member Jack Murta who, I believe, has forsaken his province when he says that Churchill is a luxury we can't afford. I think that is the one that causes me the greatest concern, because the Federal Conservatives and the Provincial Conservatives have said that they support the Port of Churchill. However, one wonders about that when someone lets the cat out of the bag like Jack Murta and reveals maybe some true feelings on this issue, that really their heart isn't in it and they really aren't sincere about supporting Churchill. When I see statements such as the one made by Jack Murta, I really wonder whether it is just lip service that has been made by the federal opposition, or whether they are indeed willing and ready to undertake some major contributions towards improving the Port of Churchill and ensuring that it does play a major part in the movement of grain and in the economic well-being of this province in the future.

New Democrats, I think, over the years have made a sincere contribution in that regard and they have made attempts. Certainly people like Vic Althouse, Rod Murphy, Laverne Lewycky, Les Benjamin, have spoken out strongly in support of the Port. They have continually pressed the Federal Government for extra support, for greater support for the Port of Churchill but have not really succeeded. I think the Provincial New Democratic Government in place at this time, our government, has indicated clearly that we support, through this resolution and also through something else, and that is the list of projects that we sent to Ottawa where we clearly outlined that this was one of the priorities, one of the desirable projects, to upgrade the Port of Churchill and the line to Churchill for the betterment and the future of Manitoba, because we believe it can play an important role. We highlighted that to the Federal Government and we are prepared to put financial support into that. I think that indication was a sincere indication that we believe in the future of the Port of Churchill; we believe that it can play a major part and that we are prepared to, as the Member for Emerson said, put our money where our mouth is. He suggested that we should do that and I think that we have done that, but certainly that hasn't been the case with former governments, nor has it been the case with the Federal Liberals and the Federal Conservatives.

During the recent hearings, and this has been referred to by my honourable colleague, the Minister of Highways and Transportation, with regard to the Crow hearings, we certainly found that there was widespread support for the Port of Churchill. People called on the Provincial Government to represent the province strongly in that

regard, because they believed that the Port of Churchill should be playing a major role in the future of grain transportation in this country. However, the Gilson Report and the organizations that worked with Gilson in preparing his report, did not forcibly put forward the position that Churchill should be a part of any improvements and any upgrading of the transportation system in Western Canada, in Canada as a whole. That is a major oversight, I believe, by the agricultural organizations who did not do it.

However, the opposition here fails to support an organization that does, Mr. Speaker, forcibly put forward the point that Churchill has to play a part, and that is the National Farmers Union who has consistently put forward that stand, that the Port of Churchill must play a part. I find that regrettable. I know that that came out very clearly in our hearings during the month of April with regard to the Crow changes. I find it regrettable, as well, that the Manitoba Farm Bureau has not taken a strong stand in support of the Port of Churchill and certainly their stand generally, on the changes to the Crow is supported by the opposition and they do not support, at least visibly, the Port of Churchill and I have to wonder about that tie-in, Mr. Speaker, and wonder whether the opposition is really prepared to take a strong stand with regard to the Port of Churchill.

I think the opposition, when in government, said that they took a strong stand for Churchill. I know that the Honourable Member for Arthur, when he was the Minister of Agriculture, did call a conference, a seminar, and it was held in Dauphin. However, that was just before the last provincial election and he was quite aware that the area of Swan River, Dauphin, did indeed ship a lot of their grain through the Port of Churchill, so he did call that meeting there. However, it wasn't open to the public nor was it open to myself, as a member of the Dauphin Town Council who was concerned about the Port of Churchill at that time. It was open to media though and so I wonder, again, whether he was making an all-out effort and really had his heart in it when he was saying there that the Port of Churchill should be used to a greater degree.

I would ask the members opposite to take a close look at the stand that they've taken over the years. They have given, as I said, verbal support to this resolution. However, I think they should take a look, seriously, at the stand their party has taken. I think they could make a tremendous difference, whether they're in government federally, or whether they're in opposition, they could have a tremendous impact if they would join as strongly with the federal New Democrats to push forward with changes to force the Federal Government to make that a priority and to not continue - as Jean-Luc Pepin says in his statements - to study and study this issue but to put some action into making the Port of Churchill a viable Port and a significant Port for Manitoba and for Canada.

I would ask the opposition there to put their hearts into their efforts and indeed to give this strong support and to urge their federal colleagues to urge the members who are involved in the leadership race at this particular time to speak up on this particular issue, because it is very important to the future of Manitoba and we need that support. I believe they're in a position where they can do something in that regard and should

be putting forward a stronger position if they really believe, Mr. Speaker, if they believe in the Port of Churchill and that it can play a part.

I thank you, Mr. Speaker, for this opportunity. I want to commend this resolution to the House and also, again, congratulate my colleague for having the foresight and the thought to put forward a meaningful resolution such as this, a resolution that can have a tremendous impact on our province in Manitoba, and particularly in Northern Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Thompson will be closing debate.

MR. S. ASHTON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In listening to the debate on this particular resolution, I must say that I am pleased to see that members opposite have joined with members on this side of the House to indicate support, not only for the resolution itself, but the broader concept of expanding the use of the Port of Churchill and making the kind of commitment to the Port which is required for that expansion in terms of use.

In saying this however, Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am somewhat disappointed that members opposite, or at least some members opposite, couldn't get up and speak on this issue without stooping to taking a few political cheap shots. I've noticed in this House that many members on the opposite side seem to have one speech which they repeat on various different resolutions and various different bills. They change a few words here or there, and throw in a few additional phrases perhaps but it's usually the same sort of political rhetoric, and I was a bit disappointed that on an issue which did seem to have the prospect of obtaining unanimous support, that they would trot out the same old political rhetoric, the same old tired speeches. But I suppose that's somewhat predictable, Mr. Speaker.

There wasn't much really I think that deserves any particular comment in terms of some of the rhetoric that members opposite use in regards to debate on this resolution. There is however one comment I would like to respond to and that was the argument put forward by the Member for Emerson when he spoke on this particular resolution, that somehow the province should stop talking about this particular issue and basically he said that we should put our money where our mouth is. Well, Mr. Speaker, I found that somewhat strange at the time and I find it even stranger today in reviewing the debate on this particular resolution.

On the one hand the Member for Emerson is supposedly chastising us for not doing anything in regard to the Port of Churchill. Well, I'd remind him that this government included renovations to the rail line and renovations to the Port as part of the "wish list" through the Federal Government. We indicated that we would be willing to put money into development of the rail line and the Port. I would remind the Member for Emerson that not only did we say this, Mr. Speaker, but his own party as evidenced by the statements of the Leader of the Opposition criticized us for doing so.

They said there is no reason for the province to be spending money on the Port of Churchill or the rail lines, that is a federal responsibility and if the Member

for Emerson doubts that, he should talk to the Leader of the Opposition. He should check Hansard.

I don't know in looking at that, Mr. Speaker, where this comment from the Member for Emerson came from. Perhaps it's an indication that there is dissent within members opposite in regard to this issue. I don't know. Perhaps some of them do feel that we should be putting some money into the Port of Churchill and the rail line. I certainly hope so.

I suspect, however, that it was once again the sort of problem you get when you trot out the same old rhetoric time and time again on one resolution and another. I would suggest to members in the future, particularly the Member for Emerson, that instead of trotting out that same rhetoric he might do a little bit of research first of all with regard to the issue itself, and second of all with regard to the position taken by his party here in Manitoba, with regard to that issue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I raised this resolution initially I indicated that I felt at that time - and I raised it on the 16th of March - that the Port of Churchill was reaching a critical stage in its development. At that point in time I decided not only some of the specific issues related to the Port of Churchill but also the pressing question at the time, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the resolution of the proposed changes to the Crow rate.

I indicated some concerns at that time, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the fact that the Port of Churchill was not included in any of the literature surrounding the change to the Crow rate. It certainly wasn't included in that infamous brochure that was distributed from coast to coast in regard to the Crow rate by the Federal Government. Neither was it mentioned in terms of any of the discussion in regard to upgrading the western rail system and I indicated concern at that time about that, Mr. Speaker.

I also indicated concern about the fact that there was some uncertainty as to the present rate structure and how that would be determined in the future, Mr. Speaker, whether there would be a change from a constant rate structure to a variable rate structure and I indicated some concern at that particular point in time.

Well since that time, Mr. Speaker, since the 16th of March, and the two-and-a-half months that have elapsed, since that time I would say that my original feeling that the Port of Churchill is reaching a critical point has been further evidenced, Mr. Speaker, by the recent comments made by Hazen Argue, the Federal Wheat Board Minister.

He indicated, and I would say that it was a very encouraging indication, that at least someone in Ottawa was thinking of the need to upgrade the rail line to the Port of Churchill and the Port itself. I'm referring, of course, to the statement which was reported in the Press, the fact that Mr. Argue had gone to the Wheat Board Advisory Board and had requested that they consider the idea of having a \$50 million renovation to the rail line and the Port of Churchill.

Mr. Speaker, there was a great deal of concern expressed in Manitoba, certainly there was a concern expressed in this House, about the fact that the Advisory Committee had not been that encouraging in its response. In particular it indicated some difficulty with the idea of guaranteeing a certain flow-through of grain each year through the Port of Churchill.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I said one can read that either way. I tend to read it as being an issue that is not closed yet by any stretch of the imagination. I still feel that the \$50 million idea, I don't know if it was exactly a proposal, but certainly the fact that the idea was made was quite important. I feel that the \$50 million is still a viable prospect and I am hoping, and I feel with the right amount of pressure, that something further will come forward from the Federal Government in regard to this in the next few months.

But the point is obvious, Mr. Speaker, and that is that some people in Ottawa were finally beginning to realize the extent of the commitment that would be required to upgrade the Port of Churchill. Someone has finally realized that it is not going to be a case of small changes to the Port or any administrative changes, Mr. Speaker, that it will require a significant amount of upgrading.

That is something that I made clear when I introduced this resolution for debate, Mr. Speaker. I said that while I had mentioned a number of specific issues of concern, that what I was really calling for, and as I said, Mr. Speaker, we're not asking for one or two things out of 10 or 20, we're asking for a major commitment. I said that it's simply not good enough given the present state of development of the Port of Churchill, to address one of the concerns, or another of the concerns, one has to address the whole series of them.

I mentioned them in debate in introducing this resolution, Mr. Speaker. I won't go into detail in regard to them again but I will mention that a number of particular items of concern in relation to the Port of Churchill are the need to tackle the problem of the fact that the rail line is not equipped to handle hopper cars. The need to look at the possibility of installing cryo anchors to address the problem with permafrost from the Wabowden to Churchill stretch of the rail line. The need to look at alternative ways of insuring ships to the Port of Churchill, particularly looking at ways of insuring ships in the periods which are not presently covered by the insurance schedule. The need for a CN and CP interchange agreement to permit the one-third of farmers in the catchment area for the Churchill Port, to be able to use the Port which they at the present time cannot do. The need to expand the season for the Port of Churchill, Mr. Speaker, to take advantage of the new technologies which would allow that to be accomplished without any major problems in terms of safety.

Those issues I mentioned and discussed at some great detail. I would suggest and reiterate again today, Mr. Speaker, that they have to be handled as a package. We cannot handle one or two and expect to see any improvement of the situation with the Port of Churchill.

We have to look at a major commitment, Mr. Speaker. I feel the \$50 million figure, the \$50 million proposal made by Hazen Argue, was that kind of commitment and, by passing this resolution, I hope we can bring a little more pressure to bear on the Federal Government, Mr. Speaker, in terms of making them continue discussions in regard to this \$50 million proposal. I do not feel that it should rest solely with the Wheat Board Advisory Committee; I feel that the Government of Canada should take a major role in terms of putting this thing together because it certainly is needed.

There's one final comment, Mr. Speaker, that I would like to make before we go to a vote on this particular resolution, and that is, as I said when I introduced it, I feel there's a broader issue at stake here. There's an issue that goes beyond simply moving grain through the Port of Churchill, simply using the potential that port has at the present time, although that is certainly part of it. I feel, Mr. Speaker, that the development of the Port of Churchill is important for the development of the North itself. I believe, if we do develop the port to its capacity, we cannot only ship grain through it, Mr. Speaker, we can also ship other goods and commodities, and that has always been one of the stumbling blocks with development in the North. Mr. Speaker, at the present time, we do not have the transportation capabilities to support a number of industries. We simply cannot ship other goods and commodities out through the Port of Churchill at the present time, and it creates serious problems in terms of economic development in the North.

Now, there's no reason why this cannot be done at some time along the line, Mr. Speaker, if the port is upgraded. In talking to people who are familiar with the history of the port over the last 50 years, they point out that while liquor was perhaps the other major commodity which was shipped at one time in any great bulk, there have been a vast number of things which have been shipped through the port at various times, Mr. Speaker, everything from cars and equipment to the generators which were used, in terms of the Hydro development in the North, or some of the conveyor belts for industrial plants in Saskatchewan. There's a list, Mr. Speaker, that is very extensive.

Now, as I said, none of these were shipped to any great magnitude, Mr. Speaker, but they did show that there is a potential for use of the port for other goods and commodities, other than grain or liquor, which is the other one which was shipped in a fair amount of bulk. The thing is, however, that it requires an upgrading of the port; it requires more traffic to be flowing through; it requires warehousing and facilities of that nature. I view that as the kind of commitment which will only follow the amount of commitment from the Federal Government. If the Federal Government isn't willing to upgrade the rail line, if they're not willing to put in the \$50 million for grain transportation, then we're not going to see these other goods and commodities shipped out of the Port of Churchill.

Now I think it becomes obvious, Mr. Speaker, then in looking at it why it is so important to the future of the North. If we don't have that transportation capability, if we don't have the ability to ship to foreign markets through the Port of Churchill, we've immediately lost a whole series of potential economic activities because we've lost a whole series of potential markets, Mr. Speaker. We've lost, not only areas of strict export where we take a commodity and ship it out, but we've also lost a potential to ship in goods, process it, using our competitive advantages in the North, such as, cheap electricity; such as, ample supplies of water, Mr. Speaker. We've lost that advantage, Mr. Speaker, because we simply don't have the transportation capabilities of trying shipping goods, both shipping them to areas, such as, Churchill or Thompson, and then returning them to their particular market.

So, as I said, Mr. Speaker, it becomes more and more clear, the further one looks at this issue, that

what is at stake here is more than simply the future of the community of Churchill itself. There's more to it than just the future of grain handling through the port; really what is at stake is the future of the North economically. Now perhaps some members of this House don't agree with that, Mr. Speaker; perhaps some members would prefer the North to consist of a series of one-industry towns, a series of outlying communities; would prefer us to live in the present situation where our economic structure approach is that of some Third World countries. You know, really that is the pattern of development we follow. If one looks at it there are a lot of similarities between our development and that of a number of Third World countries. — (Interjection) — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Morris is not impressed by that analysis. I think if he looked at it, and if he talked to a lot of people in the North, he'd find that sometimes we feel like we're the outposts of the South, of Winnipeg and outlying areas, that we're often the economic colony of the South.

Now perhaps he's got no problem with that, Mr. Speaker. I know his constituency is well in the southern part of the province, perhaps he doesn't really have any concern about that, but I think if he talked to people in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, he would find a concern, not only with this isolation, this feeling that we're somehow treated as an outpost of the city, but it goes beyond that; it goes beyond any specific one or two issues; it goes beyond a feeling in the North, which is becoming more and more strong, Mr. Speaker, that we have to look at some changes, some dramatic changes in our economic structure. We have to get away from the system of a one-industry town, Mr. Speaker, with the incumbent booms, the incumbent busts, Mr. Speaker, because that has been the economic situation we faced over the past number of years.

I think if the Member for Morris came to my constituency and talked to people he would find that there's a new interest, Mr. Speaker, in not only the general area of change in the economic structure in the North, but specifically this particular issue.

You know a lot of people used to view the future of the Port of Churchill as maybe having some impact on grain farmers, Mr. Speaker, maybe as having some impact on people who live in the community of Churchill, but they really used to say it doesn't really relate that much to the North. — (Interjection) — Well, the more and more they're looking at it, Mr. Speaker, the more and more they are finding that, yes, indeed, it does relate to the future North. There's a lot of prospect there for communities such as Thompson, or The Pas, or Flin Flon, or the many outlying communities in the North, Mr. Speaker. They're beginning to realize that, if we developed that transportation capability in the North, that we will have, not only the advantage to compete, Mr. Speaker, I think, in some cases, we'll have a definite advantage over some areas.

Perhaps that is why the Member for Morris or others don't like my comments in this particular area, perhaps they are a little concerned about the potential of competition in the North for industries. I know they were very concerned when I raised the idea of locating Alcan in Thompson. I know at that particular time that they had very great objections to that. It seems whenever we, in the North, ask for an industry, that there's something wrong with that, Mr. Speaker, there's

something unnatural about that. Well, I would suggest if we get development of our transportation links through the Port of Churchill on a general improvement of that kind of infrastructure in the North, that you will find that industries will locate in communities such as Thompson; industries such as Alcan, Mr. Speaker, although I'm not certainly researching my views to that particular industry, there are many others. We would have a very definite competitive advantage in the North if we had that, and if there was a recognition, too, that we should have some development in the North to use our resources in the North. I think it's about time we had industries in the North which used our hydro, instead of shipping it 500 miles to the south, and all the jobs to the south, as well, Mr. Speaker.

So, as I said, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I feel this resolution has impact in terms of grain shipments; it has impact to the community of Churchill, but it also

has a broader impact, and it affects the entire future of northern Manitoba in terms of the future development of its economy; and I'm pleased to see that all members of this House support this resolution. I hope that, by passing it today, we will send the Federal Government a clear message, and that is, that we in the Province of Manitoba feel that Churchill is important, that we want that commitment and we want it before it's too late, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to move to the next resolution or to call it 5:30?

The time being 5:30, the House is adjourned and will stand adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow afternoon.