

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
10:00 c'clock, Friday, March 8, 1974

Opening Prayer by Mr. Speaker.

Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions; Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees; Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports. The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Minister of Agriculture) (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Return to Order of the House No. 3 on the motion of the Member for Morris. As well, Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Return to an Order of the House No. 5.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other tabling of -- The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. BEN HANUSCHAK (Minister of Education) (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, before Orders of the Day I should like to make an announcement with respect to increases and grants to school boards under the Foundation Program for the year 1974. The equalization grants which was first introduced by this government in 1973 will again be provided in 1974 and the amount will be increased. Honourable members will remember that the principle applied is that the amount of the equalization grant per pupil is in inverse proportion to the assessment per pupil in the division. For 1974 the formula will be as follows: Where the balanced assessment per pupil exceeds \$10,850 the per pupil grant will be \$6.00, presently it is 3.00, all of the figures that I'll be giving will be double the amounts that were paid last year, Mr. Speaker; where the balanced assessment is from \$9,600 to \$10,849, the per pupil grant will be \$12.00; from \$8,350 to \$9,599 balanced assessment, the per pupil grant would be \$18.00; where the balanced assessment is \$7,100 to \$8,349, the grant would be \$24.00 per pupil; where the assessment is \$5,850 to \$7,099 per pupil, the per pupil grant would be \$30.00; where it is \$4,600 to \$5,849, the per pupil grant would be \$36.00; where it's \$4,599 or less, the per pupil grant would be \$42.00. Thus in 1974, Mr. Speaker, there will be a 100 percent increase per pupil in each category as compared with 1973.

In addition to the equalization grant there will be a 50 percent increase in the block grant under the Foundation Program for the improvement of school libraries. This grant which has been paid at the rate of \$60.00 per authorized teacher will be increased to \$90.00. In order to assist school boards to reduce their interest costs on money borrowed for operational purposes the Finance Board will be authorized to increase its advances of grant from 15 to 20 percent per month for each of 8 months of the year. This will have the effect of increasing the advances of grant by approximately \$20 million during the year.

If I just may explain, Mr. Speaker, at the present time grants are paid in four payments during the spring term, four 15 percent and one 60 percent payment and similarly four 15 percent payments in the fall term, and one - I'm sorry that's 60 - and the balance which is 40 percent - I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, for my arithmetic. Anyway it's four times 15 plus 40, now it would really amount to five times 20 percent.

Also the maximum grant for the establishment of Industrial Arts and Home Economics courses as optional courses in secondary schools will be doubled and will therefore increase from \$1,500 per course to \$3,000 per course.

The Public Schools Finance Board will be informing the school divisions as quickly as possible of the additional amounts of foundation grant which they may expect to receive in 1974 as a result of these changes.

With regard to foundation levies which provide 20 percent of the Foundation Program, I'm advised by the Public Schools Finance Board that it will be possible to maintain and perhaps to slightly reduce the rate of levy on farms and residential property for 1974. Mr. Speaker, the financial assistance provided by the government by way of grants and education property tax reduction will have the effect of providing in excess of 70 percent of the total expenditures of school boards for this year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SIDNEY SPIVAK, Q.C. (Leader of the Opposition) (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, just a short comment to thank the Minister for the statement. I must say, Mr. Speaker, that this must be viewed in the light of the total program which the government offer will offer to the municipalities and towns and cities in Manitoba with respect to the per capita grants to be

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(MR. SPIVAK cont'd) given for municipal costs. But what we really are talking about, Mr. Speaker, is the levy to be applied to the taxpayers in Manitoba for the costs of both the school and municipal administration and while the Minister has presented figures which may give an impression of a significant contribution being given to lower or to maintain tax levels at the present position, the reality is it's the total package that the taxpayer in the province will be paying. And until additional information is given and until we're in a position to know what really will be contained in the budget, until we're in a position to essentially have the information from the municipalities and the cities, it will be impossible for any overview to really be given. But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that I am not optimistic, based on this information that in effect there will be a substantial holding of the line, or reduction or a lack of increase on the general taxpayer in terms of the real estate tax that will be levied on him for both the special levy for educational purposes and for the municipal purposes. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I would think that all this does is indicate that there is going to be a substantial increase in the real estate taxes in Manitoba this year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. I. H. ASPER (Leader of the Liberal Party) (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, I too thank the Minister for his statement and welcome the fact that he's made the announcement at this particular time so that the school boards can begin the budgeting process having some very much clearer idea as to what they will be receiving. I think the principle recognized in the statement that's of considerable merit is that the grant structure clearly takes into account the fiscal capacity of each of these school divisions to finance, and of course that advances the principle of equality of educational opportunity regardless of the financial capacity of the district in which one grows up. But I too express some caution or some concern about the overall impact of these figures and certainly one can't judge the school tax or real property tax position at this stage without applying these figures to actual budgets and assessments and that may be able to be done in a week or two when we get the budget.

I think we have to express some concern too over the use of the words grant based on "authorized teachers" because there are many school divisions who are expressing alarm over the reduction in the number of authorized teachers that they are being permitted to have because of decreased enrolments.

I would commend the Minister for adopting what appears to be the view of the Auditor General in his report as to the timing of these grant payments. You recall the Auditor General said that the practice of the past had cost the taxpayers of Manitoba in '73 approximately a quarter of a million dollars, \$250,000 because of double interest charges. But I hope that the Minister is taking the Provincial Auditor's report very seriously in this regard and will see that that quarter million dollar loss is eliminated by the timing of these payments.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I have to express the disappointment of the Liberal Party in that the foundation program is only going this year in spite of the increased grants, to maintain where we bid, which is a position which is unacceptable to the Liberal Party mainly that the foundation program has not reached 80 percent of true cost, rather something over 70 percent as the report says. And Mr. Speaker, I commend the Minister for making this much of an advance, but the net result will still be two things, (1) there will be too heavy an onus of property tax for education financing; and (2) virtually no progress has been made or is projected to reduce the overall property taxation. And as a result, Mr. Speaker, the average property tax in Manitoba in 1974 will still be higher than '73.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

HONOURABLE SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C. (Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management) (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to announce meetings of committees: on Tuesday, the meeting of Public Utilities Committee to consider the report of Manitoba Hydro; on Thursday, continuance of Public Accounts Committee. --(Interjection)-- Tuesday, Public Utilities Committee for consideration of Manitoba Hydro, and on Thursday, Public Accounts Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial statements? Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills; Questions. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. I wonder if he could indicate how many authorized signatures are on the cheques drawn on the Consolidated Fund?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HONOURABLE SAUL CHERNIACK, Q.C. (Minister of Finance) (St. John's): Mr. Speaker, I'll of course take that as notice. I know my name never appears on there. I know that my Deputy Minister and another member of the staff - but I'll take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: I wonder, by way of another question of the Minister, I wonder if he can indicate whose signatures are authorized for cheques on the PEP program:

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'll take it as notice so that I don't speculate.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Co-operative Development. Can the Minister indicate whether his Department of Co-operative Development - the Minister has a trust fund for the PEP programs?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take that as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister can indicate if he's going to take it as notice, whether it's the practice of his department to forward trust cheques written in blank.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, obviously I'm not aware of what the member is talking about. I'll have to check that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Could the Minister for Co-operative Affairs indicate to the House when he will file, or if he will file statements audited financial statements for the Ilford, South Indian Lake, Kee Noe Zae, Manistikwan Co-ops, when they will be filed in this House?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that that is a procedure that is common practice, because we are dealing with private companies - file the affairs of a private company - I'm not sure, but I'll have to check, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, my question then would - let me rephrase the same question - is it the practice of his department to require financial statements to be given to the Department of Co-operative Services in respect of those co-operatives which are the recipients of government financing or grants?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: It probably is, Mr. Speaker. I think the Honourable Member should appreciate that I did undertake to get all of the information that members opposite have asked in the last few days, so during the course of my estimates there will be opportunity to peruse all of the programs of the department.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin. The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Well, my question is, does the Government of Manitoba through the Department of Co-operative Services of the Manitoba Agricultural Credit have a loan or grant or bank guarantee to the South Indian Lake Co-operative in the amount of approximately 800 to \$850,000.00?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Yes, we have a bank guarantee. I don't know the amount. I believe it's a guarantee to the credit society.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Well, Mr. Speaker, then in view of the fact that that co-operative has gone broke or has ceased operations, will the Minister table the financial statement?

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MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware that that company is not operating.

A MEMBER: If it went broke, you can have their financial statement . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wolseley.

MR. ASPER: To the same Minister. Has the Minister been informed that the South Indian Lake Co-operative advised the Fresh Water Fish Marketing Corporation that it is ceasing to be the agent for the fishermen for the sale of fish to the Fresh Water Marketing Corporation. . .

MR. USKIW: That's quite possible.

MR. ASPER: . . . that has gone out of business.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, that has no connection with whether or not I have an obligation to table their documents here. If they have gone broke I'm sure the courts have a copy of any documents in that respect.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Co-operatives, and it relates to the answers given. Is it not a fact and can he not confirm that his department audits the Southern Indian Lake Co-operative, the Ilford Co-operative, that that audit is undertaken by his department?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I took those questions as notice the other day and I've indicated, Mr. Speaker, that during the course of the estimates members opposite will have an opportunity to fully debate the Department of Co-operatives. --(Interjection)--

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader state his point of order.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, the point of order, Mr. Speaker, is the question that was originally asked by the Leader of the Liberal Party, was that the statements be filed in this House. And the Honourable Minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Member state his Point of Order.

MR. SPIVAK: Well, the Honourable Minister is indicating that he's going to answer questions that were asked yesterday, and that's fine. But that has nothing to do with whether he's going to be prepared . . .

MR. SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Well, I ask the Minister, is he going to be prepared to file the financial statements audited by his Department of the Co-operatives, which are supervised or in his terms assisted by his department?

MR. SPEAKER: The question has already been asked. The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY McKENZIE (Roblin): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs. I wonder, Mr. Speaker, did the Minister's Community Development officers bring to his attention the financial, administrative problems of the fishing co-ops in Northern Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HONOURABLE RON McBRYDE (Minister of Northern Affairs) (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, the various sections of the Department of Northern Affairs attempt to assist people in communities with their economic development and in some cases work in close co-operation with the Department of Co-operative Development to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I can hardly respond to the answer. But Mr. Speaker, can I ask the Minister, would he undertake to advise the members of this House whether his officials were aware of these problems?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, obviously this lies within the ambit of the Department of Co-operative Development.

MR. McKENZIE: One final question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder could the Honourable Minister advise the House, did the Minister's Community Development officers bring to his attention the wasted material, the excessive building costs of these fishing co-ops?

MR. McBRYDE: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

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MR. DAVID BLAKE (Minnedosa): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. It relates to McKenzie Seeds. I wonder if he could tell us how much seed was in the building at the time of the fire and how much of this was packaged and sold in Alberta and British Columbia?

MR. SPEAKER: Order for Return. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Co-operative Development. I wonder if he can indicate how many cases have been brought to the Minister's attention of fish shipments deteriorating, delivered from the Fish Co-operatives prior to the actual delivery of the Fresh Water Fish Marketing Corporation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that I can recollect any such event.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if -- another question to the Minister, whether he can indicate whether his department has estimated the loss to the fishermen because of spoiled fish caused by late delivery?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, in the assistance that is given to the northern fisheries, I presume that the Department may have perused all of the operations and may be fully aware of the questions or answers to them. But I am not in a position to know without having given notice, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Co-operative Development. Does he know anything about the department that he's running?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I'm sure the Honourable Leader of the Opposition is aware that that question is totally out of order. It's also uncourteous. I thought we were going to operate on courtesy in this House. The Honourable First Minister.

A MEMBER: He doesn't know the meaning of the word.

HON. EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): A point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, a question like that should not be allowed particularly from an individual who was a member of a government which when they were in office didn't even know where these communities existed. There were no co-ops so they had no problems. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage -- Order please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition state his point of -- Quiet! The Honourable Leader of the Opposition state his matter of privilege.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. On the point of privilege, the remarks of the Premier can be debated and will be debated in this House but the fact is, Mr. Speaker, in approximately 40 questions given to the Minister he has indicated that he knows nothing about his department.

MR. SPEAKER: That is not a matter of privilege. Order . . .

A MEMBER: . . . a man who never set foot in his life in those communities, now he knows where they are.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to rise on the same point of privilege. I would like to recall to the honourable member that when he was Minister of Industry and Commerce he took the position, Mr. Speaker, that he should be required to know nothing about what moneys were being advanced to the Manitoba Development Corporation and what they are doing with it. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order -- on a point of order, Sir. The question . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Member for Morris state his point of order.

MR. JORGENSEN: Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Let me indicate that all of the comments that have been made have not been points of order, they've been expressions of opinion. If the Honourable Member for Morris . . .

MR. JORGENSEN: That, Sir, is my point of order. The question that was posed by the Leader of the Opposition was ruled out of order, Sir, and the matter should have ended there. There should have been no comment on the other side of the House.

A MEMBER: That's right.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

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MR. GORDON E. JOHNSTON (Portage la Prairie): Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister responsible for the Co-operative Services Department. Is Mr. Victor Hryshko and Mr. W.M. Kalinowski with the department?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Kalinowski, Mr. Speaker, has taken leave to serve in Peru for two years while the other gentleman I believe he is with the department, at least I have not been aware of any change recently.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: With respect to the two aforementioned gentlemen, are there any charges pending or laid against either one?

MR. USKIW: No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, has he been able to ascertain whether or not the books and financial records of the South Indian Lake Co-op have been destroyed or misplaced and are unable to be audited?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I would think that members opposite would give us the courtesy of notice of questions which require a great deal of research. Obviously, Mr. Speaker, members opposite know that these kinds of questions cannot be nor should they be answered without a great deal of research because we might be put in a position of being charged for naming people for wrong-doing, which may not be the case at all, Mr. Speaker.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, I won't answer or I won't rise on a point of order at this point but I would try another question to the same Minister in order to illicit some information. In view of the fact that the officials of the department took powers of attorney and operated the co-ops in question, are we in a position where the department that's spent the money and mismanaged it is auditing itself or are we going to have independent audits?

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, again I think the kind of questions that the honourable members are putting do require some research; I don't think it would be advisable to give an answer without knowing fully, without knowing fully the total question.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. STEVE PATRICK (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I also have a question for the Minister of Co-operative Development. Can the Minister indicate to the House if the co-ops at Ilford, Kee Noe Zae and God's Lake Co-op, are they in operation or have they ceased operations?

MR. USKIW: Well, again, Mr. Speaker, I want to draw to the attention of the members opposite that the Department of Co-operatives does not have the same responsibility with respect to every co-operative in Northern Manitoba. For example, Kee Noe Zae has been run by the Department of Indian Affairs in co-operation of course with provincial people through the Department of Co-operatives but basically the Indian Affairs Department has been running that co-op in the last year. So members opposite should not try to get questions from me on co-operatives who are privately run organizations over which I have very limited access or control or liaison, or even with co-operatives that we do not relate to at all.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can he give us some information or indication to the House for the co-ops that he's responsible for of the three that I mentioned, the amount of money that the government has loaned to these co-ops?

MR. USKIW: I think, Mr. Speaker, that would be such an extensive list that it should require an Order for Return.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister as President of the Executive Council. I wonder if he can indicate whether he has undertaken at any time an investigation of the Department of Co-operative Development?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I readily admit that the operation of some of the co-operatives in Northern Manitoba in the frontier and resource region of the province, that many of them are difficult operations. However, we approach this with the view in mind that it is important for social as well as economic reasons and as an alternative to dependency on welfare that we make every effort, that we bend over backwards even at the cost of additional funding if necessary to attempt to make these operations viable in the long run.

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(MR. SCHREYER cont'd) And we would readily agree to an investigation of a kind that would be of some help to my honourable friend in him understanding exactly what co-operatives are, the true nature of the relationship between the Crown and community-run co-operatives. It would be an edifying experience for him.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the First Minister's present accounts can indicate whether his investigation indicated waste, inefficiency and loss of public money?

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, the definition as to what is inefficiency is something that is very subjective. I have already indicated that in attempting to help get launched in frontier and resource communities, operations of this kind, that there is as much emphasis on training and counselling, on social as well as economic considerations. But I believe that my colleague the Minister of Finance has indicated that the Estimates of the Department of Co-operative Affairs will be Estimates brought forward in a new format pursuant to an undertaking given in this House some time ago that we would be bringing some departments forward with new format of Estimates and more detail, and my honourable friend will have an opportunity then to pose any number of questions.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, to the First Minister as President of the Executive Council, I wonder if he can indicate whether his investigation did determine waste and misuse of public funds?

MR. SPEAKER: The question has been repeated.

MR. SPIVAK: Well, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: I have already indicated that what constitutes waste or inefficiency is a subjective matter particularly when relating to communities in which for the first time in history there is an effort being made to have local community controlled operations in terms of harvesting of resources. If we approach this only in terms of efficiency in an economic sense and ignore the social dimension then of course we probably wouldn't want to get involved at all. It would be easier not to get involved at all which is what my honourable friends did in most cases.

SOME MEMBERS: Hear, hear. (Applause)

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, my question's to the First Minister, in view of his just completed statement; would he concur that it is waste and mismanagement when a facility that is worth \$600,000 at maximum and lies gutted and empty, costs the taxpayers of Manitoba \$1.4 million. Is that waste?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know which particular facility he's referring to. If he is referring to the South Indian Lake Co-op I can only advise him that I have seen that facility personally on more than one occasion. If it is gutted and empty now, I don't know what has transpired but certainly last fall it was a facility which the Governments of Canada and Manitoba could have taken some sense of accomplishment in, inasmuch as, for the first time, that community did have some reason to hope that they would have a viable fishing industry because there was modern, up-to-date processing capability in that new building. And both Canada and Manitoba were involved financially in helping to make this possible by way of loan and grant financing to the local community, and that Co-op, Sir, is a local operation. It will have some turbulence still to go through but it is a locally-run operation with assistance from senior government, financial and otherwise.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, to the First Minister. I take it that the First Minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Question please.

MR. ASPER: Well, will the Minister then confirm that after the granting of money, which is based on his completed statement, there is no supervision as to what happens to it and that it is not waste when the money happens to disappear and no value is obtained for it. And, Mr. Speaker, . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable gentleman is totally out of order. He's debating it through the guise of a question. --(Interjection)-- Order please. Does the honourable gentleman wish to rephrase a debate or a question? The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, to the First Minister. Is it his opinion or view that it is

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(MR. ASPER cont'd) waste when a restaurant was built at Leaf Rapids for \$45,000 outside of the fenced compound which was designed to protect that project? If it is waste, how could it happen without supervision?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the financial involvement by the Governments of Canada and Manitoba by way of grant and by way of loan guarantee to a local community co-op, is something which does entail or involve with it a degree of supervision and assistance to the local co-operative. Of course, it is a difficult process because this kind of mechanism, the formation of a local community entity or organization to harvest a resource, is something which can achieve success, hopefully soon, but in most cases it is an evolutionary process which takes some period of time. Of course, the great problem that faces decision-makers is whether to want to avoid difficulty in the short run and therefore not encourage local community operations, or whether to bite the bullet and to anticipate some considerable degree of problems and difficulty but to look for the long-term objective which is local community expertise, local community self-determination in the running of their own affairs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPIVAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The First Minister referred to the fact that he had been present, he had visited, I believe, Southern Indian Lake. I wonder if he can indicate at the time was he concerned with the fact that there was a building called a restaurant which was not used and a conveyor of \$60,000 that was not being used at the time he was there?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I can go into considerable detail but it's not proper to the format of the question period. I can talk about a conveyor belt . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Precisely.

MR. SCHREYER: . . . about someone's suggestion that we buy a hay baler conveyor and use that instead. I've heard, oh, a hundred different suggestions.

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if honourable members would do me the courtesy of once more checking Beauchesne's Citation 171 and assisting me. The last question that was asked indicated something of past history and was argumentative in that it was asking whether that was correct or not. I could name almost every question this morning in the same vein, either argumentative or casting an opinion, being trivial, being rhetorical, offensive, containing epithet, innuendo, satire, and I think that this is not the proper time or the proper way to proceed in the question period. The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Minister responsible for the Department of Co-operatives. Does he have knowledge of a meeting that took place on September 1, 1973, attended by Mr. Maurice A. Gauthier, the Deputy Minister of the department, held in the office of Mr. Peter Moss, in which in the minutes of the meeting there is a charge made and the word used is "fraudulently", the word used is that a certain individual in his department solicited, fraudulently, moneys?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the Honourable Member for Portage would know that if that occurred that there are open avenues for those who have been affected.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Another question to the Minister. What action has he taken on this matter:

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, that has got to be the most ridiculous question to be put. First of all, as I understand the nature of that meeting it was on the invitation of Mr. Moss to discuss with the Co-operative Development Department as to how they would try to restructure the northern fisheries, and these discussions are ongoing. The fact that there was even a minute kept which was circulated for the benefit of my friends opposite or whoever else, is another question, but certainly no one was there charged with anything because that was not a court, it was a meeting by mutual consent, and therefore my friends should not read too much into that kind of a statement which makes certain allegations, which if were true, Mr. Speaker, should be proceeded with in a different manner.

MR. G. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, based on his admissions a moment ago, did he carry out an investigation?

MR. USKIW: I don't know what admissions my honourable friend is alluding to, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPIVAK: Yes. Based on the answers yesterday and my questions directed to the Minister, I wonder if he can indicate whether in his opinion whether he -- no, I'll rephrase it, Mr. Speaker. No, Mr. Speaker, I'll rephrase it; I'll rephrase it. As the Minister did not receive -- this was an answer yesterday -- a report from the Deputy Minister of this meeting, does the Minister believe that the deputy had an obligation to report such a meeting to him?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, we have had many discussions, that is my deputy and I have, with respect to restructuring the northern fisheries and the relationship between the department and the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. That particular meeting is only one event and therefore I don't take special notice of that one particular meeting, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPIVAK: Mr. Speaker, my question's to the Minister of Co-operative Development. Who gave the deputy authority to deal with the sale of the assets of the co-operatives to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, the Deputy of the Department of Co-operatives is not dealing with the question of the sale of any co-operative or private organization.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. I wonder if he could indicate to us whether the four co-ops mentioned, Ilford, Kee Noe Zae, South Indian Lake and God's Lake Co-op, whether they owe substantial funds, each on the average of, say, \$200,000, \$300,000, around the province to suppliers and to the government, and is it the Government of Manitoba's likelihood that they'll have to make good those indebtednesses?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party would presume that I should know about his personal liabilities, Mr. Speaker - that's really the question he's putting, that I somehow should know how the Department of Indian Affairs is operating Kee Noe Zae co-operative, and that I should somehow, Mr. Speaker, know how all of the other co-operatives are relating to their particular creditors. That is not a matter for my daily concern, Mr. Speaker. We do receive our reports through the department to the extent that we have a financial interest in those co-operatives, and the opportunity for debate on that aspect will be before the House very soon.

MR. ASPER: Well, Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister. Because of his responsibility to the co-operative development, does he not inquire on a regular basis personally into the economic welfare and health of the co-operatives that are being supported by his department?

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Leader of the Liberal Party knows the relationship between the department and the various co-operatives either newly formed or co-operatives that have existed for a long time. It is a relationship of assistance in the development of those co-operatives but it does not, it does not require, Mr. Speaker, the department's involvement beyond that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. ARNOLD BROWN (Rhineland): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Development. Will the Minister tell the House when we may expect an announcement regarding a new provincial day-care program?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. SAUL A. MILLER (Minister of Health and Social Development) (Seven Oaks): Soon, Mr. Speaker. And while I'm on my feet I'd like to table Return to an Address for Papers No. 3 and No. 4.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. BROWN: Can the Minister tell the House whether it is a fact that the provincial day-care program will provide no financial assistance to families with a net income in excess of \$5,000.00?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I will not answer a fishing question.

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

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM (Birtle-Russell): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the same Minister, I'd like to ask the Minister if his department is considering giving additional assistance to The Pas Hospital for increased security in the drug section of that hospital?

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MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, that would have to be looked into by the Manitoba Health Services Commission. I'll make inquiries from them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister, responsible for Urban Affairs. Has the government or officials of Urban Affairs Department any discussions recently and further studies with respect to the Inner Perimeter beltway with the city officials or city representatives?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, we have not had discussions in that respect and, just so as to satisfy my honourable friend's curiosity, I would reconfirm to him once again our previously announced policy which was one of non-support for any inner beltway per se.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary. Are there any arrangements with the government and the city still going on in acquiring property for this roadway?

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, the right-of-way acquisition fund, which is in a sense a joint Provincial-City of Winnipeg fund, continues, and that fund I believe will require some amount of replenishment, nothing undue, but it will be replenished and there will be therefore a continuation of acquisition of future rights of way and in effect for broader general public purposes of the city, and all of which merely gives the city that much additional optional response capability in future years if they do proceed to acquire certain amounts of land for the public purpose.

MR. PATRICK: A supplementary. This acquisition that's going on right now, it is not specifically for the purpose of the beltway.

MR. SCHREYER: Exactly.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY (Fort Rouge): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Housing. Is it the intention of the Provincial Government to initiate immediate steps to enter into agreement with the Federal Government in its newly announced program on rural and native housing?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, the letter was received yesterday. It's really too early to say how quickly they or we can move.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question. Can the Minister indicate whether he intends to present to this House this Session, plans for a rural housing program, particularly the enactment of a rural housing agency or rural housing repair program?

MR. MILLER: That's possible, Mr. Speaker.

MR. AXWORTHY: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister undertake to present or table in this House the study report on rural housing that was prepared by MHRC last summer, so that we may have advance information in case he does bring forward that legislation?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to first ascertain what that study is and when it was made and what it's all about, and if the member has a copy perhaps he'll give me one.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the same Minister. Has the Minister any information to suggest that Winnipeg School District No. 1 is contemplating closing all nursery schools within its jurisdiction pending announcement of the government's policy regarding day care?

MR. MILLER: Well, the City of Winnipeg School Division has not informed me of that. I don't know what their plans are; they run their own school system.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, just as a matter of convenience to all, to both sides of the House, I would ask the respective caucuses to take note that next week I would propose to speak to condolence motions relating to the late Samuel Edward Birch, MLA, and the late Ivan Schultz, MLA, and I would ask those two MLAs who represent the greater part or all of the constituencies of these two former members now deceased, to take note so as to be prepared to respond. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. BROWN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister

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(MR. BROWN cont'd) of Health and Social Development. Can the Minister tell this House whether the Department of Health and Social Development is planning to establish a central abortion clinic to be known as the Pregnancy Counselling Service?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I have never heard of that particular organization or association or what have you. The question's been asked before. I answered at that time I'd never heard of it. I've made inquiries; no one seems to have heard of it except members opposite, and if they have information I'd appreciate knowing.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister responsible for communications. Can he indicate to the House whether he or the government plans to submit a brief to the May hearings of the CRTC concerning communications policy in the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

HON. IAN TURNBULL (Minister of Consumer, Corporate and Internal Services) (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I think that the presentation of a brief to the CRTC hearing here on May 14th is a matter of policy and it will be announced in due course.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister, has he had any discussions or negotiations with the cable operators presently operating the City of Winnipeg concerning proposed plans for expansion, development of new satellite centres outside the boundaries of the Province of Manitoba, and particularly the questions of rates and fees related to the use of Manitoba Telephone Services operating lines and rights-of-way.

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, I have had informal discussions with representatives of the cable industry in the province about various matters affecting their business. I am particularly concerned of course, about the recent deferral of the CRTC, of their decision to allow the cable companies to expand the tower facility at Tolstoi, but I have in the last week, or rather since the decision to defer of the CRTC, I have had no discussions with representatives of the cable industry.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Does the government have any present plans or programs concerning the expansion of either cable or video broadcasting beyond the City of Winnipeg related to the new license applications for television stations in the city?

MR. TURNBULL: Mr. Speaker, the question is, does the government have any plans? I think that too, would be a matter of policy, which I can only say I would have to announce in due course.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A.R. (PETE) ADAM (Ste. Rose): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Mines and Resources. I wonder if he could advise if he has received any reports regarding the difficulty that the fishermen were having on South Indian Lake because of the extreme weather conditions this winter?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I can't remember anything of that kind, but I'll take the question as notice and look into it.

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, would you now proceed with the second reading of bills.

GOVERNMENT BILLS - BILL No. 7

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 7. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry, as amended.

MR. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, could I . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister state his point of order.

POINT OF ORDER

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a matter which relates to the written questions. And, Sir, written questions are not called as such by the Chair, so I'm at a loss as to know how to deal with it other than to ask for leave to indicate the nature in which we intend to proceed. I would refer, you, Sir, to Standing Order 48, Rule 5, wherein it states that where a question is of a nature that in the opinion of the Minister of the Crown, the reply

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(MR. SCHREYER cont'd) should be in the form of a Return, and the Minister states that he has no objection to tabling such a Return, his statement shall be deemed an Order of the House to that effect and shall be entered accordingly. And all I wish to indicate to honourable members is that all of the written questions that are of a nature applying to all departments or more than one department, and which request information of a numerical kind, that we will accept those questions and reply by way of a Return to an Order pursuant to Standing Order 48. This is just to clarify so that the questions need not be re-occurring on the Order Paper every week.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris on the same point.

MR. JORGENSEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, yes, I can understand the embarrassment of the government having those questions appear week after week not being answered. But my understanding of a written question is one that can be answered by a single department, an Order for Return is one that requires an answer from two or more departments. The questions that I have posed on the Order paper, Sir, are ones that can be answered as a reply from a single department, and therefore need not be transferred as an Order for Return. But if my honourable friends opposite feel that there are certain questions that may require an answer from two or more departments, that they can if they choose transfer that particular question as an Order for Return and reply to it as an Order for Return.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is a problem here. I am interpreting Rule 48 (5) literally. I concur with the Honourable Member for Morris, that where a question, a written question, is of the kind that relates to only one department and it doesn't require numerical data, then we will respond by way of written answer. But where it is a question which is repeated with respect to all departments, requiring numerical data of considerable detail, then pursuant to Standing Order 48, we will provide the information by way of a Return.

MR. SPEAKER: I wonder if we could have the assistance of the First Minister by indicating which numbers, so that for the purpose of Vote and Proceedings and Orders of the Day we will be aware which ones can be omitted.

MR. SCHREYER: That is correct. That will be forwarded.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, my purpose in posing the questions in the manner in which I have is that we have found by past experience that we do not get replies to Orders for Return. And I was living under the hope that there's at least be one or two Ministers on the opposite side of the House who may indicate some alacrity in replying to questions, and I was attempting to determine which one of those Ministers it would be. What the First Minister is going to do now is spoil my research.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, I was amused to note that the Honourable Member for Morris was not debating a Point of Order or rule but rather expressing a wry opinion as to the dispatch at which questions are answered. We are proposing to coordinate the answers and in that way he has greater reasons to hope that it will be more expeditious.

BILL No. 7 cont'd

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 7. The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, could I have the indulgence of the House in asking that this matter stand?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HONOURABLE RUSSELL PAULLEY (Minister of Labour) (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I don't think we would have too much objection. We have been trying to arrive at conclusions in respect to this bill, but I would respectfully ask that if there's any other member in the House that wants to make a contribution to the motion for the six months' hoist, that they proceed. I would be most interested in hearing other observations. (Stands)

MR. SPEAKER: The floor is open. Bill No. 15. The Honourable Minister of Public Insurance Corporation. --(Interjection)-- Oh, I'm sorry, the Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Stand, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 17. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

BILL NO. 7

MR. GRAHAM: Could I have this matter stand, Mr. Speaker. (Agreed)

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 18. The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Center.

MR. J.R. (BUD) BOYCE (Winnipeg Centre): Could I have this matter stand, Mr. Speaker? (Agreed)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Bill No. 20. The Honourable Member for Virden. The Honourable Attorney-General.

BILL NO. 15

HON. HOWARD PAWLEY (Attorney-General)(Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if we could have leave to revert back to Bill 15 which stands in the name of the Minister of Agriculture, but I believe really pertains to my department.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that agreed? (Agreed) The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Speaker, I simply want to state that I adjourned the debate for my Honourable friend, the Attorney-General.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I intend to make the shortest speech of this session and urge support of the Honourable Members so that this bill can proceed on its way to committee.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Acting House Leader The Minister of Finance.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Labour, that Mr. Speaker should now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

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

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MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 74 (a) pass--The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I listened with interest to the Minister's introduction of his estimates last night in what I think was a rather self-laudatory and superficial estimate and assessment of affairs in his department and his area of responsibility, and I want to say a few things in the next few minutes about some of the shortcomings that I feel are obvious in that sphere.

But I would like to know at the outset, Mr. Chairman, that there were two or three references that the Minister made which are interesting and certainly will be followed with considerable concern by us on this side of the House in the next few weeks in this session. Those are instances or matters pertaining to legislation which the Minister has suggested is on its way. We've heard from the outset of this session, in fact, from the days prior to this session, that there would be important changes coming in during this sitting of the House in the area of Workmen's Compensation. And we look forward to those amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act that the Minister has promised to introduce, Mr. Chairman. This was one specific area to which he referred last night in his opening statement when he said that important legislative changes are going to be introduced and notably they will occur in the area of Workmen's Compensation, having to do with improved benefits, new and improved safety devices and related subjects. So we look forward to that legislation forthcoming with great anticipation, Mr. Chairman. There is certainly areas in the field related to Workmen's Compensation that need up-dating and upgrading and improving, and we're very interested in the innovations that the Minister plans to introduce and we hope they won't be too long in forthcoming for our study here in the Chamber.

The Minister observed on the state of industrial relations in the province and suggested that in terms that may be borrowed from the venacular, that really we never had it so good in Manitoba in the area of industrial relations as we're having it right now under the impact and effect of the new Labour Relations Act passed in this House in the summer of 1972. The Minister suggested that there have been more strikes perhaps in the period since the new Labour Relations Bill was passed and went on to the Statute Books, but he says they've been settled quickly and nobody has been hurt. And he went on to underscore the fact that in his opinion in any event the department, his department had done everything it could to bring these strikes to an end, which is certainly a laudatory function, Mr. Chairman. And I would suggest

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) . . . that members of his department are indeed to be congratulated for the efforts that they have put forward since we last met in maintaining labour and industrial peace in the province and in dealing with strikes as they occur and in doing everything possible to bring such strikes to an end.

But beyond that, Mr. Chairman, I must say that I found the Minister's opening remarks, as I suggested a moment ago, highly superficial. Perhaps they were intended to be only preliminary and during the course of study of his estimates in the next few days, he may go into substantially more detail. It's to be hoped that he'll do so in any event, because we obtained very little from him last night, Sir, other than a self-congratulatory pat on the back as to the fact that Russ Paulley's in his heaven and all's right with the world. And I would think that there . . . (Applause).

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member knows that in this Chamber we do not refer to other members by their names. The Honourable Member for . . .

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'll have to rephrase that to read, the Honourable Minister of Labour in the present administration is in his heaven and all is right with the world.

I would think there would be many working people and many people in the field of industry generally across this province who would disagree very sharply with that opinion, Mr. Chairman, because the past year has seen extreme difficulty in many industrial fields and has prompted a wide series of news reports, both broadcast and printed, related specifically to the unrest that has occurred across the length and breadth of the industrial working spectrum and to many of the anomalies and difficulties that still exist in specific sections of the new Labour Relations Act. I think that it's self-evident that the Act in question has many flaws that have not been approached or attacked or corrected, Mr. Chairman, and if the Minister has any doubts on that score, I would suggest that he remove himself from the ivory tower atmosphere that he operates within, evidently in this area, and devote some time to speaking specifically to the people in industry and in the labour force itself who have to live with some of the anomalies in that bill's provisions. He knows, without my going into length or detail that two of the most troubling effects of the bill as it exists at the present time, have to do with the onus of responsibility in the area of unfair labour practices and with the so-called conscience clause, with the so-called conscience clause having to do with the check-off of union dues. There are many expressions of unhappiness that have found their way into the public prints and in the media generally in the province during the past year on both those counts, and I'm sure the Minister can't be entirely blind or deaf to the entreaties that have been made to the questions that have been raised in those areas. So I think that he assumes, perhaps, too much unto himself when he assumes that the Labour Relations Act as it presently exists on the books, is a pleasant and a copacetic kind of legislation that all within the working force in Manitoba, both from the employee and the employer side of the plant can live with comfortably.

Mr. Speaker, I have assembled over the past little while a fairly extensive collection of newspaper reports on difficulties, strikes, problems existing in the industrial sector in Manitoba at the present time, and I suggest that the truth as portrayed in those reports in the media flies in the face of the Minister's smug apathy with respect to working and industrial conditions generally. I refer to only one, to only one article which symbolizes a great many that have been brought to my attention and that I have collected in recent weeks and months, Mr. Chairman, an article by the Tribune labour reporter, Mr. Patrick Flynn, in the Winnipeg Tribune of Thursday, January 3rd, 1974, which was headed: "Strikes Dominated Labour Scene in 1973." This particular article went on to document the number of strikes and their nature existing in the province - that is of a major dimension - during 1973, and it's not unrepresentative, Sir, of the kind of article both printed and broadcast that has appeared throughout 1973 and in the early part of 1974 related specifically to our industrial sector. So I repeat, Mr. Chairman, the evidence would appear to fly in the face of the Minister's complacency.

Sir, the Minister spoke last night in his opening statements about his faith in the collective bargaining process and his approach to the collective bargaining philosophy, and I wonder whether the question should not be posed at this time, as he addresses himself to that philosophical concept, as to whether he concerns himself with strike alternatives as well as collective bargaining and with preventive mediation, as it's known. There has been little

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(MR. SHERMAN Cont'd) . . . that we've heard to date from the Minister in the area of preventive mediation, and I would be interested in the course of the examination of his estimates in these next few days in hearing from him on that philosophy and that concept, if indeed he subscribes to the possibility of such an exercise as preventive mediation. He's had a long and distinguished career in the labour community and I would hope that when he talks about collective bargaining and his faith and belief in that process that it's not just an abstraction, that it's not just an academic phrase, that he also has some things to say to us in the Legislature and say to Manitobans generally about progress being made in developing an alternative to the strike, which is a necessary discovery if our economy is to survive rationally, in my view and to successes he has achieved, if any, in the quest for proper machinery to permit preventive mediation and thus forestall the strikes before they occur. A newspaper report headed as I mentioned a moment ago, "Strikes Dominated Labour Scene in 1973", hardly suggests that sufficient effort and incentive is being undertaken in the preventive mediation field by this Minister or by this government.

Sir, Manitoba's actual unemployment rate in January of this year was 4.9 percent, I believe, which put it close to the 20,000 figure, and I defy the Minister to continue in the complacent, apathetic pose he took last night in his opening remarks on these estimates, in front of the 17 to 18 to 20 thousand Manitoba workers who are looking for jobs today. How can he suggest to this Legislature, Sir, as he did indirectly, that generally speaking the industrial scene was smooth, that he was settling strikes as they occurred without anyone's getting hurt, when close to 20,000 Manitobans are indeed hurt by the fact that they have no employment opportunities in front of them today. I don't think the two positions square, and on behalf of those who look for those jobs in that unemployment stream today I ask the Minister to reconcile his statement, his superficial opening remarks with that unfortunate state of affairs in the employment picture.

Who is the Minister kidding, Mr. Chairman, when he says that everything is going smoothly, which is to be sure a paraphrase and a personal interpretation on my part of what he said, but that is certainly the impression that I got from his remarks, that everything is really pretty good and that nobody has been hurt by any of the strikes or other labour difficulties that have occurred during the past year. I think he was referring to the whole period since the new Labour Relations Act became law. So he's on his responsibility, Sir, to reconcile that kind of a position and stance of complacency, as I've described it, with the actual conditions existing in the labour field today, and I am sure that all of us in this Chamber and all of those in the unemployment stream will be looking forward to some kind of rational explanation from him in the days immediately ahead in this particular debate.

Sir, there are three or four specific problems, quite apart from the unemployment problem, to which this Minister should be seriously addressing himself at the present time, which I think further, further fly in the face of the kind of self-satisfaction that he displayed in his opening statement. I wonder, Sir, whether the Minister is continuing to fiddle while the garment industry in Manitoba burns. I think that here we have a classic, perhaps, example of a Minister who has lost touch with a situation to the extent that he now believes that, you know, he singly can solve a problem against the best advice of those involved in an afflicted industry. I --(Interjection)-- I read that article in the Free Press. In response to the Minister, Mr. Chairman, I read that article in the Free Press and at the risk of being immodest I would suggest, perhaps incorrectly, but I would suggest that that article was based on questions and statements raised in this House by the Member for Fort Garry in this situation.

Sir, the Minister has suggested that he would like to fill the pressing labour vacancies in the Manitoba garment industry with Manitoba workers, and no one could be more in agreement with that position than I and my colleagues on this side of the House. We agree. We would like to see those jobs vacant and crying for workers in the garment industry filled by Manitobans. But, Sir, the best advice coming from the leaders of the garment industry in Manitoba, from the Fashion Institute and other leaders of the garment industry, is that it is going to be extremely difficult if not impossible to fill those jobs from the Manitoba work force. I would not be prepared to accept that kind of an attitude at face value any more than the Minister obviously is. I would say, well, that's the impression perhaps that the leaders in the garment industry have; they may have a lack of confidence in the current unemployment

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) . . . stream in Manitoba as a source of potential workers for their industry, but I want to give it a try anyway, and I laud the Minister in taking the position initially and originally that he wanted to give it a try.

But, Sir, some substantial time has gone by now since the crisis arose in the industry, and it has been suggested publicly very recently that the 125 garment manufacturers in Manitoba, many of them may have to go outside the province to participate in expansion programs because they can't get the workers here in Manitoba to fill the jobs that need to be done to keep the industry viable. Therefore Sir, we're in a crisis situation from the point of view of labour availability in the industry, and the Minister now has to make the decision and make it very quickly, whether the position that he took several weeks ago which was justifiable several weeks ago, is still justifiable, still acceptable today. And I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that he's gambling not only with the future of the garment industry in Manitoba, but he's gambling with his own integrity and with his own reputation in office and with his own status in the labour community, by taking the position that he has taken, by insisting that the potential work force can be supplied from the Manitoba unemployment stream. I hope it can. I hope he wins that gamble. But I tell him that he is gambling and Manitobans generally and Manitobans in the garment industry in particular are hoping that he's a lucky gambler, because if he loses on this one and he doesn't draw to the inside straight that he's trying for, it's a big pot that is going to be removed from the Manitoba table, removed from the Manitoba table and pulled in by economic players in the game in other parts of Canada. Because the garment industry can't, the garment industry can't afford, in the light of investments made, capital investments made in plant and machinery and in new marketing programs, to go on in the present condition of being approximately 1,000 workers short for very much longer.

So all of us are watching over the Minister's shoulder in this hand, in this poker game, and I repeat, I think there are a great many persons who are hoping that he's a lucky gambler and I think there are a great many persons who would suggest that it's bordering perhaps on the frivolous to be gambling in a situation such as this. I hope the Minister can stand up in a few minutes or a few hours or a day or two and tell me that he's been able to recruit from the unemployment stream in Manitoba 1,000 workers who are going to be quickly trained and then directed into the industry so all our problems are going to be solved, but I'm still waiting to hear that and I will be very anxious to find his response when he takes the floor.

Mr. Chairman, the area of negotiations at the present time between the City of Winnipeg Police Association and the City of Winnipeg itself is another focus point which emphasizes what we have long said on this side of the Chamber, that the Minister and his colleagues have thrown realistic considerations to the winds in favour of doctrinaire approach in their labour and industrial philosophy. It's come home to roost for all of us now, Sir, the kind of doctrinaire approach to labour conditions and working conditions that the Minister and his colleagues have taken since assuming office in this province four years ago, and nowhere has it come home more graphically than in the highly unfortunate situation that has arisen in recent weeks between those two parties, the Winnipeg Police Association and the City of Winnipeg itself. There is reason to hope that the difficulties being experienced in contractual negotiations are going to be resolved successfully and fairly soon, but that's beside the point, Mr. Chairman. That is beside the point.

The point is that there has been a period of hardening of attitudes that has led to a crisis situation for the city and its Police Association and an anxiety situation for the citizens themselves because of this government's and this Minister's rigid determination to ram through a philosophical point of view in their labour legislation and to give the right to strike to a sector of the community that never wanted it, never asked for it, and that never had it in the past. As a consequence of that action embodied in The Labour Relations Act, which we fought strenuously at the time, the Police Association of Winnipeg has been forced, in my view, into a very unfortunate position for which they are not responsible. Since the outset of the difficulties in those contractual negotiations, Sir, the police of Winnipeg under Police Chief Norman Stewart have, in my view, acted most responsibly and have acted most carefully, and I think that it's unfortunate, bordering on tragic, that they should have been put in a position that they have been put in by this government, of looking publicly like militant agitators for particular benefits in working conditions which, if denied them, would motivate them to strike.

That kind of thing is foreign and alien to the police force of this city. They don't want

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(MR. SHERMAN cont'd) . . . to look like that, they aren't like that, they don't want to be like that, but they've been put into that position by this government and this Minister, with the tactics which have been referred to elsewhere, and most correctly in my view, as social tinkering in the area of labour relations and labour legislation generally. That Labour Relations Act which we unfortunately had to see passed two years ago in this House, Sir, contained the opportunity right there for the crisis situation in Winnipeg and for the embarrassment to the Winnipeg Police Association which resulted, and I lay the blame and responsibility for that squarely on the shoulders of this Minister because he piloted that legislation through the House; he no doubt in large part was responsible for the wording and the drafting, certainly for the sense of the legislation, and he took great pride in it; stood in his place in this Chamber many times and crowed about the salutary effects it would have. Well, I wonder whether any citizen of Winnipeg or any member of the Winnipeg Police Force would agree that the effects of the past three, four, five weeks in their contract negotiations have been salutary. They've been embarrassing; they've been difficult; they've been unfortunate, they've been irresponsible and that irresponsibility was this government's, led primarily in this area by this Minister.

So, there again, Sir, is a focus point on which I think many, many people in this province and certainly all of us on this side of the Chamber, certainly all of us in the official opposition take serious exception to the Minister's bland remarks the other night, last night, of how well things are going. His State of the Union address which was intended presumably to congratulate himself on the role that he has filled during the past year and to lull us on this side of the House into believing that as long as the Honourable Minister of Labour is there, then everything is all right in the industrial field. The fact of the matter is, Sir, that the Minister's conduct and grasp of the situation in the past few weeks vis-a-vis both the police contract difficulties and the garment industry difficulties leads one to believe that this Minister has lost his grip entirely; he's a nice fellow but he's lost his grip. He's out of touch with what's going on and he's assuming unto himself the power for solving problems that he demonstrably lacks at the present time; he may come through, but he may have outlived his ability to come through that kind of crisis. So, we'll wait and see, Mr. Speaker, with great interest.

At this point one would have to conclude that in several critical areas in the labour relations field this Minister doesn't know what's going on. For example, the instance that was referred to just the other day by the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie, that was the instance involving one Mr. Gerry Fast and his organizing work for CUPE in the Provincial Civil Service done with the use of some Provincial Government facilities and materials. The Minister claimed at that time that he really knew very little about the situation and didn't know Mr. Fast. Well, I think the Member for Portage la Prairie put the question very well at that point, as to whether or not he had been deceived by Mr. Fast or whether he had been made a fool of by Mr. Fast. The Minister has to take the responsibility for the kinds of activities that are carried on in the industrial labour relations, union organizing field in this province, as long as he's the Minister of Labour. And if he doesn't know what's going on, then Mr. Speaker, not only is the industry in the province in a serious and sorry state, but one must conclude that he is out of touch.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable Member's time has expired. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do wish to make some comments at this time, I was somewhat disappointed in the Minister's introduction of his estimates, I was very disappointed in the Minister's introduction of his estimates. He was not his usual self, he did not show the figure in the stamina that he usually does, because he had some problems, Mr. Chairman, I would have at least expected the Minister to take some time, and I would hope that he will during his estimates, to tell us about the new legislation, how it is or how it has affected the province. Is it working quite well? How has it affected more strikes? And I know that the Minister will tell us that there's been more easier negotiations easier formation of unions, and this is fine.

I believe that all in this House, we are committed to the principle, that the working man can best improve himself and protect his interest through strong democratic unions. And I'm sure that everybody accepts that fact on this side of the House. And we agree with that, but the Minister should surely take the time and tell us how the new legislation is working

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(MR. PATRICK cont'd) . . . out. I know that the Minister has some problems. We have - if you look in his report, the fire losses are quite high, the strikes are higher, but perhaps we cannot contribute that to the legislation. I believe he should explain it to us. I know that he's got a police strike hanging over his head, and I would have thought he would have said something, not about the strike itself, but I believe he should tell the House and the Members on this side about the contingency plan -- the contingency plan that he has if this should happen, because I think this is very important.

And of course, in the area of garment industry that the prior speaker has made reference to, I do hope that the Minister can at least take some initiative and get some studies done and reports to see and to appreciate that an industry that employs 9,000 people in this province is a very important industry. And if it means that we will lose this industry or it'll diminish to a much lesser vitality than it is today, that it may drop down and expansion will take some other place, some other provinces. I think that maybe he should look at this seriously to see if he should undertake a study and to see if he can find employment for this industry in this province, because any industry that employs 9,000 people is certainly of great importance to this province.

But Mr. Speaker, before - I know that the Minister had talked about Workmen's Compensation, that this will be in the forefront, and I will get to that and make some specific recommendations to the Minister which I have done for the past six or seven years; and if anything, I'm disappointed that he's been the Minister for five years now, and I think this is one area that perhaps he should have taken action some time ago instead of waiting this long. But I will dwell with that in a minute, Mr. Speaker. I know he's talked about the new Power Engineers Act. And again, this is an area if you look in the report, and I'm quite happy that we are getting pretty good statistics in the report in respect of more fire losses in this province, and I believe in 1972 and last year it's quite serious. I think that we should have losses what appeared in the prior five or six years and what's happened in the last immediate past couple of years; and I think it's in there that he must review, and I know that's another area that he talked about.

But the point that I'd like to make, I don't think the Minister is getting a fair break from his colleagues in Cabinet because for the second year we're getting a report made up of -- run off on a Gestetner, and I'm sure that the Minister should at least deserve . . . --(Interjection)-- the Minister should at least deserve a - you know, a bound copy, a nice labour report that could be filed and maybe a picture on a report. Usually this is what --(Interjection)-- it looks like he is the low man on the totem pole, Mr. Chairman, because I see every other Minister and even some that are not Ministers any more in this House, they've had - I know the former Minister of Tourism and Recreation still has his picture on the report, and I don't think it's fair to the present Minister, because I know the Minister of Health and Social Services had the other picture taken out and replaced with his. That didn't happen in the case of the Minister for Tourism and Recreation. So I'm sorry to see that the Minister is on the bottom of the list and did not at least spend a few dollars to have a proper report.

But, Mr. Chairman, I also want to wish to make another comment in respect to his department and the staff. I do feel that he's got a very good staff and I would like to compliment the people in his department for the kind of assistance they can offer, and in particular if I have to single any one person - I don't want to do this, but I will, and I think he's most fortunate to have a person in his own office by the name of Art Wright, who perhaps is -- he'd be a very difficult man to replace, because it doesn't matter what information you want and what assistance you want in any area in his department, you usually get response and get response pretty quickly, and in almost all cases a very satisfactory response. And this is great, I think he's most fortunate to have this person in his department.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to get to the content of my remarks and I wish to deal the most, I think which will be the most important - I'd be interested to wait for the legislation, but I would like to make a few remarks in respect to the Workmen's Compensation Act. I know that the Minister probably seen the Votes and Proceedings and the resolutions, that I do wish the Minister will give some consideration to change the name of Workmen's Compensation to Worker's Compensation Act, and Workers' Compensation Board, because today we have - over 40 percent of the labour force are women, and I think it's certainly an injustice to carry on this archaic type of titles called workers - should be workers instead

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(MR. PATRICK cont'd) . . . of workmen. Well, the Minister says - I never knew that he had any inclination or intention to do it, so this is why I put on the Order Paper my resolution. And I hope I have a chance to debate it.

But, Mr. Chairman, the most inglorious injustice, I believe, to compensation is in respect to indemnities, and I think it's unfortunate that people that were injured as far back as in the '20s and '30s have their pension upgraded so very little, \$5.00, \$6.00, and at that time when disability was perhaps \$45.00 or \$46.00, that they still have to live on that kind of compensation. I think it's a great injustice. The second one, I have tried to convince the Minister, with not too much success, that in the area of compensation for widows, when a husband is killed, I think it's just not acceptable to what we have at the present time of \$150.00. I have said to the Minister it should be at least 75 percent of the amount that, if the husband was living and receiving, if he was totally disabled, that should be at least, I would like to say, 100 percent, that the widow should receive what her husband was receiving. If it's not acceptable then I would say it should be at least 75 percent of that amount. And I hope that the Minister will give some consideration to that respect. At the present time, I know that up to 18 each child going to school is getting \$60.00. That's today. In view what happened to the cost of living in the last year or couple of years, that should be upgraded to at least \$90 from the present figure. And this is perhaps something that the Minister can give consideration to. I know that the Federation of Labour as well have made indication. I don't know what figure they stated.

As far as the funeral expenses of \$350, I think should also be increased, Mr. Chairman, to more what the costs are today, instead what it is in the legislation. I know that in respect to Workmen's Compensation, because I have taken such an active part in the discussion in this area for the last several years, and introduced resolutions to that effect, I'm sure that I'm getting as many letters probably as the Minister of Labour in respect to this area. And I can, you know, produce some of the letters to him. So, that's an area that I feel that the Minister will have to really give some serious consideration, Mr. Speaker, and I would hope that the legislation will be tabled soon.

The other point that I would like to make is the ceiling, the ceiling should be perhaps not only increased, but maybe removed. Because the ceiling at the present time, the worker only will get 75 percent of his income. So I don't see the necessity of the ceiling at all that we have at the present time. So that's an area perhaps the Minister should give some consideration. The present \$8,000 ceiling that we have, I think, should be removed, because, you know, the compensation is not based on 100 percent; it's based on 75 percent of the disability.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that with respect, not only to the changes, compensation and pensions, upgrading of pensions that I mentioned, why should anybody receive the same pension with a small increase that was injured many years ago, but perhaps the compensation board should really undergo perhaps some change, to really reflect the needs and the problems of the injured. So I hope that the Minister will really give this serious consideration.

The other point, Mr. Speaker, that I wish to make. I know that he said he will be giving some consideration to the 40-hour work week, and again the Minister did not mention nothing in his remarks. I know the resolution passed, but according to the House Leader it has no significance any more if it passes or not, the government may look at it. But I do feel that it is in the Federal Labour Code and some of the other provinces do have it, and that we're talking about shorter work week than 40-hour work week at the present time. And somehow the Minister, who really says that he's the spokesman, the protector of the working people, of the working man, of the wage earner, and I think that this is something that I'd like to hear from him in his estimates. Is he really prepared? Because from the studies that I have received from jurisdictions that have a shorter work week and even some of them that have gone to four day a week, the results have been good. In fact, the productivity was increased and absenteeism was less than it was on a longer work week. So, I feel what the Minister would do is perhaps really improve the lot. I documented to him, or I had documented when I had the resolution before the House, where I went through some of the reports that was produced by his department a few years ago, where people do work overtime and what it amounts in -- how much loss of income. For instance, I had one automotive maintenance where in a week's time in this group that the workers could have received \$2,600 overtime, which they didn't, for time and

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(MR. PATRICK cont'd) . . . a half, and construction equipment, and so on. So I would like the Minister if he would only look back into his own report that was prepared by his own department, and see just what is happening in that area, I'm sure he would appreciate.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I asked some questions, and questions have been asked by some other people — if there's going to be any change in the minimum wage, and we did have some remarks that there probably will be. Again, the Minister neglected to say anything in that area, and I know that the minimum wage does not answer all our problems, and it never will. But, I know that the minimum wage legislation was generally established for grounds to eliminate poverty caused by substandard wages. I know that was one. And to eliminate unfair competition based upon substandard wages. But I think that the Minister has to give consideration how he can increase the purchasing power of lower income people. And this is what he has to do. So that was the reason to provide a floor for maintaining a structure in the wage structure. That was the necessity.

But I wonder if the Minister has given any consideration, any consideration that there be perhaps some floating minimum wage in respect to handicapped people. I don't know if he has given that any consideration. I know I haven't done the study that's required, but I've had people talk to me and said, you know, there's instances that they would be able to employ handicapped people. And I think it would be a two - way street. A lot of the people that may not be able to be paid \$2.00 or \$1.90 at the present time, but it's something that the Minister may have some statistics and some studies in respect to the handicapped. I hope that he would give this some consideration, and I would like to know if he's really considering the minimum wage or not.

Mr. Chairman, I am quite concerned in another area, and that's industrial safety and the Minister has to only look at his own report, I think the community benefits through greater industrial safety. I think our labour force in the form of saving injuries, everybody profits. I think it's the biggest thing that we can measure, we can measure, Mr. Chairman, is in the saving of human life. And I believe that if you have proper safety regulations not only that will save expense to the Workmen's Compensation, but I believe that employee relations would benefit when workers are made aware that there is an urgent and personal interest in their welfare, Mr. Chairman, because in the last couple of years that this is an area that we have to give some consideration to. I think that the cost of Workmen's Compensation is borne by the consumer and the taxpayer and it is a completely, an unproductive expense which can be saved if we have proper legislation and proper inspection. I don't know what -- perhaps we need more inspections but I don't know if the Minister has undertaken to do such studies as when a person is subjected in an industry to say, long-term effects of loud noise, and I think these are the things that the Minister should be doing or his department should be doing. What if the people are working in, say, electric magnetic fields for a long time, what is the effect, Mr. Chairman? And there must be some research in this area.

So I will not talk about safety in public buildings and fire but I do wish to know what the Minister is doing and what his department is doing in the industrial safety and in the industries. I think that we must have more - or we'll have to keep up and improve the programs what we have at the present time. I know that this is a concern to many workers. I think it's the right of any worker, it's the employee's right, to safety standards which are adequate, which ensure that no employee will suffer any impairment of health or functional capacity or functional capacity or diminish his life expectancy. So this knowledge has to be imparted to the workers, Mr. Chairman; I think the right to have hazardous substances labelled and monitored, this is very important, and the right to medical examinations to determine whether exposure is adversely affecting health, the right to have the results of medical examinations transmitted to the employee's physician and also the right to request a special inspection to be able to inform the inspector of any alleged violation in any industry or shop without being adversely affected or laid off for these reasons. I think this is the right of any worker in industrial safety, Mr. Chairman, and also I believe the right to refuse any unsafe buildings or any unsafe places. So I think it's the employer's duty to inform his workers of the rights, and this is something that the Minister can look into as far as industrial

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(MR. PATRICK cont'd) . . . safety is concerned.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Minister touched briefly on strikes and - but I know that even according to the last news report last week I believe that strikes idled some 700 Manitobans, which was the Co-op Implement Shop, the Safeway, the sawmill at Columbia Forest at Sprague, the 20 nurses at Tuxedo Home for Nursing, the Acme Bedding and Furniture Company. So I would like to ask the Minister how has the new legislation affected us, is this the result, and perhaps he can give us some indication.

I know that he talked about voluntary arbitration and I agree with him as far as voluntary arbitration is concerned, because even many of the trade unionists today are talking about voluntary - nobody wants compulsory arbitration but surely I know that - just quoting out of the Tribune one of the trade unions who said it - and I'm quoting him, this is what he states. "I think we are nearing the time in Canada when both management and labour in the community interest will want to resolve their differences through mediation and where that fails, through voluntary arbitration, should be binding on both parties." I would like to know if the Minister is making any studies in respect to this area because not only that the industry and even the unions, the trade unions are getting concerned and the members of long strikes. Perhaps the voluntary arbitration is something that we should be looking at in some areas and see what results it produced and how satisfactory it is. I would like to know what the Minister will be doing or is doing in fire prevention, because if he looks at his own report I just mentioned what is happening and I know it's in the report that results are not too good in the last couple of years.

Mr. Chairman, I know that the Minister made some comments in respect to unemployment and he was quite happy to quote the statistics of - and in his report it shows three percent, an increase of \$12,000 in the labour - or 12,000 people in the labour force to a size of 408,000 workers in the province. But, Mr. Chairman, my concern is this was an average of 12,000 new people came on the labour force and the Minister took great satisfaction; but my concern is what is happening to the other eight or six thousand people that do come on the labour force every year, somewhere between eighteen and twenty thousand young people, new people coming into the labour force. And if we only create jobs for the twelve or the ten, what happens to the rest of the people? So they must leave the province, they must seek employment somewhere else and I don't believe that the Minister can be satisfied by saying that, sure we have a low unemployment figure in this province because what - the reason he has a low unemployment figure is because many of these people that do come on the labour force are seeking employment in some other place and some other provinces. So for this reason I feel that the Minister cannot take great satisfaction as far as the unemployment is concerned in this province.

The second point, I know he took some great satisfaction to tell us on a couple of occasions that the per capita, the average income has increased some six percent in the province; last year I believe from \$134.48 to \$143.00 which he's correct, it's up. But, Mr. Chairman, it's way below the national average but not only that, it's slipping; in the last I'd say six or seven years it has dropped from what it was below the national average at that time, it's lower now, and the Minister may dispute my figures according to the green book, the Income Tax. I know he's not - in this figure is not people in agriculture I don't believe, in farming. So we are slipping and we have slipped in the last several years from what the difference in per capita income from the national level was then and what it is today. So again I believe that the Minister needs some research and some work to do in this field. I don't think it's a healthy situation to be in when the per capita wage - however, it did increase but it's lower today than it was several years ago from the national average.

Mr. Chairman, I am not completely satisfied or not satisfied at all in respect to the Women's Bureau at the present time, because the present Women's Bureau of the Department of Labour, I know it's functioning but it's mainly concerned with a public relations type of an operation and role and does not seem to be oriented to achieving any goals, and this is not satisfactory. I feel that the Women's Bureau should assume a very activist role in encouraging and facilitating of women into the labour force and particularly the upward mobility of women within the labour force and also within the civil service; this has not happened. And again let me state to the Minister as far as I'm concerned it's only playing a very small role, a public relations role, if anything more. I think that it has to function much better,

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(MR. PATRICK cont'd) . . . it has to have a research program and has to do something where there would be upward mobility in the Civil Service. But I will not spend much time in this area, I know my colleague wants to talk in respect to that, Mr. Chairman.

I know that I had a resolution in respect to the Pension Act, and I believe it's in the Throne Speech and I was not able to present my argument. But I do believe that again this is overdue and there must be enactment of a Pension Benefit Act on a provincial level. I think this legislation is overdue and it's required and needed to permit portability or transfer of pension plans from one company to another company. I think the lack of pension portability is perhaps one of the major hindrances in the labour mobility, Mr. Chairman. I think that at least The Pension Act should ensure very minimum standards, that companies shall be required to make their contributions to a trust or similar fund as the liability is actually incurred rather than at a future date. I think at the minimum the employees shall have at least 50 percent vesting rights after five years with percentage increased by say, ten percent for each additional year up to a maximum and perhaps after ten years an employee should have full vesting rights. And I will not get into details but I have asked and talked on this - in this area on prior occasions and last year on the estimates and I think if anything that this is the minimum standards that the Minister should have in this bill. The employee portion of the contribution should be always refundable with interest and I know even the government with its own Civil Service at the present time, if you check the interest rates on the portion that's refunded is not what some of the other western provinces have in their legislation, and I pointed this out to the Minister last year. So, Mr. Chairman, what I'm saying to the Minister, that the vested portion of the employer's contribution plus the employee's contribution plus their earnings must be fully portable in respect to pensions; perhaps the Minister may be giving some indication or he'll tell us when the bill will be introduced in the House.

I would like to just briefly touch in respect to the apprenticeship in the provinces and I know on Page 46 of the report we have some statistics but I'm -- we have some statistics but at very minimum and I believe that the department . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The honourable member's time has elapsed.

MR. PATRICK: Can I just finish my sentence, Mr. Chairman? I believe that in the area of apprenticeship that the Minister must undertake immediately a detailed study on the usefulness and effectiveness, and my concern is the fallout in the apprenticeship program; you know, people start and in two years that your fallout is such a great percentage. And I'm sure it's a concern to the Minister and a concern to everybody, because this should be a good program and it used to be a good program and there must be some problems, and I ask the Minister to start a complete study and review what the problems are. I think that there shouldn't be such a cancellation of the apprenticeship I think there should be greater completion of a greater percentage.

So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, I have not come to the end of my points that I wanted to raise, I know perhaps my colleague will raise some more, but I wanted to mention a few things on strikes in essential services. And I know on Page 64, again if the Minister would look at his own report, and the fire losses in dollars' value from '68 to '72, it's just staggering in say for instance from '71 and '72 compared to what it was in '69 and '70. And I'm sure that this should get the Minister alarmed and he should have a report for us to tell us what the reasons are for it because I'm sure that he's quite familiar with this chart and the losses. So, Mr. Chairman, I perhaps will have some more questions later on as we go clause by clause.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, it's always a privilege as I indicated last night to present the Estimates of the Department and when one does he anticipates that there might be constructive criticism of the operation of the department, and this I can accept. I can also accept some severe criticisms of a personal nature directed toward myself as Minister and indeed this has got to be the norm in this House, particularly this session.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the Honourable Member for Fort Garry and I must say I was very disappointed in him. I think he must have had vinegar for breakfast; I can accept the fact that in his discourse this morning he indicated a total lack of any knowledgeability in the field of industrial relations and in the field of labour. He hollered loudly and in my opinion said nothing except an endeavour to heap abuse because of the deficiencies in the

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) . . . personality of the person who happens to be the Minister of Labour. I suppose, Mr. Chairman, that one who is in the field of politics should be very thick-skinned, and I normally am and accept this, but it's one of these types of tirades from the Member for Fort Garry that dissuades people from going into the field of politics. And I want to say here and now to the honourable gentleman that he was out of normal context this morning. I'll forgive him, I will not ask for any apology, but I do hope that as we go forward in consideration of the Department of Labour Estimates that he will pay more attention to the field of labour and less to the possible deficiencies of the Minister.

I agree with the Honourable Member for Assiniboia when he paid a tribute to the members of the staff of the Department of Labour and particularly to my political appointment, a former Member of this Assembly, Mr. Art Wright, and I do share with the Honourable Member of Assiniboia that this gentleman goes beyond all reasonable call of duty in order to be of service, not only to the Minister but to the people of Manitoba, and such is the case fairly well, Mr. Chairman, throughout the whole Department of Labour.

One of the major criticisms of my friend the Member for Fort Garry, Mr. Speaker, which was joined to some degree by the Member of Assiniboia, was in reference to my opening statement last night. That statement, Mr. Chairman, was given in a period of 20 minutes before the time of normal adjournment to go into Private Members' Resolutions. I did not expand on the activities of the department in that 20 minutes, knowing full well that I will have an opportunity and intend to take the opportunity of so doing in the detailed consideration of the Estimates. So if my honourable friend from Fort Garry wishes to criticize the brevity of the statement that I made last night, I would suggest in all due respect to him --(Interjection)-- Pardon? It was criticized and so did my honourable friend from Portage la Prairie, who said that I was losing steam, there was nothing in it. Had I had more time last night to expand on some of the areas in my opening statement, it certainly would have been done--and you stay to your hog ranch.

A MEMBER: It's cattle.

MR. SHERMAN: Would the Minister just permit one point of clarification?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Garry.

MR. PAULLEY: . . . I beg your pardon.

MR. SHERMAN: I wondered if the Minister would permit one point of clarification. I don't believe that I criticized him for brevity. I may have been critical on other points, superficiality, complacency, smugness, apathy, but I don't think I criticized him for brevity.

MR. PAULLEY: That's right, but the reason for the brevity was because of the time constraint under which I introduced my Estimates last evening. And the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge - Fort Garry - apology to Fort Rouge -- the Honourable Member for Fort Garry has just re-emphasized my point of criticism. He said that the statement was laudatory of the Minister and contains nothing. That is the approach of my honourable friend and that's what I was criticizing. And I want to assure members of this committee, I am prepared at any time to answer for any part of the operation of the Department of Labour, and if it may sound laudatory I do believe that we have the greatest, the best Department of Labour in the whole of the Dominion of Canada, and in our legislation which was adopted by this House over the objections of the likes of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry, many jurisdictions are now accepting and adopting parts of our Labour Relations Act.

My honourable friend referred to newspaper articles dealing with the matter of strikes. I wonder if my honourable friend in his intense research through the newspapers into articles pertaining to labour, noticed an article emanating out of Quebec in which the Minister of Labour there said that in effect they were going to adopt certain provisions of the Manitoba Labour Relations Act which brought about the day of return or no return, the day a collective agreement ends, that the responsibility has --(Interjection)-- Yes, and they're sensible, because they're following our lead. Mr. Chairman, what my colleague in Quebec has said in effect, that the --(Interjection)-- You see that's why my honourable friends opposite don't have any knowledgability of labour because all they do is rattle their addlehead brains and don't listen. But what Jean Cournoyer said, Mr. Chairman, in Quebec, that the day of reckoning between management and labour is the day of the termination of a collective agreement and not protracted under compulsion following that. That's our Act; it's now being adopted by the Province of Quebec.

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd)

Another area that I would have expanded on last night had I had a chance and I am now going to take that chance, is the approach of the federal Minister of Labour in the field of collective agreements and bargaining. We all are aware of the hardship that was suffered by Canadians as the result of the railroad strike because they did not have provisions in their legislation similar to ours, where there was a responsibility on both parties to a collective agreement to responsibility bargain, and now what is the Minister of Labour in the federal House giving lip service to? The same proposal that I made to the Manitoba Federation of Labour, one which I reiterated again yesterday evening when I introduced my Estimates and one which is under active consideration in many areas, the application of voluntary binding arbitration which we have advocated for a long time. So maybe I am deficient, maybe I don't know anything about matters in the field of labour as suggested by my honourable friend from Fort Garry, but others do know and they're beginning to follow me in many areas.

My honourable friend from Fort Garry in his opening remarks made reference to the sections in the Labour Relations Act dealing with unconscionable objectors in the deduction of dues. I wonder if my honourable friend knows the degree of objections that have been made since that portion of the Act first came into effect in November of 1972. He says it's a big thing. Mr. Chairman, the total number since November 1972 who have laid complaints amounts to a total of four, three which were rejected by the Labour Board after due consideration, and one which was withdrawn. My honourable friend who appears to be so knowledgeable in the field of labour attempted to make this a big deal for people out of a labour force of over 400,000 people. Big deal, eh?

My friend made reference to the changes in our legislation dealing with unfair labour practices. We've had complaints, yes. We've had complaints of unfair labour practices, but we can do something about them now as the result of the changes in our labour legislation, and we are doing it. From January 1, 1973 to December 31, there were 29 cases handled by the investigator into unfair labour practices, and settlement was effected by the investigator in 19 cases, 17 charges withdrawn. I want to tell my honourable friend, unless he has the cockeyed notion that these investigations or unfair labour practices are only oriented against the employer, I have had investigation into alleged unfair practices by unions. We're living in a two-way street and we're adhering to the rules of the game and trying to be fair. But the previous legislation adopted by the Conservative Party of Manitoba gave to the employer a sanctity which they should not have had and we've reversed that, so that the employee can have a fair shake as well.

My friend wondered what we were doing in the field of preventative mediation. I wonder if my honourable friend knows that it is a requirement of people who have entered into a collective agreement in Manitoba to give to the Minister at least two weeks before the termination of a collective agreement, an outline of where the negotiations stand. I wonder if my honourable friend knows that in many cases the Minister has appointed conciliation officers to go in long before there's a possibility of a strike to see whether or not he can be able to assist in bringing about a fair and reasonable collective agreement. I wonder if my honourable friend knows that in preventative mediation that more requests are coming forth now for the utilization of the services of conciliation officers than there ever was before in the history of Manitoba, under the compulsory legislation of the former administration. These are the facts of life. --(Interjection)-- Yes, my friend says "good" Mr. Chairman. It would have been far better if --(Interjection)-- You never heard it before; that's perfectly correct. My friend never heard it before because he wasn't a damn bit concerned with labour until there was a deficiency in his caucus if somebody presumed to know a little bit about labour. But the Act went through. My honourable friend admits that during the passage of the Act, our new Labour Relations Act, that they opposed it. This provision was in that Act and now my honourable friend, Mr. Chairman, turns around and says, "Good, we're glad to know it." What a reply. What a reply.

Then my honourable friend went on to talk of unemployment and of jobs, again accusing me as Minister of being complacent in the field of unemployment, referring to total numbers of the unemployed. I want to assure the committee and this House and the people I am not complacent in the field of the unemployed. All I have said in reference to any statement that I have made on receipt of the statistics for the Province of Manitoba, that we have constantly

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) . . . been among the lowest in the Dominion of Canada in the number, total numbers or percentages of unemployed, and on each and every occasion I have said that I'm not satisfied and we have to do more in order to stimulate the economy of our province to create more jobs, and that is what we are doing and that is why on a comparative basis across Canada we have been in a better position than many.

There is no complacency. My honourable friend criticizes the number of unemployed that we have in Manitoba and yet he suggests that instead of the Minister of Labour, the Department and others, working to try and employ Manitobans in the garment industry, that maybe we should take a second look at the suggestion of prohibiting imports from outside of the country in the garment industry. I recognize that there are problems in the garment industry; I recognize that you may not be able or you cannot take people, figuratively speaking, off the street and put him behind a sewing machine in order to produce a garment.

About two or three years ago there was established the organization that my honourable friend referred to as the garment enterprises to set up a training program. Well I want to say, in my opinion, that the industry hasn't trained sufficient people as the result of the setting up of that, and it wasn't until comparatively recently that I found out that the answer suggested was bringing in more people from the outside into this particular industry in order to allow them to continue to produce garments. I've nothing against people coming into the Province of Manitoba but I do say, and I repeat what I have said before, I repeat what my Premier has said on a number of occasions, that while we have a number of unemployed in the province we should do whatever we possibly can to train them for employment within the province. And yet my honourable friend there, he says, he wishes me luck, I'm gambling; he hopes that I get the card into the centre of a straight flush or a straight. I'm sure that all of the people in Manitoba wish me success but they're more definitive in their good wishes than my honourable friend opposite was when he was talking of my endeavours.

I went down to the garment factory in Morden the other day just before the House started, and met the proprietor, Mr. Ralph King down there, a very nice fellow in my books, and he gave me the opportunity of talking to his employees after touring the plant. And do you know what he said to his employees - and I am not buttering myself up because he said it --(Interjection)-- No, he said it's the first time that he knows of that any Minister of Labour ever took time out of a busy life to go in to see conditions in with an organization is operating. And yet my honourable friend seems by innuendo, Mr. Chairman, he seems by innuendo to criticize me because I haven't been able to resolve all of the differences in the garment industry within a very short period of time.

I say to my honourable friend, I agree that the garment industry is a major employer in this province, but it has been faced with continuing problems. These just didn't come up yesterday; they've had continuing problems in the garment industry in Manitoba for many years in the form of very high rates of turnover. This is one of the problems. And this is one of the problems, Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that we would be confronted with if we did bring in a thousand people from outside into a low-wage industry such as this is at the present time, and as soon as they know the ways of life in this particular region they will leave and cause more high turnover and go into other jobs that are better paying. In view --(Interjection)-- What's that?

MR. GEORGE HENDERSON (Pembina): Did you tell Ralph King that?

MR. PAULLEY: Yes, I did. And he had enough common sense to listen. In view of these circumstances the proposal that 1,000 people should be recruited from another country should be very cautiously considered, and that's what we are doing. The first obligation of our province, and I think of the Minister of Labour as well, is to ensure that everything possible can be done to see that unemployed Manitobans get as many of these jobs as possible --(Interjection)-- That's right. One way we could help, the industry could help would be to substantially raise the wage rates that they're paying at the present time and make the job more attractive.

The garment industry has historically been among the lowest payers of wages, not only in Manitoba but right across the country. It might well be, it might well be that consideration should be given to a uniform minimum wage across Canada in order that there be a more reasonable competitive basis, but we haven't got that at the present time. But no longer can we afford to keep wages down just in order to accommodate any single industry.

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(MR. PAULLEY cont'd) . . . And it's not my intention so to do. I am in the process of considering adjustments to the minimum wage and I've announced that to the House. I've announced it publicly. And maybe, maybe as a result of a change in the wage scale the job at hand in the garment industry may be more attractive to Manitobans. And. . .

MR. SHERMAN: Maybe that isn't the answer.

MR. PAULLEY: Maybe it isn't the answer. I would imagine that my honourable friend who is so knowledgeable of this field of endeavour that there should be some other, there may be some other but he hasn't given me one; he hasn't given me one, Mr. Chairman, and this is where I think lies the responsibility of opposition critics. Instead of just saying, well we wish you luck on a wing and a prayer and a prayer to your endeavours when I suggest a possible approach, a raising of the wage levels, my honourable friend doesn't say, well maybe it's worth a try, but he takes the reverse attitude. What a negative approach to the solution of any problem. And I want to say this, too. --(Interjection)-- Pardon?

MR. SHERMAN: Would you rather I wished you bad luck?

MR. PAULLEY: No, no. But what I would rather you do my honourable friend is give me some constructive criticism. I don't mind being condemned for trying to do what I'm doing but I don't like being condemned for trying to do something. There's a big difference. Oh you wouldn't understand. You wouldn't understand it. Cattle or hogs. --(Interjection)-- I haven't got you completely confused. I say to my honourable friend, Mr. Chairman, I haven't got him confused, he's been confused ever since he came into this House.

MR. SHERMAN: . . . on a point of order. . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry on a point of order.

MR. SHERMAN: May the record show that that last remark of the Minister's was directed not to the Member for Fort Garry but to the Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. PAULLEY: That's perfectly true -- directly, Mr. Chairman, but it could apply to the Member for Fort Garry with equal force.

But I do want to say, Mr. --(Interjection)-- That's right. Well as a matter of fact I think it could apply to all of the members of the Conservative Party because they're all tarred with the same brush, the only thing they lack is the feathers to go on top of the tar. I want to assure, Mr. Chairman, that in this check into the garment industry we're not alone, we're working jointly with the federal authorities to try and resolve the problem. It's not an easy problem. As I indicated, it's been with us for some considerable years, it just didn't grow up overnight. We're going to do our damndest to see whether or not that we can still retain in Manitoba the garment industry under decent and better working conditions for the employees, at better wages and a better return for management as well. --(Interjection)-- Yes. My friend is wishing me good luck. I wonder how sincere some people are when they say, we hope that you're able to achieve it and if you do it will enhance the reputation of the government and therefore it may be politically disadvantageous to us because you achieve things. This seems to me, Mr. Chairman, to be the attitude of members opposite. Wish you luck on one hand with open arms but in one of the hands as it goes over your back there's a stiletto. This is the approach of my critic from Fort Garry in the field of labour. I realize it's 12:30, I believe I've almost used my 30 minutes, Mr. Chairman, and I'll continue at a later time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 12:30, I'm leaving the Chair to return at 2:30 this afternoon.