

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA  
8:00 o'clock, Monday, March 25, 1974

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, would you call Bill No. 34 please.

MR. SPEAKER: I didn't hear the Honourable House Leader.

MR. CHERNIACK: Interim Supply, 34.

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

INTERIM SUPPLY - BILL NO. 34

MR. MINAKER: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to say a few words on the Interim Supply Bill at this time and in particular in the areas of the funds, or maybe I should say the lack of funds that have been made available for the urban areas of our province, as well as I would like to make a few comments later on in regards to the MDC.

I think possibly - I know some of our fellow MLA's here have been on council before. I think the Honourable Minister of Mines and Natural Resources served some time on municipal governments, and I say "time", and the Minister of Finance, and I believe my fellow colleague, the Honourable Member from Sturgeon Creek and La Verendrye and Rhineland, and I believe are quite aware of the problems that the municipalities face at this time. And when I speak of urban areas I'm not just necessarily speaking of the City of Winnipeg or the City of Brandon, I'm talking about those areas which fall under the department or towns and villages.

I think it might be worthwhile at this time to maybe review a few things about the municipal governments that we seem to forget from time to time. In particular what are our municipal governments spending their money on these days? What part of the dollars that are raised by the municipal governments or by the province, what do they go to and what do they provide to our people? Really we're talking about 75 percent of our people I would think in Manitoba when we count the towns and the cities that we have and the population in these towns and cities. If you look at a typical budget of an urban area - and I've made reference to the City of Winnipeg budget which I am most familiar with but probably is representative of most cities or towns or villages - if you look at what the money is spent on, about 13 percent of it is spent on culture and recreation that we know of, and also in public works we spend about 13 percent of the money that's raised. Then protection of person and property, the police and fire, that we require, we spend somewhere in the order of 26 percent of all the budget that's spent on municipal governments. Then in health and social development there's somewhere in the order of 12 percent. Then we still have some urban renewal and housing - at least in the City of Winnipeg they still have some - in the order of two percent. And then there is 17 percent that goes to debt charges. Then we look at what is the source of revenue to pay for all these services that we provide to in the order of 75 percent of the population of Manitoba? Where do we find this money and what kind of money are we talking about? I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that we're talking in the order of \$200 million these days to provide these type of services throughout our province and the majority of this has to be raised by the municipalities. Where do they raise it? Well about 75 percent of it comes from realty tax, from homeowners, from businesses; 75 percent of that money is changed directly to the homeowners and business as a tax yearly. Then there's approximately 11 percent comes from business tax; then there's profit even from utilities believe it or not, but last year there wasn't any profit from utilities in the City of Winnipeg. This was conveniently absorbed in the equalization of rates and of which the Province of Manitoba received a considerable amount in the transaction. Then there is a whopping - and I say that with tongue in cheek - 10 percent of the revenue comes from government grants - 10 percent. That's all the government can find, the province can find to put towards these services - 10 percent.

My Honourable Leader mentioned earlier today in his speech on the Budget that the City of Winnipeg is faced with a sum, \$28 million increase in their operating budget this year - \$28 million that they are locked in on. They I'm sure, knowing the members on the council and my time that I spent with them and worked with them, will do everything within their power to reduce this cost if it's possible. But how does one reduce 26 percent of your budget that's fire and police protection? Do you just close the door and say we're not going to add any more policemen? We're not going to put out the fires, we're not going to provide the firemen? Are we going to stop cleaning our streets? No Mr. Speaker, we can't do this. But in the meantime,

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(MR. MINAKER Cont'd) . . . . the provincial government does not appear to be concerned in their Budget that they have presented this year, not concerned to any degree. If one reflects what that 20 mill increase will be to a \$3000 assessment home - this is a very low income home - you're looking at \$60 in taxes this year that the people who own that home will have to finance. I live in a house that I paid, I think it was \$17,200, for some ten years, I don't call it a large home, and I myself will be looking at something like \$150 in increased taxes. So that we're talking about the low income moderate income people who are faced with these costs. And we're not just talking about the City of Winnipeg, the same problem lies in Brandon, the same problem lies in Steinbach, same problem lies in Morris, because the very nature of the budget that we do have in our urban areas these very services that we described earlier, they're services that are - the major portion of is one of labour. And we know that the inflationary times that we live in that people need raises, they need increases and I'm sure the government would endorse such thinking that employees should receive a fair return for their services and as the cost of living increases that they should get their share. So as a result there's about 80 percent of the budget of an urban area that is labour and when an inflationary time occurs then the municipal governments get the blow the worst.

I've mentioned earlier in other speeches that I've given in the House that what happens, the very cause of the deficits for our urban areas are the source of increased revenue for the provincial government - very source that causes the problem for the urban areas are the rewards for the provincial government. One might say well we have - the government would say, we have the tax credit plan. But we're talking about municipal services, Mr. Speaker, not education. We're talking about just the basic services which keep our towns and villages operating. And I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the rural area is dependent on our cities and towns, they cannot survive without them; just like we in the city cannot survive without our rural people in the economy that they produce and add to our province. We are dependent on both. And I suggest Mr. Speaker, that if our cities and towns become unhealthy, they cannot maintain their levels of services and continue to charge additional and increased cost to the property owners and to the businesses, that we will have a very unhealthy situation in Manitoba and in the economy of Manitoba. Because, Mr. Speaker, whether we will admit it or not our towns and our cities are in competition with towns and cities in other parts of Canada. We are in competition in order to try and get industries to come here and to stay here, to provide the many needed jobs that we require to keep our young people working and the new people coming into the business world from the schools, and if we want to stay healthy then our cities and towns are going to have to be healthy.

Then we can look at possible sources of revenue that the province has offered the cities this year. I think in one part they've indicated that they could have access to the amusement tax. Well all except the race track. For some reason the Provincial Government wants to keep any amusement tax from the race track. I wonder if that's because it's the least problem area, the least costly area to control and police and collect these sources; I wonder possibly, Mr. Speaker, if that isn't the reason? Then we're looking I would say at maybe half of the two million dollars in the budget that they show as revenue, \$1 million availability as revenue for these urban areas.

Then they talk about the enhanced value tax. I would think that the Minister of Finance and the Honourable Minister of Mines and Natural Resources has been on council long enough to know that rezoning doesn't necessarily enhance the value of land. It's whether or not the land is serviced. And who pays for the services, who has to put the sewer and water services in on streets? That's what enhances the value of land. And rezoning - you can rezone out in the country but if you don't have the services and the facilities to provide that land, you will find that it's not going to increase that greatly in value.

When I was on council we reviewed this fairly extensively to see what kind of sources of revenue the then Minister of Urban Affairs was offering the city and we couldn't see any great dollars involved in this proposal. And furthermore, a very extensive type of search into how one would evaluate and where - or how one would strike at an enhanced value on just straight rezoning. And furthermore, there isn't that many pieces of land that are rezoned every year in most of our cities surprisingly. And when one looks at how many - they actually did a check on a number of properties that were rezoned in the past two years in the City of Winnipeg and could not come up with any noticeable revenue from this proposal.

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(MR. MINAKER Cont'd)

We're glad to see that the government is proposing a 70 percent increase in . . .

MR. CHERNIACK: I wonder if the member would permit a question at this stage?

MR. MINAKER: I would prefer, Mr. Speaker, to have the questions at the end if I may.

I'm happy to see that finally the government is starting to look at transit grants and start to get in line with the Province of Ontario who I believe was one of the leaders in the field in this regard of sharing in the operating costs of transit and also the capital costs. But then we have 3.3 million dollars offered for this. Now, Mr. Speaker, what in turn are the urban areas giving the Province of Manitoba? If one looks at five of the sales taxes that have been collected last year and what they're proposing the revenue would be this year, the sales tax, I think it was 95 million dollars last year, they're proposing that it's going to be \$125 million this year - 31 percent increase. The Liquor Control profits have gone from \$39 million to \$42 million - an eight percent increase. The tobacco tax has gone from twelve, eight million in '74 to 13.5, a five percent increase. The gasoline tax has gone from 16 million to about 17.8, a ten percent increase. And then the individual income tax, the provincial income tax, has gone from 166, well almost 167 million last year or the end of this year, to 197 projected revenue next year, a 19 percent increase. Of if we compare it to the value that was for the end of '73, we're looking at a 41 percent increase in personal income tax. These total here in the order of \$540 million, \$540 per capita.

And one starts to wonder, you know, if we didn't have our towns healthy, say we had to stop supplying sewer and water to one of our liquor stores, or we couldn't afford the police or fire protection so we had to cut back. All of a sudden the liquor stores get starting to be robbed and burned down. What happens to the very factories that provide the jobs in our city if we couldn't provide the basic services in our urban areas to these factories and they had to close down. What happens to our personal income tax level then? So, Mr. Speaker, one could go on and on in this regard. One could liken our cities and urban areas to a factory or a plant that house all these facilities and provide the basic services of protection and supply etc. to make this town and this city and these villages run and keep going. That's what the municipal governments do. And in the meantime, what does a provincial government do? It reaches its hand into the cities and the plants and grabs the money and takes it out. What does it do in return? It decided it'll give a little bit back. Just a little bit, not a lot. We're looking at last year's budget - 10 percent they gave back of the overall cost to run that plant in that city; but in the meantime they pulled out probably about 75 percent of that \$540 million from the different villages and towns and cities in our province. That's what the Provincial Government does, and they expect the taxpayer, the homeowner to pay for this, the business to pay for this. They expect that they can keep going, and as I mentioned earlier, we're in competition with Toronto, we're in competition with Calgary, Morris is in competition with Kenora. We're in competition for jobs. And if our taxes continue to grow on our properties and on our business properties what are our companies going to do, what are our people going to do? They're going to want to move. The plants are going to want to close down. Then what happens to the whole economy of our province? What will happen? Think about it on that side because it's a very complex integrated economy that we live in.

But this urban department that the government presently has, they want urban areas to operate like a puppet, you know, hold that string, when they say kick, kick, when they say jump, jump. If they want you to invest in transit you invest in transit you don't get money. So they control it with the strings of finance, that's how they do it. They control it with the strings of finance. They want it to be a puppet. But I'll say, Mr. Speaker, that our municipalities and urban areas can't survive under this and the government has to realize that they have to share some of this growth tax if they want our economy to expand.

Then on the other hand, we look at the budget for the cities. Well they've reduced the transitional cost for the City of Winnipeg this year by 500,000, I have to grant they made a formula when they gave birth to this city - I sometimes call it they gave birth to an abortion - and they gave it a little bit of money just to keep it going, to make sure that it could continue to operate. Then all of a sudden they decided well, we'll only give money, and you know what, Mr. Speaker, this government when one looks at their policies and philosophy, one keeps going back to one thing - this government only gives money when they can control it.

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A MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. MINAKER: You know, that's the only time they give money (applause) if they have the control of it. You know, they can find \$22 million or in that order for Leaf Rapids, a government town, but you know, they find in the order of less than \$6 million for the urban areas this year in the budget's additional revenue. But they can find \$1.3 million for W. Clare and Company to provide jobs elsewhere. But they take a half a million dollars away from the City of Winnipeg and other areas of the urban area.

The Honourable Member from Crescentwood in his speech today mentioned about the CPR, that it was a national catastrophe, or disaster I think he said. Well I might suggest to the Honourable Member from Crescentwood that I'm sure his colleague can find a position for him as a movie director or something and maybe even find an excuse to give a \$1.5 million grant to W.E. Clare Company to build a filmstrip of a TV program and they can do it on NBC. Maybe we can call that the Provincial Disaster or maybe we can call it the Comedy of Errors. I'm sure that money can be found for such things as this - but they can't find the money for the urban areas. They just can't seem to find it, but they can find \$57 million to lose on MDC in the past four years. And then when one starts to think, what about our corporations, what about our corporations that are here and living in our urban areas and trying to compete, they pay us corporation taxes, they provide jobs for our people, they pay the business tax, they pay the municipal tax, and what does the MDC corporations do that we have invested in? They lose money so they obviously don't pay corporation taxes. So what do our businesses that are in the community feel, what do they think about this government, when they can't even assist the municipal or the urban areas where they are located?

Mr. Speaker, we've listened to the other side from time to time talk about what they're doing for the low income people and the senior citizens, and we're all in support of that, we know that the people in our province deserve a fair return and so forth, but should it only be to certain people in our society - just to the low income and just to the senior citizens? What about the plumbers, what about the electricians, what about the carpenters, the middle income people, the moderate income people? Don't these people count?

What about them that own the property in these cities? They are paying the \$160 increase in property tax, yet we come out with a grant for new homeowners. What about the existing homeowners, what about those municipal taxes that we have ever increasing? Well I can recall the First Minister at a meeting last year, Mr. Speaker, saying "we've let you put your foot in the door, we've given you a growth tax" - and I commend him for at least giving us one of the growth taxes or a tax that he could call a growth tax, and he called it the, I believe it was "The Unconditional Grant or per Capita Grant" and it would be based on growth. Well it grew all right - grew 2.61 million I think this year for the total province. But what did the five taxes grow that we talked about earlier? The five taxes that we talked about earlier I think went somewhere in the order of \$470 million to excess of \$540, about \$67 million, that's what those five taxes grew this year or proposed to grow. And what did the growth tax that the urban areas get? - \$2.6 million, we're using the multiplier of a million people because I believe that still is approximately the right population for our province. So there we are again - put the dirty hand in and take the money out. You keep the plant running, you make sure the roads are fit to travel on so that people can come to our liquor store and the people can come to the factories and can work there; keep the sewers running, you guys pay for it, we'll take the money.

But what happens, again I repeat, Mr. Speaker, what would happen to our economy if our cities and towns went bankrupt and had to start to close the doors in some of our factories? What happened when we couldn't get trained people or people from Philippines or Toronto, you name it, to come and work in our plants if they were still open? Because believe me, people come to Manitoba because they like the culture here, they like the facilities they have here, nowadays it's become very important to people what do they have where they live, what does it cost them where they live, and if we start to lose these services that the people of Manitoba are used to, and require, we just can't stop expanding our fire departments or our police departments if the demand is there. But that's what the City of Winnipeg has tried to do for the last three or four years. I'm sure that's what the City of Brandon has had to do. So just staying with the same level of services or worse services, the costs have continued to rise. The City of Winnipeg in the last three years, the municipal tax level we're

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(MR. MINAKER Cont'd) . . . . talking about has nearly doubled in some parts of the city, and this year it's going to go up in the order I believe - I haven't worked out the percentages, but somewhere in the order of about 27 percent or 24 percent. How long can they live with this? How long can the government keep putting its hand in and taking out all the money and not put any back? They put it back but they want control, they want that puppet to hop because they know if they can squeeze them out and starve them that they can make it a Department of the Urban Affairs, I would hate to see the date that that would happen, Mr. Speaker, because I would think that it would be the end of a fine province, fine towns and cities because I could just see nothing but control, control, control. And that's what this government seems to want. It doesn't want to give money back, it wants control with the money. Sure it will give money to Leaf Rapids but it controls it. Sure it will give the odd little dollar to here and there but it wants to say what they're going to do with that money. Then they keep using the argument that is it right for the government to raise taxes then turn it over to the municipalities to spend. Well then I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, is it right for the Provincial Government to accept the federal moneys grants that it gets from the Federal Income Tax, etc.

Then they talk about the tax credit plan for education and I think if there is problems with money in our urban areas why not let the urban areas make use of this money where they see fit, you don't need the ultimate control. But no they have to be the good guy, they have to give the money back and when one looks at the administration costs of the property tax credit plan - \$438,000 - that's what the administration costs are. If we didn't collect the money in the first place there's \$438,000 that could go to urban areas or to the education system. But no they have to be the good guys, they have to take the pats on the back, they have to put the ads on TV, spell it around, say that they're the good guys. But in the meantime they reach their grubby hand in there, into that urban area again, pull out the money, every day, but not put any of it back. I'm sorry, they put a bit back but, you know, just to keep them going, just to keep them hopping, to keep them coming back with their hat in hand and asking for some assistance. But when the assistance is given, it's always well we'll take over that, we'll take over that, we'll give you it for that, but you guys sit there and you keep the towns and 75 percent of the population that live in these towns and cities, you keep running that service for them but we're not going to give you any money unless we control it. But they find no difficulty for the MDC corporations to plunk \$5 million in here and \$5 million there - \$57 million, somewhere in that order of losses I believe in that last four years. --(Interjection)-- We have 39 and I asked the Chairman of the MDC in the committee meeting the other day, Mr. Speaker, how much did he anticipate the loss of this year at the end of 1974, March 31st, and he said approximately \$17 million. Well if one adds 17 to 39, I think you come up with \$56 million in losses.

So I'm glad, you know, I'm really glad that the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources brought up CFI because I've looked at it as an outsider for many years and read reports and so on and it's amazing, when I read the MDC Act, it said, "when the moneys that are being loaned out exceed the work being done on the site the MDC has the authority to hold back payments". Now I understand that with CFI - and I stand to be corrected if I'm wrong - I understand, Mr. Speaker, with CFI that that was the policy that the Conservative administration when they were government had and they loaned out \$14 million . . .

A MEMBER: The Premier made a new deal.

MR. MINAKER: They loaned out \$14 million, Mr. Speaker, and then, Mr. Speaker, there was a change in the government administration, and then I understand the First Minister at that time made a statement that he had reviewed the situation and changed the pay-out policies. Now I understand the pay-out policies were changed, not what the future MDC agreement had. Now they merrily went on their way and loaned out another \$124 million before they realized something was wrong. You know, when one compares \$14 million to \$124, or whatever it is now, we don't know because we haven't had the information as yet to be accurate, you know, they say, well all those interests are CFI. You know I have a butcher friend and he said, "you know, I had a chat with somebody and we were talking about CFI and he said, you know if I had the money to loan out who would be responsible to loan it out. The guy said, who. He said, me. When I'm loaning the money it's my responsibility". So I would think the same thing applies to the government in power at that time. If \$14 million were loaned out under the Conservatives then we'll take the responsibility for that because there was probably

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(MR. MINAKER Cont'd) . . . . about \$12 million there on the site anyways or thereabouts. And then further, let's see them take the responsibility for the 124 million. When you start to take the debt costs on 124 million it's a heck of a lot higher than \$12 million I'll tell you. So anytime the government wants to bring that red herring across this side of the hall we'll talk about it and we'll talk about it pretty quick.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I have only sat in on the one Estimates in the House here as a member but one thing strikes home, that obviously it's wrong to charge the operating cost of MDC to capital when one doesn't pay back. What the present economic policy or the accounting principle of the government is, is one could liken to someone going to his local finance company and borrowing a thousand dollars today, going back next month borrowing another thousand and on and on one and on for four years. But never paying anything back. I asked the Chairman of the MDC and the other day in a committee what percent of the losses and loans that are outstanding with MDC are demand loans, and we got back an answer, 80 percent. So we're financing operating costs with capital. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that to be in order with proper accounting procedures that next year the MDC operating costs should be discussed in Estimates, not in capital. (Applause)

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I suggest the day of reckoning has come that we can't continue to pour money down the drain because of political embarrassment. The Minister indicated in this House that the Cabinet makes a decision on a second loan to a company that already has a loan, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it's not just a veto power, it's other indications as well, that when political decisions are made instead of business decisions this is what happens, we lose money and we cannot operate properly. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that if the government wants a make-work program then don't do it under the false pretences of the MDC, because that's exactly what they're doing now, that they're making work, and it doesn't seem to be permanent work at that, it's temporary jobs, and I suggest, Mr. Speaker, it's time that the guidelines, which I understand the Honourable Minister has now given MDC, are strengthened, that some limit is placed on the capital of MDC. We don't have a never-ending well of money, there's a million people here to pay for it and the day of reckoning will come, and the day when it does come whether you recapitalize it or not there's losses that have been accrued and they have to be paid. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that they are in the order of a hundred million dollars now when all this is cleaned up and that we and you and I and everybody else in the province are going to have to pay for that and will have to pay for it out of general revenue. We're talking in the order of a hundred dollars per capita, somewhere in the order of \$250 per family when the day of reckoning comes. I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the time has come to review MDC, set the limit on capital, get private money back into the business field, encourage it back and you get business scrutiny and business decisions rather than political decisions where they keep pouring the money in because they can't afford to say that they've made a mistake.

With those few comments, Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much for time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended to speak, I wanted to rise on a point of privilege. Mr. Speaker, I've indicated to the House on several occasions that the board of directors of the MDC makes their position vis-a-vis loans, that is correct. That if there is a second loan being recommended it must be recommended by the board and then approved by the Minister. The honourable member is saying that the board members are making those loans based on political consideration. They have been specifically told by me that they are not to do that and, Mr. Speaker, it is the only time that they have -- Yes, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member has accused the members of the Manitoba Development Corporation Board of advancing funds based on political considerations which they have been specifically told they are not to do, and therefore I want it clearly pointed out that the members of the board of directors have been advised that they are not to do what the honourable members says they are going. --(Interjection)-- Well they are not doing it, why should I, I'd rather . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday night after our 5:30 adjournment you and your kind wife tendered a reception for the members of the Legislature here and, Sir, I want to at this time personally thank you and your kind wife for the very delicious supper or

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(MR. GRAHAM Cont'd) . . . . snack that was offered to us. And I want to also assure you and your kind wife, Mr. Speaker, that the fact that I look sick later on in the evening had nothing to do with your wife's cooking or the hospitality that you offered us. Sir, when I left within a couple of hours I was sweating and then shivering and I came down with quite a severe case of the flu. So, Sir, that explains my absence from the House on Thursday and Friday.

Mr. Speaker, that absence from the House gave me an opportunity to shiver and sweat and shake and try and get rid of the flu and at the same time it gave me an opportunity to think, do a little reflection on the affairs of this Chamber. And at the same time, Mr. Speaker, I have to maybe chide the members of the media a little bit because when I was lying in bed I had a radio and I was listening and I heard some voice clips which were taken right, I imagine, verbatim from debate in the House here, and I have to admit, Sir, that hearing these over the radio, without the proper commentary, leaves you with a great deal of confusion as to what went on and the reason for giving the voice clips in the first place. I think that proper reporting of the affairs of the Legislature should always be the first interest of the media, and if just portions of debate are broadcast, then the public at large can very easily miss the point of debate or the points that are being issued, and issues can become confused. People might in fact be better off if they didn't hear these things because the confusion that exists afterwards is greater than that that existed before the short tapes were broadcast.

I refer specifically, Mr. Speaker, to a tape that was broadcast of some of the remarks of the Minister of Agriculture in debate on Friday afternoon, and I wasn't in the House to get the whole tenor of the debate, Hansard has not been distributed to us so I have not had the opportunity to read the whole context of what transpired, but from the short few words that were broadcast verbatim I gathered that the Minister of Agriculture was launching an attack against an individual who was a member of the Manitoba Farm Bureau, a director of Manitoba Pool Elevators, he's a member of the Canadian Bureau of Agriculture, and I don't know how many other positions that the man holds and these positions he holds are to represent various facets of agriculture throughout the Dominion of Canada. And in response to the Minister of Agriculture, Mr. Speaker, in response to the comments of the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources who's speaking from his seat, he refers to Mr. Parker who also held many positions, and Mr. Parker in those various capacities served in the best manner he knew how to represent the people that put their trust in his leadership. But the point that came out very clear was that the Minister of Agriculture was launching a personal attack on this gentleman, and in doing so he criticized the appointment - not the appointment, but the fact that he was a member of the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange. Mr. Speaker, I suggest that the Minister of Agriculture is in serious error. I do not believe that the gentleman mentioned is a member of the Commodity Exchange but rather that Manitoba Pool Elevators do have a seat on the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange, and as a director, as a director of Manitoba Pool Elevators, the gentleman mentioned was only fulfilling a position of Manitoba Pool Elevators and it was not a personal seat at all. So I think the record should be corrected. I have known Mr. Franklin and have met him on numerous occasions and I have found that he has been very dedicated to his work, and I, Mr. Speaker, resent and it certainly saddened me to hear the Minister of Agriculture launch an attack as he did against an individual who was only fulfilling his duties as a director of a co-operative, one of the largest co-operatives we have in the Province of Manitoba, and as such if the Minister who is in charge of co-operatives wants to attack the co-operatives, then I think that there is something seriously wrong. I would hope that the Minister in charge of co-operatives would support the co-operatives rather than attack them.

Mr. Speaker, at the same time the Minister was lashing out - and I really don't believe that he was lashing out at Mr. Franklin, but he was trying to defend the indefensible and trying to defend the position that he has taken at the present time. Here is a Minister of Agriculture who is supposed to protect the best interests of the agricultural industry in the Province of Manitoba, and the interests of the agriculture in Manitoba are many and diversified, and according to the Minister of Agriculture they can only be one; they have to be his way or none at all. He talked about democracy and being democratic. In fact he is so democratic that he has now put out a vote, or a ballot anyway to the grain producers of the Province of Manitoba, and asking them to mark this ballot and send it in to the Manitoba Marketing Board, and I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the actions of the Minister are facetious, to say the least. It really doesn't matter to the Minister what they mark on the ballot because he's going to go

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(MR. GRAHAM Cont'd) . . . . ahead and do things his way anyway.

We have seen evidence of that, Mr. Speaker, and we saw it today in the question period when a member asked the Minister what his intentions were with respect to the artificial insemination program and the -- I can't paraphrase the words of the Minister but the effect of his answer was that if he was to do anything he would strengthen the existing legislation more than changing it to reflect the wishes of the artificial insemination users in the Province of Manitoba. Because a poll was taken, Mr. Speaker, of the users of the A.I. program and 586 were opposed to the present program, 19 were in favor of the present government program, and I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that any Minister of Agriculture who had the interests of the people, particularly the users of that program, at heart would listen to the results of that poll, but instead the Minister says no. He will ignore that poll completely and in fact if he would do anything, he would strengthen the existing legislation which would make it even rougher on those 586 that opposed his program.

So, Mr. Speaker, we find evidence here that the Minister of Agriculture really isn't concerned at all about the farmers of Manitoba. All he is concerned about is the interests of his program, and he says "You must conform to our programs or else it's goodbye." He says, "We will leave you to fend for yourselves." I believe those are his exact words. And, Mr. Speaker, if I may use some other favorite expressions of the Minister of Agriculture, I say to him: what utter nonsense! Those are the Minister's favorite expressions.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture -- and I question the use of that term, I use it advisedly, because the evidence that we have seen up to now is that his knowledge of agriculture is getting less and less as his interest in his programs gets greater and greater, and the interest of his programs and the interest of agriculture do not run down the same track. Mr. Speaker, surely at some point in time this Minister will finally listen to the farmers of Manitoba, and I would sincerely hope that when he does start to listen he will then start to implement the programs that the farmers want. If he would show at least a little receptivity to some of the suggestions, then I would think there might be some hope for him, but unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have seen no evidence that the Minister is doing that. And that is why, Mr. Speaker, when I was speaking previously on agriculture, I indicated to the Minister at that time that he has had many chances but unfortunately he has blown them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want once again to refer to something else that came to my attention when I was recovering from the flu, and I had the opportunity to read a newspaper then, Mr. Speaker, and very seldom do I get the opportunity to read a newspaper, and there I read an interesting article, Mr. Speaker, which was in Friday's Free Press, and I would like to bring it to the attention of the House -- it's unfortunate that the Attorney-General is not here because . . .

A MEMBER: He's sitting in the gallery.

MR. GRAHAM: . . . he and I had some -- I believe that's the former Attorney-General. Mr. Speaker, the article I want to refer to deals with the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and it was a report from Churchill where a "Mr. William Cooper, President of the newly-formed Churchill Businessman's Association, said here Wednesday night that the organization is strongly opposed to the exorbitant rents and long-term leases which the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation is asking school and municipal authorities, as well as private firms, to pay for the homes for their employees in the redeveloped Churchill townsite."

Now, Mr. Speaker, I can well remember the program when it was announced in this House, and the noble intentions that the government had at that time and the promises that were made to the people in Northern Manitoba that this was a government that was going to do something for the north. This was the government that was going to be quite aware of the needs of the community and were going to provide the facilities for the people, and everything would be fine. However, we find, Mr. Speaker, that they started on that program quite well. They did set up a Northern Manpower Corps and they have set up a housing program in Churchill, and I understand they are turning out houses there and to listen to the Minister of Northern Affairs, I believe he used the word "quality" houses as well. Well, I would sincerely hope they are, Mr. Speaker, because in this article we find that the proposed rents are \$421.00 a month for a 4-bedroom home. That is real quality, Mr. Speaker, \$421 a month for a 4-bedroom home and on a 50-year lease, Mr. Speaker, 50-year lease, \$358.00 for a 3-bedroom unit and



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(MR. GRAHAM Cont'd) . . . . \$227.00 for a house with two bedrooms. Now this article says that the value of the 4-bedroom house is estimated at \$50,000. Over the expected 50-year life span, the school board or the private occupant or the local government district authority would end up paying \$252,000 for a \$50,000 unit.

Now the First Minister or the Minister of Finance may very well argue that, well, that will be paid with inflated dollars, that inflation is bound to continue, and the dollar that they're spending today to buy this unit they can pay for with 10 cent dollars or 20 cent dollars, and really that \$252,000 doesn't amount to too much. But, Mr. Speaker, the point that I want to make is not the value of the house, it's the question of the position that the local school board is being placed in when they are being asked, as the article goes on to say further, that they have been asked to take 20 housing units, which they had spoken for in the redeveloped area, and they have to make up their mind very quickly. And I just wonder whether the Minister of Education is going to be willing to put forward the amount of money that would be necessary for the school board to take over 20 units, because I'm sure that you would never get a teacher to go up there if they had to pay \$421.00 a month for rent on a house unless you offered them a fantastic salary. And I haven't heard the Minister of Education offer us any changes in the Foundation grant - none whatever. I haven't heard the Minister of Education tell us what he is prepared to do in individual cases where you run up against problems of this nature, problems which are themselves government-created. Is government going to then answer the problems?

Mr. Speaker, it seems rather amusing to me that we are finding government creating the problem and then government being asked to answer the problem. It is a little bit amusing, Sir, because we find it, we're finding it occurring here in Churchill, you'll find it occurring, not only in Churchill, you'll find it occurring in almost every community in Manitoba in some form or another, that government creates the problem and then government is expected to find the answer. Well, Mr. Speaker, --(Interjection)-- Mr. Speaker, it's rather amusing to hear the First Minister say that we created the problem. Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the First Minister, I want to tell the First Minister something, that when government gets involved, that is when the problem starts. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter what the program is, when you look at it and analyze it it's when government gets involved that the problem starts.

A MEMBER: That's right.

MR. GRAHAM: Mr. Speaker, --(Interjection)-- and the more they get involved the bigger the problems become. And Mr. Speaker, it's becoming evident -- right here we see it suddenly getting interested . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The hour being 9:00 o'clock we now move into the Private Members' House. First resolution is Resolution 25. The Honourable Member for Wolseley.

POINT OF PRIVILEGE

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege. Mr. Speaker, a point of privilege arose a few moments ago when the Honourable Mines Minister rose on a point of privilege following the speech by the Member from St. James, and it was only now that the speech ended, I felt it appropriate to raise it.

Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Mines Minister in his point of privilege took advantage of making a point of privilege to say that he disagreed with what the Member from St. James had said. And the Member from St. James had said that the Manitoba Development Corporation Board of Directors act at the political instruction of the government. The Honourable Mines Minister stood up and was allowed to make a point of privilege saying that is not the case. Mr. Speaker, so that the record is clear, on a point of privilege, I say that the Manitoba Development Corporation Board of Directors is the pawn and the tool of the political arm, the Minister. And Mr. Speaker, you have two points of privilege and you can rule.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Since we are into the Private Members' Hour I'll keep this very short. Both of them are explanations, neither one is a matter of privilege.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR - RESOLUTIONS 25; 1.

MR. SPEAKER: Resolution 25. The member is absent. Resolution 1. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell has left. Resolution 21. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia. Oh I'm sorry, we'll vote on No. 1.

MR. JORGENSEN: Resolution No. 1 must be proceeded with.

MR. SPEAKER put the question on the amendment and after a voice vote declared the amendment carried.

MOTION on the resolution as amended presented. Carried.

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MR. SPEAKER: Resolution 21. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I do have a few minutes and would like to just conclude by saying that some of the members that have taken part in this resolution and on this debate have indicated that there are no problems and no poverty in northern Manitoba, and this is where I disagree and I disagree very strongly, Mr. Speaker. I believe that the difference of opinion that we have here and the difference of opinion that I have is, I agree with some of the members when they say that through the union negotiation the wages are high in northern Manitoba, and this is true. Well that's not the people that I was concerned about, because through strong democratic unions naturally the people are able to negotiate a good wage for themselves. Well that wasn't my concern. My concern is where there was no union, where there wasn't a strong union, and it's only a small percentage of the people that are organized, and surely the members must know this.

I would like to hear from some of the members from northern Manitoba. Perhaps we'll hear on this resolution from the Member for Thompson, the Member for Churchill, and some of the other members. I would like to hear from the Member for Crescentwood what he feels about this resolution, because really, Mr. Speaker, I have had an opportunity to talk to quite a few people from northern Manitoba and this is the opinion that they have expressed to me, that certainly the costs are quite high in northern Manitoba. And I'm sure that if some of the members, the backbenchers, would just make themselves available to these retail food price indexes for selected northern Manitoba communities, they would find out pretty quickly what the problems are in northern Manitoba when you have in some areas as much as the index is at least by 27, 15, 30, 40 and in one instance almost to 50 percent higher than the City of Winnipeg. So, surely, Mr. Speaker, this must be of concern, must be of great concern to members from Thompson, members from Rupertsland and Churchill, and I would like to hear from them. Because the reason that you have a minimum wage in the first place is to eliminate poverty caused by the existence of substandard wages, Mr. Speaker, and that's the reason workers cannot maintain a decent standard of living. That's why you have a minimum wage, Mr. Speaker.

I know that some may say that perhaps a high minimum wage may put certain industries out of contention and out of work, or close that industry. Well in my opinion this is incorrect because, in other words, I would feel that in some instances perhaps it would compel some executives' inefficient management to improve their production methods and to improve their operation which they would improve their over-all operation, and would be able to survive and would be that much more efficient.

So what we do in minimum wage is really to establish some kind of a purchasing power of the lower income groups. That's all what it is, Mr. Speaker. And to say by the members of the backbenchers on this side it's not necessary, it's not required because it's not the case in northern Manitoba, is very much untrue, Mr. Speaker. All we're asking for is to provide a floor for maintaining a wage structure in some depressed areas. That's all it is. And I've had an opportunity to talk to a considerable amount of people in northern Manitoba and all the information that has been given to me, and the statistics themselves would indicate, that surely, surely the Member from Thompson and the Member from Rupertsland and I hope the Member for Crescentwood, would not let this resolution go and say it is of no consequences to the people in northern Manitoba who are not organized, who are not unionized, because I have talked to not only people who are not in a bargaining unit, but I have talked to many people in the union from Thompson, and the indication to me came very strong, Mr. Speaker, that this is something that they would like to see in northern Manitoba.

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(MR. PATRICK Cont'd)

So I would really conclude, Mr. Speaker, that I feel this resolution certainly has merit and I'm very glad to see that the Member for Fort Garry has, on this side of the House, has given support to it and perhaps we will get maybe different points of view from the members of the backbenchers than we got from the Minister of Northern Affairs, because certainly, Mr. Speaker, all the problems have not been solved by the Minister of Northern Manitoba, by the Minister of Northern Affairs. In fact, one of the members on this side is saying that he's made it worse. Well I couldn't say that he did or he didn't, that's not the point; I'm not making an attack but really, Mr. Speaker, in remote areas there is great concern by many people who are not getting a basic standard of maintaining a wage structure in the depressed areas, and I would hope that the members on this side would perhaps change their mind or if maybe backbenchers can change the Minister of Northern Affairs' mind and would support, not maybe the resolution in its totality, but at least accept the principle, because the principle has been accepted in his own department, the government has accepted the principle by making a northern allowance and a higher wage for the civil servants in northern Manitoba, by allowing a cost of living, so surely, Mr. Speaker, this resolution merits consideration.

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

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MR. KEN DILLEN (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, on the number of occasions that I have arisen in this House to express the points of opinion with regard to the north, never once have I ever requested anything more than consideration of equality. In all of the things that I have talked about, I wanted the same consideration for the people of the north regardless of their geographical location that could be expected anywhere in the southern part of this province. I think a good point in question is the question of the equality in wages, and while we're on the same subject, equality in the sense that the people in the north want the equalization of many things, including hydro, telephone, roads, rail rates, truck rates, and a whole host of other things. And they want to be treated equal with regard to wages as well. It's no problem in my area for those people who have the protection of their collective agreements in establishing their wage rates through the collective bargaining process, but it is a little bit more difficult for people who do not have that benefit, but by the same token there are other ways of achieving this equality in wages--(Interjection)-- There are - There was reference made recently in one of the papers with regard to the telephone system.

The thing I wanted to mention, the way the article was put, was that the people in the south were somehow going to have to subsidize the cost of providing telephone services into many of the remote communities, and I haven't heard anybody in this House, argue that the people in the north should not have the benefits of telephone and television, and I suppose it is simply one man's opinion that this service should not be provided. The same applies to hydro rates. We've had some discussion in this House over the past couple of weeks on the possibility of an increase in the Hydro rates but it's very significant to us that although we are not going to receive equality with the City of Winnipeg or the southern part of the major centres in the province, at least there is going to be a closing of the gap, so to speak, in the rates currently charged. And that's really - we can't expect very much more, all we're asking for is the opportunity to be equal with any of the other part of the province. Because after all, we are Manitobans as well.

When I talk about the equality I have to confess one exception, in that provisions have been made in the Allied Hydro Council Agreements which will provide first access to employment opportunities to people of the north and so it should be. The collective agreement, if I could just go into that a little closer, provides that people living in census division 16 and 19 north of the Winnipeg River system should have the opportunity of first access to employment opportunities. And when this resolution deals with the increase in the minimum wage I think that it's incumbent upon the people of the north to attempt by whatever means possible to gain access to not just those jobs that are paying the minimum wage and higher but have access to the jobs that are paying the higher rates of pay and that is on the hydro construction sites and all of the major construction sites in the north.

This will be achieved and is being achieved in many ways. The Northern Manpower Corps that I had the pleasure of working with for one year prior to coming into this particular job that I have now, and it was the efforts of that Corps, a small group of people, determined to provide access to employment that really is gaining some significant effect now on the total economy of the northern remote communities. I think that it would be safe to say that at the present time there is somewhere in the neighborhood of 100 people from the area of Cross Lake who are currently employed on Lake Winnipeg regulation, a hundred people there who are earning in excess of \$5 an hour. So that the people who would normally pay the minimum wage have now got to compete with those existing employment opportunities that exist in that area and the minimum wage as we see it here in the southern part of the province has really no significance whatever.

I certainly appreciate the intent of this resolution and naturally if it's accepted by the House we would accept for those areas that are now receiving a minimum wage, an additional minimum wage, an addition of 15 percent. Although the number affected may be relatively small and insignificant nonetheless the intent of the resolution is certainly appreciated. However, the increase in the minimum wage of 15 percent does not do very much in terms of putting roofs on houses, windows on houses, home improvements, and it really doesn't have the effect of putting any more bread on the table. The emphasis that I feel should be placed on northern Manitoba is increasing the wages of every person who is employed, not by insignificant amount but by a great amount, and that can be done by training those people who now do not have the

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(MR. DILLEN cont'd). . . necessary skills to fill those jobs, to fill the job vacancies that presently exist.

Some mention was made this evening on the situation in Churchill and I suppose that it's very meaningful that somebody should consider that there was a necessity for increasing the minimum wage for Churchill, or for the north in that manner, but really any resolution that does not indicate clearly just exactly where this north is is very difficult to accept, because for so many years the north was considered that area somewhere north of the perimeter highway; and if that is the intent of the resolution that the mentality still exists that the north exists somewhere north of perimeter highway then on that basis no doubt it will have some benefit -- (Interjection)-- the member says that he's been a little bit further north than that and I suppose that he's talking then of somewhere in the Interlake . . . There are many things that have to be taken into consideration when we talk about this whole question of equality, and although there is a definite need, as I've expressed before, in increasing the earning ability of the people in the north, I think that we also have to recognize that there is definitely a lack of opportunities in other areas as well. When I talk about the lack of opportunity I want to express that there is a lack of opportunity in education, continuing education, a lack of opportunity in employment and a lack of opportunity for training. But this, you know, has come about as a result of a hundred years of neglect in this province for the people of the north, that the north for the last number of years only existed as a means of exploitation for the mining companies, the wood companies, the fishing companies and everybody else in the southern part of this north whose only intent it was to come in and rip out the natural resources of the area with absolutely no regard to one of the most important resources that the area has, and that is in the area of the human resource.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. DILLEN: And I too much confess that the area of exploitation did not only exist for the mining companies and the pulpwood companies and the fish companies, that there was many people, many people in this. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Would the honourable member from someone else's seat kindly refrain from interrupting. The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. DILLEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The area that--I just got off my train of thought here for a moment, but there were other people as well who were just as guilty of a form of exploitation as were the other companies that I've mentioned before and the corporations. And I suppose that many people are looking at the north today as a means of exploitation for the benefit of the southern worker who can go into the north and spend 60 days or 90 days or a year and get as much as he can in the shortest possible period of time and get out, and that in itself is a form of exploitation that is not really benefitting the people of the area. And it doesn't only apply to southern Manitobans, it applies to southern Saskatchewan residents, southern Canadians right across the whole of the Dominion of Canada, and although I have no objection whatsoever of any person from Canada being employed anywhere in Canada I think that we have a very definite responsibility to ensure that our people who are somewhat less advantaged than the people who have access to training facilities, to educational facilities, to other employment opportunities, that we give the same consideration and equality to those people of the northern areas of the province.

There was some mention made concerning the higher rates of allowances that are paid to civil servants for employment in northern areas and although I have never been able to clearly define why this is necessary, why there's a necessity to pay a higher rate of pay or an allowance of any description for a civil servant to work in the north. If generally speaking the servants of this province must have some form of, some social conscience that would compel them to do their best type of work in any area that they're called upon to do it in, that it shouldn't be necessary to use this as an inducement for people to go into the north, but such is the case that in order to get the type of people who are best suited and want to work in the north additional money has to be paid in the form of an allowance.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable member has five minutes.

MR. DILLEN: There have been considerable amounts of discussion that's gone on in the past year with regard to the equalization of freight rates between the east and west but the similar disparity exists between the north and the south and I think it's necessary to press on with the continuation of the fight to bring about equality for all of Manitobans in this respect.

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(MR. DILLEN Cont'd)

I think I should draw to the attention of the members of this House that I understand there's some extreme difficulties being experienced in the garment industry and the problem seems to be in acquiring workers from the southern part of the province to be employed in those many employment opportunities that exist there. And yet in spite of this question being raised repeatedly in this House I have yet to have somebody suggest that a 15 percent increase in the minimum wage for the garment industry may solve part of that problem. And would this be accepted by the industry itself.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose that the proposed motion be amended by striking out all the words after the words "in southern areas" and adding thereto

"AND WHEREAS the present government has undertaken many important and worthwhile programs to lower the cost of living in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS the minimum wage is one aspect in the cost of living,

BE IT RESOLVED that as the Government of Manitoba is presently conducting an impact study as to the effects of minimum wages in areas within the province, the effect on business including the number of persons involved, the matter of the application of the minimum wage in various areas of the province be deferred until such time that the findings of the study are known."

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like very much to have a copy of the amendment because I'd very much like to speak on it.

Mr. Speaker, my first comments would be one of great alarm, where here the resolution is guaranteeing the people of the north, which includes the Honourable Member for Thompson, that third largest city that we have in this province, 15 percent, right off just like that. Well, read it. Just read it. Now therefore be it resolved that the government give consideration to amending the minimum wage regulations in Manitoba to provide in northern Manitoba and remote areas the minimum wage shall always and automatically be not less than 15 percent of the minimum wage in general use throughout.

Now can you, can you, Mr. Speaker, justify a member coming in here from Thompson and amending that resolution with this type of a resolution which puts it into oblivion, in other words telling his people back in Thompson that he will not accept a 15 percent right across-the-board. Well of course, Mr. Speaker, again it's the same old socialist trick, you know - what one says they all say and they fall in line like sheep. But I suspect if we were to send the honourable member's comments tonight to the mayor and the council - and I listened to his speech with great interest - that he turned down the people of Thompson a 15 percent over the rest of Manitoba, he wouldn't buy it. Instead of that, Mr. Speaker, he goes for a gimmick here that says, and whereas - and you can remember some of the promises that this government has made - I don't know about his constituency but I can sure tell you some of the promises that have been made in Roblin. And nothing has happened out there, Mr. Speaker, as long as we've had this government. But anyway Mr. Speaker, it goes on. "And whereas the government has undertaken many important and worthwhile programs to lower the cost of living in northern Manitoba." There's no quarrel with that, no quarrel with that statement, Mr. Speaker. "And whereas the minimum wage is one aspect of the cost of living" - no quarrel with that aspect of the resolution. "Therefore be it resolved that the Government of Manitoba is presently conducting an impact study" - and man we've had these studies since I've been here going out of our ears.

But I again ask the Member for Thompson, would you like to speak again or would you like to take another look at what you said, because Mr. Speaker, I just can't buy what that honourable member said. He's opposed to the minimum wage, he's opposed to a 15 percent additional pay for the people in Thompson, that the rest of Manitoba are not getting, he's opposed to that. He's already said it. And let it be on the record, Mr. Speaker, that I will hopefully get his speech and get it to the mayor and the people up there as quickly as I can to let them know what kind of a member they got. Because there's no way we in the Liberal Party of this province justify that you're entitled to a 15 - in fact I even see a 20 or 25 percent increase over the rest of the people of Manitoba. And I think the Conservatives would support

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(MR. McKENZIE Cont'd) . . . . that too. But what does your NDP friend say? - you're going to study it. Here it is right in hard cold facts, black figures. Do you want it or don't you want it. He says, no, I don't want it. I don't want it for my people, I don't want a 15 percent over the rest of Manitoba for my people due to reasons which are regional, transportation and that, he says no he doesn't want it.

You know what he said, Mr. Speaker? He got off on a harangue about 100 years that nothing has happened up there, nothing has happened until this government took over. Now, Mr. Speaker, just let's go back and check the record, just let's check the record. I'm sure that the honourable member didn't mean to make that kind of an allegation in this Chamber and expect that nobody was going to challenge him on it. Because how did Thompson arrive on the scene? Was it from the NDP? Were you the guys that created Thompson, the third largest city that we have in our province; And the member said that nothing has happened in a hundred years. That's his own constituency. That's the seat of his own riding. How did Thompson get there? Did you build it? Did the Minister for Mines build it or did your government? No, they didn't. Was it there ten years ago? It was. He said nothing happened up there for a hundred years. So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to accept his statement as fact. He said nothing.

Let's look at Flin Flon, Lynn Lake, Snow Lake. Were those communities not there a hundred years ago? No they weren't. Were they there 20 years ago? Were they there ten? Do the people from Snow Lake or Lynn Lake want a 15 percent increase over the people, the wages they are getting in the city? I suspect, Mr. Speaker, they would like to get that. The Liberals are willing to support it, we're willing to support it but what do you get from the NDP? They're going to further study it. You know, typical typical, you know. Great philosophers. They don't understand hard cold facts. That you need 15 percent, and Mr. Speaker, I'll even go farther and amend it and say that you need 25 percent, we're willing to stand up and support it, and pass a resolution giving the people in the north all the rights and the money that they need to maintain the north. But for a member to stand up in this Chamber and make an allegation that nothing has happened in the north for a hundred years until these guys took over - What a dream, Mr. Speaker.

Let's talk about the development of the hydro power of this province, Mr. Speaker. I remember the 1966 meeting of the Public Utilities Committee, Mr. Speaker, when the Chairman of the Board in those days laid the full development of the plan for the north, of the development.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. DILLEN: Would the Member for Roblin permit a question?

MR. McKENZIE: Sure.

MR. DILLEN: Would you express your party's position on the last increase in the minimum wage in the Province of Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, am I allowed to answer, because that's not in this resolution. I leave it to the Speaker.

A MEMBER: Backing out, eh?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin proceed.

MR. McKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I am not going to indicate what the honourable member should debate. But minimum wages is the question before us. If he wants to answer that's his business.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I submit that the honourable member raised the question of order with you and asked you whether it would be in order for him to discuss his party's general position, and his in particular vis-a-vis the minimum wage, and I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that it is entirely in order.

MR. McKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I'm willing to debate that --(Interjection)-- isn't that unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, you know and that's typical of those guys over there. They never want to let anybody be heard from this side. The allegations that come across, I listened to what the Honourable Minister, I listened to what the Member for Thompson has said, and all my colleagues on this side of the House listened with a keen ear. And you know what, this rabble rousing, Mr. Speaker, that continually

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(MR. MCKENZIE Cont'd) . . . . goes on over there, first of all you can't hear yourself think because you can't get yourself expressed because they're on your back.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I again ask you, can I reply to the Honourable Member for Thompson's question? He says I can. No, he asked me where I was on the minimum wage when it was brought before the House before. I was support of it. Support of it, Sir.

--(Interjection)-- I'm talking about myself. And I'm speaking tonight as the Member for Roblin constituency and if you want to deny me those rights - you know, this - what do they call this thing that stands over here supposed to be the Member from Osborne is it? It's called Tourism or, is he a tourism or a consumer? Nobody knows what his responsibilities are, what duties he's got. Nobody knows where his office is, but you can hear him, Mr. Speaker, when he stands up and you can hear his voice, I'm sure they must hear him four blocks away all the time. But he never says anything in this House and he never makes sense, but you can always hear him.

A MEMBER: How can I not make sense . . .

MR. MCKENZIE: So, Mr. Speaker, let me finish my remarks. As much as I'd like to and get my voice across past the consumer affairs so the Member from Thompson can hear me, about the resolution, I again stand up before the members of this Chamber and say that the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party of this province are in complete support of this resolution. So it's been amended. And who amended it, Mr. Speaker? We didn't amend it. No, the NDP amended it. That they're not, you know - the money that the Minister of Finance was talking about here in his budget - do you mean to tell me they can't afford to just stand up and support? --(Interjection)-- I'm not talking about the - I'm talking about 15 percent over it or 20 or 25 percent which we'll support on this side of the House. No quarrel, no quarrels at all.

But let's look at the problems that I have where I live - and many people say that because I'm in Roblin constituency that I don't come from the north, I have as many problems in my constituency as you have in the north but here we're willing to compensate some of our problems and pass them on to you people in the north. And he says I don't want it. I don't want it. The Member for Thompson says I don't want no part of it, I'm going to amend this resolution so that it's meaningless and it's worthless and it's got no value, and here it is. He says "that as the Government of Manitoba is presently conducting an impact study". Now impact study on what? Do they not know, does your government not know, what your sitting on the back bench of, that there's a problem in the north, that it costs people a lot more to live up there than it does down here? Do you not know that yourself? Why would you as a Member for Thompson stand up and accept that kind of an amendment and put it on the order? You made the allegations in your speech, you said nothing has happened up there for a hundred years. For that reason and that reason only you should have supported it. If nothing has happened up there then you should have said I'll support - I'll even go for 50 percent increase in the minimum wage. But you know what, he didn't do that. No, he didn't do that. He came back and made all these allegations about nothing has happened up there, as if - do you mean to tell me nothing has happened in the last four years? Yes, you made - it was your speech, you made the speech, Sir.

So, Mr. Speaker, how can we believe - the new member from Thompson should have some in here clean from all this socialist garments that these other guys are wearing, but he's got them on, he talks like them, he makes the same kind of speeches because I've heard this hundred year thing from - I think most members of the north have made this allegation: Nothing has happened up there. Nothing has happened. They're not willing - and remember when some of the other things come up in this House about the north that . . . you are telling us that you don't want us to have compassion on you people in the north. Do you not? Well don't you want the 15 percent? There it is, you can have it. All you have to do is stand up on your feet the same as I am and say I'll accept it.

So Mr. Speaker, I in my closing remarks say that the people of Roblin constituency which I represent are in complete support of this resolution, we know you deserve 15 percent and if we can amend the resolution to go to 20 and 25 we'll support that to make sure that you can't stand up and say that we from the south or from Roblin constituency are against you people. We never were, we never will be, we're one Manitoba and we'll stand behind you any time.



## RESOLUTION 21

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

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, I hadn't intended to enter the debate until I heard the speech from the Honourable Member from Thompson. Mr. Speaker, that was an astounding piece of literature, one that deserves to be inscribed on tablets and erected some place near the grave of the late Member from Churchill, the Honourable Gordon Beard. Because never before, Mr. Speaker, never before, Mr. Speaker, has the presence of that man been more noticeably desirable in this House. Never before have we found that the north is bereft of a voice. Mr. Speaker, the great power and the great tower that Gordon Beard would have added to a debate of this nature would have given the north the kind of voice that it's entitled to. But so far, Mr. Speaker, the north through it's spokesman from Thompson has discredited itself in seeking the kind of deal, the kind of fiscal and economic structure that the north has long said it requires.

Mr. Speaker, I deliver a message to the honourable private members opposite. There exists in this Legislature enough people who have indicated support for this resolution, a resolution that the Liberal Party committed to four years ago shortly after I became the leader, and it's three times put to this House. And there exists tonight and in the days ahead enough votes in this Chamber ready to vote for this resolution which, if the five northern NDP MLAs join us, this resolution will pass.

A MEMBER: Hear, hear.

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, a very important kind of mathematics is going to be demonstrated here. Because this resolution will pass if the five northern NDP MLAs want it to pass. And it will fail only if those five NDP MLAs from the north vote "Party" and not for their region. Mr. Speaker, this is what the Honourable Member from Thompson said he rejects. He said I believe it was peanuts, he certainly left the impression that this 15 percent minimum wage differential that we have been calling for was not enough to - was the word insignificant? Fine. He certainly conveyed a stronger impression to me.

Now on the premise that there will be no increase in the minimum wage, which is an inconceivable premise, but even if there weren't an increase, Mr. Speaker, our proposal means approximately minimum today - 30 cents per hour at the base level of the scale in northern Manitoba. That doesn't mean 30 cents at the top, that's 30 cents per hour at the bottom. That represents \$2.40 per day, and that represents without overtime approximately \$12.00 per week, and that represents approximately \$50.00 a month. And the resolution would raise the pay scale north of 53 in Manitoba by a minimum of \$50 a month at the bottom. Now if that's peanuts, Mr. Speaker, pardon me, because I have a lot of people that I know to whom \$50.00 per month is not peanuts. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I know of strikes, I know of lockouts, I know of work stoppages that take place over much less. Mr. Speaker, it's the multiplier effect. Mr. Speaker, my honourable colleague asks me what did the Honourable Member from Thompson make himself. Well that's not a valid question. The reason it's not a valid question is because he was an NDP employee, so naturally Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member from Thompson wouldn't know what it's like to live on minimum wage. Why if you simply browse through Public Accounts you'll find him at 13 or 14 thousand dollars a year, without the benefit of ever having to be elected. It must have been a terrible terrible problem for him to come closer to the minimum wage when he was forced to become a member of the Legislature at \$9,600.

But Mr. Speaker, fortunately he's preserved and protected from that indignity of working for \$9,600. You see like so many of our honourable colleagues opposite, he is a government super MLA. Mr. Speaker, that means anything from three to five to six thousand dollars a year extra. Now if you happen to also be in charge of the political indoctrination centre called the government building in Thompson, maybe your job is the filing of tape recordings or the erasing of tape recordings, I'm not sure what his job there was, Mr. Speaker, maybe under those circumstances perhaps he was paid on the basis upon how many memberships he was able to sell out of Her Majesty's building in Thompson. I'm not sure. But, Mr. Speaker, the minimum wage has a multiplying effect throughout an entire economy, and when you raise the base to 15 cents - and I express my embarrassment for the people of Thompson constituency at having had the representation just made on their behalf tonight - when you raise that 15 percent base that permeates the entire wage structure. Everybody knows that. When the base wage goes up, everything above it goes up. So it means an economic lift to north of 53 of a minimum - and our resolution says a minimum of 15 percent. That's why I say to my honourable colleague

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(MR. ASPER cont'd) . . . . from Roblin that certainly 20 percent is in order; it's worth considering; but we said a minimum of 15 percent. The reason we said a minimum was because we looked at data that has been put before the House. The Honourable Minister for Industry and Commerce finally produced a report from his Statistics Division that made some great contribution to this province. It told us that the northerner faces an unacceptable cost of living load, dramatically different from the City of Winnipeg and southern Manitoba. I believe the average was 18 percent and 20 percent in that order.

Now, Mr. Speaker, given that, why not? How can anyone say no? That if the cost of living increment is 15-20, 20 to 22 percent higher--well, here we are. Here are the figures if anybody wants to question me on them. I can read them. If the cost of living is that much higher, surely the wage base can stand to be lifted by 15 percent at least. Mr. Speaker, I've heard these debates for four years now in my present role, and I've heard, I remember the time the Liberal Party brought in a resolution three years ago, where we asked that there be established the Department of Northern Affairs. Well, Mr. Speaker, that was heresy. The government hooted. The government absolutely couldn't accept that. I remember the Honourable Mines Minister. I remember him speaking on that debate, suggesting perhaps there might be next the Minister of Southern Affairs, and Eastern Affairs to fractionalize the province, and there should never be a Minister of Northern Affairs. Our resolution was foolish.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are used to that rhetoric. We are used to that hyperbole, and we are also grateful that it doesn't mean anything, especially when it comes from the Mines Minister, because we know that he plays the game; that if it comes in from this side it's no, and then a respectable time period elapses and it comes in from that side, and it's yes.

A MEMBER: Do we have a Northern Affairs Minister?

MR. ASPER: Mr. Speaker, the question is put, do we have a Minister of Northern Affairs? I wish the question had been put a little more precisely. Do we have a Department of Northern Affairs? The answer is yes. Do we have a Minister of Northern Affairs? No, Mr. Speaker, we do not. That's one of our problems. And, Mr. Speaker, when the enquiry takes place we will be able to document that with a little more precision.

Mr. Speaker, I treat the government's rejection to date of this resolution the same way I treated their rejection of the idea of a Department of Northern Affairs. It would come. And as we said a year later, we would like to see a University of the North and that was hooted at and pooh-pooed as usual, and then suddenly the university started to move into the north with a northern division. And that's fine. That's our job. That's what private members are all about, feeding input into government and going through the rigmarole. If government accepts it. But if government doesn't accept it because it came from the other side, then the purpose is defeated. Mr. Speaker, that's what disappoints me about the Member from Thompson in his contribution, because he took a political party position. He forgot that we were in the Private Members' Hour and at this time he's free--maybe somebody should tell him. I'm sorry, in that party they don't tell you. I take it back. He is free, and Mr. Speaker, it will be observed when he votes. And the Member from Flin Flon, and the Honourable Member from The Pas, the Honourable Member from Rupertsland, and the Honourable Member from Churchill, they will be on the record when this comes to a vote. And I challenge them to stand in this Chamber on this resolution and dare them to say "No. No, we don't think we should have a differential because we don't have any economic fiscal problems up here."

Mr. Speaker, it's not unusual for there to be differentials in minimum wage and wage structures based on regional considerations. We've got it in the construction industry. It's no shame, it's no stigma. Heavy construction wage rates are different. I can remember when I worked in rural Manitoba one summer and in urban Manitoba another summer, we had different minimum wages. Mr. Speaker, never before than at this moment the north needs statesmen, the north needs spokesmen. The north made a judgment, the north made a judgment in June of 1973 to give full support to the New Democratic Party, and now the New Democratic Party with five out of five northern seats, has a chance to show the north that that concern that they felt was justified, and the chance now is to pass the resolution. Mr. Speaker, they've got the five seats and they've turned their back on the north, and the northern representatives who have spoken so far, the Honourable Member from Thompson has also joined in turning his back on his own people.

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(MR. ASPER cont'd)

Mr. Speaker, we will see, we've seen it before with NDP members who can't distinguish their relationships to their constituency between their relationship to their party, and this is a matter of personal regret that we are in Private Members' Hour, a worthwhile resolution has been put forward, one which will enhance the region of the north and the well-being of the people in the north, and the first northerner to speak on it, the Honourable Member from Thompson, turns his back, turns his back on his own people, and says no.

Mr. Speaker, not only does the north need a statement on this resolution but on the whole field of northern policy, because we will shortly be debating in this Chamber a bill or bills which will have significant long-term perpetual impact on the frontier - I'm speaking of the mining laws, the tax laws that are anticipated. Mr. Speaker, if this is the quality of statesmanship that we have from the north, if we have a northern member saying I will vote to turn this down because my party has told me this is a source of embarrassment to us, then, Mr. Speaker, God help the north when it comes to the debate which involves its long-term future - the mining debate.

Mr. Speaker, the only policy that the NDP has been able to produce for the north is a policy of colonization. If the north was neglected for the first hundred years, as my honourable friend from Thompson suggests, then let us assume that it was given a very good look in the first year or two of the first administration of the NDP, following which the NDP said this is a kind of region which can give us five seats but which responds best to the political boss system. So the organizers came pouring in, paid by the taxpayers of course, and each community got its boss and each community got its patronage system and each community got its payoff system, and, Mr. Speaker, it got to the point where we said to the people of Manitoba during the election and the Progressive Conservative Party to its credit supported that view, that we will cut sales tax, for example, to lower the cost of living. Mr. Speaker, the NDP who denounced sales tax, who denounced it in the most vigorous terms in 1967-68 and voted against it and had the opportunity to change it - what did they do? Their first major change in the sales tax system. You heard the Honourable Finance Minister two or three nights ago say what he's going to do. He's going to take the sales tax off sales of goods on Indian Reserves. Mr. Speaker, think. Mr. Speaker, it works very mathematical. It has been said that the northern Indian reserves are the key to the northern political power, so naturally, Mr. Speaker, as we've seen in every other program and we'll demonstrate tomorrow when we go back to the Budget Debate, every dime of spending, every dime of political activity, every ounce of government energy is only exerted where it has political power. It has no merit unless it has political authority, political muscle behind it, political dividends to reap.

Well, Mr. Speaker, knowing that why does the Honourable Member from Thompson cop out? Why does he turn his back on his people? Here is a chance for the NDP at the expense of INCO, those dastardly pirates who milk the lifeblood out of our community, and Thompson Motors, and the Burntwood Hotel, and all those savages, that as I've heard that Honourable Member from Thompson before he was elevated to Member from Thompson, but in the early days when we fought it out in Thompson, all of us, in the building of that town, Mr. Speaker, my honourable colleague asks me, where was he? Mr. Speaker, we were all there, we were all there in a strike in 1966, and Mr. Speaker, if the people who supported my honourable friend in 1966 - 1964, when was the strike? '65 in March I believe - and the former Member from Thompson, the Honourable Joe Borowski, Mr. Speaker, was a very cozy relationship amongst many of us in those days, you wouldn't have heard a comment from the honourable member like you heard tonight. Mr. Speaker, here is a chance for the Member from Thompson to get them, to get those employers who are sucking the energy and the lifeblood out of the labour force of the north. Mr. Speaker, what does he do? He says no.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in concluding my comments, I repeat that let us treat for the moment the Member from Thompson's comment as an aberration, let us take the position that something he ate, like the Honourable Member from Birtle-Russell the other night, something has disagreed with him, and let us give him another chance because he now has an amendment, and I challenge the Member from Churchill, the Honourable Member from The Pas, Flin Flon and Rupertsland to stand up and be counted on this resolution. It is in their hands to pass it or defeat it. And if it's defeated, Mr. Speaker, the record will show that the northern NDP MLAs turned it down, and we'll be satisfied because we'll take their word that they speak for the

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(MR. ASPER cont'd) . . . . . people of the north and we are wrong and they were right. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. GREEN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I only have a minute and I really can't do very much in a minute. Mr. Speaker, the honourable member says he wants to see these northern members stand up and be counted and then they will be able to go back to their constituencies and see whether they are the statesmen or the embarrassment to their constituents. Well three of those honourable members stood up, were counted on exactly the similar principle last year, took exactly the same position, those three were not an embarrassment to their constituents, they were sent back here and joined by two more. On the other hand, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member who is my member was an embarrassment to many of his constituents and he should look at some of his fans and maybe he will determine why. Mr. Speaker, I insist to continue my remarks.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member will have an opportunity next time. The hour of adjournment having arrived, the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:30 tomorrow afternoon.