

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY of MANITOBA
Tuesday, March 1, 1977

TIME: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker

MR. SPEAKER, Honourable Peter Fox (Kildonan): Before we proceed, I should like to direct the attention of the honourable members to the gallery where we have 30 students, Grade 11 standing, from Daniel McIntyre Collegiate. These students are under the direction of Mr. Rohs. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Wellington.

We also have 30 students, Grade 11 standing, from the West Kildonan Collegiate under the direction of Mr. Paul Ruta. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks, the Minister of Finance and Urban Affairs.

On behalf of all the honourable members of the Legislature I welcome you.
Presenting Petitions; Reading and Receiving Petitions.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Public Works.

HONOURABLE RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker I am pleased to submit the **REPORT of the Board of Internal Economy Commissioners** for the past fiscal year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

HONOURABLE LEONARD EVANS (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the **Annual Report for the Fiscal Year ending March 31, 1976**, for the Department of Industry and Commerce and also the **Manitoba Trading Corporation, the Manitoba Research Council and the Manitoba Design Institute.**

MR. SPEAKER: Any other Ministerial Statements or Tabling of Reports? The Honourable Minister of Mines.

HONOURABLE SIDNEY GREEN, Q.C., (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the **Annual Report of the Department of Mines Resources and Environmental Management; the Annual Report of the Watershed Conservation Districts of Manitoba; the Annual Report of the Resource Conservation Districts; the Annual Report of the Communities Economic Development.** **MR. SPEAKER:** Thank you. Notices of Motion; Introduction of Bills.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition. **HONOURABLE STERLING LYON (Souris-Killarney):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the First Minister and the Minister of Finance, perhaps I could direct a question —(Interjection)— Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't see him. Well, with the presence of the Minister of Finance in the House, Mr. Speaker . . . **MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. **MR. LYON:** . . . could I direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Finance and ask him if he could give us clarification with respect to the reported loan of \$193,210,000 which has been advanced, apparently, by the Government of Canada to Manitoba Hydro with respect to the transmission line construction presently going on between Nelson River and southern Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HONOURABLE SAUL A. MILLER (Seven Oaks): Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. LYON: A supplementary, of which my honourable friend may want to take notice as well. Could he advise us when he is bringing us an answer to the first question as to whether this loan of \$193 million which I take it is part of a larger one of \$437 million to be advanced by the Federal Government, could he tell us what the interest rate is on the loan, the terms of repayment and whether or not this, as in the case of the first loan, will be administered by the Atomic Energy Commission?

MR. MILLER: Yes, I'll take that as notice as well, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour. I wonder if the Minister has had an opportunity to examine the letter that was sent by the officials of Griffin Steel to the Chief Conciliation Officer and employees indicating that their employment would be terminated on February 28th to determine if this was in fact a violation of the Manitoba Labour Relations Act, and if so is he now prepared to investigate that particular infraction to determine whether the company is in violation of the Act.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HONOURABLE RUSSELL PAULLEY (Transcona): I guess, Mr. Speaker, the simple reply to my honourable friend would be, yes, in every instance. I have received a copy of the letter that was sent by Griffin Steel to the employees pertaining to their status of employees, after February 28th. A request has been made of me for an investigation into the letter and incidentally I only received the

communications, Mr. Speaker, yesterday when I returned to my office at 5:30. It is my intention to cause an investigation to be made into the letter to see whether or not it contains a violation of the Labour Relations Act.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister for his explanation. Could he indicate, then, whether he is now prepared to initiate an industrial enquiries commission under the Act based upon this kind of contrary evidence that seems to be apparent.

MR. PAULLEY: I think, Mr. Speaker, it would be only fair for me to say that in the communication that I have received from Mr. Alan Pitt, the National President of CAIMAW there were two requests made: one in reference to Section 21, (1) of the Labour Relations Act (that's the one that I just referred to); the other was a request under Section 112(1) the establishment of an industrial enquiry commission.

I have indicated to my honourable friend that I am prepared to institute an investigation under Section 21(1). I see at the present time no useful purpose would be served by the establishment of an industrial enquiry commission, which is something entirely different than the request for the enquiry under the Unfair Labour Practices section of the Labour Relations Act.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, just a final supplementary to the Minister. Can he indicate whether the Department of Labour or any of his officials are on the scene of the particular picket line at Griffin Steel to determine if there is any irregularities in the conduct of the different parties to the dispute or to the law officers who are present at the picket line to maintain order. Is there any observation or examination going on to determine if there are any irregularities or breaking of the guideline set forward as to how this should be conducted.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, I think it would only be fair and proper for me to say, insofar as the Department of Labour is concerned, that having exhausted, at least up until now, all of its input into trying to resolve this dispute, it would serve no useful purpose for the Department of Labour to have observers insofar as to what is going on at the entrance to the plant.

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

HONOURABLE RENE TOUPIN, (Springfield): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I answered several questions from the Honourable Member for Assiniboia, one that I took as notice dealing with employees of the Manitoba Telephone System, and one such employee being suspended. There has been one suspension of an employee of the Telephone System for three days because of a breach of a term of the collective agreement by the employee, that is Article 4, Section 401(2)(3) and (4) of the collective agreement. It was a three day suspension and it was because of a breach of the collective agreement arrived at between management and employees.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. STEVE PATRICK: I thank the Minister for giving me the answer. He didn't indicate to the House if he investigated that management is monitoring conversations of employees or other problems of personnel. Can the Minister indicate to the House if he investigated that?

MR. TOUPIN: Well, not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker, that there is no official monitoring being taken by management but there is always reporting being had by means of other employees to management and that's something you'll never prevent.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. L. R. (BUD) SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Labour and is relative to Griffin Steel. It differs from the questions asked by the Member for Fort Rouge. I would ask the Minister if he can advise the House what mediation or conciliation efforts, if any, are being undertaken by the Department of Labour at this time in that dispute?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: I report to the House, Mr. Speaker, that at the present time, not. It is deemed by the attitude of both management and labour that they have come to a termination of discussions. We have informed both parties that we are ready as a department, and that I am ready as Minister of Labour, to discuss at any time a possible solution but properly to my honourable friend, there is no direct involvement at the present time.

MR. SHERMAN: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister advise the House of when conciliation efforts by the Department of Labour in the dispute terminated?

MR. PAULLEY: I suppose, Mr. Speaker, the answer would be at the "eleventh hour," just prior to the disputes coming to the resolution that they would continue their differences of opinion of the Chief Conciliation Officer and also the Conciliation Officer, James Davage had been meeting with each of the parties in an endeavour to resolve the dispute.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, a further supplementary to the Minister. I would ask the Minister whether he has received any representations from either party in the dispute but particularly from the strikers that the Chief Conciliation Officer compromised his position and his effectiveness through what was apparently a partisan public statement on the issue last week.

MR. PAULLEY: I think it has been established, Mr. Speaker, that there was no partisan statement made by the Chief Conciliation Officer of the Province of Manitoba and I have received no complaint

from the employees accordingly; the only source of the complaint that I noted as the normal source, being the media of the Province of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. BOB BANMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister in charge of Fitness and Amateur Sport and would ask the Minister if he could confirm that the operations of the new Fitness and Amateur Sport facilities is experiencing and being severely hampered by low moral and staffing problems?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for Health.

HONOURABLE LAURENT L. DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, is the Honourable Member referring to staff of the Directorate on Fitness and Amateur Sport? —(Interjection)— Well then I say that he's definitely wrong.

MR. BANMAN: A further supplementary, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could inform the House if the special studies group has prepared a report on the administrative problems being encountered by the Sports Administrative Centre.

MR. DESJARDINS: Now my friend is talking about the Sports Administration Centre, which is not the staff of the Directorate on Fitness and Amateur Sports. There are certain grants for the Administration Centre, there are growing pains there, there's no doubt about that, this is something that started not too long ago, they want more and more service, as you provide service more services are required. This is being investigated to see if we should go ahead with the project, put more money into it or change it and the Advisory Committee on Fitness and Amateur Sports have been asked to look at it, to bring in all the sports people, to see what, as I say, what we should do with this program; some of the sports associations would like to see it continue, others think they can handle it themselves, so the whole thing is being reviewed. As I say it's growing pains because it's been a very successful operation.

MR. BANMAN: I wonder if the Minister could confirm or advise the House if he will be making any reports available as to the report that I mention in my prior question?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. DESJARDINS: I don't know if he's talking about any official reports; there's no official reports prepared by the department at this time. The people of the different associations might bring in some recommendation and so on. This certainly would be made available and I'll have no hesitation in disclosing all the information that I have at the time that I defend my estimates and I'd be very pleased to debate this with my honourable friend.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture but, in his absence, perhaps I should direct it to the First Minister and ask him if the Minister, or any officials of his department are conducting a poll via the telephone, asking farmers as to how they are going to vote on this referendum that is coming up in the next few days?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HONOURABLE EDWARD SCHREYER (Premier) (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, I obviously have no way of being certain other than that I believe very much that that is extremely unlikely. I'll take the question as notice, however, and check for a fact.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Minister of Labour. Can the Minister of Labour indicate to the House if we can expect some legislation to deal with compulsory overtime, which would solve the problem at Griffin Steel and prevent . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. PATRICK: . . . such occurrences in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member is debating the question. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: . . . Minister of Labour and I'm sure he would like to answer if the Minister will be bringing in legislation to deal with compulsory overtime.

MR. SPEAKER: Anticipation. The Honourable Member for St. Vital . . . Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: I got a supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: The Minister indicated to the House that his department is not monitoring the picket lines at Griffin Steel. Can he indicate to the House, is there any other government department, perhaps the Attorney-General, anybody from Attorney-General's department that is monitoring the picket lines at Griffin Steel?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, if that question was directed to me, I believe that the Honourable, the Attorney-General would be more competent to answer insofar as anyone outside of the Department of Labour and, in particular, in the Attorney-General's department.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

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HONOURABLE HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, because of complaints that were lodged with me, there has been some monitoring taking place as to the conduct at the picket lines in the past few days.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Attorney-General. Has he requested a report from The Human Rights Commission, concerning the recent censoring of a book in Manitoba?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'll be obtaining a report in connection with the book that the Honourable Member is referring to and I judge that is a reference to some news report in connection with the book by the lady out in Kenora in connection with the Native people.

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

MR. WALDING: Supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Can the Attorney-General inform the House whether the censorship of books is within the terms of reference of the Human Rights Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. That's asking for a legal opinion. The Honourable Member for Birtle-Russell.

MR. HARRY E. GRAHAM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Attorney-General and it also relates to the activities of his department at Griffin Steel. I would like to ask the Attorney-General if the advice given to the strikers by members of his department is consistent with the laws of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the advice given to the representatives of the strikers is consistent with the laws of the Province of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I have a further question related to the issue at Griffin Steel and it arises out of the Minister's answer to a question of a few moments ago, that he did not see that any useful purpose could be served . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Question please.

MR. SHERMAN: . . . by appointment of an industrial commis=slon, and I would ask the Minister whether he can advise the House as to what step he would see as serving a useful purpose prior to going the extent of appointing such a commission.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: I would respectfully suggest, Mr. Speaker, to my honourable friend a continuance of the steps that I am taking at the present time to consider all aspects of the matter including the document that I have in my hand which was the collective agreement under which the agreement prevailed between management and labour in respect of overtime and time and a half' and a normal work day which indicates that in this collective agreement no difference than most collective agreements prevailing in the Province of Manitoba, there is no reference at all in the collective agreement that expired a few weeks ago than the norm insofar as compulsion and overtime is concerned.

MR. SHERMAN: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Would the Minister not concede that the situation differs in that it is now inflammatory and there is a potential for . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The question is argumentative. The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. HARRY J. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Agriculture who I understand is proclaiming his neutrality at a cattlemen's meeting in Teulon this afternoon and again in Selkirk tonight . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. ENNS: I direct my question to the Acting Minister of Agriculture and ask him to undertake to forestall the possible difficulties that our farmers will be facing in the supply of necessary pesticides and herbicides in the coming crop year. My under=standing is that there's some possible move afoot to close the border' Would he give us that undertaking?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HONOURABLE BILLIE URUSKI (St. George): Mr. Speaker' I'll take the question as notice.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the House Leaders have arranged that the Department of Agriculture will be next up for consideration in the Estimates. Would the House Leader indicate to us that the Acting Minister of Agriculture will be prepared to guide through those Estimates, at least until March 11th?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable House Leader.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the honourable member that the Minister of Agriculture would be present to pilot his Estimates through whichever committee he is designated to.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Attorney-General and possibly

he'd like to take it as notice for clarification. Is the fine for driving without a licence tag — the new 1977 blue tag — \$100.00?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that the honourable member might wish to check the Act. He might get the information faster than awaiting my response because offhand I couldn't tell him specifically what it is.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Is the fine being charged on the basis of driving a car without insurance, and if it is \$100.00 which I understand people have paid, should the public not have been notified of this high fine?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Honourable Highways Minister. I wonder if he could advise the House why the longest and they say the worst lineups in four years are now appearing at 1075 Portage Avenue in trying to apply for the renewal of their licences.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HONOURABLE PETER BURTONIAK (Dauphin): Well, Mr. Speaker, I suppose that one could say that it's public nature I guess. When renewals come up at the end of the year they have the opportunity to go to any of the outlets in any part of rural Manitoba or to the Motor Vehicle Branch. We have even taken the liberty of extending the hours this past last weekend, on Friday, open on Saturday from 9 till 1:30 and again last night till 8:30 in the evening. So I think it would give them ample time. Now why the people were a little slow in getting their renewals, certainly you or I or anyone can't really answer that. I guess it's just human nature. It's one of those things.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Roblin. Order please.

MR. MCKENZIE: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the Minister could advise the House the reason why people who bought a new car, say in November or December are still waiting for their new registration forms, or their renewal forms. —(Interjection)— I can repeat the question.

Could the Minister advise why people who purchased or changed a car in November or December are still waiting for their new registration forms?

MR. BURTONIAK: I am not sure that that is the case in every situation, but if it is I'll certainly check it out and see if the honourable member is correct or not.

MR. MCKENZIE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could describe it as mismanagement or poor administration . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Question. The Honourable Minister.

MR. BURTONIAK: Mr. Speaker, I would invite the Honourable Member for Roblin to give me any specific case or cases and I will certainly be glad to respond.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Health and Social Development, that in view of the public statement by the Federal Minister of Veterans' Affairs that he would be prepared to have Deer Lodge Hospital transferred into nursing home facilities. Can the Minister indicate whether his department has undertaken negotiations to that effect so that the Deer Lodge Hospital could be used for nursing home care?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, the negotiating has been going on for a number of months now and I hope that soon I might be able to make a statement to the House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, could I direct one further question, Sir, to the Minister of Labour on the Griffin Steel situation and ask him whether the instruction to him that no further conciliation meetings were desired came from both parties in the dispute or just one party?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. PAULLEY: Mr. Speaker, it was indicated to me by both parties that they saw no useful purpose to be served by the involvement of a conciliation officer of the Department of Labour.

MR. SHERMAN: A final supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Was that a recent communication?

MR. PAULLEY: I would say, Mr. Speaker, that it's reasonably recent.

TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Renewable Resources.

HONOURABLE HARVEY BOSTROM (Rupert's Island): Mr. Speaker, I ask leave to Table two reports.

MR. SPEAKER: Agreed? (Agreed)

MR. BOSTROM: I would like to table the report of the **Department of Renewable Resources and Transportation Services** which contains a Crown Land Report.

The second report is the **Annual Report of the Manitoba Government Air Division.**

MR. SPEAKER: Any other questions?

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THRONE SPEECH DEBATE

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. Proposed Motion of the Honourable Member for Logan. The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. WARNER H. JORGENSEN: When the debate concluded last night, Sir, I was commenting on the First Minister's new technique in now relating taxes on farm land to net income and somehow or rather he felt that if he could relate the amount of taxes that was levied on farm land to net income, that that would be the way that he could show that the increase in taxes — 50 percent increase in taxes in the last two years — would somehow or other begin to look reasonable. Well, I ask the Minister now that if net income begins to fall as indeed it should, as indeed it will in the coming year, are farm taxes going to fall accordingly in relation to net income? I guess not; I would think not.

So the First Minister, when he replied yesterday to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition, he used all sorts of devious arguments, irrelevant arguments and yes, Sir, I might even say some very stupid arguments in attempting to justify their position. Mr. Speaker, he attempted to justify his government's performance in the last eight years on the basis of statistics; on the basis of the gross national product; on the basis of employment statistics, and I tell the First Minister that as reasonable as that kind of an argument may sound, that is not the indictment against this government. The indictment against this government is a series of restrictive pieces of legislation being brought in almost every year on every conceivable occasion to restrict the freedoms of the people of this province and he is going to be charged with that indictment come the next election.

Sir, there were those who criticized the Speech from the Throne because it did not contain a lot of innovative legislation. Sir, that's the best news that the people of this province have ever heard, the fact that there is little legislation of a restrictive nature. But I don't want to leave the impression that there is no legislation of a restrictive nature because the Speech from the Throne indicates that they are going to continue to pursue that sort of program and that the people of this country and particularly the farmers of this province are going to be subjected to more restrictions.

Sir, he took great delight in referring to the beef marketing vote that is about to take place and comparing it to the establishment of a Hog Marketing Commission in 1965 . . .

A MEMBER: There's no comparison.

MR. JORGENSEN: . . . as if there was a comparison there, Sir. The fact is, and for the benefit of the First Minister, I am going to draw that comparison; I am going to point out to him so that he and his colleagues and particularly the Minister of Agriculture will understand the difference between a Hog Marketing Commission and a compulsory Hog Marketing Board. The Commission that was set up in 1965 carried with it no compulsory features whatsoever. There was a deduction that anyone could have withdrawn from simply by applying. There were no compulsory features; it was an agency that was set up to assist hog producers to market their product if they chose to use it, absolutely nothing compulsory about that commission and that's a far cry from what the Minister of Agriculture has done since he has become Minister.

The setting up of the Hog Marketing Board — compulsory, without a vote — indeed, it took him three years before he would allow elections to be held in appointing directors to that Board. And the First Minister has the audacity to suggest that in the comparison of the activities of the two governments in relation to that particular subject, that they are parallel. I ask him to give us some indication how a voluntary commission that can be used or cannot be used by the producers, — indeed it did have a check-off but the check-off carried with it the provision that anyone could opt out if they chose — how that compares with the kind of restrictive, the kind of compulsory kind of program that he is attempting to implement right now. He suggested that the Minister of Agriculture responded in the only democratic way. Responded to what? Who asked for the Board in the first place?

A MEMBER: Nobody.

MR. JORGENSEN: . . . It was the Minister that initiated the discussion that initiated the study on beef marketing in the first place. Nobody requested it; it was the Minister that requested it and he stacked it, he stacked it to produce the kind of a report that he wanted . . .

A MEMBER: But he didn't get it. Who was on it?

MR. JORGENSEN: . . . and then set up a Task Force to examine the report of the Meat Marketing Commission. Who do we find on the Task Force?

A MEMBER: The same people that wrote the report.

MR. JORGENSEN: The same people that wrote the report. I knew my Honourable Friend from Lakeside would help me with that one.

And what was that designed for? One more step in the direction of a compulsory Beef Marketing Board, something that the producers have never asked for. Well, Sir, he attempts to compare that with the voluntary kind of an organization that was set up in 1965 in order to assist hog producers to market their products. And the First Minister took great exception to the fact that there was a check-off asked for by the cattle producers. "A terrible thing," says the Minister, "without a vote." Well, Sir, the check-off was asked for but again with the provision that anyone who did not want to contribute

could opt out. That was inherent in that provision. — (Interjection)— Well my honourable friend asks, "What's wrong with a vote?" There's nothing wrong with a vote if a vote is conducted in the way that a vote normally is conducted where first of all somebody asked for it which has never been the case; where, secondly, the producers are given an opportunity to make up their own minds instead of the coercion that is inherent in the suggestion of the Minister of Agriculture.

The setting up of an instant organization sponsored by the Minister to promote his program, the whole thing smells of the hand of the Minister all the way through. The kind of tactics that he has employed in everything that he has done since he became the Minister of Agriculture. — (Interjection)— Well, the First Minister has lent his support to the activities of the Minister of Agriculture and we're glad to know that at least once since he has become First Minister that he is going to take some responsibility. Every time that the Minister or any of his Ministers gets into trouble, he has successfully evaded taking any responsibility. I'm glad to see that finally he is going to take that kind of responsibility.

Sir, both the First Minister and the Minister of Mines use an argument that, to me, is becoming very repetitive in this Chamber and that is the argument that individual rights can be bargained away, can be taken away, simply because the government has a majority of 50 percent plus one. So individual rights cannot be taken away in that respect.

A MEMBER: Right.

MR. JORGENSON: But they are by this government. On this vote and every other vote. How many times have we heard from honourable gentlemen opposite the argument that "Well we have the majority; we can do as we please." "We have the majority", as if that majority gives them the right to take away from individuals their right to run their own lives; their right to pursue their own destiny; their right to seek their own jobs and their own employment in the way that they want to do it. They are the masters, Sir, and it is that kind of an attitude that prevailed all during the term of office of honourable gentlemen opposite that is going to be remembered come the voting day, hopefully this year.

A MEMBER: Hopefully June — the sooner, the better.

MR. JORGENSON: It is that kind of an attitude, the continuation of the belief that this government can abrogate individual rights and liberties at random. Sir, that cannot be done, not in a democracy, and the people are going to remind the First Minister that they're sick and tired of having their rights taken away from them by a government that has no concern over individual rights. — (Interjection)— Well, which rights? The rights to market one's product the way they want to market. The right to trade with one another, the right to deal with one another without restrictive legislation imposed by government. That's the kind of rights. Yes, and 50 per cent plus one is going to make the difference. What's that? 50 per cent plus one going to make the difference? It is going to retain the rights of those that voted against it. I think not. 50 per cent plus one gives my honourable friends opposite the right to govern this country. That's all. Not to take away individual rights. Not to take away freedoms. Not to take away money as if it belonged to them, in the form of taxes.

Well, the Minister of Mines also used an argument that, to me, was very interesting, when he was responding to the Leader of the Opposition's suggestion that the Minister of Health continued to perpetuate and continued to promote fights with the doctors. The Minister of Mines said as far as he's concerned that if there's a quarrel between the doctors and the Minister, the doctors can go. And he said also that if there's an argument between the Minister of Mines and the mining companies, the mining companies can go.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister state the Matter of Privilege.

HONOURABLE EDWARD SCHREYER (Rossmere): Yes, Mr. Speaker, it's not a matter of personal privilege. It's a matter of parliamentary privilege, however. The statement attributed to the Honourable, the Minister of Mines, I can assure my honourable friend that if he will check the records that is not what he said.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, essentially that's what the Minister of Mines did say. He said we can do without them, and he also said that if the Minister of Industry and Commerce gets into a fight with the Chamber of Commerce, they can go.

Well, Sir, you notice the Minister of Mines was very careful not to mention what happens when the Minister of Agriculture gets into a fight with the farmers. He's very selective, very selective in selecting the groups that he thinks can go. Oh, the doctors they're a small minority — minorities don't count. The mining companies, there's only a few of them, they can go. They don't count. The Chamber of Commerce — who cares about the Chamber of Commerce. But when the Minister of Agriculture gets into . . . and he's fought with every commodity group in this province since he's become Minister of Agriculture, then they can go. Then they can go. Yes, that is the attitude of the honourable gentlemen opposite, Sir. That is the attitude of the honourable gentlemen opposite.

You know, their arithmetic is good. As long as there are majorities, they'll be on the side of those majorities. But minority rights don't mean a thing. They're very selective in the kind of people that they appeal to and it doesn't matter, it doesn't matter if a particular group in this country, rights are

being trampled upon, abrogated, tossed out the window, if they don't represent something in the way of a significant block of votes, they don't care. And that has been the attitude exhibited by the honourable gentlemen opposite in almost every piece of legislation that they've introduced in this House and every speech that they've ever made in this Chamber, Sir.

Well, the Minister is going to find that sooner or later, they're going to run out of minority groups. The minority groups that, to a large extent, make up this province, because we're all minority groups. And, if it is their intention to alienate, if it is their intention to destroy every group that contributes significantly to the economy of this province, then they'll have their wish. They will have only those that are left but there'll be no contributions. They'll all be on the receiving end. And then as the President, the outgoing President of the NDP Party said so significantly at the recent annual meeting, when the rich and the people with the money are gone it makes it awful tough then to be socialists: Because we've got no more money to pass around. That's essentially what she said.

Well, Sir, by that kind of an attitude the Minister will be denying the people of this province an opportunity to make the kind of contribution to the welfare of this province and, indeed, it seems to me now that a good many people in this province who have been criticized and who have been virtually driven out of this province, if they choose to leave, then I wonder who is going to be left. Who is going to be left in order to make the contribution in taxes that this government would like to see made, to run the country, and to contribute to those programs that are necessary for those people who would remain here. My honourable friends, they think that they can continue to ostracize and to destroy the gifted and the talented and those who make a significant contribution, they're sadly mistaken. Sir, they cannot paint a Mona Lisa by signing one dab to each of a million Manitobans. It takes the initiative and I know that the Minister of Mines rejects this argument because I've heard him reject it. The Minister of Mines rejects the argument that the talented, the gifted, and the industrious should be given an opportunity to make their contribution. He wants everybody levelled down to the lowest common denominator. That's the argument that he has pursued. That's the argument that he has pursued in this Chamber for —(Interjection)—

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

MR. JORGENSEN: Certainly, Sir, the argument was —(Interjection)— My honourable friend again comes to my assistance and I thank him for it. The statement made by the First Minister two and one-half times one. What is that going to do, notwithstanding, notwithstanding the fact that it is going to make a lot of the gifted and the talented people, those that are already there, think twice about staying in this province, what is it going to do to the younger people who want to climb up the ladder of success, who want to achieve something in this province, when, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, they find out when they start climbing up that ladder, it's a ladder constructed with only two and one-half rungs. —(Interjection)— Well, my honourable friend asked me what the biggest spread would satisfy me. I think that that is the —(Interjection)—

Well, my honourable friend, you know . . . Apparently, Sir, the House Leader on the Opposition side did not take your admonitions to heart last night, to instruct members on the other side to . . . —(Interjection)— Well, you're opposition to me — to instruct members on the other side to behave themselves during the course of debate and conduct themselves with a little bit of decorum. I can assure you, Sir, that I took your instructions to heart and I did that. Mind you, I got thrown out of the caucus room for it, for my troubles, but nonetheless, I would suggest that the honourable gentlemen opposite do take your admonitions seriously because I don't recall that I do much interrupting when the Honourable First Minister is speaking. It's not that I find his speeches so enthralling and so exciting that I'm speechless, it's just that I do him the courtesy of listening while he is speaking.

Oh, now, Sir, I might have the odd interjection that I think is designed to be timely, rather than just making a lot of noise, in order to try and prevent somebody else from speaking. I think there is a significant difference between that kind of an interjection and just making a lot of noise to prevent other people from speaking. But, Sir, I digress, what . . .

A MEMBER: Don't make them too odd.

MR. JORGENSEN: I want now, Sir, to deal with another statement that the First Minister made last night and one that exercised him pretty considerably and that's on the question of the public debt of this province and I have before me the prospectus for \$125 million of the Manitoba Hydro Electric Board and for the benefit of my honourable friends opposite, it is a public document and I don't think that it is necessary for me to be tabling it, they can find it for themselves. Now if the Minister disputes, the First Minister disputes the figures that are contained in that document, then one or the other is wrong. Either the Manitoba Hydro Electric Board are getting false figures, or the First Minister is but, and I am going to leave that judgement to the First Minister himself to determine just which one of them is and I know what the First Minister's attempting to do, he's attempting to deduct the assets from the total public debt to arrive at the figure that he arrived at last night. Well, the total funded direct debt, and that's down on page 49 of the Hydro prospectus, is one billion, three hundred and twelve million dollars total funded debt it says. I don't know where else you can draw another

conclusion, one billion three hundred and twelve million dollars.

Then on page 52 we have an item dealing with the Province of Manitoba indebtedness guaranteed, which, if I understand correctly, is the capital debt of the province and that amounts to one billion nine hundred and fifteen million dollars. Well you add the two of them together and that works out to something like three billion dollars. Then you add to that, on December 1st there was a series, series 3N of Hydro guaranteed debt, that was \$125 million. Then there's a Swiss franc issue, February 22, 1977, that's \$40 million; Japanese yen, March 3, 1977, which is day after tomorrow, \$42 million. Then in today's paper, there is a notice that suggests that the Federal Government is going to be loaning the province \$193 million. Now, there is perhaps some clarification necessary here because the Tribune had a different report. Tribune suggested it was something like four hundred million, but I'll take the lower one, one hundred and ninety-three million but, even not counting that, not counting this latest report that appeared in the paper' the total of the funded debt and the guaranteed debt is three billion four hundred and thirty-four million, minus eight hundred million. Where do you minus the eight hundred million?

Well what the Minister is doing is precisely what I suggested he was doing and then he denied it. Now I wish he would make up his mind. That works out and it doesn't really matter, the debt has to be paid. In Hydro it is well known that 41 or 42 seats out of every dollar goes to pay the interest on that debt and it doesn't matter whether you pay it through direct taxes or whether you pay it through an increase in your Hydro bills, you're still paying the interest on that debt. That's the point that we're making. —(Interjection)— Well . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Five minutes.

MR. JORGENSEN: . . . has it ever been higher? I doubt it very much.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. JORGENSEN: And whether it's unusual or not, I don't know why the Minister is so sensitive in this point, he has not denied the figures that I have just now quoted and if he has not denied them, what's he worried about? If he claims that they're average and they're normal, well then what's he so excited about? Well, my honourable friend continues to, on the one hand, agree with the figures that I have now put on the record as to the total debt of this province, both funded and guaranteed, and still argues that it is lower. Now, I don't know, I just can't understand how the Minister is reasoning; but that shouldn't be surprising, anybody that can come up with an argument that, when property taxes raised 50 percent in one year, there's nothing wrong with it if it's related to net income, anybody who can come up with that kind of an argument for taxes is liable to come up with any kind of an argument on any kind of a subject and the Minister is well known for his ability to do that and he does it time after time. So since the Minister has not denied the figures that I have now quoted, it then follows, does it not, Sir, that divided by the million and six thousand people that are in this province, that works out to a total per capita debt of \$3,415.05 per capita. Well, I still don't understand where the First Minister gets his minus eight hundred. Either he is using a set of figures all of his own, or he doesn't believe the figures that are contained in his own prospectus. The fact is, Sir, that the debt of this province, any way you look at it, is increasing and that's not an unusual phenomena, it's doing that all across the country and I have been saying, more than one occasion in this Chamber, that whether it's Liberal, Conservative or NDP, the road that we're heading, the direction that we're going, is the road to disaster unless we have the good sense to reverse it and apparently, my honourable friends, my honourable friends suggest that we shouldn't.

A MEMBER: Tell Bill Davis that.

MR. JORGENSEN: I don't have to tell Bill Davis that because it is not my responsibility to go into the Province of Ontario and tell another Premier what his job is, but I think it is my responsibility in this Chamber to try and point that out to the people who are governing this province — I happen to be an elected member in this province. I feel that my responsibility is pointing out to honourable gentlemen opposite the error of their ways and hopefully, and hopefully, that the Opposition in the Ontario Legislature will do the same thing but you will notice, Sir, that the Opposition in the Ontario legislature, which are the friends of my honourable friends opposite, they do exactly the opposite now, they're encouraging him to spend more, to get into greater difficulties and maybe, if my honourable friend has a problem with the Ontario government, maybe he should be in touch with the Ontario opposition and tell them to desist in their advocacy of greater and greater spending on the part of the government. —(Interjection)— Yes.

MR. SCHREYER: With respect to his last statement that the opposition in Ontario consistently urges the government to spend more, is the honourable member aware that with respect, for example, to ways and means of attempting to save some spending in the Health Care field, that the Leader of the Official Opposition in Ontario has been supporting the Minister of Health there in the closing of six or seven hospitals, rather significant amounts involved.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. JORGENSEN: I accept that news from the First Minister and I accept it with gratitude, in the knowledge, in the knowledge that at least there is some semblance of sanity on the part of some

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people, some recognition that the opposition does have a responsibility and perhaps a greater responsibility than is recognized in protecting that lone poor individual who is out there that nobody seems to give a damn about and nobody is concerned about — the poor, over-burdened taxpayer. It's about time that somebody recognized that he does exist.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HONOURABLE SAMUEL USKIW (Lac du Bonnet): Mr. Speaker, it's a very interesting time in 1977 hearing the members opposite repeat some of the old arguments of the past and, of course, especially the member for Morris who is so good at trying to repeat the factless statements of his and others from that side over many years in an effort to try to impress upon the public that there is some basis and justification to what they are saying. I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that's fair game in this arena in the argument that is often put forward that repetition is really a good approach to education and be it propoganda or whatever, that it does work to some degree.

I have to say, first of all, Mr. Speaker, that I had not intended to enter into the debate and that really I haven't had too much time to get involved having been involved in rural meetings over the last number of days . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. USKIW: . . . as much as I enjoy debating with my friends opposite, I find that my . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. USKIW: . . . time at this particular Session has been somewhat constrained. But I would like to tell the Member for Lakeside the meetings out in the countryside are much nicer and much more co-operative than are the meetings in this Chamber. The meetings that I have attended, Mr. Speaker, have had very good turnouts and people were interested to know the subject matter and to seek information.

A MEMBER: We're from the Grasslands; you go back to Woodlands.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I rise in this debate because I think it is very important to point out to the people of Manitoba the role that the government is playing in an effort to stabilize our rural communities, our agriculture, and this is only but one aspect of it as my honourable friends opposite fully appreciate, I'm sure, and that is the need to stabilize rural incomes and this is not a new need; we've had that problem in this country for, well all of our history. We've had many attempts over the years to deal with the problem through provincial and federal levels of government. We have had the establishment of marketing legislation — every province of this country — in an effort to deal with income instability and certainly we've had federal interventions through the Agricultural Stabilization Act, many pieces of legislation which were supposedly to bring about the kind of stability that agriculture would be able to compete and enjoy a standard of living equal to others in society. Of course, we have not yet arrived there.

So in the last decade, the government of Canada has attempted to introduce a greater amount of support by way of another piece of legislation, namely, the marketing legislation put on the books four or five years ago. Of course, they have been successful to some degree with respect to a number of commodities which have come under that legislation and where there is a federal, provincial and producer agreement. I emphasize that because under that legislation, Mr. Speaker, it does require the agreement of marketing boards, of provincial governments and the government of Canada in order to give effect to that legislation and in order to make it work. It has worked very well, Mr. Speaker. We have had a very good experience in the last three or four years. There were some initial problems in getting things started but it appears, well it's obvious, Mr. Speaker, that that is the direction in which this country should go with respect to its agricultural commodities.

Years ago, Mr. Speaker, and I am sure members opposite would have to agree with me on this point, that agriculture was mainly labour intensive and that if the rewards were not very fulfilling that the worst position would be that they just didn't earn very much income; they gave up of their labour for nought, but really, Mr. Speaker, that is not our situation today. Today, we have moved into an area of intensive capitalization; it's really a problem of meeting input costs on a year-to-year basis and therefore, we are not able to look at the problem of income stabilization as casually as we had in decades past. So, I have to commend the government of Canada for giving greater attention to the needs of our agricultural producers through the passage of that legislation and I suggest to the Member for Rock Lake who tells me that it's a little bit late, Mr. Speaker — that it is true it's late and it is better late than never — but I want to remind him that during the Tory years in Ottawa, there was absolutely no progress made in this area, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. USKIW: So it is true, Mr. Speaker, that notwithstanding the different philosophies in the make-up of all the provincial governments in Canada and the government of Canada, notwithstanding that, we were able to enter into agreements where there was unanimous agreement of all ten provinces and marketing boards within those ten provinces. That is quite an achievement and I give that credit to the federal government, indeed who initiated the move. Certainly we prodded them in that direction but they were willing to co-operate and I give a lot of credit to our present Minister of

Agriculture in Canada, Mr. Speaker, for having drawn together people of goodwill who are seriously trying to improve the income position of our farm community. I have no hesitation in doing that because it is the first time in our history that there is a genuine attempt at the national level to do something about farm income instability — the first time a genuine attempt is undertaken.

Mr. Speaker, the arguments that I have heard and read in Hansard of the past week from members opposite are the arguments of the past and you know, I smile at that because the Leader of the Opposition chastised members on this side for talking about the past — he didn't want to remind them of the past — but in reading Hansard, Mr. Speaker, it's almost a chapter and verse repetition of what was said a year ago, five years ago, ten years ago, on this question.

Now, I think it's worthwhile to talk about the democratic rights of people because the Member for Morris, this afternoon, tried to suggest to us that when a question is referred to the people who are going to be affected by a decision on the question, that the democratic principles should apply. I am bothered by his interpretation of the "democratic principle," Mr. Speaker, and I know they are consistent in that regard, because when they were responsible for the rules of procedure in this province, when they were the government, they in fact inhibited the democratic process but almost completely, Mr. Speaker. I can recall that we had numerous referendums for the establishment of marketing boards in this province, where we had to live under the rules that required two-thirds of the producers to vote in favour in order that the Minister would agree that they should establish a marketing board. Well, I can give you another argument, Mr. Speaker, much worse than that example. The example of the vote — (Interjection) — All right, let me take my friend up on that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. USKIW: How many people did vote on the Hog vote and I ask my friend that, Mr. Speaker, because they were the government when they established the Hog Commission without a referendum.

A MEMBER: No Board.

MR. USKIW: No Board? But a compulsory check off on every farmer — (Interjection) — there's nothing voluntary about it at all!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The last time for the Member for Lakeside.

MR. USKIW: The Honourable for Lakeside would like to tell us that it was a voluntary arrangement, when every producer who shipped hogs had to finance the operation whether he used it or he didn't use it. — (Interjection) —

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member state his Matter of Privilege.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I think it is a matter of privilege when a deliberate distortion, a deliberate mistruth is constantly being repeated by members opposite.

MR. SPEAKER: Will the honourable member state his matter of privilege?

MR. ENNS: The Hog Marketing Commission was voluntary. The check off was voluntary. There was no compulsion involved in the establishment of the Manitoba Hog Commission in 1966 by the previous administration or earlier.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, there is no point in belabouring that. I ask my honourable friend to look up the record and he can decide for himself.

The example I was leading up to Mr. Speaker was of course the vote of the turkey producers in this province for the establishment of a board, and something in the order of 80 to 90 percent of those producers voted for the establishment of a marketing board to handle the marketing of turkeys in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, that government at that time, the Conservative government, refused to implement the decision of the producers even though they held a referendum; had a substantial majority in favour. — (Interjection) — Yes, my honourable friend, the Member for Lakeside says it was implemented, after a year and a half of foot-dragging because the Minister of Industry and Commerce was trying to make a deal for the processors so that they could bypass the orderly marketing system and the producers who voted for it were unable to implement it for almost two years after the vote, Mr. Speaker. That was what we would describe as their interpretation of democracy at work.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to point out to you, Sir, and the people of Manitoba about the posture of the Conservative Party. It is nothing new. I have been accustomed to it for some period of time but they insist on maintaining the "big lie" approach. That is the way in which they are trying to suggest to us that they are a responsible opposition. Mr. Speaker, I think that one can readily see and read between the lines as to what has happened in the current referendum on a beef marketing board. I think the "big lie" approach is the strategy, it appears obvious to me. But, Mr. Speaker, I suggest to you that the back room stage directors are over there. Those are the back room stage directors, Mr. Speaker, and the Manitoba Cattle Producers' Freedom Campaign are, of course, the actors. That's really the sum total of it as I see it, Mr. Speaker. — (Interjection) —

A MEMBER: It's called a puppet show.

MR. USKIW: My friend, the Minister of Municipal Affairs calls it a puppet show.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at the strategy and I give them some credit for that, Mr. Speaker, because one of the first things they did was to get the Minister committed to a neutral position. That was the first request that came up on the referendum. And, Mr. Speaker, the Minister having committed himself to a neutral position they then felt that the field was open to anything that they wanted to do and any argument that they wanted to put forward in that they would not get a challenge from the department. So what did they do, Mr. Speaker? The very next thing they did, they started to raise an awful lot of fuss; a lot of hell about the Minister implementing that request. How dare the Minister not let his staff pass their propoganda around throughout the province. That was the next move. First you ask him to be neutral and then you clobber him because he debate, and tells his staff to stay out of the the staff refused to distribute their junk mail, Mr. Speaker. That was the strategy — (Interjection)— That's exactly true, Mr. Speaker.

A MEMBER: That's not true.

MR. USKIW: That's exactly true, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. USKIW: And then, of course, Mr. Speaker you do have to completely confuse the voters. That is of utmost importance. You must completely distort and confuse the voter and muddy all of the issues so that the producers don't really know what is going on.

Mr. Speaker, I have a good example of that here. My wife gets a big charge out of these advertisements. She keeps them as souvenirs, Mr. Speaker. Here it is. This is dated January 20th in the Manitoba Co-operator. This is sponsored by the Freedom Campaign Committee. It says, "If you want freedom to sell cattle the way you want vote against Sam Uskiw's Manitoba Cattle Producers' Marketing Agency." Well, the headline in itself, Mr. Speaker, is a lie you see. Because anyone knows that if it was a government agency it would have to be a marketing commission as set up similar to the one set up by the members opposite when they set up the Hog Marketing Commission. But if you are going to set up a producer marketing board it can only be done by the consent of producers and only producers run it. —(Interjection)— I'll get to that on another occasion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they go in this advertisement, through a number of questions that they pose and a number of assumptions they make, and what people don't know is that prior to buying this act, some of these people have met with me and we clarified to their satisfaction every one of those points. Yet they have the gall to print that as if they have no knowledge; as if they had not discussed them with the Minister of Agriculture. That is an example of the propoganda techniques that were employed.

Now the next thing, Mr. Speaker, they wanted to do was to mail out all sorts of literature and statements. I have another example here a very recent one. Just listen to how they are trying to confuse. It says here, "The department wants a marketing board." It makes no reference at all, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that we had an inquiry commission. It makes no reference to the fact that we had an advisory committee and that an advisory committee recommended on where we should go with respect to the recommendations of the Inquiry Commission. It just says the Minister wants it, the Department wants it. That's a paid ad, dated January 27th, Winnipeg Tribune. Then they say, Mr. Speaker, that civil servants would control this Marketing Board.

Now, members opposite know full well that a Marketing Board elected by producers is controlled by producers. Once they have been given the authority to do so by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, from that point on they run their own show. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker I would prefer that the questions come in at the end of my comments. So, that is lie number 2, Mr. Speaker.

Number three suggests here that the Minister change the regulations in February of 1976 with respect to the requirements of a majority in this vote in order to carry. Mr. Speaker, the facts are that those regulations were changed in 1972 and we had already won vote for a check-off three years ago under those new regulations. Lie number three.

Number four - what are they suggesting the alternatives should be? It's really interesting, Mr. Speaker, the alternative to this board which will solve all problems for the beef industry. We advocate the appointment of a beef ombudsman under the authority of the Ombudsman's Act to investigate producer complaints. That's the answer to the marketing problem. Mr. Speaker these stage directors here, they know and the people that paid for this ad know, Mr. Speaker, that the Ombudsman's Act does not deal with private matters. It can only deal with matters of government and government agencies but does not deal with matters of a private nature as between a producer of beef and the trucker who hauls it for him, and the commission firm who markets the beef for him and the packer who buys it ultimately. So, Mr. Speaker, if we are going to assume that this is a indeed sincere and serious campaign to inform the voter on this issue then I advocate, Mr. Speaker, that everyone read the Ombudsman Act and to determine for themselves whether or not the producers of beef in Manitoba would solve their problem by appointa under that piece of legislation.

Now the Leader of the Opposition in his remarks a few days ago, Mr. Speaker, made mention of the fact that we were very much involved, we were an interventionist government, that we had very

major socialist plans in this area, and of course he alleges that marketing boards are socialist plans. There's nothing farther from the truth, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)— Well, it says so right here, is a shining example of this government's ability to ignore any real problem in the face of chasing after more socialist programs.

The Minister of Agriculture decided that what the beef farmers really need is a government-controlled marketing board. Now either he doesn't know his own legislation or he wants to further falsify the debate.

Since the beef producers of Manitoba don't appear to want a marketing board — this is what the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting and this is in Hansard of Monday, February 21st — and has never asked for one; and even the government's own beef advisory committee recommended against one, the Minister had decided that he is going to have to bully them a little so that he threatens them to accept government control. That's what the Leader of the Opposition stated in his reply to the Speech from the Throne. And then he goes on to talk about the Minister driving a deep wedge between the beef producers and the government.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the wedge is all about but in terms of the people in the freedom campaign, I would venture to say that there are no more than a couple of dozen people that are behind the freedom campaign. That particular group is responsible to nobody, Mr. Speaker. It is not a membership organization. It is a little club that got together, decided that they have to attack the government.

Because they have laid claim to having support from many groups. They have laid claim to having support of all the beef organization groups and the dairy producers, and so on, and in fact members opposite have alleged that the dairymen were against this whole thing, and so on. And they have a right to be — no one is objecting to that. Mr. Speaker, let me make it clear. We are having a vote, and I have to respect the decision, which ever way it goes. But I think the voter is entitled to a clear-cut issue and is entitled to have a full understanding of what the implications are. And how they decide to vote is really their privilege, Mr. Speaker. It is not up to us to predetermine.

But here we have a letter that went out to the milk producers. This is dated February 23rd, 1977, and the Member for Lakeside should be aware it has to do with one Mr. Armand Desharnais President of the Manitoba Milk Producers Co-op Association Limited, and the milk producers chosen by the Manitoba Milk Producers Marketing Board to represent all milk producers and the Manitoba Beef Advisory Committee. He has categorically denied that his association has now, or ever did, support in any way the Manitoba cattle freedom campaign as is claimed. He told Board members that he has called for a retraction of the press release that tells farmers how to vote. It appears that someone in the association is bound and determined to do the milk producers of this province a disservice by confusing the issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't know what it is that members opposite are trying to prove. It was the Member for Rock Lake that alleges that milk producers were involved with the freedom campaign. Yes, in Hansard dated February 22nd. —(Interjection)— Oh, the Member for Rock Lake has read it in the paper, Mr. Speaker. And that is the very point that I am now trying to educate him on, is that you shouldn't believe everything you read in the paper.

He goes on to say though, Mr. Speaker, that the freedom campaign represents 95 per cent of producers. Mr. Speaker, 95 per cent of producers — that's got to be a mind-boggling . . . — (Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, I don't care how long anyone has been going. But to claim that that group, which have been set up to distort this referendum completely and to confuse, that they represent 95 per cent of producers, Mr. Speaker, I believe that that statement will come back to haunt the Member for Rock Lake. Because on that basis, then we should have a vote 95 per cent against and 5 per cent for. And if the position is any different from that then of course my honourable friend is certainly not cognizant of what is going on.

And then of course the Member for Rock Lake went on to complain about registration procedures, Mr. Speaker. He went on to complain about the fact that every production unit is eligible for one vote, and he alleges that it should somehow be different, that we should allow the Father, and the Mother and the Son, and the Daughter, and the Grandmother, and perhaps an Uncle and an Aunt, to have a vote. That's really what he is implying, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I remind my honourable friend about the rules that applied in 1962. I'm wondering whether anyone knows who the government was in 1962.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please.

MR. USKIW: It says here, Mr. Speaker, according to the rules of 1962, where a family is a household only a head of household could register. Regardless of how many producers there were. That was in the potato referendum. I happen to have had personal knowledge in that one, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Rock Lake makes a point when he suggests that he is willing to debate with the Minister on any platform. Well I'm going to give you a little lesson on that one, Mr.

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Speaker. Because I had that opportunity with at least one member of the opposition in the course of this debate. It happened to be a meeting, not called by the Department, not called by the Independent Cattle Producers Association, but sponsored by the Rural Municipality of Grandview and Wally McKenzie, the Member for Roblin was the guest speaker, Mr. Speaker. He was the guest speaker. And so, you know, one of the councilmen found out that I was in Dauphin that day and thought it was a good idea that I should also attend. Since it was an information meeting what would be wrong with getting some information? And you know that was the first one that I was invited to — sponsored by anyone. I wasn't invited to one by the freedom campaign. They didn't want anybody with any information. But that one I was invited to, and I attended, Mr. Speaker. I attended that one. And you know, the honourable friend, the Member for Roblin, who was the guest speaker, spoke for about three minutes, maybe five. I'd have to stretch it to say five. And what did he say? He said well when they were the government they studied the marketing problems, too, and they had presented a report something to the effect that it was very similar to ours but that he didn't agree with marketing boards, and he sat down. That was all he said, and he was the guest speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they gave me the floor at that stage, and one hour and a half later, Mr. Speaker, after I was through, the Chairman said to the Member for Roblin, "Would you like to say something?" And he said, "No". So I invite the Member for Rock Lake, Mr. Speaker, to debate these issues with me, anywhere. I invite him to do that anywhere, Mr. Speaker.

I have it on the record, Mr. Speaker, that the guest speaker spoke for no more than three to five minutes and was completely either disinterested or incapable of punching one hole in the presentation of the Minister of the Agriculture in Grandview.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let's get down to the historical facts as they led up to the referendum. I would like to, before I do that, first of all remind the members of the opposition that of the 12 man advisory committee as of yesterday, ten are saying, "Vote yes in this referendum." — (Interjection) — No, this is a press release, this is a press release, this is a press release issued as of yesterday.

But, Mr. Speaker, what were the circumstances that led up to this thing. First of all, I think it's fair to say that we have studied marketing of meat products in Canada many many times at the federal level and different provincial governments have and certainly the Conservative government of the 1960's in Manitoba did through the Shewman Commission and certainly we went into it again in 1974 which produced this document which recommends in the main that we set up a marketing system for beef.

Mr. Speaker, I was aware, fully aware, that it is just too simplistic to presume that the majority of beef producers would want to go that far. That I would be well advised if for none other than political reasons, Mr. Speaker, to get the opinion of the producers at large. And so, in meeting with the Beef Growers Association and the Cow-Calf Producers Association and the farm union people, it was decided that we would set up an advisory committee of twelve — there were some members-at-large — and that committee would hold meetings throughout the province, last fall, and subsequent to that, they would present to me a report as to how we should proceed with the recommendations of the Inquiry Commission. I want to read into the record their recommendations because the Member for Rock Lake alleges, somehow, that that is not what they recommended so I want to read it into the record and if he wishes copies of it, I will send him a copy of the reports. We had a majority and a minority report and, Mr. Speaker, you can appreciate my dilemma on receiving two reports out of a twelve man committee which further explains the need for referring the question to the producers.

But the majority report, Mr. Speaker, and I want to quote: "A competitive beef marketing system: Whereas the Committee finds that cattle producers appear to be in favour of a producer-controlled agency, with some powers to regulate the marketing of cattle produced in Manitoba and; Whereas it appears that most producers prefer that the directors of such an agency be elected at the earliest feasible date." Well, Mr. Speaker, I want members opposite to remember that the recommendation here is that we elect a producer board at the earliest feasible date. I don't know how much earlier you can be than on Day One. "Whereas producers would favour the exercise of limited marketing powers by the agency, while it is controlled by a provisional board of appointed producers and; Whereas most producers would favour the exercise of additional powers by the agency once it is controlled by a fully elected Board and; Whereas many producers fear that supply management powers may be granted to the agency contrary to the wishes of producers and; Whereas producers appear to be generally in favour of a check-off on all cattle marketed, other than those sold farm to farm and; Whereas the committee concludes that most producers would be in favour of a plan that contains explicit safeguards with respect to these concerns. The Committee therefore recommends that:

1. An agency to be known as the Manitoba Cattle Producers Agency be established under the Natural Products Marketing Act, without a prior plebiscite of producers.
2. Provisional directors of the agency be cattle producers appointed by the Minister of Agriculture.
3. The Provisional Board be authorized:
 - (a) To make regulations with respect to weighing, settlement and identification

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procedures in plants and auction markets and with respect to disclosure of prices paid by packers for animals sold direct.

(b) To investigate alternative markets and to test competitive methods of selling cattle on a rail grade basis.

(c) To investigate producer complaints.

(d) To require buyers to pose prices and discounts offered for rail grade purchases.

(e) To collect and disseminate market and price information.

(f) To exercise such additional powers as may be approved by a producer plebescite.

4. The Provisional Board be replaced by an elected board within two years.

5. The Directors be elected by registered producers within districts established on the basis of producer numbers and recognized geographic boundaries.

6. The elected board have all powers exercised by the provisional board and such additional powers as may be necessary to carry out all other functions as recommended by the Manitoba Livestock and Meat Commission." In other words, once that board is elected, Mr. Speaker, they would have all of the powers in order that they could implement these recommendations.

MR. SPEAKER: Five minutes.

MR. USKIW: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. "Powers additional to those specified in 6. be granted to the elected board only upon approval of producers. The plan include a provision that a plebiscite be taken on any section of the plan if requested by ten percent of registered producers. The agency be funded by a compulsory . . . — compulsory, Mr. Speaker — "minimal check-off based on a percentage of market value on all cattle and calves marketed in the province excepting farm to farm sales."

And then, of course, Mr. Speaker, that document was signed by eight of the twelve members of the advisory committee and they are: Armand Desharnais, Elgin Hall, Rudy Usick, Richard Laid, Arnold Keyes, Charlie Meyer, Donald Voth and Les Thatcher. Those are the signatories of the majority report.

Then we had a minority report representing the remaining four members of the committee which in essence recommend, Mr. Speaker, that we establish a marketing commission without a vote and that within three years a referendum be held to determine whether that marketing commission should be converted to a producer elected marketing board. And that was signed by: Brad McDonald, Lyle Ross, Art Nicholson and Dennis Trinder.

So Mr. Speaker, you can see why it is that I chose to take the route of the referendum. It was really important from the government's point of view to get a further feeling from a majority of producers as to how far they wished to go and so we did prepare a letter that went out with the ballot outlining the powers and duties of the Board and that is what they are voting on — nothing more, nothing less. That is the document, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite and some of the Freedom Campaign have suggested not be included with the ballot. Mr. Speaker, had I accepted that suggestion, then they would have made the argument that, "What are we voting on? We have no information with the ballot." That would have been their argument, Mr. Speaker. So we did have to point out the powers, the duties of a board if this vote carries and on page three we point out that this board will have no power to regulate supply, to set up quotas and that it doesn't make sense to do that through a provincial agency which has the responsibility of marketing a product which is largely exported out of the province, that that only makes sense in the national context, if we had a national marketing board.

So the producers have been fully informed as to the question, we have had many many meetings; the department has had very few — in fact only one sponsored by the Department, as I recall it — but I have accepted every invitation that I have received to attend meetings in order to further clarify for the benefit of those voters that have had a deluge of junk mail delivered to them, Mr. Speaker, by hand and through the mail, in an effort to completely confuse and distort the results in this referendum. . . My only hope, Mr. Speaker, is that there has been sufficient time for the producers to have fully analyzed the proposition before them and that they can make a vote with the utmost of intelligence because that is what is required. It is very unfortunate if producers cast their ballots without knowing the implications of a 'yes' or a 'no' vote.

So I look forward, Mr. Speaker, with a great deal of anticipation because that vote will give me a sense of direction in terms of the attitude of the people and whether government has any further role to play in that regard. The government's role at this time is merely to facilitate that that decision be made by the people who will be affected by it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

MR. PATRICK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish I knew something about the beef industry in the province of Manitoba . . . because . . .

A MEMBER: You know as much as the Minister knows about it.

MR. PATRICK: . . . the centre of debate has been the Independent Cattle Producers, the Freedom

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Mr. Speaker, and I can give him some facts, how do you know that you're getting the best product, how does the Minister know? He says, "Well that's the only way." I can give him some facts that are startling and he wouldn't like to hear them, I know, because I can tell you that units were built in this city two years ago, solid construction, first class construction, solid concrete construction around \$13,000 a unit, now we're building frame and stucco \$30,000 a unit, \$30,000 a unit. In a matter of two years — (Interjection) — because you didn't call for tender. How do you know that somebody wouldn't have given you a tender for, instead of \$30,000, \$15,000? I'll tell you, when he says that's a proposal unit. The Minister probably is not aware but should be aware, when the land was offered, when land was offered — I can give him the case because, in fact, I told him about this piece of property last year — was offered to the MHRC for \$44,000. MHRC said, "No, they weren't interested." Why wouldn't Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation buy the land, develop a kind of plan, that kind of accommodation that perhaps we'd all be proud of, and call for tender system. At least give some of the other builders in the city an opportunity to have jobs and to be able to build. That wasn't done. Do you know how much the contractor paid that built on that site that was offered to the MHRC for \$44,000, was sold for \$40,000 or something, but the builder paid \$125,000, and a short time later, three times as much, three times as much and you can repeat that many times in the city. So how can anyone, the Minister or the government, or the backbenchers say that the government wasn't taken on some of the deals and I'm not putting any blame on the builder because he, you know, because he was getting the jobs, the proposal system, he was getting the contracts, why shouldn't he, the amount he paid for land wasn't important but the point was that the land was offered to the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation and it only makes sense, only makes sense that they should have purchased some of the key locations and then called for tenders and still, and again I'm not saying that they shouldn't have used the proposal system in some cases but, according to the information, I hope the Minister can correct me, but some 60 percent or so of all the units that were built were built to the proposal system. So I do have a concern and I think that the government can be to blame and taken to task, they did not do a good job as far as the housing is concerned.

The land assembly, I'm sure, the land assembly could have been done better than what is done now. The government is planning for 20 years from now, or 25 years for now and UUUUU my argument with the government again is, maybe 25 years from now people will like to live in inner core of the city in condominiums, in apartment blocks and maybe not in houses that are going to be 25 miles away from the city. So surely there is enough land close in proximity that could have been connected to sewers and so on and facilities that could have been put onstream quicker.

Now I think it's a serious situation here that the government did not do a good job. I believe that it requires perhaps one department to look after the housing, you know you have the Minister responsible for co-ops looking after co-op housing, the Industry and Commerce for land assembly and somebody else in another area and I think there is some co-ordination required to deal with this I am concerned in this area and I'll talk again in this respect. I have the most recent vacancy survey report for the month of February, in respect to apartments in the City of Winnipeg, in three bedroom, two bedroom, duplexes, there is a zero vacancy in Winnipeg, there's not one apartment available for the month of February. In one bedroom, or bachelor, there's .2 percent in bachelor and .3 percent in one bedroom but in two, three and duplexes there's just no vacancies, none at all. I should clarify that, that's in the price range of \$150 to \$200 per suite. So that's how serious the new apartment situation is. Again, I think it's important that the Minister should have met with the private sector, with the industry, and see what kind of accommodation could have been made to see that there are some new apartments started because, even with the rent control, there has been some scepticism and reluctance on the part of industry or the builders to start, even though they have a five year freeze from any controls. So I am concerned in this area and I will take more time to develop this later on in the session. But I can relate to the Minister, if he's not aware, that he should be aware of many instances where the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation could have got key locations in the city for in fact real good prices, the land, and then they could have called for tenders, we could have had such kind of accommodation we could have been proud of.

Mr. Speaker, the other area that I am somewhat concerned and greatly concerned — and we know what happened as a result of inflation in the last two years, particularly last year, not only in Winnipeg or in this province, but in Canada and, as far as our Senior Citizens are concerned, many of these people are really in a pretty tough situation. Fifty-eight percent of the single senior citizens receive income that is below the poverty level, 58 percent, Mr. Speaker. We also have, of these same people, paying 50 percent of their total income for accommodation, 50 percent of their total income for accommodation, so again the government can't take great

pride and credit that it has solved all the problems and it has done a great job. I called a year ago or again, I believe it's two years ago that I called, that the supplement for senior citizens in need, with some kind of a test, the supplement be increased and I indicated that it be increased at least to \$300 per person and to \$250 where there is a couple involved. Because you don't with \$30 or \$40, Mr. Speaker, you don't buy much groceries today, very little in fact — you can go to the store and I'm sure

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you've experienced that yourself. So we have some very serious problems where 75 percent of our senior citizens suffer some chronic illness and I think that the best way, that the best way we can help these people in the home care, is delivery which can be expanded which can be improved and it's, again, at the present time it's in its infancy stage and doing very little. Other serious problem that the government is not aware of perhaps, Mr. Speaker, and doing very little, is that the percentage of the senior citizens in this province are going to increase at an alarming rate; by the year 2,000 or even prior to that, at least 12 percent of the total population will be senior citizens and they're rate. Again, increasing at a tremendous the government has done very little in this area, very little, Mr. Speaker. So back-benchers — I ask the sure the Minister will get up and says well we've done the home repair program and nobody's arguing with that. It has been of assistance. It has been of great help to the people and the tax credit, the property tax credit has been, I don't deny that. But the Minister should consider that even with all those assistances, how would he, how would he like to make it on \$250 or \$240 per month. You can't do it. That's very difficult. You have to have some other source of income and I'm talking about 58 percent of the people in this province who live below the poverty line as far as the senior citizens are concerned. And again, in that area, I say that the government has not reacted to the need of these people and it is time that they have because I know they take great credit for many of the good programs but it seems that in the last year, and particularly this Throne Speech, they have not reacted to the needs of the people where because of inflation, you know the cost of living has gone beyond all means for these people. There is no mention in the Throne Speech. The Government has not reacted to the needs of these people.

The other area, Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech has mentioned something in respect to the estate and gift taxes and small businesses. Well, I appreciate that and I believe that something has to be done. I still know very little what will be done because the Member for St. Johns the other day said, "well, how much is enough and what do you want?" But all I can do is indicate to the members, the backbenchers is that at the present time the limits perhaps aren't sufficient and something has to be done. Because what you are going to do is lose a lot of the small businesses in this community that will leave and go somewhere else where there are better opportunities and when you have a business leave you also have a certain amount of jobs dislocated.

So what I am saying to the Members of the Government, I think that the small business man has to have some support. The small business man has to have some help because he is very fastly a disappearing breed. He is disappearing and it is still the little businessman that offers the competition; offers the services and if he does disappear there will be no competition. So this is an area that I feel that the Government has to do something with respect to low interest loans and offer some assistance.

I know that when we had the new corporation Capital Tax brought in last year and was tabled in the House in the last dying minutes of the session and it was told it was just strictly just going to catch the rich corporations, the million dollar people. But that's not so, Mr. Speaker. It is not so. It's hurting many small businesses in this province because the new corporation tax in broad terms, I believe it's very inflationary to start with and it is unfair because it is, in my estimation, it is a very marked departure from based on ability to pay. Because it is not based on ability to pay. And I believe in many respects it will be destructive to many small businesses in this community. I know the Minister of Finance is back in the House and he has had many complaints in respect to this tax. Again I feel it is not fair and I am talking about the new corporation Capital Tax because it is not based on ability to pay.

The best I can do is to relate my own circumstances; my own business and I hope the Minister will listen. At least in my own situation the corporation was able to employ 20 some or 25 people over a period of 20 years now and it gives jobs to some people. Twenty-five people isn't much but it is quite a few employees with a pretty good payroll but again, the Member for St. Johns said, "No, it doesn't affect any small businesses, it's those millionaires." That's what he said. But I'll tell you that small business is what I'm associated with. The reason I hate to use my own position because it's a conflict of interest and perhaps everything else but the facts are that there was a \$200 corporation Capital Tax. You know there are a very few assets in the corporation. There's a few desks and a few typewriters and the rest is a great big operating loan from the bank which is your operating capital. So before you pay your business tax and all the other costs of running a business, on top of that because you have a great big loan at the bank, well they say "That's your operating capital therefore, you're taxed and we need \$200 more." But that's not what we heard . . .

The point is very few businesses can do that. Very many small businesses haven't got the ability to take it after income tax any more because they are probably in a deficit situation. Many of them are. Well now the Minister for Finance doesn't agree. All you do is take a trip down dp o Inkster Blvd. and find out how many empty buildings there are and go and ask the neighbour next door "What happened to the business." You know where they went? They went to Alberta. —(Interjection)— That's right. Some of them maybe have but there's some have moved out and the others move as well. So the thing is, as much as we would like to agree with the government perhaps well I would disagree.

The present estate and gift tax is, I believe, is not proper. There should be changes made and we welcome the Throne Speech. We don't know what they'll be. But the Minister cannot tell us that governments can live in isolation because you can't. It's just a strange thing the capital will move wherever it can make more money. That's the problem. At least you can perhaps go all the way because I don't agree with total removal but you have to realize and be practical and realize what's happening in the country. You can't live in isolation because if you do you know the government will have to become the employer of all the people in this province because you won't. I can't relate it much stronger, Mr. Speaker, as far as the new Corporation Capital Tax is concerned because I'm indicating to the Minister that I understand what it is because I had to pay. My own little business had to pay not because it had large volumes of assets and money but because it has a great big loan at the bank. You said well that's the assets of the corporation so you've got to pay. Well, all I'm saying to the Minister is: Look at it, may be there are some changes required. I think the government would do well to look in that area and bring in the changes that are required because the way it was explained last session it is not working that way. It's affecting many small businesses and perhaps the government can take a look in that area.

Mr. Speaker I will not take any more time in the House. I perhaps can. I don't want to be too repetitious but I do want bring attention to the government and perhaps to the backbenchers that as far as the inner core of the City of Winnipeg, as much as the government can say that great changes have taken place, sure you have brought in policies and legislation but that sometimes doesn't help many unfortunate people in our city. Because, again, let me reiterate to the Minister of Finance. I think that the greatest pride the First Minister used to take in this House was when he used to get up and say, "We will not solve all the problems and we may not be the most popular government but we will do something for those less fortunate people." That's what he used to say many times. I'm saying to the government and to the backbenchers, in the inner core of the City of Winnipeg, particularly our Native people, there are serious problems; serious problems. There are more people today that haven't got the job opportunities. There are more people today that haven't got housing. There are more people in the centre care who were there 8 years ago, many more, that have moved in from different parts of the province that couldn't make a living and their chances in life and their opportunities aren't any better today than they were then unless the government starts thinking about some job creating programs and perhaps not building big offices because that is not going to help the situation in any way shape or form.

Now, I see the Minister of Health came in and I had some goodies for the Minister of — and this certainly should be concern to all the members in this House — where we have one of the most important people in this province in respect to gynaecology and the Head of Obstetrics who indicated in a news report from the Health Sciences Centre where Dr. Ralston pointed out that the province has more children in the lower socio-economic group than any other province in Canada. Thirty percent of the children in this province live in poverty and 76.8 percent of the single mothers are raising children on welfare. So, again, all I'm saying to the government and the reason I'm chastising the government is that you haven't solved all the problems; that you haven't solved. To me this is a very serious thing. There must be some effort made immediately to try and correct the situation. I hope the Minister will indicate to the House when he discusses his Estimates what he is doing about this because the Minister is trying to tell us that he is spending more money and doing a better job than any other province in Canada and there is one, a doctor, a head of gynaecology in this province saying that no other province has as many kids as this province — 30 percent of the children in this province live in poverty. — (Interjection) — Well, again the Minister says it's the native children, but I think that it's our responsibility in this House . . .

A MEMBER: It's the federal government's.

MR. PATRICK: Well, ... then collectively it is our problem and the federal government to do something for these people.

A MEMBER: Not when they leave the reserve it's not.

MR. PATRICK: Just to say because they're native we have no responsibility, that would concern me, I don't think that's the answer. Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance — and he had some responsibilities in the area, I would hope that he has some answers. I know it's not his responsibility now, we have a new Minister, the Minister of Industry and Commerce — why is the home ownership fading in this province? Why is it and fading quickly? Still, when we had the municipalities, St. James provided lots, East Kildonan did; West Kildonan did; St. Boniface and they put in services and put the lots on the market to the people and the people were able to — (Interjection) — well, the Minister says West Kildonan didn't; he should know because he was mayor of that City so he's probably right but I am familiar quite well with the City of St. James and it did one of the probably finest jobs in this City for its people for many years because it had the land and it put in the services so we didn't have the problems. Since the total amalgamation in the last five or six years, after Unicity came in, there hasn't been one lot put on the market by the City of Winnipeg. Why? Because nobody — you know,

probably there was no agreement with the province of Manitoba. I can't understand why the government here doesn't talk to the Mayor of the City of Winnipeg and talk to council and meet with private sector to see what can be done. I know yesterday, the First Minister indicated to this House, he said, "We have in co-operation with the private sector, we will have 2,000 lots coming onstream." Well, Mr. Speaker, that was the best news that we had in this House in eight years from this government. The best news. But why didn't it happen some years ago? Why did it take eight years to be able to talk to the mayor of the City? — (Interjection) — the Minister of Health says there was no land. If any one of those members would have come to me and said, "Look, tell me where there's 200 acres of land at \$500 an acre," I would have found you some, very close to services. But not now, you know today you would have had to pay probably \$20,000 to \$15,000 an acre; two years ago I would have found you some at five — at five. But why did it take eight years for the government to come to their senses and say, "Look, we're going to get together with the City of Winnipeg and the private sector and see if we can put some lots together." That's what the First Minister told us the other day that they are doing and I think it's great news; but 500 acres to the Minister of Industry and Commerce, you know, this is peanuts, this is a very very baby step, you know, he should be taking at least a half-step to meet the crisis situation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am concerned. I raised the three areas that are perhaps most important and the way the government proceeded to build houses through MHRC that the government is responsible for, I don't think they've done a good job. I think they could have done a much better job.

As far as the labour situation at Griffin Steel, I don't think we have the kind of information from the government that we should have had and I think the situation could be resolved quite easily. Why have anybody required to work more than 40 hours. Again I say that the Union should not intimidate any employees not to work more than 40 hours; that could be legislated; there's nothing wrong with that, unless in emergency situations.

Then we have got the people in the Inner Core. You haven't come to grips with their problems; in fact the problems are multiplied because there are so many more of those people in that area than we had before. So I would say, I'm not critical of the government what's in the Throne Speech, I'm being very critical and condemning the government for what's not in there to deal with these serious problems.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, in the traditional manner, I was going to congratulate you for assuming the responsibility for another year but frankly after last night and other incidents, I think perhaps I should just convey to you my commiserations. However I have confidence that you will somehow bear with us and, as in the past, bring us through another session. I also want to commend my two colleagues, the Mover and Seconder of the Throne Speech for their excellent speeches and the manner in which they brought forward their views on the Throne Speech.

I want to, of course, welcome — he's not here but perhaps some members could convey to him — welcome the new leader Leader of the Opposition. He and I did spend a few short years in this House together when he was on this side and I was on that side so I got to know him, I think, fairly well, although I am learning more about him every day. At the beginning of his speech in this debate, Mr. Speaker, I heard the new leader acknowledge in a way which I don't think I would have expected and I found very surprising to me, that our government had indeed done some good things and he wouldn't want to change that. But then of course, the Member for Souris-Killarney got further into his speech and he's made comments since and other statements and I become more and more convinced that he hasn't changed at all from what I remember him. As a matter of fact, his speech showed the same old negativism — he's known for that — and the same arrogance for which he was known in earlier years

A MEMBER: That's for sure.

MR. MILLER: . . . and the same old indifference to the real concerns of the vast majority — and I underscore vast — the vast majority of Manitobans. As I listened carefully to his speech and have read in Hansard some other matters that he mentioned, I realize perhaps the essential difference between the current leader of the Conservative Party and his predecessor, the Member for River Heights.

The Member for River Heights, although he may have started with the same basic philosophy and the same assumptions, the former leader was prepared to abandon the logical conclusions to which they led if those conclusions clearly resulted in less equitable policies — in less equitable social policies. But not so the current leader, no way, he's still stuck with his 19th century idealism. You know, with the exception only of the positions which are bound to be totally disastrous from a vote appeal, he sticks exactly where he was and where I think he will be till the end of his days. It doesn't matter to him that if we follow through with his programs the results would mean harsher policies again for the vast majority so long as his dogmatic, philosophical approach to his 19th century philosophy is maintained. And he has a philosophy; there's no question and it's well rooted in the 19th century.

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Most of what the current leader revealed was that he and his friends on that side of the House are really the defenders of the old status quo, of privilege, "I've got a Jack and I want to keep it." That's their position; it always has been. If they have to make a choice, Mr. Speaker, we know where they'll stand and we know what side they'll be on and I think Manitobans also know what side they'll be on when the crunch comes as it inevitably does. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe they really know the meaning of equity — they may know the meaning of pity, they're not that hard-hearted — but they don't know the meaning of true equity. They haven't learned and I suspect they haven't really tried to learn. Mr. Speaker, I don't believe I've ever witnessed, watched a collection of power-hungry individuals as we're watching this year. They, with their friends on the editorial board of the Free Press, are trying to relive the glorious days of the past — and by past, I don't mean just a decade or two, I mean away back. You know the Leader of the Opposition started out his speech with the hope that the House would forget the past, he said, let's start talking about the future. That was a nice try. But then he went on to imply that if Manitobans would just support him and his friends, everything would be just like it was in the good old days. So what he's saying is, forget about the past, let's start talking about the future, but really what he wants is the good old days back. Well, he can't have it both ways. Because people's memories aren't so short and they aren't going to forget that the good old days under that government weren't exactly that good. As a matter of fact, they weren't very good at all. Nor are they going to forget that this new leader, this brand new wrapped-in-cellophane leader, is not so new, after all. Because he has a track record. You know, he talks about if they were in office they would do things differently. He doesn't say how but the implication is there. That we tax too much, that we're too tough on people, that we're bleeding people. But, you know, that same leader is going to be remembered by hundreds of thousands of people because he was one of the senior members of a Cabinet under Walter Weir, and we all remember him, and Mr. Duff Roblin when they introduced the sales tax. That was theirs. They introduced the hospital insurance premium and the medicare premium because they didn't call that a tax, that was just a premium you paid. That wasn't called a tax.

They introduced the Revenue Act, Part I, and for those that don't remember that was the taxation of energy for non-residential use and for the telephone tax, as well. Mind you, they also did apply a tax on heating fuel but that became so hot an issue that I think, because of the heat factor, they had to back away. So the tax on heating fuel in residences was withdrawn.

And if that same brand new leader came out of nowhere suddenly, who has evolved the CFI negotiations, and let's not forget that, and he is the same leader that went along, apparently, with his colleagues when they were prepared to proceed with northern hydro development with complete disregard for the rights of northern people or what the implications were for, what was it, about one-quarter of the province.

You know, I think it has to be said that there is a real question of credibility involved in accepting the statements of the new Leader of the Opposition, namely that his Party is now ready to make a commitment not to impose medicare premiums, to continue the support of pharmacare and he would continue to operate autopac.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I remember the Leader of the Liberal Party. I believe what he said was and I quote, "We have difficulty in believing the sincerity of the Leader of the Opposition." This is what the leader of the Liberal Party said. And, you know, I have to agree with him. Because I honestly believe the Member for Souris-Killarney and his friends, his colleagues, indeed they have a major credibility problem. It isn't just the Leader of the Liberal Party who voices these questions, but I think many people do.

Now, I'm not saying that the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues did not do some good things when they formed the government. I just don't believe that one simply blackens everything for the sake of blackening, which they appear intent to do in this session. I don't believe in that. Of course, every government does some things, and some are good, and they have their certain credits, I suppose, that they can take.

But let's not pretend that those are the glory years, Mr. Speaker. The fact is they weren't. And except, perhaps, for those on the other side who still haven't got over the fact that the people of Manitoba saw through their self-righteousness and their pompousness, and posturing back in 1969, and turned them out of office — that mustn't be forgotten — the fact is that if there have been any glory years I think with pride I can say that they've been in the last seven and one-half years, Mr. Speaker, under a New Democratic government, a government which does in fact represent the best interest of most, not all, of most people of Manitoba. Not one which simply pretends to represent it, but in fact does. And I say "of most" because I agree we cannot be all things to all people as they're trying to be. They made their choice. We know who they really want to represent and they're welcome to them. But let them not try to, sort of, pretend with this sort of holier-than-thou attitude that if they were there, somehow, everything would be different, that all the people's needs would be looked after. Their track record shows otherwise. The speeches in this House show otherwise. Not just this year but in other years as well. And the votes on which they've said "nay" consistently show otherwise

as well.

Mr. Speaker, I won't go through the entire record. Many of my colleagues have spoken on them, and they've done it ably. And in many cases I think our track record speaks for itself. But let's take one point: Let's talk about the state of the economy. You know the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues have cried gloom and doom from the very day that this government was elected in 1969. Do you remember? Everybody was going to move out. The economy was going to go belly-up. Yes, the last one out — turn out the lights. I recall that. That's right. That was a bumper sticker. Don't blame me, I didn't vote NDP. That was another one.

You know, Mr. Speaker, now, seven and one-half years later, the gross provincial product in this province is doubled. It is double — (Interjection) — that's right but the gross provincial product, my friend, is doubled. It increased by 100 percent since the time that they were in office. In other words, Mr. Speaker, it has grown by the same amount in seven years as it grew in the first 100 years under the former government and of those before this. And that is factual. And that is factual. You compare that with what they predicted they'd hoped to do in the TED Report and it's a comedy, it's really a comedy. They were targeting for 1980, when we were surpassing it in 1972 and 1973.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MILLER: You know, that's one example, Mr. Speaker, and the opposition know it. — (Interjection) — I'm sorry, I didn't hear that comment.

A MEMBER: . . . out of the taxpayer's pocket?

MR. MILLER: Well of course if you are going to have programs and policies, you tax for them. Mr. Speaker, nothing is for free. I have said it a dozen times but people pay for programs they want, they need, and which they benefit from. Nothing is free. Maybe they think it's free.

A MEMBER: That's not true. That's not true. You've just got premiums, that's all.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. MILLER: Yes, but if you call a premium not a tax then maybe that's free. Oh no, medicare is not free. It's paid for by tax dollars, it's paid for by tax dollars. You're darn right it is and we don't try to hide it, as you did, by saying medicare is free but we have a premium. We have a premium. It's free otherwise. What a bunch of nonsense. Now, suddenly, we have an opposition which says that this Party wouldn't reintroduce premiums. They wouldn't introduce it because they realize — they're so power hungry they're prepared to do anything — so they pledged they're not going to introduce premiums. So that's quite a flip-flop, let me tell you, but, and I find it hard to believe but you know I'm a believing guy. I believe you. I believe you. I know I look at the Conservatives in Ontario and they just raised their premiums, I think it was in 1976, to \$384 per family. It didn't matter what your income was, \$384 per family. In Alberta, they've got so much money it's coming out of their ears. They're trying to figure out more trust funds and heritage funds to bury it in but, in their case, I suppose it's a matter of philosophy. They have a premium, oh yes. They've got a premium. And B.C., which is not a Conservative Party government but I would say it's a small "C" conservative government, well you know, they just raised their premiums, too.

So, I'm wondering what would this group opposite, how would they get around the pledge that they wouldn't reintroduce medicare premiums. I'm trying to figure out what they might do, and it struck me, oh that's it, exactly. They would introduce deterrent fees. Now deterrent fees is not a premium, it's a deterrent fee. Now I'm wondering really whether our friends across the way might not try to get around the new commitment by applying therefor a charge like deterrent fee and of course they will say that's not a premium and we're not taxing for it, it's a deterrent fee. If you're sick, you've got to pay money. If you have to go more than once to the doctor, tough, you shouldn't be sick. Now this has been tried elsewhere, Mr. Speaker, with not too much success, but it has been tried. It's along the lines that members opposite, I think, would think.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the fact is that prior to 1969 the Progressive Conservatives had plenty of opportunity to eliminate premiums, and they didn't do it. And, frankly, to me it rings hollow now for them to say that they support the policy which our government introduced.

You know, the fact is that they rejected it when they were in office and they even pretended that premiums weren't taxes, as I said earlier.

Then the Leader of the Opposition turns to Autopac, MPIC, and he said that he and his colleagues wanted to do something about it, to assure that it was built on a good, sound actuarial basis and, if possible, to introduce competition and freedom of choice, I think those were the words he used. Mr. Speaker, I've been around long enough, not just in this Chamber, but elsewhere. When members opposite speak in such ringing terms I get the feeling they are really talking about the dismemberment of socially useful institutions, and there is a way of doing it, because what they may be speaking of when talking of freedom of choice is to permit the private sector to operate within the plan. The net result would be to give a license to private companies to cream the system leaving the Autopac to deal with the most difficult cases; the most expensive cases, driving premiums up so they could say, "You see, government operation doesn't work." It's that kind of almost Machiavellian thinking which, I suspect, they are capable of doing.

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Now then, the Leader of the Opposition, I think it was the Leader of the Opposition talked about — I think the words he used were "cynical patronage in the civil service." You know, I give the Leader of the Opposition credit. He is a good speaker. He uses very flowery language. He talks about "cynical patronage." I think this is something that he and his friends have tried to suggest for a number of years now, it's not new, but the fact is it doesn't hold up, Mr. Speaker.

Our government has been in office now for a number of years and inevitably there is a turnover as people retire or leave for whatever reasons, but by and large, and I say this without equivocation promotions have been from within the staff, from the system and still even now the vast majority of senior staff in the major departments are people who have been career civil servants, many of whom were employed by the previous government, and even the government before them. Sure, we have executive assistants, Ministers do and so does every government and so did the opposition. Of course they also had Dalton Camp when they were in power. Now for all I know they still have him although I don't see him. This I don't know.

I am told, Mr. Speaker — and I can't corroborate it — I'm told that they now have, with the coming of a the new leader, a large staff of new people; many from out of the province. Now I wonder how they can explain this imported help; this high-powered imported help, to those of their supporters that think of these people on the opposite side as simple down home folks, because that's the image you know that they like to project, Simple down home folks, my eye!

Then the Leader of the Opposition did something that was really surprising, and I wonder if he caucused with the Member for Pembina. He called for more money for Day Care. Now that really is a red letter day and maybe that's because it's his nickname, I don't know. I really wonder if they got a hundred percent vote on caucus on that one. But the fact is, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoba's Day Care program is as good as any in Canada and perhaps better, and it's improving year by year. It has started and it will pick up and it will grow. It's inconceivable to me how the Conservatives can suddenly start supporting a program because as the former government this kind of program was totally rejected, it was just incompatible with any of their ideas or any thoughts, it was absolute nonsense. Woman's place was in the home, children and that's it. Exactly, exactly, and it's still with them. exactly.

It's interesting to me that members opposite; those who are staunchly opposed to extra government spending — because they're opposed, they're going to hold the reins. But in this case, Day Care and other programs, they're calling for more money for what is potentially, Mr. Speaker, is particularly in Day Care, potentially a very expensive universal program. Because, if you take Day Care to it's logical conclusion, as espoused by many people, what you are basically doing is lowering the educational system. Instead of age five at kindergarten, you are lowering it down to three and perhaps two, and I needn't tell you how expensive that can be.

So, I'm interested to see, and remember the leader's words that he spoke here and see what will happen in future sessions and future commitments that he may make in this field, I'll see how he deals with them.

You know the speaker, and other members opposite as well, keep talking about Manitoba's taxation. They say we should have a tax system which is in line with other provinces. Well, Mr. Speaker we have got a tax system which is in line with other provinces. Our rates are comparable and as a matter of fact, in my humble opinion, I think they are even fairer than other provinces. You know there are a great many points that can be made about our tax system and about the kind of tax system our friends opposite would like to see. All I can say is this, that the majority of the people of Manitoba, and I say to the public, that if the public thinks that the Conservative Party would mean lower taxes, forget it. Forget it. They're the ones that I stated before, imposed sales tax. They were the ones who imposed Medicare premiums. They were the ones who imposed tobacco taxes. As a matter of fact, most taxes came up through them. Although they might like to forget this — another point — they even had the highest income tax rate for many years, for many years, for many years and they didn't have tax credits, Mr. Speaker, except for a couple of years there they had a sort of rebate system, which they then proceeded of course to cancel the moment they introduced the five percent sales tax. They wiped it out.

Mr. Speaker, I am not critical of them or any party holding office, for having to tax because, as I said before, nothing is free. Services are not free. Costs revenue, go up and it can only be raised through revenue by taxation. So I'm not critical of them because they imposed so many taxes but I wish they would remember that they did impose them, and not now seem to appear that while they were in office there were no taxes; everybody got free services, somehow manna from heaven. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that we too have taxes of course but we feel that we at least have a much fairer tax system than was in existence when members opposite sat on these benches.

Mr. Speaker, I'm saying it and they'll say, "Well, of course, what's he going to say." But last year some members may recall an article in the Globe and Mail and it compared a family, a mythical family with . . . and they took the same figure across Canada, \$8,226 per annum, and they calculated what

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the impact would be on each family if they lived in any one of the ten provinces. Mr. Speaker, I have to remind you, if they've forgotten, that Manitoba placed lowest of any province in Canada. They're trying to forget that. They want people to forget it. They want it.

Another statistic, Mr. Speaker, which again they are ignoring or trying to forget or hoping people will forget, that a simple set of per capita comparisons based on comparable Statistics Canada figures shows that the per capita provincial government revenues in Manitoba, that was what we are drawing out of the economy is the third lowest in Canada this year, the third lowest. So the image they are trying to project of a government gone berserk, grabbing, is absolute nonsense it is not borne out by the facts. It's not borne out by the facts. That's what they are trying to peddle and that's what they're going to try to peddle in the months to come. —(Interjection)— No, what you're saying, you're giving more. You're saying this government is spending money like it has gone out of style. And that's the image you're trying to project and that is the image, that pitch we are going to hear for weeks and months to come.

He made a crack about, yes, two and a half to one. You know he even made a joke about it and he said that talking about narrowing the income gap between the rich and the poor was like giving someone a ladder with only two and a half rungs. I believe that's what he said. Well, you know, that's very funny to him and of course to his colleagues. I know the kind of ladder that existed before and the kind of ladder they'd like to see again. It would have 100 or 150 rungs and he and his friends would control those rungs and that ladder; and when he and his friends got to the top they'd either grease the rungs or they'd pull up the ladder after them. Now that's the kind of free enterprise system that they're talking about — free for themselves, private for themselves. As I conceive their philosophy, there's a place for everyone, but everyone in their place, and that's the key thing with them. You know they just can't conceive the idea that anyone might feel that there should be just a little less inequality in our society and perhaps a lot more tolerance. That isn't their bag.

The Member for Souris-Killarney went on to attack the increase in the administrative costs of MHRC since 1969. He looked at the figure in '69 and he looks at the figure now and it's very very large, and of course the administrative costs have gone up because MHRC are now doing something worthwhile. They're now doing something constructive. I believe it's already been pointed out that before the 1969 election there was a complete disregard for housing requirements of those who really needed it — those least fortunate — those who couldn't find housing even when homes are cheap, as pointed out by the Member for Assiniboia. There was always an element in our society, always a percentage, who couldn't make it in the private market, didn't qualify, whether they be elderly, broken families, whatever the reasons were and their needs were totally disregarded. We are doing something about it and we have done something about it, and not just in the City but in rural Manitoba as well. Since 1969 we've been able to change the situation in a major way; we've built or committed over 11,000 elderly and family public housing units and, frankly, it's a record that I'm proud of and I think justly so and I think that Manitobans are proud of, because I think Manitobans recognized that there was a need, the need is being filled — albeit not as quickly — but when you try to undo decades of neglect, you can't do it in seven years; it just can't be done that quickly so you have to pace it in a measured way within the means available.

The Member for Souris-Killarney also talked about the Critical Home Repair Program and he had some nice things to say about it, and I thank him for this support and I have to agree with him, it is one of the better innovations, the finer innovations that was brought in and it should certainly be continued and should certainly be improved. As for the suggestion, however, that support for it is too low, relative to other public works projects, I can only say to them that I disagree with them, I feel the amount is sufficient to handle the applications because you can't just, you know you have to be able to handle the inflow of applications and the administration and as well the available manpower. There's just so much available manpower and you simply cannot heat up the economy to such an extent that there aren't people to do the work. By introducing a program that is longterm so that year after year it will continue and roll on, for the first time in Manitoba's history we will be able to repair and as well continue to maintain our housing stock. Of course, other government programs which have been mentioned, but have been criticized as well, they will generate jobs and generate income because of the multiplier effect in construction and the overall impact will be far larger than the initial outlay. You know, the attitude of the opposition in housing is somewhat schizoid, I get that feeling. They say we should spend more, yet if we did, I'm sure they'd say that it constitutes interference in the free market system, the free enterprise system and that we're undertaking too much government spending. Now what would they really do, I wonder what would they do if they were in office? They advanced one idea and that was the tax break for mortgage interest, and I can tell them it's not a new idea, it's a very old idea and it was recently resurrected by the immediately former Minister for Federal Urban Affairs and I believe there is still talk about it in Ottawa, but nothing has happened at the federal level as yet. Now in some ways that may have merit, there are many things about the program that I might not like but if it is applied as a tax credit, perhaps it may have merit. But certainly, it's a program that has to be launched at the national level, as a federal tax measure, and perhaps it will be

but we'll be hearing from the federal budget in the next few weeks. I know the members opposite, the Leader of the Official Opposition and his group, have no answers in housing. The answer I know they had in 1967, 1968, 1969 was to set up, pass legislation, set up MHRC and they sat, they did nothing. One of the ways to do it was, of course, to simply make it mandatory that the city, the municipalities, the villages, the towns had to contribute both capital and operating subsidy and that discouraged any participation because, of course, the local governments did not want to get into this kind of encumbrance and this kind of debt and so nothing happened until we took office and changed that.

Then the Leader of the Opposition and others, I believe, also talked about, but he used the succession duty." He says it shows — you know, to me using that term "the most cruel succession duty," to me shows that they are really the defenders of those who already have much. They call these taxes evidence of spiteful envy on our part, of our party, and of course they would have them removed. But the people that benefit are largely beneficiaries of very large transfers of wealth, so now we know where their sympathies lie. But the fact is they should, you know, they know this is true and they should admit it, because in fact they themselves wrestled with this same question a number of years ago when they debated, both internally and openly in the late 1960's about whether or not they should rebate their share of the federal estate tax as Alberta had started to do in the mid-sixties. Now, Mr. Speaker, I know we've recognized that the current system of succession duties is not without problems, of course it is, and the Throne Speech made reference to that and I can assure the House that a review is going on and will be dealt with in due course. It would certainly be far better if there was a national system of estate taxation, of course there would be, everyone agrees. I believe there are plenty of quotations on the record where the opposition, when they were in government, said the very same thing so to now take the position that they feel differently about succession duty is not fair to them because actually they took a logical, moral position at one time and now to try to play politics with it, I think is really not fair.

Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition made some considerable comment about the fact that the Throne Speech lacked an important matter — it lacked any reference to national unity and the recent Quebec election and related issues. Now I want to say something about this which I know the Premier would be too modest to say. Our Premier is recognized in Canada by Canadians in every province as one of the strongest supporters of national unity in this country and he will be one of the most important participants in the up-coming discussions which will take place about the future of Canada. I think this point is worth making, Mr. Speaker. Canada needs leadership now more than ever before. Leadership which has experience; which is widely respected throughout the country. Now I know that the Member for Souris-Killarney aspires to such a position but I have to tell him, I'm sorry, that his qualifications cannot even be remotely compared with those of our leader. The only man to represent Manitoba at the conference table in the immediate future and in the distant future with the other provinces sitting down and with Ottawa, is the man who is leading our province right now. He's the logical man; he's the only man.

Mr. Speaker, I notice I only have five minutes. I want to cover a couple more points and that is with reference to Manitoba's credit rating. The reference was made to that by the Leader and I guess he was alluding to a recent article in the Free Press. I was pleased, frankly, that immediately after that article appeared both the Tribune and Channel Seven reports refuted the story which appeared in the Free Press, a newspaper which in my opinion, has become a real right-wing rag, the likes of which I haven't seen in Manitoba for years. The Hush magazine was a philosophical literary journal in comparison.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say this, it's been said before but again I underline, we have a AA rating today — it's higher than the province ever had under the Conservative government. It's higher than ever before. What I don't understand, if we have a AA rating, how they can be somehow implied from that that this government's credit rating is poor, or this government's credibility on the open market is poor, or this government is having difficulty in the open market. It makes no sense. You know, Moody's is a long established firm; they have a lot riding on the line if their credit ratings are not justified. If Moody's puts its neck on the line, they don't do it because they like us, they're all New Democrats, they're not. Mind you, maybe if I tried to sell them a membership card, they might buy one, I haven't tried. But certainly no one questions it. I'm sorry, I've got just two minutes to go, I'm sorry — (Interjection) — Oh, then it's not my time, it's his.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel state the matter of privilege.

MR. CRAIK: Yes. Number one, I think the member suggested that the Leader of Opposition's comments were based on the credit rating issued in some story in the Free Press. I think that story as I recall, came out at a date after which the Leader of the Opposition made his reply. Yes, the Minister suggested that.

Secondly, I do not recall — I can be corrected — I do not recall the Leader of the Opposition commenting on the credit rating of either Manitoba or Canada.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, I thought that the allusion made by the Leader of the Opposition was in fact based on that newspaper story; if it wasn't then I stand corrected. On the other hand, I do believe

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he did make some reference to credit rating from Manitoba and if I'm wrong, I'll apologize and I'll stand corrected.

Mr. Speaker, in the very few seconds literally that are left to me, I want to talk about something that surfaced last night and even today on the question of the budget and the accounts and what was referred to as the Prospectus that was issued by the government when they went to the American market.

Mr. Speaker, what we are witnessing today is the attempt by the opposition to include in the one budget, in the one operation, both the usual direct debt and the debt of self-sustaining utilities. Mr. Speaker, I would like to read something into the record. I would like to say this: what really counts is what you do with the money you raise, whether it will pay its way directly or indirectly is the chief matter of concern. This has been our guiding principle and the one to which we have adhered to the best of our ability. The public debt or indeed public investments as it really is has grown. I can only wish it had grown sooner so that our people might have enjoyed sooner the fruits of that investment. We have allowed public debt to increase. After the circumstances of the past, I regard this as a completely necessary development. It has become popular in some circles to argue that a balanced budget on both capital and current is a *sine qua non* of government finance, the best of all possible worlds. For a mature economy, that you might have to wait but ours is a developing economy and no manner or reason which suggests that we should impose on our people our people, our farms and our industries, onerous and discouraging levels of taxation to pay today for the full capital costs of our economic and social development.

Mr. Speaker, the great bulk of our debt has been contracted for asset creating purposes, in great part self-supporting. Mr. Speaker, those words are not mine, they were put forward to this House by the Honourable Duff Roblin, the Premier of the Province of Manitoba, in 1961 and now members opposite are trying to scramble the eggs and say direct debt is the same as a self-sustaining debt, you've got to put them all together because that is the debt of Manitoba. That's errant nonsense and they know it. They never practise it and it would be poor business to practise it and what's more, they know it. Mr. Speaker, my time has run out, I'm sorry.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland will have an opportunity when we come back at 8:00 p.m. The hour being 5:30, I am now leaving the Chair to return at 8:00 p.m.