



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

26 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Harry E. Graham
Speaker*



VOL. XXVI No. 69A

2:30 p.m. Thursday, June 22, 1978

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 22, 1978

Time: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. ARNOLD BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the first report of the Standing Committee on Municipal Affairs.

MR. CLERK: Your committee met on June 20th, 1978 and appointed Mr. Brown as Chairman. Your committee agreed that the quorum for all future meetings of the committee be six members.

Your committee heard representations with respect to Bill No. 18, An Act to amend The Brandon Charter, as follows:

1. Phil Hall — Private Citizen — Owner Brentwood Village Mobile Home Park.
2. Elliott MacDonald — Solicitor for Registered Owner of Land to be Annexed.
3. Gil Box — Mayor, City of Brandon.
4. Reeve Felix Weisgerber — R.M. of Cornwallis.
5. Wes Smith — Resident of Larkhill Mobile Home Park.
6. Roland Elliott - Brandon Mobile Home Owners' Association.

Your committee met again on June 22, 1978 and considered Bills

No. 8 — An Act to amend The Portage la Prairie Charter.

No. 12 — An Act respecting The City of Brandon.

And has agreed to report the same without amendment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. BROWN: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Emerson, that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. ABE KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the second report of the Standing Committee on Economic Development.

MR. CLERK: Your committee met on Thursday, June 22, 1978, to consider the Annual Report of the Communities Economic Development Fund for the year ended March 31, 1977.

Mr. Hugh J. Jones, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Communities Economic Development Fund, provided information as desired by members of the committee with respect to the Annual Report and current operations of the Fund.

The Annual Report of the Communities Economic Development Fund was received by the committee as presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa, that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

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

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. EDWARD SCHREYER (Rossmere): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, perhaps the First Minister could reply or take the matter as notice and that is to ask whether, in light of the uncertainty that's being demonstrated by senior government with respect to the definitive plans for the financing of the McGregor-Sherbrook Overpass, can the First Minister say whether any action is being taken in order to attempt to bring this proposed bridge construction to a more definitive pass?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON, Premier (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I would have to take that question as notice for my colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, who is attending Municipal Conventions these days. I'm sure that he will have some more up-to-date information than I would have on that topic so I will gladly take it as notice.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: To the Minister of Finance, Mr. Speaker, that is to ask the Minister of Finance whether he can confirm that there is an attempt being made on the part of some provinces, presumably including Manitoba, to attempt to get an extension of some X months — a few months — with respect to the period of the sales tax reduction?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I can't advise the Leader of the Opposition of any position that has been taken by the Province of Manitoba to have the period extended. I expect that now that the dates are confirmed, and that the air strike is not proceeding, that the Finance Ministers are going to meet on the 6th of July — it's a one day meeting, not a two day meeting — I fully expect that the question he raises will be very fully addressed at that time.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons for proposing that question, really, is to ask the Minister of Finance if an attempt will be made to attempt to get an extension of the period of the sales tax reduction, given that under the present arrangement, the sales tax reduction period expires in the autumn of this year, and it is really immediately after that and into the winter that Canada experiences economic slow down, and the reintroduction of the sales tax, it seems to me, would be a rather inversely inappropriate at that time.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the question on whether that can be seriously undertaken will be based too on the more definitive information on the impact of the reduction, and we are getting more information week by week on the effects of the reduction of the sales tax.

But secondly, more importantly it will probably be influenced by the size of the deficits, and as the Leader of the Opposition knows, the impact on the Federal deficit was, in total, grossed over \$1 million, for the move that was made. The net cost to the Federal government they calculated, in prediction, to be slightly under \$1 billion to remove it for the six months. With the Federal deficit running as high as it is, in the order of \$11.5 billion, in the current year, it would have to be seriously considered whether the Federal government, in itself, can afford to do it, and secondly, whether Manitoba can afford to undergo further revenues to the extent of some \$42 million a year, if the same program were carried on indefinitely.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Health. Mr. Speaker, in response to numerous requests from parents, who have been thus far unable to use the Before School Lunch and After School Program at Shaughnessy Community School, could the Minister advise me that I may assure these parents that the funding which has made

this program possible, will continue into next year?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, I believe I can assure the honourable member of that fact. I would appreciate if he would give me 24 hours to do so. I believe that that is one of the existing programs, the funding for which was included and approved in the appropriations for my department this year, but I would like to check on that specific name.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I have just one further question to the Honourable House Leader. Can the Honourable House Leader tell me whether it is being considered that the Legislature will recess before the month of July or within a few days after the month of July to reconvene in the fall of 1977?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Speaker, I can't give my honourable friend assurance one way or the other; no decision has been made on that particular intriguing prospect of the honourable member's.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the honourable member has said that no decision can be made, can I take it from that, or will the honourable member tell me that such a prospect is being considered?

MR. JORGENSEN: Well, it wasn't up until the moment that my honourable friend mentioned it. Now that he has mentioned it, we may give it consideration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Labour. In view of the fact that the Minister of Labour has indicated that a low minimum wage is important for the continuation of the garment industry in Manitoba, and in view of the fact as well that Electro-Knit has indicated its intention to transfer part of its operations from Manitoba to the Province of Quebec, and in view of the fact that Quebec has the highest minimum wage in the Dominion of Canada, is the Minister of Labour going to communicate to Electro-Knit advising them of the fact that Quebec does have the highest minimum wage in the Dominion of Canada?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, that's a hypothetical question, but on the other hand, I haven't heard anything to that effect; I haven't had any reports about that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.
The Honourable Member for Selkirk with a supplementary.

MR. PAWLEY: The announcement has already been made by Electro-Knit in today's paper, so it's no longer a hypothetical matter, it's a matter of fact. I wonder if the Minister of Labour would like to revise her answer in view of the fact that it is not hypothetical?.

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, I haven't been informed and I also haven't seen the newspaper, so I wouldn't care to comment at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: he Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Public Works, that in view of the fact that the Provincial Government must approve the transfer of land to the Federal Government to build the new penitentiary at Selkirk, and that they have been waiting now several months for that decision, can the Minister indicate what the reason is for the hold-up on the decision or can we expect a decision on that penitentiary land within the very near future?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Public Works.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, my information is that the particular land in question has been put together with several other parcels of land where an exchange is being worked out and it's perhaps for that reason that this has been delayed somewhat longer than it ought to be. I can recall having given instructions some time ago to the department to single out the particular land in question with respect to the new penitentiary site and proceed with that exchange singly. If, as it appears to be other exchanges that were initially thought about are holding up the transfer.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Can I take it from the Minister's remarks then that the Provincial Government has not introduced any particular objection to the transfer of land for that purpose but simply is caught in other problems, and I would ask him if he could provide a report to the House on what the disposition of that land might be or what the present state might be in terms of the transfer or exchange of land.

MR. ENNS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that is the situation. There is no objection by the provincial authorities to the transfer of land and I will undertake to, in the next day or two, assure the honourable member that that is in fact taking place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have an additional question that perhaps the Minister of Public Works might take, or take as notice for his colleague, the Minister of Urban Affairs, having to do with the report that the Federal Government has now offered additional funding for the Sherbrook-McGregor Overpass and I would ask if the province has agreed to the conditions offered by the Federal Government for that additional transfer of money so the Sherbrook-McGregor Overpass can proceed within the next construction year.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government has suggested to the province that we allocate the total amount of those moneys that have been made available to us from the Federal Government for these purposes, or for purposes that could be generally construed to mean the improvement of transportation services throughout the province. There has been some concern by the province that we did not wish to allocate that total amount to this one specific project. Now my understanding is that an arrangement, a more recent arrangement has been arrived at through the Minister of Municipal Affairs, and we would now be in a position to proceed with that kind of assurance to the City of Winnipeg.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Minister of Labour says it's hypothetical, and as a last desperate step to keep the question of Electro-Knit leaving hypothetical, would the Minister of Finance consider advising Electro-Knit that Quebec has an esstate tax and an inheritance tax, and that Manitoba has none, and that on that basis they should stay in the Province of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the Member for Inkster is well aware of the fact that the head office of that company is now located in the Province of Quebec, and if the owners in fact reside there they will be more than aware of the existence of the tax he refers to. However, Mr. Speaker, I would remind the Member for Inkster that if it is a matter of taxes that are causing any difficulty, if such difficulty exists, that there are more taxes than succession duty taxes that will be taken into account.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. In view of the fact that the honourable member says that the head office of Electro-Knit is in Quebec, and that that is the reason for the moving, would the Minister of Finance consider advising Electro-Knit that, there being no death taxes or estate tax in the Province of Manitoba, rather than moving people from here to Quebec, they should be moving people from Quebec to the Province of Manitoba.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, with regard to the question of the succession duty effects on the influence

of whether the company locates in Manitoba or not, I simply repeat to the member opposite that it is highly doubtful that in the case of a company of the likes of Electro-Knit, that the succession duty part of the total tax picture, is a major part.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, Mr. Speaker, my supplementary flows from the Minister's reply to the Member for Inkster. The Minister's reply implies that there are other taxes other than succession duty taxes that must be taken into account. In the light of that answer, I would like to ask the Minister, which other taxes, given that the sales tax is substantially higher in Quebec than here, the income tax is higher than here, there is a corporate tax that is levied for the city of Montreal. In addition to that the taxation level with respect to production machinery is also higher than here, so I'd like to ask the Minister which taxes he's thinking of when he says that it's these other taxes that more than offset the succession duties taxes.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I have no hesitation in telling the Leader of the Opposition and the Member for Inkster whether or not it applies to Electro-Knit I cannot tell you, but the tax that gives me the most difficulty in dealing with present customers, clients, industrial companies and potential ones is the present rate of Manitoba Hydro rates and the future rates — no hesitation.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: The Minister of Finance. I'd like to ask him if he would be prepared to table a statistical document which is available at least once a year put out by the Association of Electrical Utility Operations in Canada that sets out the Hydro rates, residential and industrial, across the country. Would my honourable friend be prepared to table that in a few days? —(Interjection)— Well, I'm sure that my honourable friend will hear enough about it as well.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, what I would like to table is some of the conversations that have taken place with organizations that depend on a competitive Hydro rate and that capitalized on an advantage in the past of a lower than average Hydro rate in the Province of Manitoba for the basis of an industrial operation. Mr. Speaker, that is the problem in most cases with regard to the location of industry, more than the question that he's raising here. Whether or not it is the question with Electro-Knit I would highly doubt it, but in most cases that is the tax — if you want to call it — that is the tax that causes the problem right now.

MR. SCHREYER: . . . and that is to ask the Minister of Finance if he is implying that the neighboring provinces that are bringing electrical utility additional capacity on stream in current times, such as the thermal plant at Atikokan, whether it be nuclear at Bruce, whether it be James Bay or wherever in Canada, are they bringing it in at any less in terms of mills per kilowatt hour than is the case here in Manitoba?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the one large advantage that we have traditionally had, which was our Hydro power rate being substantially lower than our neighbors, is the one that is of the most concern and the people that are looking at the Hydro rates here for the establishment of continual expanding or locating an industry are well aware, Mr. Speaker, of the total economics that are going to affect the cost of power in the period of time in which they want to set up their operations.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a fourth question.

MR. SCHREYER: Just to take one year at random to test my honourable friend's hypothesis, I would like to ask the Minister of Finance if he's prepared to table a comparison of Hydro rates, residential and industrial for Manitoba and the Province of Ontario for say, 1962, just as one year selected at random, to indicate whether or not Manitoba rates were significantly different from that of the Province of Ontario today or 15 or 16 years ago?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition is not aware, he should well be aware, that the method by which \$700 million worth of still capitalized interest charges on the Nelson River, the method by which those are amortized can put the Manitoba rates from the lowest to the highest,

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all depending on how you wish to introduce that. If he can tell me that over the period of the next year that there is going to be sufficient things go on in Manitoba Hydro and in Manitoba over that period of time to allow that amortization to take place in the method that he would probably like to have had it take place, then I can tell him that we're in the middle of the spectrum with the other provinces.

If, on the other hand, the \$700 million worth of capital for which we are still borrowing money to pay the interest charges, has to be borne by the ratepayers of Manitoba, then I can tell him that we can put ourselves above our neighbours.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I suggest that questions of this type are more of a debate whereas the Question Period should be used to elicit information. May I suggest to the honourable members that the debate that is presently being carried on with respect to Hydro may better be carried on when Hydro next appears before the Public Utilities Committee.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition on a point of order.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, your last suggestion, Sir, would be difficult to accommodate given that Manitoba Hydro has been before the Utilities Committee already and the report has been dealt with.

In light of that, I would like to pose, not a supplementary, but simply a question standing on its own which the Minister may wish to answer or take as notice, and that is to ask the Minister

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition with a fifth question.

MR. SCHREYER: Well, I'm sorry, Sir, the matter seems to be current, and that is to ask the Minister of Finance whether, in his last reply when he attempted to draw projections of the comparative cost of Hydro based on its amortization requirements in relation to the cost of electrical energy elsewhere, what assumptions he made — after all, there must be some assumption, Sir — what assumptions he made as to the future price of coal and the freight rate on coal, the future price of uranium oxide, the future price of oil and any other alternative form of electrical generation. What figures is he using to project the cost into the future?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to address a question to the Minister of Industry and Commerce, Mr. Speaker, and ask the Minister of Industry and Commerce whether Tupperware Limited, which has announced its decision to locate in southern Manitoba, whether that company expressed concern to the Minister or to his officials regarding the relative cost of electricity in Manitoba for their operation.

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

MR. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, I have not received correspondence with regard to that particular industry, but let me tell the former Minister that there are some companies that are fairly heavy users of electricity in this province who have expressed concern to me, who have plants in British Columbia and have told me that the competitive rate over the next couple of years, we will not be able to match the British Columbia rates.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: In light of the Minister of Industry and Commerce, in the light of his reply, I should like to ask him point-blank if he is aware of the statement made by the Chairman of B. C. Hydro, Mr. Robert Bonner, to the effect that British Columbia Hydro will require increases in the order of 60 to 70 percent in the next four to five years.

MR. BANMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, let me tell you, in the next couple of years if we lose some of these industries, we're going to be faced with higher increase in rates than that. We're facing a zero growth in consumption and if we're going to lose some of these, we're going to have to charge our taxpayers or the users of Hydro even more than we are right now.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition. Order please. Order please. Order please. Now, if we can get back to the Question Period rather than the debate, I'd recognize the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SCHREYER: Well' Mr. Speaker, I will avoid trying to engage in debate in the Question Period. I would like to ask the last Minister, however, who made reference to British Columbia Hydro rates, that even while accepting some of the observations which he included in his reply, I still would like to hear from the Honourable Minister if he is aware of the projected required increases as announced by Mr. Robert Bonner, the Chairman of the B.C. Hydro, in that province.

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I don't know exactly what the rate increases in B.C. are going to be and we don't know exactly what the rate increases over here are going to be, but in the shortfall in the next couple of years, our rates are going to higher than B.C. rates .

MR. SCHREYER: Would the Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce indicate whether he is implying that industrial rates here are significantly higher than in neighbouring provinces and if so, would the Honourable Minister undertake to acquaint himself with the debate here in this Chamber in the early 1960s, 1962 to be precise, when it was outlined at that time that Ontario Hydro industrial rates were on balance more favourable to industry than those in Manitoba?

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, I was asked a question by the Member for Brandon East who wanted to know if there has been any people that have asked my department, or showed concern, about the increase in Hydro rates and I have related that there has been some correspondence or some dialogue between officials in my department and I have had some conversations with some people who are concerned about the Hydro rates versus other jurisdictions where they are operating their businesses.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: I would like to address another question to the Minister of Industry and by way of clarification, I was asking about Tupperware and whether that company was concerned about the rate of electricity and obviously it wasn't.

I would like to ask the Minister if he could enlighten the House to what degree electrical costs are a significant factor in economic location decisions. I would daresay that it is a very minor decision factor for most companies. So I would like to ask the Minister just what industries have electrical costs of any significance? I would daresay that they are in a very small minority.

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

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, we have some substantial users but just to give the member an example, and he should be aware of it, the high cost of hydro power to greenhouse operators who are trying to operate during the winter months is putting them out of business. In California they don't have to have electricity to heat the tomatoes.

MR. EVANS: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would submit that greenhouse operators are very small employers in the Province of Manitoba. I would like to ask the Honourable Minister, however, given the fact that there are various kinds of energies available: coal, gas, oil, as well as electricity, I ask to what degree is industry in Manitoba significantly dependent upon electricity as a major component of industrial production costs?

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, the hydro costs have added to doing the cost of business in this particular province; you have to talk to any small entrepreneur, any store owner, he'll tell you that. But the point that the member is missing is that we haven't got gas in Manitoba; we haven't got natural gas in Manitoba. We have one natural resource which is the hydro-electrical power, and that was our birthright, if you want to call it that. And right now that birthright is costing us an arm and a leg.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister says we don't have natural gas in the Province of Manitoba. Is the Minister suggesting that there is about to be a shortage of natural gas or for some reason the Canadian Confederation is going to fall apart and Trans-Canada Gas Lines will no longer supply natural gas, or that Polar Gas will not at some time be providing gas?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I suggest to the Honourable Member for Brandon East that facetious questions are clearly out of order.

Orders of the Day. The Honourable Member for Selkirk.

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MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Industry and Commerce. Could the Minister of Industry and Commerce confirm that presently the HMS Lord Selkirk is being sliced into pieces in order for its preparation of movement out of the Province of Manitoba to some climates outside this province?

MR. BANMAN: No, Mr. Speaker, I can't confirm that.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that this too involves a loss of jobs in the Province of Manitoba, would the Minister make any efforts to ascertain whether or not this is true or untrue?

MR. BANMAN: Mr. Speaker, if somebody is cutting it up, I guess they are providing jobs.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Honourable Attorney-General. Last week he took as second notice from me a question regarding an investigation under The Fatal Inquiries Act which took place on about April 16th. I wish to know if the Honourable Minister has the answer now; if not, I am going to raise the matter when we get into his Estimates, and I'm getting a little bit tired of being told that he's going to take this question as notice and then not come back with an answer. If he doesn't want to give me an answer he can say so here and now.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I would apologize to the member. I unfortunately — or not unfortunately, but I have been attending regional meetings of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities. I have the file in my office and I will discuss it with him later today if he wishes.

MR. JENKINS: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, to the Honourable Minister of Labour. Can the Honourable Minister of Labour inform the House whether she has received an investigative report on the death that took place of the municipal worker painting on Portage Avenue?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MRS. PRICE: I haven't received the official report yet, Mr. Speaker. As soon as I do, I will report.

MR. JENKINS: A further supplementary to the Minister. Will it be also referred to The Fatal Inquiries Act for investigation?

MRS. PRICE: If it is justifiably so; I have to wait until we see what the report is. I know the police have been in on it and they have a report but I haven't received the official one as yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address a question to the Minister of Labour as well. I wonder if the Minister could indicate what role she or her department will be playing in regard to the lock-out at Canada Packers and the strike at Swifts?

MRS. PRICE: The conciliation services were held down east and we haven't had any part of it to date; we haven't been asked to participate.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister would care to indicate what are the key issues in the strike and the lock-out and whether she could confirm that one of the key issues at Swifts is the restriction that employees can only use the washroom two times a day?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I wish to address another question to the Minister of Labour. If the person whom people up north call "Little Big Mouth" would care to close it for a while, then I would address another question to the Minister of Labour. —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. It is my duty to inform members that use of unparliamentary language should not be condoned in this Chamber and I would ask the Member for The Pas to withdraw that remark.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I will certainly withdraw that comment if the members opposite will withdraw all their interjections which are far worse than that comment.
My question to the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker . . .

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order that you have raised, I must say that I wouldn't expect any sign of courtesy or anything of that sort from the honourable gentleman, and that his comments of the kind that he has just made are typical of my honourable friend and that they are taken —(Interjection)— I can assure him, Mr. Speaker, that his comments are taken in that light on this side of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I suggest to all members of this Chamber that it is not within the realm of possibility for members to conduct themselves in a very gentlemanly manner and conduct their business with due courtesy to all members of the Chamber.
The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Labour if the parliamentary gentleman opposite will permit me to ask it. I wonder if the Minister of Labour is concerned about the collusion between Canada Packers and Swifts as evidenced by Canada Packer's lockout of their employees?

MRS. PRICE: Mr. Speaker, I definitely am concerned about the lockout; however, as I had mentioned earlier, I have not been asked to have any conciliation from the Department of Labour and until such time we are bystanders the same as they are.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition on a point of privilege.

MR. SCHREYER: Yes, Mr. Speaker. A few moments ago we were treated to a short discourse by the First Minister with respect to parliamentary decorum and parliamentary graciousness; certainly decorum. Now that we happen, by coincidence, to have the electronic media present I presume it is also possible to prove that a very serious breach of parliamentary decorum took place. It is my most definite understanding that whenever Mr. Speaker rises, that everyone else in this Chamber sits down. That did not take place at the very same moment as we were being treated to a lecture on parliamentary procedure by the First Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I would suggest that we should perhaps carry on with the question period at this particular time as there is only five minutes left.
The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the First Minister. In view of the announcement that the Provincial Government has vetoed city plans to combat soaring unemployment in the construction industry, and the fact that the Minister of Education can seem to offer nothing more to many students of Manitoba than volunteer programs, could the Minister explain what program he has to provide employment to Manitobans other than to just ask them to volunteer their time for various projects?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't know that that is a question that first of all is capable of being answered in the question period or secondly, that is not being answered in the course of the Estimates consideration each day. I really don't see the causal affect between what my honourable friend alleges to be a fact, and his subsequent allegations. So at the risk of not taking further time of the House, I will merely tell my honourable friend to read Hansard, listen to the announcements of the government, and he will see what is going on with respect to employment in Manitoba, and he will see that the figures in Manitoba, even though they are not acceptable to the official opposition

or to us, are better than perhaps we had reason to hope they would be having regard to all of the other circumstances in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Well, Mr. Speaker, I say to the First Minister that my impression of his program for unemployed adults and poor people in Manitoba, is as follows, and I ask him to confirm or deny it; that the program his government puts before the people of Manitoba, who are looking for employment, is that they should volunteer their services free to the Provincial Government, and that is all they are offered.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I still really don't quite comprehend the point that my honourable friend from Elmwood is attempting to make, but that is not an unusual situation. I am reminded of course of the story that has been told in this House before in response to that kind of a question, that when the Duke of Wellington was once approached by somebody in St. James Park, and the gentleman said to him, "Mr. Smith, I believe," the Duke of Wellington said, "If you believe that, you will believe anything." I think that is the only response I can give to my honourable friend.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please. Yesterday, the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose directed a question to the Speaker. I would like to refer the honourable member to a ruling of Speaker Hanuschak in 1970, pages 226 and 227 of the journals, in which Speaker Hanuschak refers to Beauchesne's citation 184 of the Fourth Edition, which states as follows: "Questions dealing with matters within the jurisdiction of the Speaker should be addressed to the Speaker by private notice, since no written or public notice of question to the Speaker is permissible."

Now dealing with the subject matter that the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose has raised, I have perused Hansard of May 12th, May 29th, June 6th, and June 21st, and I should like to refer honourable members to citation 157(5) of Beauchesne, which states: "It is not in order to read articles and newspapers, letters, or communications emanating from persons outside of the House, referring to, or commenting on, or denying anything said by a member, or expressing an opinion reflecting on proceedings within the House." It would appear from the above citation that it could be conceivable that the Minister was out of order in reading letters into the record, or making reference to portions of letters.

However, other citations in Beauchesne, as well as in May, seem to contradict this particular point. I only bring this to the attention of the House, so that members may wish to consider carefully in the future, the propriety of using either letters or extracts of letters in their debate.

I should also like to refer members to citation 159(5) of Beauchesne, and the point of order that a member should lay on the table a document which he quotes should be taken when reference is made to the document.

A careful analysis of Hansard shows that the Member for Ste. Rose did not raise this matter on May 12th. In fact, the only reference I have been able to obtain occurs in Hansard on May 29th. It would appear to me that if the honourable member had wished the letters to be tabled, he should have raised the issue on May 12th when the Minister concerned made reference to excerpts from those letters in his speech. I therefore have to rule that the Member for Ste. Rose has no matter of privilege, nor indeed, no matter of a point of order.

However, I would hope that the Minister of Agriculture and the Member for Ste. Rose will be able to arrive at a conclusion which should prove satisfactory to each member in particular, and to the House in general.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Highways, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply, with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Northern Affairs, and the Honourable Member for Crescentwood in the Chair for the Department of Finance.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY — FINANCE

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Warren Steen: Committee come to order. We are on Page 31 of the Estimates Book, the Department of Finance. The Minister of Finance.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I apologize for being a few minutes late. I would like to, in opening the Estimates, make a short statement before we get into the detail.

Let me first of all say in the short time that I've been in the Portfolio as the Minister of Finance I've had the very strong support of Mr. Curtis and his group of people that are in Finance, and it's proven to be a very major support and one that I'm sure is going to show itself as being very beneficial to Manitoba to have a group such as this operating in the administration of the financial affairs of the province, and I want to thank each one of them for the assistance they've given me in the period of time I've been there.

Mr. Chairman, first of all I'd like to point out in the Estimates this year there are several changes. One is that the Tax Credit payments totalling \$133.5 million have once again been included as an expenditure item in the Estimates. During 1977-78 the cost of the program was removed from the Estimates and shown as a reduction of income tax revenues, although previously it had been shown in the fashion shown here, and in view of the nature and size of these payments I think that it's more appropriate and meaningful to show the Tax Credit payments as expenditures and therefore to have had the payments added to the Estimates rather than reducing the income tax receipts.

Another major change in the presentation is reflected in the Estimates for Sinking Funds. As previously stated in the Budget and so on, the Provincial Auditor has for some time been recommending that annual sinking funds should be netted against the liability or debt outstanding rather than being shown as a charge against the Public Debt Statutory appropriation and the Sinking Fund shown as an asset. So we've decided to reflect this change in 1978-79 Estimates and therefore a provision for Sinking Fund payments is not included in the Public Debt Appropriation.

During the 1977 fall Session both the Succession Duty and Gift tax and the Mineral Acreage tax were removed. The effective date for cancellation of these taxes were October the 11th, 1977 and December 31, 1976 respectively. You will, however, notice that expenditure estimates for 1978-79 still include a provision for \$79,600 identified for Succession Duty and Gift Tax Branch and there is also a small provision of \$105,200 for Mineral Acreage Branch included in the Mining and Use Taxes Branch Estimates. This is required during the winding down phase to handle the outstanding material that was on hand and will over a period of time diminish to zero.

I'm happy to indicate that many members of the staff from these two Branches have already been transferred to fill vacancies in other sections of the department and other departments of government. As a result of winding up the Branches we have not laid off but we have transferred either to other positions or moved into other departments. I expect that when the two Branches are completely wound down these people still working in these Branches will be able to be absorbed into other positions in the government and, in fact, probably within the department.

My Estimates also make provision in 1978-79 for the Manitoba Energy Council. During 1977-78 this function was part of the Department of Industry and Commerce but will be part of Finance responsibility for 1978-79. You'll note that the estimate for this branch has increased from \$154,000 in 1977-78, to \$253,000 in 1978-79. There will in fact, Mr. Chairman, to be an increase over that as well in the Supplementary Supply as a result of the Western Power Grid Studies which will also come under this appropriation.

I see this branch is taking a more active role in fulfilling its objectives of collecting and co-ordinating information concerning energy demands, developing policy concerning energy and offering policy recommendations and advice to the government. If Manitobans are to benefit from the many things that are happening in the energy field, it will be necessary to have all the facts and the clear policy to carry forward. Also, as we are well aware, there are some very major changes and much more concentration being given to the various energy options that we have to consider for future planning in this field.

During the Budget Address, I announced that Manitoba would combine current and capital Estimates in 1978-79. In the department, the capital requirements, as they do in most other departments, appears in the appropriation called Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets. As members will note, the left-hand side reports \$1 million and the right-hand side is nil. This is explained by the fact that in 1977-78, the Insulation Loan Program was part of Schedule B, General Purposes Capital, in The Loan Act, and therefore had to be printed in the Estimates. As this program requires the eventual repayment of all the loans, it should be classified as self-sustaining and included in The Loan Act along with the other self-sustaining programs and therefore the right-hand side of the Estimates before you which represents government programs shows as nil. If members look on the Capital Estimates that were tabled on Budget Address day, they will see that the Insulation Program is there under the other Schedule and increased to \$4 million rather than \$1 million.

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In terms of staffing, the department includes a total of 351 SMY made up of 334 continuing and 17 term positions compared with 365 last year made up of 340 continuing and 26 term. This represents a decrease of 15 SMY or 4.1 percent from one year to the next, made up of six SMY decrease for continuing and 9 SMY decrease for term. Major decreases have occurred in the Mineral Acreage Tax Section, Succession Duty and Gift Tax Branch, and the Manitoba Tax Credit Office with partially offsetting increases occurring in the Retail Sales Tax Branch, Mining and Use Tax Branch and the Manitoba Energy Council.

Mr. Chairman, with that brief overview, I haven't any further comments other than to answer the questions that may be directed regarding the items.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for giving us the staff complement. Are there any vacancies on staff at the present time?

MR. CRAIK: Some of these questions, I'll have to get numbers, Mr. Chairman. We have some vacancies. I'll get the numbers for you.

MR. MILLER: Yes, and also the vacancies this year as compared to last year so we have some idea of what the vacancy rate is.

MR. CRAIK: Okay.

MR. MILLER: Then Mr. Chairman, what the Minister is saying is the reduction in SMYs is due to the elimination of certain programs like the Mineral Acreage Tax and the Succession Duty tax itself so that although they still have to carry on, it's on a limited basis and in time this will be phased out entirely. The staff will simply move perhaps to other fields within the department. But the reduction in staff man years is because the two taxes have been eliminated and therefore there is less work on an ongoing basis.

MR. CRAIK: That's primarily correct. The Department is at the 90 percent staffing level as well.

MR. MILLER: Okay, that's what I was curious about. The other staff reduction, Mr. Chairman, is the Manitoba Tax Credit Office and I am wondering if the Minister could explain a reduction there because that is a program that is still in existence and to our knowledge is not being phased down or phased out. Does the Minister feel that the staff that is being reduced in this area is adequate to maintain the program, and also, how many are actually being reduced?

MR. CRAIK: Most of those reductions are actually in the field people who go around filling out the forms because it now being a repeat of last year and the year before's procedures, less assistance is required in the field to actually help people fill out the forms. So the reduction is primarily in those particular categories, part-time people who are hired during a short period of the year to go around filling out forms.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, then what the Minister is saying is that the reduction here is that short period when staff from the Finance Department went to personal care homes and elderly persons' housing in particular to assist people there, elderly people, to fill out their tax forms in order to qualify for their tax credits; it would be the cost of living tax credit; it would be the property tax credit. Is the Minister saying that he feels that it's no longer necessary that this assistance be made available to elderly people?

MR. CRAIK: Well, it hasn't been eliminated; it's been reduced from 14 to 8 because as the program goes on, people become familiar with the procedures and there is less requirement for that type of assistance than there was in the early years of the operation of the program, so that reduction, I see, has been made from 14 to 8.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I find that an interesting comment but I am wondering whether that is a subjective opinion by the Minister or in fact that in 1977, or this spring, let's say, that the reports received back from the field were that their services were really not needed and that fewer people could be involved in the program. Is that what the Minister is saying, that he knows for a fact that people are not required to supply this kind of service to people in Manitoba?

MR. CRAIK: Well, I don't know that anyone would know for a fact, Mr. Chairman, but our judgment on it was there could be some reduction here as the program had become mature.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, then what the Minister is saying is that in his opinion, because the program has been in existence for a while, then people, as I indicated earlier, elderly people who have problems in filling out tax forms, that in his opinion, because they have been assisted in the past, they should, at this point in time, be able to do it on their own or find other means of doing it, whether through a private company or private accountants or what have you and that, in his opinion, the fact that some people may therefore not be able to fill out the forms or fill them out properly, that's their problem and not his.

MR. CRAIK: Well, it isn't quite as abrupt as that, Mr. Chairman. As I say, we have reduced the staff, we have provided information for a direct toll free line in the event of anybody having any questions in regard to the filling out of the application forms, if there are any in the rural areas that have discussions. We did check with some of the senior citizen homes and found that in fact the supervisors in the homes themselves were pretty well equipped to advise the people in cases where there were questions that arose with regards to the filling out of the forms.

But I would point out that the actual number of SMYs that were used last year was 10.2 for this purpose and the number that are still on, I indicated to you that we reduced from 14 to 8 in this area, I'm indicating here now that the actual numbers that were used last year were 10 people. There are still, I would gather from this, 8 people involved. So it's not a case of having wiped it out but we did reduce it somewhat.

MR. MILLER: I'm pleased to hear that, Mr. Chairman, because what the Minister therefore is saying is that the reduction is not 14 to 8 as he indicated earlier but 10.2 to 8.

MR. CRAIK: Well, there may be more . . . That's SMYs. Now they are short period . . .

MR. MILLER: Yes, they are short periods. There are a lot of bodies making up one SMY and you take them for short periods. But in using the SMY calculation, it's a reduction from 10.2 to 8 rather than 14 to 8, is that right?

MR. CRAIK: That's the information I have, yes.

MR. MILLER: Okay, fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUUK: Mr. Chairman, following up on this particular point, I would like to point out that there is a very substantial reduction on the salary side there. It's a reduction of \$67,000 from \$162,000 to \$95,000 and if you compress that over the short period of time when the forms are filled out by senior citizens, it would strike me that there's been a very large reduction in the type of service provided to senior citizens enabling them to get the benefit along with other people.

I'm wondering if the Minister would undertake to give us a breakdown of the number of returns received last year by the Property Tax Credit Office and the number of returns that have been received this year, the year has ended and the Property Tax Credit office has received all of the forms for this year. I would wonder if he would undertake to provide us next year with that comparison to determine whether in fact fewer senior citizens are indeed filing the credit returns.

MR. CRAIK: We wouldn't have that information yet but we will be able to obtain those numbers. Revenue Canada processes these for us but we can obtain the numbers, I gather, from them.

MR. PARASIUUK: Mr. Chairman, all I'm doing is serving notice so that next year when I ask the Minister if he does have the material, I think he will be aware that I will be asking that question next year.

If I could continue on with the questioning, Mr. Chairman, perhaps I missed it in the Minister's introductory statement but whereabouts is the provision for the work that will be done in relation to the Polar Gas Pipeline? Is that being provided for in the Estimates here?

MR. CRAIK: That's under the Manitoba Energy Council.

MR. PARASIUUK: It's under Manitoba Energy Council.

MR. CRAIK: Yes. I indicated to you that in Supplementary Supply we will be introducing another additional probably around \$120,000 in Supplementary Supply on the Manitoba Energy Council and the Polar Gas work will account, the work that is done in 1978-79 will be included partially at least in that.

MR. PARASIUK: Could the Minister just give us an indication of what 1.(e) is because, again, I might have missed that in his introductory statement. The Special Studies 1.(e), it's a new item. What is it?

MR. CRAIK: Oh, this is the Hydro Inquiry, the Tritschler Commission.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, in that connection, does the Minister have any indication when the Commission may be reporting? I understand it's going to be having hearings over the summer in this respect and reporting sometime next year?

MR. CRAIK: The information that I have is that the public hearings are to start in late summer and I think their objective has been to complete their work by the end of 1978. I had inquiries from the media regarding this and I directed them to the Commission office and I understand that he has indicated to them that that is roughly his schedule.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(b)(1)—pass — the Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, before we pass that, I wonder if the Minister could run down the reconciliation statement and explain the transfers and the nature of the transfers from Northern Affairs, Urban Affairs, Industry and Commerce and Executive Council. That's a transfer to Executive Council.

MR. CRAIK: Northern Affairs is people that have been involved now and are primarily involved in the Federal-Provincial Cost-Sharing Agreements, the DREE Agreements. Industry and Commerce is the Energy Council. Urban Affairs, there was one person transferred there. The GDA, the General Development Agreement of DREE, is co-ordinated through Finance.

MR. MILLER: That's the Northern Affairs one.

MR. CRAIK: The Northern Affairs staff has been primarily now utilized in that area and had involvement in Northern Affairs under that as well. The Urban Affairs one, I'll have to find out for you.

MR. MILLER: I see. What about the transfer to Executive Council?

MR. CRAIK: The Urban Affairs transfer is now my secretary, used to be the secretary of the Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: Oh, the staff.

MR. CRAIK: Yes.

MR. MILLER: Oh, I see. Okay, fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. CRAIK: That isn't her full salary.

MR. MILLER: No, no.

MR. PARASIUK: I wanted to get back to a couple of statements that the Minister had made in response to questions from the Member for Seven Oaks. In order to facilitate some of my later questioning, I was wondering if he would provide an organizational chart for the department. I know he's had some functions added on to the Department of Finance and if we got one of those, it would help us.

Secondly, if he could provide the tables indicating what the staff man year changes have been. I know he read it into the record, but we don't get Hansard for a few days and therefore it's difficult

to take a look at what these were and I would think that his department has probably prepared a fairly simple chart showing staff man years, permanent, contract and term for 1977-78 and 1978-79, and also that chart would probably show the vacancy rate in both years. So if he would undertake to provide or table that chart to us sometime today or tomorrow, it would help us in getting a better appreciation of the department.

MR. CRAIK: We'll undertake to provide that.

MR. PARASIUK: The Minister indicated that although there have been certain branches that have been wound down or are in the process of being wound down, the civil servants in these particular branches have been transferred to other parts of the department or to other departments. Now I can understand and appreciate the system of redeployment within a department because I think that's fairly straightforward but I wonder how the process of redeployment takes place to other departments and I'm wondering whether in fact these civil servants shouldn't have gone on to the government redeployment list so that they, along with all the other civil servants whose functions were made redundant, would have a fair and equal chance at job opportunities within the Civil Service, or is it the situation that somehow Finance civil servants are getting a preferential treatment in getting an opportunity to bid or get into the job openings in other departments.

MR. CRAIK: XThe ones that were redeployed were done through open competition and most were accommodated within the department itself. I think there were only one or two that went into other departments.

MR. PARASIUK: So what the Minister is saying is that there has been no redeployment process that hasn't utilized formal competition so that everyone in the Civil Service as such would have had a fair opportunity to bid on those job opportunities.

MR. CRAIK: They're all formal competition.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay. I would like to just make a general comment with respect to the Department of Finance. I can share the Minister's appreciation for the competence of the staff. They are an excellent staff; they are incredibly hard-working, and they above all have integrity, and I think that that has served past administrations well and I think that will serve this administration well.

However, with respect to integrity, I have one concern, and that concerns the Task Force, the Report on the Government Organization and Economy, the Task Force Report, Volume I. I believe that my colleague, the Member for Seven Oaks, had asked questions of the Minister of Finance as to whether Finance officials had been asked to provide technical work with respect to the Task Force and I think that the Minister indicated that that was the case. I think the Member for Seven Oaks also asked if these civil servants were being asked to somehow change their technical analysis to fit the political objectives of the Conservative Party in trying to depict a horrible deficit, and of course the Minister indicated that that wasn't the case. I'd like to ask some questions in this respect.

First, were technical people from the Finance Department used in doing analysis for Volume I of the Task Force Report on Government Economy and Efficiency?

MR. CRAIK: Well, a number of departmental people were consulted by the Task Force people during their work.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I'm specifically referring to Pages 24 to 32, which is the fiscal situation, and I would think if any department was in a position to report technically on the fiscal situation it would have been the Department of Finance. Now I know that the other entity that would have been able to make some technical reports available to the Task Force would have been the Provincial Auditor, and he provided an audited statement for the first statement, I think this was the September 30th statement. He didn't audit the statements of Finance Department officials regarding the December 31st statement and I guess the March 31st statement, which I don't know if we've received yet, but I gather that the Provincial Auditor won't be auditing those quarterly reports. Given that, it would strike me that the major source of technical information for the Task Force Report on the fiscal situation would have been Finance officials. And in that respect I find it somewhat inconceivable that technical people in the Finance Department would start talking about —(Interjection)— Well no, they didn't here — I find it inconceivable —(Interjection)— Oh, yes they did; sorry, on Page 26 it says, "Preliminary calculations at the time these requests were submitted indicated that if extraordinary action were not taken to limit growth in spending, 1978-79 current and capital expenditures could exceed revenues by an amount in the area of \$400 million." Now,

was that based on technical material provided by the Department of Finance, or was that based on some type of exaggerated — in a sense wishful thinking — on the part of some of the politicians? Could the Minister please give us a concrete answer as to whether that \$400 million figure — which is a figure — was provided by Finance Department technical officials or whether it was a figure provided by the politicians?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to attempt to rationalize or comment on the work of the Task Force which has already been examined in this Committee.

MR. PARASIUK: No, it wasn't.

MR. CRAIK: Well, it was examined under Executive Council.

MR. PARASIUK: No.

MR. CRAIK: Under the particular Minister's Salary, the report itself wasn't a production by the government but Finance people were consulted along the way. As the member mentions the Auditor's department, I would also presume that Management Committee people were aware of some of the financial management affairs. The figure referred to as the potential 1978-79 deficit in my Budget speech or, earlier than that, in the tabling of the Estimates, is the only figure that I have produced and is the only figure that I think I can answer for, and I really don't think that it's the place to be undertaking to rationalize, comment, defend, otherwise the work of an advisory group to the government.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I find that position incredible in that whenever people have asked for information we get information which in a sense has the stamp of the Department of Finance technical officials on it, so therefore people accept that information as being correct. Now, we look at a Task Force that has a figure of \$400 million as a possible deficit, and this is not a guess; it doesn't say that this is a guess. This is preliminary calculations. Now those calculations would have to be done by the Budget branch, I would assume, which is 1.(d). Now, that could have been the case. Furthermore, we had that \$400 million figure corroborated by the Minister of Finance making statements to that effect as well.

MR. CRAIK: Where?

MR. PARASIUK: You made a statement with respect to a \$400 million deficit.

MR. CRAIK: Where?

MR. PARASIUK: When you introduced . . . Did you use 300 as opposed to 400?

MR. CRAIK: I never used 400.

MR. PARASIUK: You used 300.

MR. CRAIK: Well, you're making the statement.

MR. PARASIUK: No, you just said that you used the figure of \$400 million when you introduced the Estimates. You also did so in comment with the press, and that is written down as a matter of record. Now, the point is, when we try and find out what the components of that \$400 million deficit are, we ask individual Ministers and we find out that the individual Ministers aren't able to provide us the components. In fact, the numbers they give us are much less. About three or four Ministers answered that question and they backed off because they realized that they weren't providing corroboration to the Minister of Finance's speculations; they weren't at all. So they refuse to answer any questions as to what their proposed deficit might be or what the possible changes might have been to their Estimates when they took office on October 24th and proceeded to try and develop the Estimates for their department for this particular year.

So the component parts were all wrong; the parts didn't add up to the sum of \$400 million. We therefore assume that somehow, this \$400 million figure had to be developed by some other groups, not by the departments themselves. So we assume then, since this is purported to be a technical document and since the Minister of Finance's statements are supposedly based on fact, not fiction, that there is some type of technical evidence to support a Task Force which had on it or had providing technical material regarding the fiscal situation, we would expect that group to

be able to provide the technical evidence to substantiate that \$400 million figure. We would also expect the Minister of Finance himself to provide technical documentation to substantiate his \$300 million figure. And it goes a bit further than that, in that if you go on to Page 27, this is a statement that says, "To raise money in one year through taxation rather than borrowing would have required . . ." — this was to raise the \$400 million figure which has never been corroborated and never been documented — ". . . to raise \$400 million would have required tripling of the provincial personal income tax rate." Now, is the Minister in a position to indicate what the present income tax rate of Manitoba is?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the comment that I made in the . . . I don't know where the member is getting his figures because I . . .

MR. PARASIUK: I'm asking you where you got your figures; you're making the statement.

MR. CRAIK: The comment that I made with regard to the budget, I don't recall having used the \$400 million figure that you're talking about. I think you've got the wrong person but perhaps someplace, somewhere, some reference is made. If it was, I don't recall it, but . . .

MR. PARASIUK: Did you use \$300 million as a figure?

MR. CRAIK: . . . in any event the . . . Well, did I use 300 ? Now we're on a fishing trip.

MR. PARASIUK: No, I'm not fishing. It was either \$300 or \$400 million that you used. Now I'm asking you, which one did you use? Now, if you can't remember that, then we can check through the record and find out.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I would suggest to the Member for Transcona, if he's going to attribute statements to other people, that he had better verify those statements and the onus is on him to do it. If you find out that a person is going to deny one statement, he comes back on a fishing trip to try and find out, you know, some sort of a play the odds until he finds out what he can deal with. It's a - pretty loosey-goosey way to go about trying to examine Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Johns.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I think I still have the floor. I was asking a number of questions. I was asking a question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: The Minister is in a position of not wanting to answer the question. I will check into it because I know that he did say \$300 million. He also, right now . . .

MR. CRAIK: He just finished saying I said 400; now he's saying 300.

MR. PARASIUK: . . . just in discussing this matter, you indicated \$400 million and I'll check through Hansard. . .

MR. CRAIK: Well, make up your mind and then we'll talk about it.

MR. PARASIUK: . . . We don't need the answer right now but I will check through it. The point is, the figure of \$300 million as a potential deficit has been used and the figure of \$400 million. These are statements that have been made by government people utilizing technical material prepared by the Department of Finance. We don't have that technical material but the figure of \$400 million has been used by some Ministers and the figure of \$300 million has been used by other Ministers. We would like to know whether in fact that is based on technical material that was put forward by the Department of Finance officials. I've asked that question; I've not received an answer.

I look at the Task Force Report and I note that it indicates that there could have been a deficit of \$400 million and the Task Force Report, presumably again, utilizing calculations done by the Department of Finance officials, indicates that in order to clear off a \$400 million potential deficit, a tripling of the provincial income tax rate would have been required. Well, I'm asking the Minister, very clearly, what is the present provincial personal income tax rate?

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MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I think it would be more appropriate if the member were to ask if I felt that a \$400 million deficit in 1978-79 was a realistic figure, did I agree or disagree with it. That might be the appropriate question. But to first of all suggest that I used the \$400 million figure is erroneous, which I didn't. Secondly, to try and suggest that somehow I had some influence over the use of the \$400 million figure is going even further. The figure used in Hansard, to save him the footwork, that I used at the time of the budget, was \$300 million. That was naturally based on information that I received from departmental officials. I said at the time that I felt it was a conservative figure on the first-round Estimates that I inherited when I came to office at the end of October, first of November because the first round of information was in from the departments and it was well in excess of \$300 million on a combined account basis. Whether or not it could have reached 400, I can't say it couldn't have. If you asked me whether I thought that the \$400 million figure used by the Task Force was unrealistic, I couldn't tell - you it's unrealistic. If you asked me if it was realistic, I'd say, yes, it could be.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I've asked the Minister quite specifically what is the provincial personal income tax rate. Could he tell me what it is?

MR. CRAIK: At the current time?

MR. PARASIUK: Yes.

MR. CRAIK: The provincial income tax rate, personal rate, is 54 percent, plus the surtax.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay. And in October 24th or December 1st, it would have been 56 percent, is that correct? 56 points.

MR. CRAIK: 56 percent plus the surtax.

MR. PARASIUK: 56 percent. Now, what does each percentage point yield in the way of income?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, if the Member for Transcona wants to borrow my calculator, I'll give it to him.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, could you just answer the question then?

MR. CRAIK: I'm not going to do your arithmetic for you.

MR. PARASIUK: I was just asking very simple, straightforward questions which I would assume the Minister of Finance could answer.

MR. CHERNIACK: He knows better.

MR. PARASIUK: The staff know that answer by heart; what does one percentage point yield in income?

MR. CRAIK: Well, the information, Mr. Chairman, is all in the Revenue Estimates. You can take it and divide it by 56 and you've got it.

MR. CHERNIACK: Have you got a calculator there?

MR. PARASIUK: Could you, you know, I don't have my calculator, could yield, I think that's a normal you please give me what one point would question.

MR. CRAIK: Here you are.

MR. PARASIUK: No, I asked you the question, Mr. Chairman. You know, if the Minister wants to take the position of not wanting to answer questions, I guess he can take that position but I would have thought that would have been a fairly straightforward type of question that he could have answered, very straightforward. What does one percentage point of income tax in Manitoba yield to the Manitoba Government? Is that a difficult question? Do you find that too difficult?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, . . .

MR. PARASIUK: If it is too difficult, then maybe we can try and get Mr. Cherniack to do the calculations but if the Minister of Finance does find it too difficult, then I guess we'll have to use . . . All this fat here, we have so many staff, one, two, three, we have about 12, 15 staff here. If the 12 to 15 technical staff find that calculation too difficult, then I will retract it and try and get someone else to do the calculation but I didn't think that that was such a difficult question.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, it's such a simple answer that I simply reversed it on the member because he knows very well that elementary arithmetic, he probably knows it off-hand already. I mean, if you want to play that sort of a game . . .

MR. PARASIUK: No, I'm just asking what it is.

MR. CRAIK: . . . fine, I'll take your questions as notice . . .

MR. PARASIUK: Okay.

MR. CRAIK: . . . and we'll bank them and . . .

MR. PARASIUK: It certainly wouldn't be less than \$7 million.

MR. CRAIK: It would be less than \$7 million probably; it would be approximately \$6 million.

MR. PARASIUK: So you were saying that if you bank all the questions, and if I ask you the question a number of times, you will come in here then and try and move closure because that's what you did in the other Estimates when we were asking questions that the Minister of Labour couldn't answer. Now, maybe she didn't have the staff back-up to answer that question. I've asked you a very straightforward question as to what the yield might be because sometimes it varies from year to year and I've just asked you what it's going to be for this coming year. I don't have my estimates, I don't have the Estimates of Revenue with me. I don't have the Estimates of Revenue with me but I do know that there are staff sitting there who know that answer and can pass it on very, very quickly, very easily, without any difficulty.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, to take the Member for Transcona out of his misery; it's roughly \$6 million per point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Might I point out to both the Member for Transcona and the Minister of Finance that it makes it very, very difficult for the people that record Hansard if they don't wait for one or the other to finish their question or their answering.

The Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: If it's going to be \$6 million — but my colleagues are telling me that it's more like \$7 million, you know — so that makes a fairly large difference because if you multiply 56 times 6 you're going to get \$336 million, and if you multiply 56 times 7 you're going to get something a bit higher; I mean you get something closer to 400.

MR. CRAIK: Did you add the surtax?

MR. PARASIUK: If you add the surtax it would even make it closer, so that means that according to my calculations, even if you take these highly speculative numbers of the Chairman of the Task Force and even if you take the highly speculative numbers of the Minister of Finance regarding a potential deficit, and if you do a technical calculation of what the yield is times the number of points, you will find that that statement on Page 27 is just completely and totally incorrect. It could never have been made by a technical person. It just wouldn't have been. At the most it might have said a doubling of the provincial personal income tax rate would have been required, but certainly not a tripling, certainly not a tripling. And the point about that is there is a big difference between doubling your income taxes and tripling your income taxes.

Now, when we are told that Department of Finance technical officials are working on a document and we find in this document that comes out as a government document — it is a government document — that it indicates that some type of tripling of the income tax would have been required in order to deal with this horrendous deficit then some people might attach some credibility to that statement because the technical people of the Department of Finance were involved, and if you

ask for any material regarding taxation, and I recollect yesterday the Minister tabled material of a comparative nature regarding taxes between this province and other provinces, and people looked at it and they didn't start questioning the figures to say if these are right or wrong or have they been slanted correctly or incorrectly. You took them as being straight technical figures provided by the Department of Finance; you took them on faith and you proceeded to start looking at the comparisons.

Well, I would like to be able to do that with respect to future documents where the Department of Finance officials have been involved, because I do know that they do technical work. I do know that it's good work, it's well done and you can have faith in it, but when I see this type of ridiculous error that exists on Page 27 I am astounded. I am wondering whether in fact the competence that existed in the Department of Finance somehow was horribly diluted as of October 24th, and I don't think that's the case, or whether in fact they have been instructed to change their figures to suit the political circumstances — and I hope that's not the case. Or whether in fact we are being told that the technical people are doing the work but that political people are coming along and taking the technical numbers of the Department of Finance and wilfully changing them and presenting them to the public as accurate information. Now I think that's a very critical point regarding the future integrity of the Department of Finance. I know that over the last 16 years the Department of Finance had the highest integrity. I would like it to continue and I think it's important to get an explanation as to how you would get that statement on Page 27, that in order to deal with some type of hypothetical \$400 million deficit you would need a tripling of the personal income tax rate in Manitoba. Can the Minister explain that?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the only comment I want to make is that the Department of Finance people who are associated with and were consulted on the work did not draft the report of the Task Force nor make the extrapolations or otherwise that are contained in the report. So I don't intend to pretend to answer for the Department of Finance, but simply to keep the record clear that the allegations of the Member for Transcona are not necessarily the facts.

Whether or not the statements contained in the Task Force Report are accurate or not, I will not attempt to answer them, that's for the Task Force to — The Member for Transcona may wish to put on the record and state publicly that the personal income tax, using that type of extrapolation, would not have been three times but would have been closer to two times; if that's his case, well, he's done it.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, if you look at Page 24 when they just introduced the fiscal situation, analysis of the Task Force, it says, "Immediately after taking office the new government instructed the Department of Finance, in co-operation with the Provincial Auditor, to prepare an interim report on the financial position of the province for the six months ended September 30, 1977 as well as projections for the year ending March 31, 1978," and then goes on to describe the various situations. So, one therefore surely would not infer from that introduction that somehow these figures that follow that introductory paragraph are figures put out by the Task Force and not by the Department of Finance in co-operation with the Provincial Auditor. And that's the point, because I do think it does.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I might point out to the Member for Transcona that we did spend 10 to 12 hours with the Minister responsible for the Task Force and that our primary responsibilities here are the Estimates that are before us on the Department of Finance.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, if I could respond to that. We've asked a number of questions of different Ministers and they said well, you can get that when you deal with the Executive Council. I was out of town for that one day and I can recall my colleague, the Member for St. Johns, indicating that I did have some questions to raise on this. This was disregarded by the Committee; the Committee then decided to ram through this report of the Minister responsible for the Task Force sometime about 12:30.

MR. CHAIRMAN: After some 10 or 12 hours of debate.

MR. PARASIUK: Okay, after some 10 or 12 hours, but we didn't get a chance to discuss this particular item. And the point is, we do have other opportunities, and I've had you tell me this in the past, you know, if you raise something now and then, don't be so terrified that it might pass by because you do get other opportunities in the Estimates process. And you yourself have indicated when we get to the Finance Department's Estimates, you can ask a number of these other questions. I'm doing that now, and you are now telling me that I shouldn't be doing that, and I was really only just following your advice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I didn't say you shouldn't be doing it; I'm suggesting that we are on the Department of Finance's Estimates and not the Task Force Report. If you're asking questions relating to the Finance Department and want to use the Task Force information as backup, that's in order.

MR. PARASIUK: Precisely. That's all I'm doing. Because the Department of Finance has been named in it; it's been named as providing this technical material; we find the technical material in this document is false. And all I want to know is whether in fact the Department of Finance provided the false material or not. I would hope that they didn't; and frankly I would say that they didn't do so, but I do think that the Department of Finance's integrity has been compromised by this and I'm wondering whether the Minister can indicate whether any of the technical staff of his department saw this statement that a tripling of the provincial personal tax rate would have been required in order to deal with this deficit, and whether in fact they didn't bring it to the Minister's attention?

Because I would think that if I was an official of that department and I saw this type of statement, I would know that it would reflect badly upon the department and I would try and raise it up with the Deputy or the Minister to ensure that the record was put straight. Now, I'm just wondering whether the Minister received information from his staff indicating that this number was wrong, that this figure was wrong, that this calculation was wrong, and that maybe the Department of Finance's technical integrity had been compromised by using that type of gross exaggeration.

MR. CRAIK: Well, if it will do the Member for Transcona any good, I may answer one of his questions, was I aware of the contents of the Task Force Report prior to publication? The answer is, no.

MR. PARASIUK: So you weren't aware of it. After it was published were you aware of its contents or did your staff read any of the material of the Task Force Report? And furthermore, did they then inform you that certain statements in here that could have been attributed to the Department of Finance were incorrect?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I have already said that the Department of Finance, although they were consulted on this, did not draft the Task Force Report, nor do I have any evidence that they were involved in arriving at the extrapolations that were done by the Task Force group.

MR. PARASIUK: And you are telling me that none of your staff contacted you to inform you that this was a glaring inaccuracy of the Task Force Report, namely, the statement that a tripling of the provincial personal income tax rate would have been required?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, it's highly possible that there wasn't any member of the Finance Department that saw the final report any sooner than I did.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Chairman, I'm asking, if, since the publication of this report, which is April of 1978, whether any of his staff informed him that there was this glaring error on Page 27 which might have been attributed to the Department of Finance?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Transcona is assuming it is an error; I'm not agreeing that it is an error. If you include last year's deficit, the year before, and next year's deficit, probably you can make an argument for that statement. I am in no way intending to comment on the Task Force Report, but I'm just not, by his remarks, letting them go by, suggest that I in any way agree with him that the report is in error. I'm just simply reporting that the Finance Department was consulted along the way of their investigations and their examinations in preparation of material, but that does not mean that they were involved in the drafting of the report. To repeat to him again, the publication of the report was when I saw the comment he is referring to.

MR. PARASIUK: I'd like to ask the Minister of Finance if he would undertake to let us know by this evening whether any technical staff of the Department of Finance in their calculations indicated to the Task Force that a tripling of the provincial personal income tax rate would have been required? That's one.

Secondly, I'd like him to further undertake to find out whether, since the publication of this report, or before or after the publication of this report, whether any Finance officials communicated to the Deputy or the Minister that the statement on Page 27, which I believe to be glaringly wrong, was in fact wrong. Could the Minister undertake to find out those two pieces of information and report back to us this evening, because that's as far as I'd like to go on this particular matter, if the Minister

would undertake to get that information, which I think is fairly straightforward and I think would clear the air with respect to the technical competence and credibility of the Department of Finance, which I have a tremendously high regard for and I would not like to see compromised.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I've already replied that the Finance Department people were not involved in the drafting of the Task Force Report, and the recommendations that are there are there with the Task Force letter of submission, and I don't intend to, since the Finance Department was no more than a consultant along the way in their investigations, I don't intend to go on a witch hunt in the Department to find out whether they can verify or otherwise something that's in the report of a Committee to which they did not have the responsibility for authoring.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Gentlemen, in accordance with Rule 19(2), the hour of 4:30 having arrived, I am interrupting proceedings of the Committee for Private Members' Hour and will return at 8:00 p.m.\$

SUPPLY — NORTHERN AFFAIRS

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Abe Kovnats: I would direct the honourable members to Page 65 in the book of Estimates, Northern Affairs and Renewable Resources and Transportation Services. We are on Resolution No. 97, Clause 3. Fisheries and Wildlife Division. The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSON: Due to the absence of the Member for Rupertsland, the Minister of Northern Affairs was asked if he could proceed to Item 100, and deal with that particular branch of the department until the return of the Member for Rupertsland. So, if you would call, I believe it's Item 100, that they would prefer to start with that Item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would direct the honourable members to Page 66, Resolution 100, Clause 6. Northern Field Services Division, (a) (1) Salaries—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder, since this appears to be a partially new item, if the Minister would care to explain exactly what the position is here, and just give us some detail of what it's about?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. KEN MacMSSTER (Thompson): Mr. Chairman, the first thing I'd like to do is pass over a couple of sheets of the chart for the Member for The Pas.

Just in opening remarks, I'll attempt to give you, Mr. Chairman, a general idea of what Northern Regional Services means. It's an area of the province that we are attempting to establish a procedure in programming and people and a delivery service, and by Northern Regional of course, you'll find that within the Estimates there's a Southern Regional area too.

We have established in northern Manitoba for the first time, and I could be corrected, for the first time in the history of the Province of Manitoba, a very senior civil servant in the form of an Assistant Deputy Minister, who will be having his office and his staff and running the entire operation from Thompson. The Regional Services, as we call them, — there are four regional offices, being Thompson, The Pas, Dauphin and Selkirk — and as we go through it you'll find that there's approximately ten. We broke it out and we'll get to those questions, I suppose, as we go along. We broke out ten classifications of individuals that will be working out of those offices which we feel can supply the services to the particular regions. So that's the part of the delivery end of it.

We also have the conservation officers, biologists, foresters, some construction workers and a variety of other trades and people in professions who are in the Regional Services, which has similarities to the southern ones. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. The Minister is a little off base when he says that this is a first very senior position. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, in the past there were three persons of Assistant Deputy Minister calibre located in the north when the Minister came to office; they were the head of Engineering Services — excuse me, that position was vacant when the Minister came to office — there was the head of Local Government Development located in Thompson, and the

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head of The Northern Manpower Corps located at The Pas. So this is certainly not a new situation, and those positions were basically ADM positions, although the title was head of a certain division.

Mr. Chairman, there is a salary item here for the past, and I assume that that refers to Local Government Development position in Thompson, and I wonder if the Minister could explain why he saw fit to demote and force out the person who previously occupied this position? Was the person incompetent, was the person not capable of functioning under the new Minister? For what reasons did he force the previous incumbent from this position out of his position?

MR. MacMASTER: Would the member be kind enough to specify the particular position that he was talking about?

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Speaker, I am making an assumption here, since there's a salary figure shown for last year. This would refer to the head of Local Government Development, but if it refers to another position, maybe the Minister could tell us what that position is? But I'm making the assumption that it was the position of head of Local Government Development located at Thompson, the person who has since resigned from government service because of demotion and reduction of responsibilities.

MR. MacMASTER: The one position that was previously under 6.(a)(1) is a retired Assistant Deputy Minister, who has left the service of Renewable Resources, and we have promoted a regional director into that position and moved that particular individual to northern Manitoba; that's why it was one — he filled that one position — and he has two of staff support to him, which I could enlarge on for the information of the Member for The Pas. There will be three people in that particular office: the Assistant Deputy Minister; his secretary, which is presently being posted, bulletined; and an Administration Officer from Northern Affairs who was working in Winnipeg, who has now moved to Thompson and resides in Thompson. So that's the three that we're dealing with under 6.(a)(1).

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister doesn't wish to answer my question under this section, I am assuming that he will answer the same question under 6.(d). It doesn't particularly matter to me where he answers the question as long as he deals with that question. The position that we're looking at here is basically a structural change in terms of a further regional division as opposed to a functional division, which, in my mind, has always been and always will be six of one and half a dozen of the other. It's a structural matter and it's very difficult to say whether one structure is any more effective than another structure. The position that we're looking at here, Assistant Deputy Minister position, is certainly one that has now been transferred to northern Manitoba — a person from the Resources Department previously stationed in the southern area of our province, and I suppose the ancillary services to that particular person. But, Mr. Chairman, the question that I asked, and this item itself relates, and as the Minister introduced it, to the structure, to the function, to the management of the department, and particularly to the department as it functions in the northern part of the province, and therefore is a good section to deal with the overall problems that my colleague, the Member for Rupertsland, talked upon last week, and that is a deliberate decision by the Minister, upon taking office, to find ways to dispose of, to force out of the department, a certain senior position, in fact all of the senior positions within the Department of Northern Affairs, and it might be the time at which the Minister wishes to explain that action or he might wait till I ask him questions on each particular section as to why he made that particular decision on each particular section of the department.

Since we have a sectional organizational chart, I would wonder what the Minister sees as the basic executive of the combined departments? Since we would have to wait till each section is dealt with to get to that, I wonder if he could just fill us in as to — I assume that the assistant deputy minister in Thompson now would be considered executive of the department, and what other positions would he consider the senior executive of the department at this time?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MacMASTER: The assistant deputy minister in northern Manitoba will be responsible for all the delivery services of the combined departments, conservation, local government services, the entire operation of northern Manitoba; he will be responsible for.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. In this section, 6.(a), will any of these costs be recovered from the Federal Government under the Manitoba Northlands Agreement, in Section 6.(a), and he could respond to both (1) and (2), even though we're not to (2) yet; will any of these be recovered from

the Manitoba Northlands Agreement?

MR. MacMASTER: It might be possible, down the road, to negotiate some sharing if it could be established direct involvement, I suppose, but we're not displaying it because at this particular time I don't want to go on record as saying that I don't think we can, because if I am going to try and negotiate it, that's a poor position to start from. It's not displayed at this particular time.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could tell me if I am interpreting the chart correctly. The Director of Regional Services, W.C. McLean, I assume, has the basic responsibility for what used to be Resources Department, and it would appear that the head of Community Service is vacant, would have the responsibility for what used to be the Northern Affairs' function. Would that be correct?

MR. MacMASTER: Not entirely, Mr. Chairman, and if the member would bear with me, I would appreciate going into as much detail as I am capable of under the particular appropriations as we come to them.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, then that would seem to imply that each section under No. 6 can be divided up into responsibility of one of these two branches. Would that be a correct assumption?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass; (2)—pass; (a)—pass; (b)(1) Salaries—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I could have some detail from the Minister as to exactly the function served here, the roles and responsibilities, and the programs delivered by this section.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, the operations group has the responsibility to deliver the assigned resource management programs of the division, and we feel in an effective and efficient way. They will be participating in resource management programs of the division and they will be providing a system of delivery of information to the public. The breakdown in numbers might be of interest if I can just break it down here. To break it down for the member; there is a director, two managers, eight clerical positions, 17 biologists — foresters and technicians, two mechanics, a radio operator. There are 32 COs, conservation officers, and there is 28.15 casual fire rangers, towermen, and patrolmen. This breakdown, I suppose, answers the question as well, as going into a great deal of verbiage.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister has those figures added up in terms of the staff vacancies when he took office, so that we can get some comparison between then and now.

MR. MacMASTER: Previously, Mr. Chairman, there was 89.15, there is an increase this year of 2, which is up to 91.15. The changes took place in the following manner: There were two resource technicians, whose positions had been vacant for over a year, and we determined them to be excess and we deleted them, and we added four people, three conservation officers and a regional manager, that will be posted as presently vacant, will be posted and will be residing in Thompson. A further breakdown for the information of the member of the three conservation officers; one will be in Grand Rapids, one in Gillam, and one in Norway House.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, of the 89.15, I wonder if the Minister could indicate how many of those were — I am not sure whether the .15 is because of the positions to allow for hiring of casual and part-time staff. So maybe the Minister, if that is the case, and I notice one of his staff nodding their heads, of the 89.15, how many were permanent civil servants, how many were positions to cover casual and part-time help, and then how many of those permanent positions were vacant at the time of his assuming office?

MR. MacMASTER: The 28.15 casual fire rangers, towermen and patrolmen, this type of thing, was the only casual areas; the rest were permanent positions: 28.15. And to probably go through it just once more to maybe clear it up, the 89.15 — there were two vacancies which we deleted bringing it down two, and then we added four permanent positions, so that's where we're at today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. How did this section ever meet the 10 percent vacancy required under the previous administration? Did they do that by eliminating some of the casual staff man years or calling them vacancies, because the 10 percent would be more than two of the remaining number?

MR. MacMASTER: Does the member want to know the number of vacancies in that particular area? Is that what you want to know? I'm saying that two positions that were vacant, we took out. I didn't relate to how many others there were; if that's what he wants to know, Mr. Chairman, I can try and dig up those figures.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the Minister for allowing us to move to this section of his Estimates and just serve notice that I'll be asking that question each time, so if his staff wants to start working on that as to how many vacancies there were. The other question I will be asking in each section, if the members want to be prepared for that, and I'll ask it now for (b)(1) — whether any of these services were previously covered or paid for under the Manitoba-Northlands Agreement?

MR. MacMASTER: The answer to the second question, Mr. Chairman, is no.

MR. McBRYDE: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I have some familiarity with this operation as it functioned out of The Pas under the Regional Director there, who was able to have a reasonably good relationship with his section of the people in northern Manitoba, but I am not clear now, and I was never 100 percent clear before, as to the autonomy of that section or of this section of this operation. I am assuming that on Northern Regional Services, that we are looking at the Director of Northern Regional Services plus a Northwest Region Manager who is now the same person, and the Northeast Region Manager, and I wonder if the Minister could explain how far along that region can carry something? If it's a — for example, a problem of the limits in terms of hunting, how many deer can you take out of a certain area? Do they have to come to Winnipeg for that decision? Is that decision made on a regional basis? If there is a problem between the trappers of Moose Lake and Easterville as to exactly where the line should go, is that regional office able to deal with that type of matter?

I just want to give some examples and help to define the area of responsibility. If there is a change in fishing quota, for example, Moose Lake has had fairly serious problems because of the downturn in production on that particular lake and there has been some discussion of a reduction of quotas and even at one time, some discussion of actually closing it down and paying the fishermen — putting some work projects in for fishermen while the fishery was closed so that the lake could replenish itself. I wonder which of those types of decisions can be made at a regional level and which type go to the central office for decision making?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I think we could spend a long time talking about specifics that could be dealt with in particular areas. I would think the majority of trapping decisions, as far as the trappers are concerned, could be made very easily at a regional level, as I would like to believe that they are being made today. We are talking about major hunting restrictions or new numbers, or new licensing procedures, certainly I think that would go through the Deputy's office and eventually end up with myself in consultation with many people, if we were talking about cutting back on the moose hunting or whatever in northern Manitoba.

Fishing quotas is a provincial matter and certainly their recommendations would be seriously considered by my particular office in consultation with a good many of their specialists in the field and consultation with the fishermen. So I think there is a division that we can think about; there is real provincial responsibilities that normally will have to be dealt with by my particular office but certainly with the good advice of the people in the field and your regional problems, I think, fairly well define themselves.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, there were a couple of studies that were talked about by this Regional Office section but my recollection was there was some difficulty in some cases of getting funds because the basic funds for these fisheries biological studies are held in Winnipeg and these are in regards to — one was to look at some of the historical quota allocations, because there has been a disagreement between those communities for many years, between Cormorant, Moose Lake, Easterville in terms of quota eligibility and their lack of involvement at one time when certain quotas were changed or moved around.

The other was that a more detailed study of Moose Lake itself to try and determine how Moose Lake could be brought back to better production, because of its declining production in that area. And you know, there was a specific individual out of The Pas that was doing a lot of the work on Fisheries that had the respect of community . people, and I wonder if in this funding of this section, whether there are funds for those, or are those funds all held centrally and then the central office makes the decision between all of the regions and decides what studies should be carried forward?

MR. MacMASTER: I am aware, but not in the specifics of some of the history of what the Member for The Pas mentioned, Mr. Chairman, and I understand that the specific Moose Lake study will not be available in this particular calendar year but it is expected early in 1979.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, would it be better for the Minister in terms of asking some questions about the production of some areas within this regional service to wait till Fisheries or to deal with them here. Which would be the most convenient?

MR. MacMASTER: If it's provincial Fisheries problems, I would prefer to deal with them under the Fish and Wildlife section — I think we would have been in this this afternoon — possibly that sequence, although it may have been lucky, not by design, I might have answered a lot of those questions. I think if we're talking about quotas or studies that possibly we could deal with the fishing industry as such under the Fish section of the Estimates, Mr. Chairman.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, that's quite agreeable. I wondered what would be the best for the Minister. I wonder if the Minister could outline for us what role has been required of the staff of that Northern Regional Services, what role they have been required to play legally in the matter of policy in relation to the hunting rights, the Migratory Birds Convention Act, that The Pas Indian band has been in fact conducting an active protest, and many of them were arrested in that regard. What legal requirement was there on your staff, the conservation officers, and what policy directives were they given to deal with that situation?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I can say to open that I would think the expression is "have been invited to get involved" in a variety of ways and at this particular junction of things we have attempted to keep out of the situation. There's court cases proceeding; there's federal jurisdiction that appears to be in question, Mr. Chairman. There are directions that have been suggested over the period of time that in my opinion appear to be contrary to existing laws. I would like to feel that at this particular time our conservation officers are attempting to ensure that the general public complies with the Acts that are in existence. I'm sure that this Committee will appreciate that at this particular time in history in our country . . . I really think that the thing is going to come to a head now; it's going to have to be a national decision made and then the rules, of course, handed back to the provinces to do their part in enforcing it. We've asked our conservation officers not to go looking for trouble and we hope that the entire situation can be resolved satisfactorily.

I really believe that it has to be resolved satisfactorily on a national level. The Indian people certainly have some rights that date back long before the time that most of us that were in this particular Chamber. I think it's a matter of our federal jurisdiction in this country establishing whether they're going to live by the variety of Acts that have been enacted and whether in fact the treaties that have been established still, as the expression goes, "holds water" or using the water expression, whether they're going to "water them down." I think there has to be a great deal of consultation between provincial, federal and the Indian officials on this particular issue. I don't think it has been resolved by any of the Acts really in the last few years from what I understand.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, there's one part I'm not quite sure of the Minister's answer. By legislation or by transfer of authority, or by other legal structures, were the conservation officers of this department required to make arrests? Were they the ones that were required to perform that function or was that done by the RCMP or federal authorities or who would have been . . . ?

MR. MacMASTER: The RCMP were the ones that arrested the particular people in question.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, the Minister is certainly quite correct when he outlines that this is a fairly complicated situation, and that he's quite correct that it's basically a federal problem in that the Federal Government, the Government of Canada has in fact signed two contradictory

agreements. One agreement was the treaty with the Treaty Indian people of Canada, signed many years ago, which gave certain rights and privileges to the Treaty Indian people; the other was an Agreement called the Migratory Birds Convention Act which affects Canada, the U.S.A. and Mexico. Both of those federal contractual agreements in my mind are contradictory and the Minister is I believe correct when he says, if the Federal Government is going to have to get involved they will have to deal with this issue. Because if they're the ones that signed and brought into legislation contradictory agreements, contradictory contracts, then I find it easiest to view the treaties in terms of contracts, and if you're going to take something away from a contract then you have to re-negotiate the contract and put something back in. The Indian people of Canada may, or the Indian people of Manitoba may or may not be willing to have something taken away if in fact something were put back into the contract that they have with the Federal Government. It is a problem in that the Federal Government, although it has these two contradictory pieces of legislation — if one is fulfilled it violates the rights of Treaty Indians in Canada; if the other is fulfilled it violates an agreement between Canada, the U.S.A. and Mexico — that they have made these two contradictory arrangements, they certainly have the obligation to try and resolve those contradictory arrangements. But it seems that the provincial officials, no matter how studiously they try and avoid it and get around the issue, are continuously brought into the issue.

The issue relates also to long speeches given by members opposite in terms of night hunting and night lighting, which is a problem more in southern Manitoba than in the northern part of our province. But, again, there are certain rights and privileges that people think they do have and yet violate some common sense arrangements or some common sense procedures, and even though it's not only treaty Indians that are involved in this problem, who would contest whether or not they're breaking the law? There are certainly others involved in the problem who know they are breaking the law, and our provincial authorities know they are breaking the law, but the basic resolution in my opinion — and I think the Minister has indicated that — has to come from federal authorities and federal authorities are going to have to deal with the contradictions that they have produced. I suppose that there's a wise course of action for the province to try and avoid direct involvement and for the province to try and insist that the Federal Government deal with a very complex situation in this regard.

I would assume though that the staff, 17 biologists within this operation — which has been expanded and in no way reduced; the Minister was going to get me figures in terms of the vacancies when he came to office — I would assume that the biologists still have a responsibility in terms of counts, in terms of the relationship between the province and Ducks Unlimited, in terms of statistical data, in terms of recommendations as to limits, in terms of the effect of hunting by Treaty Indians on this population, and I wonder if the Minister would care to expand on that subject or enlighten us as to what is their role in that regard and how that is carried out.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, the problem on the particular hunting rights, fishing rights, certainly are meant to be in general because I can't comment legally on what is right or what's wrong. My assumptions are very similar to what you just heard both from myself and the member opposite, but we know that legally they're in the midst of a court battle today. I would like, if I had a preference, to see it being held at the courts and the decision go from The Pas, Winnipeg, on into Ottawa and get the thing clarified. I really don't believe that the Indian people or the Province of Manitoba is going to benefit at all in a long dragged-out court case that could take a year or two years and in the meantime great complex may arise. I don't believe, Mr. Chairman, that at this particular moment in time in Manitoba that the native people in northern Manitoba are abusing what rights they have, what rights they lay claim to in relationship to the populations of the wildlife species in northern Manitoba, and I think that answers the question as specifically as I can.

To answer another question that the member raised in relationship to vacancies, we can provide the member, Mr. Chairman, with answers to vacancies. If the member chooses to pick a month, or if he wants some period of approximate numbers, that's fine, but vacancies come and go; attrition takes place and people are moved. I have thought in general, but my staff now tells me specifically that it's extremely difficult to give you a set number of what the vacancy was, be it 2 point, or 6 point, or 10 point, whatever, so if the member wishes vacancy estimate in a particular area we're prepared to endeavor to supply that. If he would like to say vacancy as of some particular date we'll attempt to supply that later on in our Estimates.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, in order to try and understand the expansion or reductions in staff, vacancy is very important, because in the efforts of restraint measures practiced by the previous administration the policy was not to eliminate whole programs or to fire people that fell within particular programs as has been the policy of this Minister, but the policy was to basically require a ten percent vacancy rate so that in fact a number of positions were not filled. And since that was a requirement of the various departments and the various sections then each section would

be 10 percent or more. I know that many sections of Northern Affairs before were 14 — I think the overall was 14 percent. Some sections were much higher and a few less than 10 percent, which was part of the Restraint Program initiated a couple of years ago, and therefore I suppose that the best thing to do would be to arbitrarily pick a date, like October 11, October 24 — (Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, I won't comment on that. But to pick a month, and to get the figures for that particular month, or if it would be easier to pick the same month, that is, to pick last June and this June for that kind of a comparison — but I don't care which date, as long as he tells me where he is picking it from, so we can get some idea of the actual staffing that was in place at the time he took office and as to the actual staffing in place at this time.

MR. MacMASTER: Well, we've talked about, or it has been mentioned in the last few minutes, that the policy of the previous administration was to run with a 10 percent vacancy, and certainly not to cut programs. I think, basically, that was one of their problems, that a review of programs, and a review of amalgamation of programs and people, did not take place. Consequently, in my opinion, there were programs that could be deleted. So that, I suppose, is a difference of opinion between the previous administration and the present administration.

I will endeavour to come up with some type of vacancy figure at a time, it doesn't really matter to me what month, what time, we'll attempt to get a vacancy figure of the particular areas that we are talking about, as we roll through and see how we can combine it with what we have today, which is what the member is asking, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. To digress one moment back to a statement that the Minister made at the beginning of the conversation on the rights of treaty Indians to hunt in the Province of Manitoba, he mentioned that, and I think his exact words were, "That they had been invited to get involved in this issue." Not wanting to place any value judgement on whether or not the province should become involved in this issue, I would just like to clarify and find out from the Minister, who did the inviting and to what extent — what process did they suggest to the Minister for the province's involvement?

MR. MacMASTER: The invitations came, certainly not official or written, but I would like to believe that when demonstrations are taking place, that credence to the demonstration — you can add greater credence to it, the more people you have involved, and I'm sure the variety of people that were involved in some of the demonstrations in relationship to the Indian people's hunting rights, felt that it would add credence if there were large numbers of conservation officers and provincial government officials present as well as RCMP, and I suppose people from the Attorney-General's office, and CBC, and what have you. We have attempted — rightly or wrongly — to keep a very low profile on it specifically, I suppose, because it gets back to what we said before, that it is a Federal jurisdiction and if the Feds have got themselves in problems with contrary agreements — and again that's just an opinion of mine — then I don't feel that Manitoba, regardless of what political party is reigning in the particular province at the time, should be the one that has to unravel the mess that they have got themselves in.

MR. CHAIAN: Order please. I would like to direct the honourable members attention to the gallery on my right, where we have 27 students from the Gladstone Elementary School under the direction of the teacher, Faye Scott. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Gladstone, and I would ask you to join me in welcoming these students and their director to our Legislature.

The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So then, when the Minister remarked that he had asked the conservation officers not to go looking for trouble, was he asking them at that point not to participate in demonstrations, or not to be around demonstrations of this nature?

MR. MacMASTER: I'd prefer that our particular people that I'm responsible for not get involved unless absolutely necessary. The protection of the general public and the wildlife in Manitoba certainly, in part, rests within the department that I represent, but I go back to saying that I don't believe that the Indian people in Manitoba are right today creating any major problems in relationship to the wildlife livelihood in Manitoba, or the future of it, on this particular day. I don't think they are abusing what they lay claim to having rights for, I don't think that's being abused today, I think they had their demonstration — if that's the proper word — in The Pas, I don't they are going out challenging anybody today or yesterday and trying to add anything to that particular incident.

The point has been well made, and now I believe it's up to the proper authorities to rule on it, and to reiterate what I said. I hope it isn't a two-year court case because that builds up some pretty hard feelings, and I think it would be better resolved without going through the Courts at all.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm afraid we'll have to have some diversity of opinion here — there may not be a problem in the north, but there certainly is one in the south. I'm not talking about migratory game birds, but the issue at The Pas which will be resolved, and this again, the Federal Government are involved.

But I would like to ask the Minister, in the southern areas are the laws as they exist going to be enforced, and I'm talking about The Natural Resources Transfer Act and the terms and conditions of it whereby the native people have the right to hunt on unoccupied Crown Land, or land to which they have been granted access? I would like to know what is going to happen when these particular people are violating private property. In many cases the land is posted and in some cases it isn't, but I really don't think there should be any particular difference in the fact that breaking the law is breaking the law, and as I say I have no hang-up on their treaty rights or existing agreements, but I do have to voice very strongly the fact that I believe that there should be enforcement when the law has been broken? I would like to have the Minister's opinion on this.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to run away from the question, but there are Court cases pending, and there's some being held right now in regards to that particular issue.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, there is some diversity of opinion on this matter before us right now' and I would just like at this juncture to go on the record as being in agreement with the Minister as to the treaty rights that belong to the native people of this province. They are rights that are well documented, and they are before the Courts now, and I agree wholeheartedly with the Minister that that Court process takes place as speedily as possible, so that we can clear this matter up.

I think until that time, I would just have to encourage the Minister to follow his course of action in this area, and also to stand by his convictions, which at this point seem to be quite in line with my own, in that the treaty Indians of Manitoba have rights that have been given to them throughout the decades, centuries, now, to hunt game for their own livelihood, for their own existence, and that they should remain entitled to do so, under those treaty rights.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister, when he's checking the vacancy rate — I don't know what date he picked to check it from — might also check for me the existing situation in terms of regional location, and that is the staff under this section. Where have they been located and where are they located now? Has there been any effort to bring in people from more remote communities into The Pas or Thompson, and has there been any effort to relocate people from Thompson or The Pas to Winnipeg? Or has there, in fact, been any further decentralization in this particular section of the operation?

Mr. Chairman, while the Minister's staff is checking that, I wonder if the Minister could explain, and again I'll have to pick a very fairly colloquial example to demonstrate my question but it might apply more broadly, the relationship between Ducks Unlimited and the Conservation and Resources Department, especially the relationship between the Northern Regional Services out of The Pas and the Ducks Unlimited, that have numerous areas between Moose Lake and The Pas, between The Pas and Easterville, and between The Pas and the Saskatchewan borders, the Saskeram area. What is the relationship between those groups, between Ducks Unlimited and the provincial government? How Ducks Unlimited gets permission to proceed with certain works? What control the department has over those works that they have agreed to allow Ducks Unlimited to proceed with, and whether that relationship that has been existing for many years, if there's been any change in that policy or how the Provincial Resources Department relates to Ducks Unlimited with the coming to government of the present Minister?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I think the relationship is good. Ducks Unlimited, over the course of years, have put X millions, I suppose is the general figure, into Canada in conjunction with the Federal government and the provincial governments. They certainly wouldn't go into any given area in Manitoba and develop anything without a lot of consultation and, I would think, encouragement

and advice and the rest of it of our particular department. We would work very closely with them in relationship to leasing of land or development on lands that we now hold. I think they do a tremendous, worthy service to the wildlife spectrum of things in Manitoba.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I was more concerned about the relationship and the responsibilities, so maybe I can give a couple more specific examples to help the Minister deal with the question.

For example, probably in the Tom Lamb Wildlife Management area or the area between The Pas and Moose Lake, where Ducks Unlimited have permit to regulate water levels of a great number of lakes; if the trappers at Moose Lake were unhappy with the way certain lakes were being regulated for the benefit of ducks and felt that it was hurting the muskrats, would the department say, "Well, that's between you and Ducks Unlimited?" or does the department have a responsibility to say to Ducks Unlimited, "How are you regulating those lakes, and are you in fact hurting the muskrat population?"

Or another example would be a similar water-control situation where the hunters might say, "Well, this used to be an area that was full of ducks, and now those Ducks Unlimited have come along here, and they've wrecked this whole area for ducks." Does the department then deal with the hunters or do they just say to the hunters, "Go, see Ducks Unlimited." What is the department's responsibility in the way that regulation is done by Ducks Unlimited?

MR. MacMASTER: Well, the department's responsibility is on behalf of all the citizens of the province, whether they be trappers, or fishermen, or hunters, and the Ducks Unlimited, before they can start doing anything with water in this particular province, have to get licences from the Department of Mines and Resources, to get into the specifics if there is problems with trappers. In the majority of cases when areas are dammed up, you will find that the trappers benefit, do not lose in the deal, in fact it is generally conceded that they are the ones that reap a lot of the benefits from the work of Ducks Unlimited. I am sure that if I was to look hard enough, I could find an area where that isn't particularly true, but generally speaking, damming up of waterways is beneficial to the muskrat which was just mentioned.

But if a trappers association, or a group, or an individual, or whatever, isn't satisfied, and has reason to believe that his livelihood is being affected, either by Ducks Unlimited or anything else that is affecting the particular area, our offices and our people are prepared to listen to him, and work on his behalf. So I think that specifically answers the question, that the trapper is not left at the mercy of any development that takes place. I would like to believe you could broaden that past Ducks Unlimited, but that's what we are talking about. So he certainly isn't at the mercy of any Ducks Unlimited development. I would like to believe that it's the opposite, Mr. Chairman, that proper consultation would take place between Ducks Unlimited, conservation officers, the trappers, the local people involved, and the hunters, before any structure takes place. If that's not the case, then I certainly would appreciate hearing about it, now or in the future.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, just to get a little better understanding. If the nature of the agreement between the province and Ducks Unlimited, if in fact your officials said, unfortunately we have given them permission to proceed in this area and it is causing problems that we think are unbeneficial to the wildlife generally, that somehow they have made a mistake; is the agreement such that the department can tell them what to do or they pretty well then just have to use their persuasive powers or do they actually have authority still, over the moves of Ducks Unlimited?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to believe that before any agreement was drafted, that the trappers would be involved, and the local people would be involved, and that a responsible agreement would be drafted. If that is not the case, I would like to believe that sane, sensible people could sit down, present it with a variety of circumstances, that dictate that the agreement could be amended.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, that would be nice and I am not in disagreement with the Minister, but does the province have the final authority, even after a project is under way and implemented and in progress, does the province have the final authority over Ducks Unlimited?

MR. MacMASTER: I might stand corrected, Mr. Chairman, but I would like to believe that any contacts that I would be entering into as Minister, that all bodies would be involved in the negotiations of the contract. Once a contract is signed, if the unforeseen which happens in life

was raised, I think that the relationship that our government has with Ducks Unlimited, I would hope the relationship any government had with an outside body such as Ducks Unlimited, certainly could sit down and renegotiate it and the Provincial Government would have the authority to do that. I would like to believe that that's the case.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister a fairly specific question in relation to the Saskeram area near The Pas. In that particular area, and in the whole development of the Pasquia Land Settlement project at The Pas, there has been numerous discussions and numerous problems related to agricultural use versus the resources, versus wildlife use. What are the best balances and what are the best uses in that regard? A number of years ago, some fairly intensive work was done, a fairly intensive study done in the region, and it appeared, Mr. Chairman, that in fact the farmers and the wildlife people had reached some kind of agreement as to the best way to proceed. Both had given a bit and there was some understanding, and then because of some actions of Resources and of the farmers, both ended up reverting to their original position after two years of negotiation and study and sort of an agreement. They both then reverted to their original positions that are fairly rigid, and I wonder what role the department is now playing in the ongoing discussion in attempting to settle the conflicting uses of the Saskeram area, and what role the Resources Department is playing in that study and policy decision-making process.

MR. MacMASTER: I agree with the member, Mr. Chairman, that there has been years of ongoing discussions in relationship to the use of the particular section of land that he is talking about. We have set up a group now to go back into, exactly where I suppose the people involved were two or three years ago, I didn't know, honestly, they had come that close to reaching some agreement, but the assistant deputy minister of my department from northern Manitoba will be my representative on that particular agreement and we are going to be going at it. I think they have had a preliminary meeting and once the House rises, and we can get out and get on with some of the other work facing us, this will be one of our top priorities.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, I just wonder if that other information is now available to the Minister, the vacancies and the regional breakdown, or whether that will not be available till this evening.

MR. MacMASTER: I haven't got it. I can assure the member, Mr. Chairman, that before we get out of this section, we will certainly do our best to; if not, I would appreciate his consideration that my word is good enough whether the section passes or not, that he will have a breakdown which we will explain right here in the House to him.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Chairman, under this section, there was a serious effort being made with the conservation officers, and there are 32 of them in this particular section from the Minister's figures, there was a serious effort being made in trying to assist the conservation officers to become developmental, to be able to work with the communities and relate to the communities in terms of economic development projects and programs after so many many years of functioning only as policemen. I mean this was not an easy process for the conservation officers or the department, and I wonder if the Minister is pursuing that approach, whether he is satisfied with solely the policeman approach by conservation officers, and if he is pursuing that approach whether he is meeting with much success or not.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I can't speak for all parts of the province, but I can speak for I think the acceptance of conservation officers in northern Manitoba. I don't believe that there is a citizen including politicians that run around the north that are more accepted at any given time than conservation officers within communities, and within areas of the northern part of this province. I don't recall in my over 18 years in the north of conservation officers being labelled as policemen. You know, I don't want to get dramatic, but I know of communities where they are just about priest, doctor, and consoling godmother and everything else to the communities; they are involved with the recreation part of the communities, they are very active within the communities, they are very well thought of within the communities. I would like to believe that they can be of a variety of services to the communities that they are being now, they can be resource advisors which is as big a role as I think they can play. They are aware of the forestry inventories in general, and biology, and the laws and the rules of the fur business, and in general I think they are extremely well thought of people and the roles they play in the community, and have been playing, are going to continue I think by their choice, not by my direction.

MR. McBRYDE: Well, Mr. Chairman, I certainly didn't mean to criticize the role of the conservation

officer, but the role that was put upon them in the past has basically been enforcement, period, and there was an attempt to allow them to broaden that role into other aspects, especially developmental aspects and as the Minister said, especially in the forestry aspects. I am assuming then that the Minister is continuing in that direction, and that he sees that as a worthwhile direction, that it's not just enforcement but other activities as well that conservation officers should be involved in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1)—pass; (2)—pass — the Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: Could the Minister quickly outline for us the areas of expansion in the Other Expenditures?

MR. CHAIRMAN: In accordance with Rule 19(2), I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour, and will return at the call of the Chair.t\$

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We are now under Private Members' Hour, and the first item of business, Adjourned Debates on Second Reading of Public Bills.

MR. SPEAKER: On the Proposed Motion of the Honourable Member for Emerson, Bill No. 5, An Act to amend The Liquor Control Act, and the Proposed Motion of the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre in amendment thereto — the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I am not at this moment ready to speak, so if anybody else wishes to get into the water, they can do so, or should I say, get into the alcohol.

BILL NO. 6 — THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

MR. SPEAKER: On the Proposed Motion of the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, Bill No. 6, The Freedom of Information Act, and the Proposed Motion of the Honourable Member for Selkirk in amendment thereto — the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would just like to make a few comments. It appears that the amendment to the bill, if it were passed, would see it disappear from the Order Paper and I would like to respond to some of the objections and comments that were brought forward by other members in response to this bill. As we all know, Mr. Speaker, this bill is not a new one in this House, I have presented it three times in a row and I think it perhaps is worth restating the reasons for introducing it.

The Honourable Member for Inkster, when he spoke on the bill, indicated that — when I expressed my own disagreement with his position — said I must be stupid or vindictive or not appreciative of the parliamentary system in order to bring such a measure forward. Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think my motives were based upon stupidity or vindictiveness or unappreciation of the parliamentary system. That may be the interpretation of the Member for Inkster as to why I would introduce the bill.

But, Mr. Speaker, my reasons for doing it were: First, it was a very deep and profound concern about the issue of the disposal and dissemination of information because I consider that the monopoly of information is one of the growing and dangerous powers that government holds in its hands. The ability to use or abuse the use of information is one of the most serious threats to individual rights and liberties in this country. The present procedures and institutions that we have developed as a means of ensuring accountability and responsibility are themselves not sufficient. Not that they are useless but are themselves not sufficient to do the job. That is my reason for introducing the bill, not because of stupidity or vindictiveness or lack of appreciation. It is just simply to recognize that government itself has grown immensely larger and more complex in its operation, has undertaken a vast variety of activities that relate in thousands of ways in terms of individual behaviour, that the ability of the parliamentary institution, in itself, to provide full and adequate protection is not sufficient. Therefore, as we have in the past introduced reforms to institutions, as we have introduced reforms in this Legislature, things like the Ombudsman which, if we followed the logic of some of the arguments presented by other members, would never have been introduced because all we needed was this Legislature — that's all we needed was legislation — we didn't need an Ombudsman and yet, if the logic of the arguments presented by members such as the Member for Morris, the Member for Inkster, were to be believed or accepted, we don't need anything. We didn't need a public auditor; we don't need an Ombudsman; we don't need any other kind of agencies; all we

need is members in their seat, sort of working day-in and day-out. I don't disparage any of those activities because I do believe, Mr. Speaker, that a very important and useful function is played by members of this House in gaining information and probing government, forcing it to divulge certain things.

and again -02 But what is interesting, Mr. Speaker I went back to check the record — that some of the very members, including the Member for Inkster, who were most outraged and indignant in their arguments only a few short months ago about the unwillingness of the Minister without Portfolio to provide technical reports based upon the Task Force and saying that it was an abrogation of their rights and all the language used by many members speaking in this House on a motion brought forward by the Member for St. Boniface, all indicated that this was a denial of democratic rights. How could members of this Legislature be expected to make decisions about such an important matter as the reorganization of government when the members opposite would not, and refused categorically to supply the information upon which those reports were based.

I just came, Mr. Speaker, from a debate in the other committee on Finance where, again, the same line of questioning: Where are the technical reports? Where is the information? The Minister of Finance simply says, "I'm not telling you." Now, I suppose if we feel that somehow four years from now, when the time comes for another election to be held, that that will be the most important issue, then we can say, "Maybe the parliamentary system works." But I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that realism would suggest that there are going to be a lot of issues and a lot of things discussed in this Legislature over four years and by the time the electorate gets around to having to make a decision as to who is going to be in and out, their ability to isolate that one example of the refusal of a government to provide information will have been lost in a great sort of a wave of other events and other issues. The decision of the election may turn on something totally different but, in the meantime, in the meantime, that information will not have been divulged, decisions will have been made and the people of Manitoba will be poorer for it because they will not have been able to make decisions based upon a full and open disclosure of information in this House.

So when I again am accused of being stupid and vindictive, I find that a fairly spurious charge because what I am suggesting is that while all the instrumentation and procedure of this House can lead — oftentimes does — to probing, there are times when it doesn't. There are times when information needs to be supplied and it doesn't discount in any way the ability to use the parliamentary form as a way of achieving it, it provides another adjunct to it.

Now, we could take it one step further, Mr. Speaker. A further objection that I would suggest was that somehow the Manitoba Legislature is in perpetual motion, sort of for 12 months of the year. But we happen to know, at least if practices hold, that we meet for maybe five months a year. What happens to the individual who, come August, finds it is absolutely essential to his or her specific interest that some information be received. Is the Member for Inkster going to come down here, get the Clerk to open up the doorways of the House and sit here by himself and challenge the government to produce that information? What happens to that individual who is dealing with the Workmen's Compensation Board, Department of Health, cases which I have brought in the past before this House where individuals were denied information by the Workmen's Compensation Board relating to their individual case, or a case that I had last August. I will give you a case in point, Mr. Speaker.

A teacher in northern Manitoba was refused employment by the school board based upon what they considered to be a report given by the Department of Education that was put in his file, kept here in the Department of Education files, and somehow it alleged or alluded to certain behaviour of his and that was the rationale given why he wasn't being employed. But no one told him what that information was. That happened in August. I wrote letters to the Minister of Education, got some, you know, a nice reply back saying, "Yes, I'll certainly look into it." He said, "If he wants information, tell him to go down and see the Department of Education." The individual went down, saw the Department of Education, they gave him only what they had been prepared to give him before. I wrote another letter, made some phone calls, asked — I could show him a file of correspondence on that one case. That individual is still denied employment in the educational system because of a file sitting inside this government. Now where is the protection of the House in that respect? I've asked questions in Estimates; I asked questions in Question Period; the same answer came back. In the meantime, that individual — and I'm not judging his case — but what I do know is that he feels aggrieved; he feels that his employment was denied because of a retention of information and he had no way of testing it and all the instrumentations of this House were used. Every single bit of it. Yet I know when the election came, in my constituency that one individual may have supported me individually but certainly the turning point of the election wasn't that particular case.

So what I'm saying is that we cannot solely rely upon the arena of politics as the answer. This is probably where I disagree most deeply with the Member for Inkster. He has a kind of a collectivist

attitude to the world based, I suppose, on a good Marxist analysis of the world, that it's a total political arena of total conflict — good guys, bad guys; in and out; left or right, whatever it may be — and that is his view of the world. It is not mine. I don't share that analysis of the way society works. I don't believe society is in total conflict and that the political forces are marching up and down the battle field, sort of 24 hours a day. I believe the individual must also have some guarantees of rights and freedoms and should be able to use those.

One of the primary guarantors of those throughout the total history of our society has been the courts. The kind of allegations made that you can't trust the courts that have been made by members of this House, I find again, I don't believe, I don't accept, because I think the courts have had their weaknesses in the past but they are certainly not the foibles of the class system that have been suggested by members here. —(Interjection)— No, I don't think so and if the Member for St. Vital thinks so, that's his privilege, it's his right. I think he's wrong; I've said so many times before. I don't agree much with the Member for St. Vital. I'm a Liberal. That's why I'm in this House, I believe in that interpretation of it. I'm not a collectivist or base my analysis of society on some sort of Marxist analysis that this is the way the world works. And that's why we disagree, and that's why we're different, and that's why we have elections is to make those differences. But what I am trying to say is that you are denying individuals certain abilities to gain their rights by using that argument and assuming that you can solve everything through political conflict or through political battle. You cannot solve all problems that way nor should you try. It is not the way the world totally works. Now there's a difference and, you know, I'll accept it.

What does surprise me a little bit more is the opposition coming from the Conservatives. I can understand that position because that's been a traditional sort of position of Marxist philosophy for a long period of time, you know, since they developed it. That's what it is. I don't know, the Member for Inkster was upset but he reads philosophy and Marx was a very good sociologist, he analyzed the world properly and it's an acceptable way of analyzing events. But I'm a little bit more surprised by the Conservatives who have talked with great ferocity about their dedication to individual rights and freedoms.

It is interesting, Mr. Speaker, that in the very case where we are saying, "Let's ensure that individuals have a right to secure more of their rights and freedoms," that they deny it. It seems to me that the basis of denial that the Member for Morris expressed was that we don't need it in Manitoba. Now he said they may need it in Ottawa; they may need it in the United States; they may need it in Sweden; they may need it in New Zealand; they may need it in Australia; they may need it in Great Britain — all these places where Freedom of Information bills are being introduced, but somehow we don't need it in Manitoba. Well the Member for Morris I suppose maybe wants eventually to become the Minister of Tourism and Recreation and become a sort of Pollyanna booster for the joys and virtues of Manitoba, that it is the most perfect of all places. I don't happen to think that in this kind of issue that the government of Manitoba, whomever its political masters may be, is any more enlightened in these areas than any other jurisdiction. Nor do I think necessarily that do the rules and procedures here afford that much more protection for individual guarantees, than all those other jurisdictions I mentioned which are either moving into or have established Freedom of Information bills. Sweden has had it for 200 years and it has provided, if members would care to have researched the topic perhaps, they would realize that it has worked with a great deal of effectiveness in those areas on which I have elaborated, providing those kinds of individual guarantees and freedoms.

So I guess the only way I can understand the Tory opposition is that what we're confronting is tradition, you know, the most sacred of Tory virtues, tradition. Don't change what is because it has stood the test of time. Well again I find myself in opposition to that particular philosophical stance. I think that is always the blind spot of the Tory, the veneration of tradition of the way things are sort of can become an obsession, not simply a matter of caution but an obsession that you're unwilling to change anything, that what is and what you know must be the only thing that works and a real fear of trying something new and different. A fear of innovation if you like, a fear to make some changes because it may not work out as well. While there are certain virtues to that position, it does mean that if you adopt it as totally and as completely as the Member for Morris seems to have adopted it, it means you'll get no change at all in our institutions. As a student of parliamentary procedure which he claims to be — and I accept that he is, demonstrates his understanding — he would know that along in years Parliament itself has changed drastically from its earliest origins and that many of the institutions which we now venerate were, in their day, castigated as being some sort of, you know, workpiece of the devil.

Many of the things that we now take as commonplace and accepted procedures in this House were fought over. I looked at some past histories. Some of the basic rules of this House which we now accept, 15 years ago, you know, they were being fought over as being that they were going to ruin this Legislature. I don't think they've ruined it; I think we've been able to accept them.

But it does come back to the basic position again, Mr. Speaker, that I would suggest is this.

It's not stupidity or vindictiveness or any other sort of vile motivation that prompts this bill, it is an assessment that at the present moment in time, there are areas and circumstances in which the monopoly of information, refusal to divulge it, can create injustices for individuals which this Legislature is not possible to correct, and when I suggest that we use the courts I have said in my statement that I'm prepared, you know, the position taken by the Member for Selkirk may be a valid one. He says, "Let's do a legislative Committee", except this, that there is a degree of independence out there. He is not simply responding again to the kinds of acrimonious ring which oftentimes goes on in our Committee in which government can assert its majority in any event. It does provide the individual with the protection of a tribunal which simply says that you have tested all the other means; now you should provide the information, and I dispute totally and completely the suggestion made by the Member for Inkster that this would lead to less information being given rather than more. I think that it's simply turning things on its head. He has a particular style which is simply to convolute argumentation. It's a technique and it's been used by him and other members of the House many, many times. It doesn't make the case right simply because it's a technique of debate.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member has five minutes.

MR. AXWORTHY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. But what I would say is this, that we should look at the concept itself. I think that members themselves have not in any way addressed themselves to the issue that I do raise and that is whether there is already sufficient sort of protection and guarantees, and if it is, then I would ask them to reconsider: why the horrendous debate a month ago in this House about the lack of divulgence of the Task Force Reports which I thought was the clearest case in terms of a political issue that is required.

I can suggest many other cases that I have run into as a member of the Legislature dealing with individuals where information has been divulged and as a professional practising in the field of research where I have gone to many departments and asked them, "How about the research that you've done?" "Sorry, that's private property, that's public private property. We can't give you this information. It's privileged." As a taxpayer I helped pay for it but government's going to hold on to it. Why? Because that information gives them power. It gives them advantage. It gives them the ability to sort of provide for a step above somebody else and it is that need to restrain that kind of power which is the basic rationale for this bill, that my philosophy is that no one should have too much power whether it is on the public side or the private side. When you get too much power there is a tendency to abuse it, therefore we must design and blueprint our institutions to ensure constantly that we keep up with the information explosion that has taken place in our society and ensure that there are more adequate protections than are presently available.

That is the purpose and basis for this bill. That is the reason why it is being introduced and, Mr. Speaker, as long as I am a member of this House I will continue to try to pursue that cause and to try to pursue that kind of more adequate protection than we presently have.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, shall I refer to it as a technique in debate, as a method of convoluting things, that someone will attribute something which is easy to shoot down, to somebody who didn't say it, in order to be able to have a very valid argument against it. The honourable member said that I said that his motives for introducing this bill were that he was stupid, that he was vindictive, or that there was a failure on his part to understand the parliamentary system. Mr. Speaker, I never said anything of the sort about his motives for introducing the bill.

From time to time, Mr. Speaker, I have referred to the honourable member, members and others who think like him, as being sincerely of the belief that this type of bill will reveal more information. I then turned to the honourable member, Mr. Speaker, and I said, "I plead with the honourable member to believe in the sincerity of those who believe that it will reduce the amount of information, and the honourable member, in response to that plea, Mr. Speaker, because I turned to him and I said, "I plead with the honourable member to believe in the sincerity of those who say that his view is not their view and that his kind of legislation will bring more secrecy." And the honourable member in response to that plea said, "I don't believe you." And I said, "Well, Mr. Speaker, if that's the position taken by the honourable member, that he chooses to disbelieve in our sincerity and in the sincerity of our arguments whether he thinks they are right or wrong, then I can only attribute his belief in our lack of sincerity on stupidity, some type of personal vindictiveness, or a lack of appreciation of the parliamentary system." That's what I said, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that's what I said and I didn't check the Hansard but I know what I said, and I tell the honourable member if I said otherwise, I apologize in advance, and I make that charge to him on the basis that he will apologize to me if I am right, because, Mr. Speaker, that's what I

said. I said, "If the honourable member is going to accuse us of wanting secrecy, then I am going to say that the motive for introducing the bill is to achieve secrecy." That's what I said, Mr. Speaker, and the honourable members in this House heard me. And I turned to the honourable member and I pleaded with him. I said, "Believe in my sincerity that the reason I oppose this bill is because I want more openness", and he said, "I don't believe you." That's what he said.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what does the honourable member expect from us? He says that I'm a liar. He says that when I say that I believe this bill will lead to secrecy I'm not telling the truth. And I say, if that's what he feels, Mr. Speaker, I can only attribute his feelings in that regard to stupidity, some type of personal vindictiveness, or a lack of appreciation of the parliamentary system. That's what I said. —(Interjection)— Or all three of them. I maybe have said all three. But that's what I said. I never said that his motive in introducing the bill was that he was stupid. I said the opposite, Mr. Speaker, I said the opposite. There are people on all sides of the House and throughout Canada who believe in this type of legislation. I said so. I said they sincerely believe in it. They believe that it will bring more openness; I believe it will bring more secrecy. I asked the honourable member to believe me when I thought that it would bring more secrecy. He said, "I don't believe you." That's what he said.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I happen to think that my arguments are as good as the honourable member's. I suppose I will have to be so immodest as to say that I think that they are better arguments than the honourable member. I took the Secrecy of Information Bill that he had referred to in Nova Scotia and showed what kind of bill it was and how it will bring more secrecy. I showed how his own legislation — and, Mr. Speaker, I have respect for the courts — I am arguing before the courts on a daily basis, but I say the courts are not the place to put things into the political arena.

The Honourable Member for Selkirk got up and said, if there is a problem with an individual obtaining information as distinct from the kind of debate that we had with the Member for River Heights — which I say is absolutely proof of my position — that where the government feels that the information that they have is information that they do not have to disclose, that should be a political debate; it should not go across the road and a judge say that the Member for River Heights is right. The arguments should be made in this House, in the political arena, and if we are right, Mr. Speaker, I have that confidence in the political system that the Conservatives will take their knocks for it, and you know I don't think that that's a terrible thing.

I don't think that what he called the acrimony of Committees and the House, I have never felt it. I have never felt it as acrimony and that's why I said to the honourable member that there must be some personal vindictiveness because he regards it as acrimony. He regards it as acrimony. I don't regard it as acrimony. I regard it as the legitimate legislative process which results in great things, Mr. Speaker — which results in far more openness of information than the bill that is being presented by my honourable friend. Both sides — I took the position until my honourable friend insisted that we are seeking secrecy, or we who take this position are seeking secrecy — I said both sides want free information. The honourable member has one method . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. On a matter of personal explanation?

MR. AXWORTHY: On a matter of privilege, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: A matter of privilege. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Yes, the Member for Inkster suggested that his remarks, or he couched his remarks as being a retort to my lack of belief in their sincerity. I would like, if I may, quote to the member and to the House exactly what the Member for Inkster said, and I think that the interpretation that I put on his remarks would be the more accurate one.

On Page 3782 of Hansard, Thursday, June 15th, it says, "Mr. Speaker, beware of politicians bearing gifts. This legislation that is being proposed would not give freedom of information. This legislation will facilitate secrecy and the honourable member doesn't believe that. He can adopt that attitude for one of many reasons. It could be a particular vindictiveness on his part. It could be a lack of understanding. It could be a failure to appreciate not only the parliamentary process but the political process." It has nothing to do with the sincerity of his remarks. It said that my belief in this question of secrecy information was based upon these attitudes and motivations. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member to apologize.\$

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, what the honourable member has read is exactly what I said occurred. I asked him to believe in the sincerity of those who believe that this legislation will introduce secrecy. He said, "I don't believe it", and I said, "The honourable member doesn't believe it. I can only attribute, Mr. Speaker, the attitude of the honourable member to some sort of vindictiveness — did I use the word "stupidity?" Oh, I didn't even use the word "stupidity". Maybe I should have,

Mr. Speaker. —(Interjection)—

MR. AXWORTHY: It's obvious the Member for Inkster . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. On the same point of privilege. The Honourable Member for Inkster on the point of privilege.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I indicated to the honourable member and he will find it in my remarks, that I turned to him — if it's not in Hansard, and I hardly believe that it can't — I said I asked the honourable member to believe in the sincerity — believe in those — maybe I didn't use the word sincerity — who believe that this will bring about secrecy. The honourable member said from his seat, "I don't believe it." And I said, "The honourable member doesn't believe it? I can only attribute that to — he says I used the word stupidity. I did use the word personal vindictiveness or lack of appreciation of the parliamentary system. That's exactly what I said, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly what I said. And that's exactly what I related to the House so I have no basis upon which to apologize to my honourable friend. And if he will read the entire remarks that is the context in which I said it. —(Interjection)— Mr. Speake, if I did not use the word "sincerity", I said, "I want the honourable member to believe the thinking," or words to that effect, "of those of us who believe that this will introduce secrecy."

Mr. Speaker, he says I didn't use the word "sincerity". Now I'm going to ask him to apologize. I tell my honourable friend, he can believe me if he wishes or he can disbelieve me. I believe — well, Mr. Speaker, he disbelieves me. All right. Then I want to tell my honourable friend I believe that he, on the basis of his answer, that he wants to bring this bill for the purpose of having secrecy of information in this province. Mr. Speaker, I tell you that because he doubts the word the "sincerity", the "sincerity." I used the word — and has indicated his doubts of the sincerity of those who say opposite. So I told him to read the whole thing and there, Mr. Speaker, is almost a repetition of the words that I have just given the House. I asked him to believe in our sincerity. He refused to believe in our sincerity and then I said, "If he refuses to believe it I can only attribute it to vindictiveness on his part or a lack of understanding of the parliamentary system."

So, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member is the one who should apologize because the word that he says I didn't use is there, and it's there in almost — Mr. Speaker, now members can compare what I said without looking at Hansard to what is in Hansard. I turned to the honourable member. I said I asked the honourable member to believe me. He said, "I don't believe you." Then I said, okay, if he doubts the sincerity of those and says that we are seeking secrecy, then I say that he is seeking secrecy and if he doesn't believe me then I can only attribute it to the personal vindictiveness or lack of understanding of the parliamentary system. That's what he said and that's what I said.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, Order please. Before the honourable member carries on there was a point of privilege raised by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge. I ask the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, is he satisfied with the explanation given by the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. AXWORTHY: No, Mr. Speaker, I'm not satisfied with the explanation given by the Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SPEAKER: Then I have to say that I will take the matter under advisement and certainly peruse Hansard myself. The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy to have that done, and I don't ask, Mr. Speaker, that you take one paragraph. I indicated in this House that I turned to the honourable member, I asked him if he believed me that I felt a certain way about a thing, he said, "I don't believe you," — that doesn't appear in Hansard. The honourable member will not deny he said, "I don't believe you." I then said, "Well, if that's the way you feel about it, then I can tell you, if you don't accept the sincerity of those who are opposed to your view, I will really have to say that I can't accept your sincerity." And that's the way I put it, Mr. Speaker.

And I then indicated that I can only attribute his attitude on that question, and he said I used the word stupid. I didn't remember using the word stupid, and now he agrees I didn't use the word stupid. So w here, Mr. Speaker, is even a better example of setting-up a straman. He used that word in his speech, and I don't — well, I won't say that I never say stupid — but I don't think I've called honourable members stupid, I have referred to stupidity, but in order to make his case he said I called him stupid. When did I call you stupid? —(Interjection) —

Mr. Speaker, on a point of privilege, I want the honourable member to withdraw the statement that I said that he was stupid.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. GREEN: The honourable member said that I said that he was stupid. On a point of privilege I would like the honourable member to withdraw .

MR. AXWORTHY: I would certainly withdraw if I did say it if the member would agree that he had used the statement, the lack of understanding is a proper synonym for being stupid.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I will agree that I used the word "lack of understanding." Mr. Speaker, I don't agree that the use of the words "lack of understanding" is a synonym for use of the word stupid " and if my honourable friend says that the use of the word "stupid" is equivalent to a lack of understanding, then he has less understanding than that which I attributed to him last week, because they are in no way related to each other. —(Interjection)— That's what he says, that's right.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Am I correct in the request from the Honourable Member for Inkster asking for a withdrawal.

MR. GREEN: I am perfectly satisfied that I have the withdrawal, Mr. Speaker, I merely indicate that I do not, nor have I ever, felt that the use of the term "lack of understanding" is equivalent to the word "stupid," that if the honourable member has that feeling he can take that as certainly do not think that. And, I repeat, that if he makes that synonym, then he has less understanding than that which I gave him credit for two weeks ago.

Now, Mr. Speaker, let us appreciate the differences on this question. I think I said in that debate, and if I didn't I have to repeat it, I believe that there are great philosophical bodies of view that support the position of the Member for Fort Rouge. I accept the sincerity of all of those people who push that point of view, including, I say with some regret because of his attitude, the Member for Fort Rouge. I have to say that with some regret, because I thought if I could really do to him what he is doing to me and to others, to say that they are keeping secrecy, that he would understand and he would no longer make that claim, but he continues to insist — despite protestations on the part of members of all parties — that please believe us, we want openness too, we think your way is wrong and our way is right. He refuses to believe that. I still, with regret, will accept his sincerity, and have to attribute his failure to believe on some personal vindictiveness; or lack of understanding of the parliamentary system. —(Interjection)— That's right, that's right.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, now my honourable friend is finally understanding what I've said. Not his motive for introducing the bill, his motive, Mr. Speaker, his motive for calling us proponents of secrecy. Why he does that, I don't know. I have given some suggestions, and honourable members

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has three minutes.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I will sum up.

I say that there is considerable philosophical opinion on both sides of the question. I have to tell my honourable friend that you cannot divide that opinion into Marxian and non-Marxian; that there are Marxists who believe that there should be constitutional requirements for governments to reveal information; that there are Marxists who believe that you shouldn't; that there are Conservatives who believe that you should have Freedom of Information Acts; that there are Conservatives who believe that you shouldn't; that there are men of all political parties who can adopt one position on this question or another. There happens to be a majority of people in this House, who from time to time have rejected the kind of proposition that my honourable friend is presenting, and yet have tried to be reasonable about it.

The Attorney-General got up and said, "Look, we don't believe in taking a political question and taking it to the Courts. If there is a problem with an individual getting information we are willing to look at that." But my honourable friend takes all of these statements and attributes them to some desire for government secrecy and power.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that there should be government secrecy. I do not believe that the power of the Legislature should be greater than the power of all of the people who elect people to the Legislature. I believe that the positions that I am putting insure that the governments will not have that kind of power over me and I believe that the position I am putting I am putting because I believe that there should be openness of information.

I introduced a bill last week in the Legislature which is headed "Freedom of Information". It is obviously a secrecy of information bill. Mr. Speaker, their use of the word freedom doesn't give

freedom. There has been an organization since 1946 that's running around the world calling themselves The Peace Council, and they say anybody who is not an adherent of the The Peace Council is for war. The honourable member says anybody who is against his bill is for secrecy. I reject that. I consider it simplistic. He says he doesn't share my views — be my guest. I don't share your views, and I believe that for the moment, in any event, there are more people who share the views that I am now presenting than who share your views. That doesn't mean that we are right and you are wrong, but at least it means, Mr. Speaker, that we are entitled to the same respect for our ideas, which is all I ask.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, I don't want to make this a perpetual three-cornered debate, but the reason I rise is because I would like to explain the reasons why we are going to vote against this amendment.

After the intriguing suggestion made by the Member for Inkster during the question period about recessing and coming back later on in the fall, there is just a possibility then we may be dealing with this thing on Christmas Day, and I wouldn't want that to happen. I would like to dispose of it right away, so we are going to be voting against the amendment, and against the bill — at least, if we get there. I don't want to have this thing hanging around when we want to adjourn for Christmas dinner.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for Fort Rouge, being a Liberal and bearing all of the true characteristics of a Liberal, believes that every problem of every person in this country can be solved by some kind of legislation. That was even inherent in the question that he asked the First Minister about tornado warnings the other day. The implication was that now we've got to have somebody at everybody's doorstep instructing them what to do in case there may be a tornado arriving on the scene. And if you look at the list of resolutions and bills that he introduces over here, he never opens his mouth unless it's at taxpayers' expense, in this Chamber. Every suggestion that he ever made, either sets up another bureaucracy, adds more work to the existing bureaucracy or spends more money, and I don't believe for a single minute that there's going to be one single thing that's going to be achieved by the passage of this legislation.

I hadn't been aware of the so-called Freedom of Information Act that was passed in the Province of Nova Scotia until friend, the Member for Inkster, introduced it in debate last time this subject was before the House. That's an incredible piece of legislation, achieving absolutely nothing, and I don't think that anything is achieved by simply passing legislation. The Liberals seem to think that, by the passage of legislation, they can now go to the public and say, "Well, we passed a bill on this." Whether the bill is going to do any good or not, the bill has been passed, and that is a mark of achievement, and he suggests that through the years there have been improvements in Parliament. There haven't been very many improvements in Parliament, in the Federal Parliament, in the last number of years. They've been going backwards, eroding the authority of Parliament, and every measure that they've ever introduced, and everything they seem to be doing in Parliament in the last number of years has to be to erode the authority of Parliament, and to transfer the responsibility of the people who have been elected to some other non-elected body. For some reason or other, the Liberals seem to believe that the politicians cannot be trusted. Well, they may know themselves a little bit better than the rest of us do, but I think I know them fairly well. I can tell you, I don't trust them either, not what I've seen of Liberal activities in the last number of years, and maybe he speaks with some conviction when he says that politicians can't be trusted, because he speaks of those that he knows best.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the measure that the Member for Fort Rouge speaks of with such great vehemence, with such conviction, is another one of those measures that, in my opinion, has as its ultimate objective the erosion of the authority of Parliament again, and we have seen too many of those measures all through the years. I haven't got the book with me, but I commend to my honourable friend Robert Moss' book, "The Collapse of Democracy", and he may learn something about how those who believe that everything can be solved by a piece of legislation have eroded the authority of democratic parliaments in the free world simply because they do not understand how those Parliaments are intended to function and how they function best.

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend can continue to bring this legislation into this Chamber, but as long as I'm here I, for one, am going to continue to oppose it, because I don't want to see, I want to put a stop to those who believe that they can continuously erode the authority of Parliament. It's been a longstanding conviction on the part of Liberals that they don't believe in the Parliamentary system, and every step that has ever been taken by a Liberal government, and particularly in the last number of years in Ottawa, has been directed towards replacing that Parliamentary system with a Congressional system, or the superimposing of portions of the congressional system onto the parliamentary system, which is like exchanging Ford Motor parts with General Motors parts — it

won't work. You cannot superimpose one entirely different concept of government onto another and expect it to work. You destroy it, and I have no intention of standing by and allowing our system to be destroyed. I happen to believe in it, and I happen to believe that, in most respects, it is superior to the American system. It is more responsible to the people of this country.

So, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding all of the forceful arguments that have been presented in this Chamber by the Member for Fort Rouge, on this particular subject, convincing in his own mind — and I don't know who else he's convincing, because he certainly hasn't convinced me — that his arguments are in any way at all going to enhance or improve the freedom of the people of this province. And all one has to do is to look at Section 9.(2) and that was outlined earlier, because it's the same bill that he introduced a few years ago. The Member for Inkster went through the list of those bills and the loopholes that are contained in that particular section to realize that the bill is really not going to achieve anything. But my honourable friend is going to be able to say, if this passes — and I doubt very much that it does — “We passed legislation dealing with that,” as if, “Now you can forget about it; now the freedoms are assured.” Mr. Speaker, they will not be assured. Under our system there is only one thing that can ensure freedom and that is eternal vigilance.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear, I'm not mad at anybody who spoke on this bill. I'm not angry with any political party. I'm concerned about the questions that are raised and I don't have the glib or clear-cut answers in my mind that make me able to speak with the authority that others have had when they discussed it.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that parliament, as has been said, is a pretty imperfect method of governing but it's the best that we have. I believe in the authority of parliament but I don't think that we should get carried overboard how great an institution it is — I wish I remembered the last couple of words that the Member for Morris had to say but it was a very strongly worded defense on behalf of parliament. I don't think parliament needs to be defended too much. I think that parliament has proven its functions in our democratic society. I believe the congressional system has also proven great advantages although, from what I know of the congressional system, I favour our system here in preference to it. That doesn't mean that it's bad, wrong or dangerous, but I prefer our system because I do think we have more responsible government under our system.

ut there are some things about responsibility of government that have down to the voter on election da and there to be carried are many things about the responsibility of the government of the day which do not really percolate down. I have to say that having been here, I think about half my time in Opposition and about half my time on the government side, I have not felt that the parliamentary system has been such as to produce the kind of information that I've often felt was worth having in public, in the open, available to the individual and to society. I do believe that government tends to be secretive. I do not believe that this Freedom of Information Act will make government much less secretive, but I would like government to be somewhat less secretive. In Opposition there have been occasions when I have attempted to obtain information that was denied without a proper explanation, without a proper reason given, and I suspect the same occurred when I was on the government side. I recall that for some couple of years prior to the election of the NDP government, I was trying to get a copy of a document paid for by taxpayers' money, a document not produced by government but ordered by government to be produced on a contract. It was called — and I don't remeer the exact name —(Interjection)— Yes, I thank the Member for Inkster for remembering Transition in the North.

Mr. Speaker, I didn't know what was in it; I didn't really know what it was about, but I had heard that there was such a document, that it was paid for. It was lying on the desk of the Premier and I knew nothing about it except that it became more and more interesting the more difficult it became to obtain. Well, I cannot say that my failure to obtain it caused the downfall of the Conservative Government, but I must say that the downfall of the Conservative Government produced that document, brought it out in the open and made it available. Mr. Speaker, that government could have continued in office and refused to produce the document, and there was no way of properly exploring, because, Mr. Speaker, never did I know what the document was all the time I was asking for it. Never, therefore, did I have an explanation as to why it was being refused. The term “stonewalled” is to me a fairly new term, but I'm sure it applies retroactively to what happened when I wanted that document.

And that is not the only example. I had the means in this Legislature of asking for the production, even debating the production. I did not have the means of forcing the defenders of the refusal to give good reasons. The Honourable Member for Morris mentioned the reasons set out in one of the subsections of the Act which are reasonable reasons: “ the release of information would result in direct financial loss to the government; or the information pertains to personnel matters; or it

is requested to be used in legal proceedings; or it pertains to trade secrets or commercial and financial information that is privileged or confidential; or the information requested pertains to criminal law enforcement;" — and I'd like to finish it so that it's on the record — "or the release would be in contravention of the privacy of a person under The Privacy Act; or that some act of the province forbids the release; or that the release would endanger the physical or mental wellbeing of someone."

These are proper reasons for refusal. But, Mr. Speaker, I've never been able to get the government of the day to give these reasons, to justify these reasons, to account in any way for refusal. And that has disturbed me, Mr. Speaker. I do feel that there is information that is available that should be made available. I know that in introducing The Ombudsman Act, we brought to the man on the street, to the private person in society, an opportunity to have certain investigations made on his behalf, and I like that, Mr. Speaker. I think the Ombudsman has proven himself to be a very useful support to the parliamentary system which I support along with the Member for Morris, but I think that without the Ombudsman our parliamentary system itself was failing in certain very important respects.

Now as I recall The Ombudsman Act, and I haven't looked at it for quite a while, there is no opportunity for the Ombudsman to investigate information in the possession of Ministers nor an opportunity to inquire about documentation or decisions which the Minister may. I understand that, Mr. Speaker. I was part of the government that passed the bill but, Mr. Speaker, I have yet to find an opportunity for review in our system today. Our rules do not give us, in my opinion, an adequate opportunity to review. And certainly I am against speaking, that as MLAs, we have the opportunity to get up and ask questions; we cannot force answers. We have an opportunity to ask for production of documents; we cannot force the production. And what bothers me most, we cannot force a proper response. So, someone would say, "Well, we'll bring it back on election day and we'll thresh it out there; we'll throw out the government." I've never seen a government fall on the basis of refusal to give information.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I started out by saying that I didn't have a hard and fast opinion about it. I am satisfied that one shouldn't call it a Freedom of Information Act because there are enough ways to wiggle out of it so that you don't get freedom. I would not call it secrecy of information. I don't think that it will tend to make matters more secret than they are now, because to the extent that they are secret, they will be kept secret and the effort will be made to keep them secret. I do not believe in the referral to the courts because I do believe that the court does not have the right, nor a proper opportunity, to evaluate what is being requested. But I, personally, would like to see this in some way in the hands of a Committee of the Legislature which has the opportunity and the atmosphere to investigate the reasons for refusal. I don't believe we have it in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to have it on a basis where one can, by form of confrontation if necessary, challenge a government for its reason of refusal. The government will support an intersessional study or a Royal Commission outside of the Legislature, although I believe it belongs within, amongst members of the Legislature. I would say that if the government refused to do it, I think our party should do it. I don't know whether the Liberal Party is big enough to do anything or wants to do anything beyond that, but I would say that it would be something of interest here in our own party to make that kind of investigation.

I must say that there is much that the Member for Morris had to say about the Liberal Party to make one feel that this is more of an Axworthy resolution than a Liberal Party resolution. I am inclined to say that, and that may be the first mean thing I've said so far in this debate. But I would like to think that there is a possibility that we will not, as a Legislature, just wipe it out on the basis of what we've heard so far in the debate on this bill. I would like to think that, in spite of the Member for Morris' insistence that they will vote down both the proposed six-month hoist and the bill, that he will undertake, or that some member of government will undertake to set up a committee that will — an all-party committee — that will actually invite people to come and make representations and will make recommendations, unless they believe the system is perfect. I don't believe it is, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hour being 5:30, I am leaving the Chair and the House will resume in Committee at 8:00 o'clock. When this item next appears on the Order Paper, the Honourable Member for St. John's will have 8 minutes.