

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, 20 May, 1981

Time — 2:00 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 . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, for the information of the House, I would like to table the Manitoba submission to the Parliamentary Task Force on Federal-Provincial arrangements which my colleague, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Education will be momentarily presenting to the Task Force.

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

HON. GARY FILMON (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the 1980 Annual Report of the Clean Environment Commission. The report, I might indicate, is still in the hands of the Queen's Printer. We do not have copies for the House as yet but I have an advance copy which I should like to table today.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Economic Development following on the questions and answers of this morning. Can the Minister indicate out of which appropriation further moneys are being expended for the purposes of continuing his "Stay in Manitoba" advertising program?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): I don't have it in front of me, Mr. Speaker, the exact appropriation, but we have promotion appropriation within the Estimates Book, and that's where it would come from.

Mr. Speaker, I might say that in answer to the Leader of the Opposition in Estimates, I said: "Mr. Chairman, we are anticipating quite a few promotional items in the upcoming year. The decision as to whether there will be any further ads on television is not one that has been made as yet." I informed the Leader of the Opposition of that.

I was also asked by the Member for Brandon East regarding television ads and I said then, as I said in the beginning when I read off this list, and I was reading a list in my Estimates of advertising in the section in the Estimates which shows the amount. "These are the intentions at the present time. There could be decision made that if we felt that there was a reason to have television advertising we would take a look at it, Mr. Speaker." So I did inform the Leader of the Opposition there could be changes — (Interjection)— You want the date? It was to the Leader of the Opposition, Thursday, the 5th of February, and to the Member for Brandon East, Monday the 9th.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would also like to refer the Minister to Page 438 of Hansard, February 9th. In response to a question from the Member for Brandon East, the Minister indicated that the Budget allocation of \$588,000 was all for print material. I ask the Minister therefore, now that moneys are being taken apparently from that particular account for advertising on TV, if he could outline to the Chamber what areas are being deleted from the anticipated print account that was going to be expended under that appropriation?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, as I said I don't have it in front of me, but I do have the same Hansard that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition has in front of him. After the "\$588,000" figure, "MR. EVANS: And that includes Manitrade, is that what you are saying?" that was Mr. Evans. I said, "Enterprise Manitoba Campaign is the print campaign." "MR. EVANS: What is the estimated amount that might be spent on television advertising in the next year as opposed to print material or is it all print material?" My answer, "This is all print material," referring to the Enterprise Manitoba Campaign, Mr. Speaker, and then I have just finished reading what else I said to the Member for Brandon East. So, if the member wants to read the whole Hansard, I'm perfectly willing to read it all here with him.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, we'll await the Minister giving us a report as to where he's obtaining these funds — very strange to us as to where he's obtaining the funds but if he can return and give us that information we'd be most appreciative. What I would then ask the Minister, in view of the fact that this advertising is clearly considered to be of a political nature by practically everybody in the Province of Manitoba, can he assure us that this political advertising, paid for by his department, the Department of Economic Development, which indeed we've been bombarded with for the past seven weeks, will be discontinued so there's no overlapping with The Elections Act in the event of the calling of an election by the First Minister, so that we don't have an overlap between what will be party advertising during the campaign and the political advertising that we've been showered with from his department for the past seven weeks.

MR. JOHNSTON: The indication that the Leader of the Opposition leaves that most everybody in

Manitoba says it's political advertising is not correct, Mr. Speaker. We've had many people compliment us on the fact that we are trying to do something for the Province of Manitoba. But I've read this before, Mr. Speaker, and I'll read the other place where the Member for Brandon East says, who said we shouldn't do some advertising? Who said we shouldn't do some public relations? Who's we, Mr. Speaker? Who's the Member for Brandon East referring to?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further by way of supplementary to the Minister, is the Minister prepared to acknowledge that there is some differential between advertising for purposes of providing information, for purposes of promoting the Province of Manitoba as such, for purposes of economic development, tourism, etc., as opposed to the straight political propaganda that we've been showered with from this series of advertising that he's been releasing from his department?

MR. JOHNSTON: I say again, I do not accept the Leader of the Opposition's statement that it's complete political propaganda. I don't think it's wrong to inform the people of Manitoba or anybody else that Manitoba's a good place to live and work in, Mr. Speaker. I agree with that. Obviously the Leader of the Opposition doesn't like us doing it.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, just by way of one short supplementary question, in conclusion to the Minister. Is the Minister suggesting that Manitobans have to be told by way of TV advertising this is a good province to live in. The vast majority of Manitobans do say this is a good province to live in, they don't have to be told by the expenditure of their tax money that this is a good province to live in. The only question that Manitobans have, and I put it to the Minister, is indeed that this could be a better province if we had a change in government.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.
The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

MR. JOHNSTON: As I said this morning, Mr. Speaker, it's awful hard to explain anything to yelling, screaming little boys.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If I can have the indulgence of the House, I would like to at this time introduce 25 students of Grade 6 standing from the R. J. Waugh School under the direction of Mr. Grant. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Gladstone.

We have 22 students of Grade 6 standing from LaVerendrye School under the direction of Mr. Hanna. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Crescentwood.

And we have 16 students of Grade 2 standing from Balmoral School under the direction of Mrs. Hanson. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Education.

On behalf of all the honourable members, we welcome you here today.

ORAL QUESTIONS Cont'd

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: I'd like to ask a question, Mr. Speaker, also of the Minister of Economic Development, with regard to the television advertising which my Leader has just been quizzing the Minister about. And that is specifically, has his department attempted to measure the effectiveness of this advertising as has been done in the past when the department has advertised in trade shows, or for some very specific industrial development or some very specific tourist development program where you at least attempt to measure the effectiveness of the taxpayers' dollars spent on promoting a particular program or scheme? Has there been any attempt to measure the impact of this particular program? I suspect, Mr. Speaker, it's just about impossible.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, during my Estimates I also presented a graph that showed very clearly that the number of people visiting the province as far as tourism is concerned and the number of Manitobans travelling within our own province is very definitely related to the amount of money that is spent on promotion from 1970 through to 1974; tourism expenditures went up, the number of people that came to Manitoba and travelled in Manitoba went up.

After 1974 to 1978 the expenditures were dropped down completely and the number of people that travelled within Manitoba or came to Manitoba dropped down. So there is definitely a graph of figures that shows results from promotion in tourism.

I could say that the other type of advertising has been showing results, Mr. Speaker, because our manufacturing investment has been up during the past three years. I might just say, Mr. Speaker, that the latest figures that we have received on manufacturing which were just released by the Bureau of Statistics is that we have had five straight months of increased manufacturing shipments. We have had an increase of 12.6 percent of March over February, 1981. And in January to March, 1981 period, Manitoba had a 10 percent increase in manufacturing over last year in the same period, Mr. Speaker. So I might compare and be very pleased to compare Manitoba with some of the others. We were 12.6 over last month; Saskatchewan was 12.2; Alberta was 8.4, Mr. Speaker. Manitoba was 10 in these three months over the last three months; Saskatchewan was 10.8. The highest was Alberta during the three-month period at 17.5; B.C. was only 17.5. We came out very favourably with the rest of the country, Mr. Speaker.

MR. EVANS: A supplementary question to the Honourable Minister. I'd like to ask the Minister, is he really truthfully, honestly and sincerely trying to suggest to this House and to the people of Manitoba that there is some relationship between these — (Interjection) — I am asking a question, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister suggesting to this House that there is some correlation between the "Stay in Manitoba" television advertising program and the amount of manufacturing shipments from this province? Is he really serious, Mr. Speaker? Is that what the Minister is telling this House, really?

MR. JOHNSTON: As my colleague mentioned, everything helps; that, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that we have this government in Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East with a final supplementary.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister if he can very briefly and succinctly tell us, really, what is the objective of the "Stay in Manitoba" television advertising program? Is it to increase manufacturing; is it to increase retail sales; is it to persuade people that we have got such a terrific government here that is so concerned about them? Is it to get more votes for the Conservative Party, for the Conservative Government of this province? Is it really an ethical type of advertising? That's what I would like to ask the Minister.

MR. JOHNSTON: Well, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons, I imagine, for encouraging the people of Manitoba to invest in Manitoba, if they did invest and do invest in Manitoba, as they have been over the last three years, that would make a situation where people would stay in Manitoba and also the people in the country who do complain many times that there is no place for their younger people to find jobs, etc., and I would suggest that some of the efforts that have been made have, Mr. Speaker, done this for at least the rural part of Manitoba that we have the figures on. In 1978, there was 363 businesses in rural Manitoba. In 1979, there were 453 businesses in rural Manitoba and in 1980 there were 519 new businesses in rural Manitoba; an increase of 42 percent, Mr. Speaker. So our efforts, all combined, are definitely doing something to help the people of Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Tourism, Economic Development, and government propaganda, and ask him whether he or the province was approached by the Town of Winnipeg Beach to purchase the golf course?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'm not the Minister of Economic Development and Tourism and propaganda.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I will then put it to some other Minister, or perhaps to the Minister of Fitness, if there is somebody on that side who could indicate whether the province was approached by the Town of Winnipeg Beach to purchase the golf course?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sport.

HON. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye): Mr. Speaker, my department wasn't approached.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a final supplementary.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, the problem is that there is only a handful of Ministers here so I will then

address that question —(Interjection)— Well, there's hardly anybody here today. I will ask the House Leader, or the Minister of Natural Resources, or whoever has an interest, if not a responsibility, whether the Town of Winnipeg Beach made an approach to the province to purchase the golf course and if the government turned thumbs down on that, which I gather they did, whether they have considered any possible recreational replacement for the people of Winnipeg Beach. Even though it was privately owned, has some substitute or equivalent been considered? First and foremost, why was that proposal turned down?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, the Department of Natural Resources, through its responsibility for Parks, was indeed approached by the people of Winnipeg Beach with a view that perhaps Parks could be interested in purchasing or doing something with this property. But, Mr. Speaker, I remind the honourable members opposite that it was their administration, of which the honourable member was a Minister, that undertook the development at Winnipeg Beach, changing that into the pleasant day use facilities that Winnipeg Beach now provides. I suppose at that time they might have questioned themselves, or somebody could have questioned as to whether or not they wished to include or expand or take into the government's sphere the golf course which was operating at that time when the previous administration developed the facilities at Winnipeg Beach. They chose not to do so, Mr. Speaker. We believe that we have an ongoing commitment to the facility at Winnipeg Beach and are fulfilling that commitment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield. (Interjection)— Order please. It is highly improper for a member to ask a direct question of the Speaker.

The Honourable Member for Springfield.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood on a point of order.

MR. DOERN: If the same question was basically repeated three times to three different Ministers, does that constitute a question and two supplements or is that not the equivalent of a single question?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. ROBERT ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Natural Resources as to whether or not he can confirm reports that Highway 15 is blocked due to forest fire and brush fire activity?

MR. ENNS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the conditions being what they are, we have had a considerably worsening situation with respect to forest fires. We now have four fires, that we consider major, burning in southern Manitoba; Pine Falls, Scantebury, Willard and Kettle Hills; it has called for the temporary closing of Highway No. 15. Some farmsteads are

being evacuated at this time. Fortunately at this point no property damage is being reported, but I take this opportunity to express the concern and urge the public to be extremely mindful of the very extreme hazardous situation that we have with respect to our forest fire situation and our thunder and lightning season has not come upon us yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J. R. (Bud) BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Labour. In light of Ontario's apparent resistance to the expansion of the Federal Government in making Canadian pension plan more comprehensive, is the Minister in a position to advise the House what the position of Manitoba is in this regard?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member for some notice as to his intentions to ask the question. There was a national conference on pensions at which I believe only one province very adequately laid down a position, which was the province of Saskatchewan, and wanted some dramatic expansion of the Canadian Pension Plan. At that particular conference they had a number of discussions with various other provinces and officials, some of which were from Manitoba, and some of the problems of expanding, and I don't wish to say whether that's totally acceptable or unacceptable, but some of the problems of expanding that in its entirety and indexing it upwards was thoroughly discussed with that particular province and other provinces.

We understand now that there will be a fall meeting some time in September or October. Manitoba has a sub-committee of Cabinet that is looking at the overall pension situation in Manitoba and as it relates across the country. We also have a sub-committee of senior officials headed up by the Deputy Minister of Health, who are reviewing all aspects of the pension schemes in Manitoba and nationally and how we might better devise a position which we could put forward at the fall conference. I should say that there was no provincial positions asked for at the previous Federal-Provincial conference. It was more of an opportunity to exchange ideas of what would happen if you did this, and how could we better incorporate other ideas.

It was a good conference, I understand, for the exchange of ideas.

MR. BOYCE: Since the administrators of private pension funds are required to invest the funds which are deposited with them for pension purposes, are invested at the best possible rate, will the Province of Manitoba be continuing their support for the funds which are vested in the Canada Pension Plan being made available to provincial governments at lower than current rates of interest, Mr. Speaker?

MR. MacMASTER: Well, Mr. Speaker, to try and answer the last part, yes, we would certainly hope that those funds would be available at low interest rates. There was some question, and I'm not taking sides either way, it was just part of the debate which

might be of some interest, but there were some questions raised by several provinces as to the best investment abilities of those handling the CPP. They thought there might be some question in that regard as to whether they were getting the greatest benefits from that type of investment.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre with a final supplementary.

MR. BOYCE: Perhaps I didn't hear it but is the Minister in a position to advise us when Manitoba will be taking a definitive position and making a public announcement in this regard?

MR. MacMASTER: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suspect later on in the summer, certainly before we go to the fall conference that the Federal Government is calling.

There was a report came down in Ontario which might be of some interest to the Members of the Legislature, the Haley Report, I believe it was called, where it recommended mandatory pensions be established in all businesses and all establishments in the Province of Ontario. That is presently being considered by the legislators in that province. Now I don't know whether it is at committee stage; I don't know whether the Minister has brought it in, but I certainly know that report and recommendations therein are being considered.

The members of this House are aware that we hope very shortly to be implementing a voluntary program in the Province of Manitoba. We seem to be getting a great deal of favorable response from Chambers of Commerce, manufacturers' associations and trade unions that we have talked to in conferences we have had in the province. We know that the voluntary aspect isn't the ultimate but I personally feel very strong about the fact that we have to do something for people, maybe urge them if you wish, on their way through their working life to start preparing for themselves in their elder years. I think that perspective of mine, that thought of mine, is shared by all segments of society in the Province of Manitoba. We are looking at a voluntary plan which we hope would encompass several hundred companies and several thousand workers in the Province of Manitoba and we hope to get on with that later this year.

Again, I say to the member that that's a step that we are taking in this province and I don't know how Ontario handled the mandatory recommendation that they have been given.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Northern Affairs. I would ask the Minister if he could provide the Legislature with an update as to the status of the negotiations between his government and the Federal Government respecting the continuation of the previous Northlands Agreement?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. DOUG GOURLAY (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, there have been some discussions with the Federal

Minister and the Minister of Finance; however, those are not complete as yet.

MR. COWAN: Well, as we have asked this question on numerous occasions, Mr. Speaker, in the hope that that agreement would have met with some progress in the interim, I would ask the Minister if he can indicate whether or not he is optimistic that the agreement will be signed in the near future and if he is, can he provide us with some time frame as to when he anticipates the signing of that agreement?

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, obviously, I think it has been reported many times that we are anxious to get on with the program and I'm not sure at this point when we can finalize the signing because it takes two parties to complete the agreement. We are just waiting at the present time for a commitment from the federal people to complete this agreement.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Speaker, there is a difference between being anxious and being optimistic and I would suggest that waiting is hardly enough, given the serious circumstances which are surrounding the delay in the signing of this agreement.

Can the Minister indicate if any programs have been disbanded or if there is any intention on the part of the government, or suspicion, that they may have to disband such programs because this agreement has not been signed as of yet? And further to that, can the Minister indicate if the agreement will be retroactive to the March 31st, 1981 expiration date of the agreement so that the money which has been spent in the meanwhile will be fully recoverable under the new agreement?

MR. GOURLAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, all these points are definitely under consideration and I wouldn't want to comment further on them until we have some definite final commitments from the federal authorities.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Northern Affairs. Does he know whether or not, if a new Northlands Agreement or Manitoba Northern Development Agreement is signed, whether those provisions will be retroactive to March 31st, 1981 or not? Does he know that?

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, we have been sending communications to the federal authorities to get some retroactivity on these programs and those have not been confirmed to date, to my knowledge, by the federal people.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, if this agreement which was promised by the government to be signed in March of this year, and is not yet signed, does not get signed soon, at what stage will the province have to cancel programs presently under way that would have been jointly cost-shared had an agreement been signed by this date?

MR. GOURLAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, if we don't have some confirmation from the federal authorities soon, we'll have to re-examine our whole position on many of the programs.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could indicate exactly what steps he and the Provincial Government are taking to overcome the delays that they themselves caused but delays now at the Federal level in having this agreement signed? What specific steps is this government taking?

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, I think these questions have been dealt with as fully as we possibly can deal with them at this time. We don't want to jeopardize our position on the agreements with the federal people and I can't be any more specific than that. There's some indication from the Federal Minister that he is prepared to get on with this signing but it hasn't been completed to date.

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

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him whether today, he has any definitive plans that he wishes to announce with respect to the maintaining of basic herds and other livestock in the Province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, if the member is referring to new program announcements; no, there aren't but there are other actions being considered. For example, the use of some wildlife management area for additional pasture, Mr. Speaker, but that was in place last year. The fences were put up and as I indicated no other new programs, at this point, to announce.

MR. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister when we can expect an announcement with respect to these programs in terms of pasture lands and the like?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, as the member is well aware, the Minister of Natural Resources and my colleague is also involved in the drought committee and there have been some preliminary discussions with them and we intend to further discuss later on today some actions that may make available some additional pasture land or additional Crown land that could be used, in fact was used last year, and could be considered for use this particular year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George with a final supplementary.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the hog program, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister indicate when pay-outs will be made under that program?

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I assume the member is referring to the provincial program and not the federal program which we're waiting on the announcement to come from. The committee have met, Mr. Speaker, the Producer Committee. I have not had a report back from them but I would expect very shortly that they'll have some more of the details worked out and would be available to announce to the hog producers.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to direct a question to the Minister of Natural Resources and ask him if he can clarify his remarks, since the golf course at Winnipeg Beach was apparently offered for sale in the last year or two and is now going to be turned into a housing or condominium development and since he apparently was approached by the town, could he give us the specific reason for the refusal to purchase? Was it the fact that he was protecting the sanctity of the area and following the general plans laid down for that area by the previous administration or didn't he want to put out the money or didn't he feel that this type of a facility was necessary? On what specific grounds did he refuse the invitation of the mayor and council to take over what had been a private facility that was being put up for sale?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. ENNS: I'm happy to have this opportunity to clarify that answer. Let me make it very clear that there was no formal offer to purchase being proposed by the council of Winnipeg Beach which really wasn't the place to make that kind of an offer in the first instance. Secondly, the only contact that I had, I'm trying to answer as honestly as I can, was from several individual citizens who took the time to write to my office, suggesting and expressing their concern that this private recreational area could perhaps or should perhaps be considered for inclusion into the existing park facilities or facilities that the Government of Manitoba has operating in that area. But let me make it very clear that no offer was forthcoming to the government from the town. It, of course, wasn't theirs to make. The owners of the property were the party that would first have to agree to selling the property and obviously they've chosen not to.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I ask the Minister, since he's responsible for Parks and to that extent Recreation, whether he has considered or is considering some recreational equivalent? There's a loss to the people of Winnipeg Beach and the surrounding beaches, heavily used in the summertime by people of Manitoba. Has he considered some equivalent substitute, either a new investment in tennis courts or whatever, or does he just feel that the area can afford to lose such a facility and it'll have no adverse effect?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I think it goes without saying that I would be certainly sympathetic towards the loss of a recreational resource in that area. I remind honourable members that this government and the previous government has made a considerable investment in public funds in general recreational facilities along the east shore of Lake Winnipeg including the very substantial Hecla Park development which was undertaken some years ago and is being carried on by this administration. I think there is some discussion, and I don't want to raise false expectations, but there's some discussion of some alternate land that may be made available for

the provision of a golf course and if such considerations come forward to the department, they will certainly receive our active interest and consideration.

But, Mr. Speaker, the point has to be made that perhaps, if the honourable members want to take us to task, we are not quite as quick to appropriate privately-owned land as was the previous administration. We have some consideration for the fact that people in this country who own land and own property have some rights attached to it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a final supplementary.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I was speaking about the west shore of the lake. The Minister said he is speaking about the east shore, but —(Interjection)— Never shall the twain meet is right.

I want to say to the Minister in general that he should give consideration to some recreational equivalent . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If the honourable member has a question, he can pose his question.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, my question is, in view of the fact that a lot of teenagers in the area are spending their time in pinball parlors and bingo games and things like that, wouldn't it be good advice to consider some outdoor recreational facility that would be an equivalent or an improvement or supplement to the area in view of the loss of a major recreational facility for the area which is new?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I can advise the honourable member that my colleague contributed a considerable amount of dollars to the provision and the improvement of the roller skating facility in that area so that we could lure the youngsters out of the pinball arcades and into the roller skating rink. But, Mr. Speaker, I must also remind him that as one being just barely old enough to remember the good old boardwalk on Winnipeg Beach, which contained many of the kind of entertainment sources that were provided in those days, had been removed and I would think a more wholesome form of recreational facilities have been provided for at Winnipeg Beach, and others will be planned and others will be considered as we have the opportunity to do so.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Environment. Further to the Minister's advice during his Estimates review to the effect that an appraisal was being done in regard to steps that could be undertaken to minimize the pollution of the Red River, and in view of the fact that there has been indication of a pending lawsuit by the Town of Selkirk regarding that matter, can the Minister advise whether or not his appraisal has been completed and whether he can report to the House in respect to same, or table the report itself?

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

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I can advise the Honourable Leader of the Opposition that matter is under review by the Clean Environment Commission as well as by members of the staff of my department and we are not in a position as yet to table any report, but the matter is certainly under investigation and review at the moment.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, since we have been informed that the Minister will be having meetings with municipal officials in the next short while pertaining to the issue of pollution of the Red River, can the Minister advise whether or not he will be acquainting those officials with the contents of the report at that time or whether he will be unable to do so because the report will be incomplete?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I'm sorry, I am not informed as to which meetings the Leader of the Opposition is referring to with municipal officials and which particular municipal officials he is referring to, so perhaps he could clarify.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, this past week an announcement appeared in the local weekly in my own constituency to the effect that the Minister would be meeting with municipal representatives from the Town of Selkirk and other areas affected. In view of that public announcement, which I read privy to last week, can the Minister confirm that indeed such meetings are taking place and are intended and if so will the report be available at those meetings?

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I can perhaps indicate that there was a representative of the Selkirk Town Council at the annual meeting of the Manitoba Environmental Council who questioned me about the concern and I said that I would be happy to have officials of my department sit down with them and discuss the issues and perhaps would even undertake to convene a meeting between them and the City of Winnipeg officials, but certainly no formal request has come nor an indication that this was going to happen. So perhaps the member has some information for me that he would like to share after question period and I can undertake to put together such a meeting.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for Question Period having expired, we'll proceed with Orders of the Day.

The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. JAMES R. FERGUSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have several changes. On Privileges and Elections, Mr. MacMaster for Mr. Mercier; Mr. Einarson for Mr. Anderson; Mr. Galbraith for Mr. Brown; Mr. Blake for Mr. Kovnats.

On Statutory Regulations and Orders, Mr. Gourlay for Mr. Domino.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I would like to call Adjourned Debates on Second Reading on three bills. If it's possible to pass these bills, at least two

of them, then I would like to call Privileges and Elections Committee to meet tomorrow morning at 10:00 a.m. to consider these bills. There are only three bills left on the Order Paper, Mr. Speaker, which require consideration by a committee outside of the House.

Mr. Speaker, would you call Adjourned Debates on Second Reading on Bill 39, Bill 56, and Bill 62.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADJOURNED DEBATES ON SECOND READING

BILL NO. 39 THE ECOLOGICAL RESERVES ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Adjourned Debate on Bill No. 39, The Ecological Reserves Act.

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I only have a few comments on the bill. I understand there is perhaps one other member on our side who wishes to speak on it.

I listened to the Minister's introduction to the bill in which he indicated —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If honourable members want to carry on private conversations, I suggest they do it elsewhere.

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, as I was indicating, the Minister in introducing the bill admitted that all of the things that are contained within this particular proposed Act could be carried out under existing legislation, so that there is really no pressing need for this Act. All of the powers that are within this bill are already available to the government under the various acts, The Crown Lands Act, The Parklands Act, and others, Mr. Speaker, so that really what the government is doing here, as I see it, is to provide The Ecological Reserves Act as something which is window dressing for their government, and I am not surprised at this because their record and public image in the Province of Manitoba regarding environmental and ecological matters is not good. Their record in park development has been very dismal indeed. They've been attacked from all sides on their administration of parks. Their park planning has been almost non-existent and even the most recent draft plan for the Whiteshell Park, Mr. Speaker, had to be rejected right here in the House by the Minister of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. If members want to carry on private conversations, it makes it exceedingly difficult to listen to the speaker who is recognized by the Chair. I would suggest they carry on those conversations outside the Chamber; those of us who are interested in listening to the honourable member would have an opportunity to do so.

The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: The proposed changes or plan for the Whiteshell Park, Mr. Speaker, was discussed at a recent meeting in Winnipeg. It was attended by a

number of interested people who reacted very strongly and negatively to the proposals that were put forward by the government. Mr. Speaker, the Minister beat a hasty retreat here in the House a day or so after when he was questioned on it saying it wasn't really government policy and they would have to review it, etc., etc. Mr. Speaker, that has been the example. It's just one more example of the way in which they have been unable to come up with any effective planning for the park development in the Province of Manitoba.

So here they are, Mr. Speaker, coming forward with The Ecological Reserves Act which in effect is not doing anything different than what could be done under existing legislation and, Mr. Speaker, it points out in here the things that can be done under this Act, although they are indicating that they may appoint an Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee, and on the other hand they may not appoint one. There is nothing here that's obligatory on the government to appoint one. We had an Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee before without the bill.

Also, Mr. Speaker, the Act provides for Ministerial discretion in all things which are related to ecological reserves. Mr. Speaker, the possibility of this bill doing any good in the Province of Manitoba under a Progressive Conservative government is very slight because, Mr. Speaker, although the Act, the proposed bill, has good principles within it, the proof will be in the administration of such an Act. Mr. Speaker, with this government's dismal record in park planning, in recreational development, in protection of the environment, in their lack of interest in things that are related to the ecology, Mr. Speaker, it does not bode well for any action that they would take with respect to ecological reserves. We don't hold out any great hope that this bill will bring forward any improved action or attitudes on behalf of the Progressive Conservative government.

Mr. Speaker, we see this as a face saving gesture by the government. They simply want to hold this up and say, see here, we are really interested in the ecology. We're bringing forward this progressive legislation. Mr. Speaker, they are not fooling anybody because people in the Province of Manitoba already know that these guys are not very interested in the ecology or environmental concerns.

Just recently I saw a report which was put out by the Environmental Council which included within it a cartoon which was drawn by a Grade 12 student, and the cartoon was very revealing on what Manitobans really think about, and these are young Manitobans, high school students — what they think about the Conservative government. It showed one person labelled a Conservative, whose ideas in a blank above their head, in the cartoon, Mr. Speaker, showed the Conservatives as thinking about parks in terms of intensive development, condominiums, stores, commercial ventures in parks. On the other hand they showed the cartoon of the conservationist whose perception and concept of a park was a place of nature with trees and lakes and wildlife. And, Mr. Speaker, this is what the people of Manitoba, and I think these young people are representative of the general population of Manitoba, this is what they think of the Progressive Conservative government and their attitude towards parks in Manitoba. They have a dismal record. They have a record of over-

concentration, over-kill on the side of commercial development and, Mr. Speaker, they do not have a good record in terms of conservation, in terms of protection of ecological areas that are of a rare or unique nature in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we have no objection to this legislation. It is reasonably good legislation. We look forward to looking through the bill in detail at the committee stage and perhaps recommending some minor changes. As far as the establishment of ecological reserves, Mr. Speaker, we established ecological reserves in the years 1973 to 1977. I believe the first one that was established was established on Lake Winnipeg and Reindeer Island, and all of the things that are contained within here in terms of establishing the prohibitions as to the types of use that may occur on such a reserve was possible under the existing legislation. It was not necessary for our government to come forward with a window dressing bill like this because Mr. Speaker, people had confidence that we did have concern for the environment and things that were of a concern to people of an ecological or eco-system nature.

Mr. Speaker, there are, as I mentioned, a couple of small concerns in terms of the administration of the Act that we will be bringing up in committee. Other than that, Mr. Speaker, that is all of the comments that I have at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to elaborate upon some comments which have been made during the course of the debate in this Legislature on this particular bill because I think it is an important opportunity to not only review the principle of the bill itself, but as well to talk about some concerns which we have in respect to the way in which the Conservative government has mishandled the environment in the Province of Manitoba.

But before going into detail on that, I think it is important to indicate very clearly, as did the Member for Rupertsland, that we have no objection to the bill per se. There are some improvements which I think are necessary and should be made, and I think the Member for Rupertsland pointed out one of them and that is in respect to the Advisory Councils. I have taken the opportunity of reviewing a series of acts in other jurisdictions based on the same principle of putting aside certain areas of the province for purposes of study in respect to their eco systems, and in many instances, and I would say in the majority of instances, they have a mandatory advisory council. Either the council is set up by the legislation itself or it is mandated that the Minister must establish a council. There is no discretionary power allowed to the Minister in respect to that. I think that's important. Quite frankly I don't trust the government when it comes to environmental and ecological matters and I don't trust that they will put in place an Advisory Council as speedily as it should be done. I would like to see it as a part of the legislation; that they are mandated to do so; that they must do so. And if they are sincere in their motivations in respect to bringing this bill forward, Mr. Speaker, they will have no objection to that sort of change, that sort of clarification of the existing

bill. But forming an advisory council is not enough, and I can say that quite categorically because in my own constituency I have seen the way in which that Minister who is now responsible for Natural Resources and other Ministers who have been responsible for that same portfolio in the Conservative government have treated the recommendations and the advice of an advisory council which was established by them.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that on December 7th, I believe it was, and I could stand corrected as to its specific date, but in December of 1977 the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area Advisory Council was implemented by the government. One of the considerations of that council was similar to the considerations of the Advisory Council as drawn out in The Ecological Reserves Act and that was to look at the situation, to review the area and to try to come forward with substantial and solid recommendations as to regulations which should be put in place to protect the environment and to protect that wildlife management area. The Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area was established by Order-in-Council in 1978 and the advisory council started looking at the regulations. Well, as they went along, they determined that there was in fact a need for some very specific and very definitive guidelines and regulations for the use of the Churchill Wildlife Management Area by the public and by entrepreneurs in the area.

I have to point out to you, Mr. Speaker, that there were entrepreneurs who were vitally interested in that area on the advisory committee and so when they were taking into consideration the regulations, they were probably as well equipped as any group was to make the determination as to how that area should be used. They have had nothing but grief from this government in respect to bringing those regulations forward. It is not because they have not tried; I can assure you they have. It is not because they have not come forward with good recommendations and regulations which would in fact act to protect the area; I can assure you that they have. But it is because of an intransigence on the part of the government that those regulations have not been put into effect, even after the government and numerous Ministers in that portfolio have promised both those individuals who are concerned about the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area in the community and are members of the committee as well as opposition that they would in fact be bringing forward regulations to deal with that particular area.

I am informed that the local advisory council of the management area recommended over two years ago that regulations submitted by them to the Department of Natural Resources be implemented. And this is what they have to say about that: For reasons unknown the Department saw fit not to implement any regulations at all in Cape Churchill.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that we have brought this matter to the attention of the government during Estimates. As well, you will recall that we have brought this matter to the attention of the government during the recent question periods in this Legislature, and yet we still see no indication on the part of the government that these regulations are imminent. They give lip service to the need for

regulations. They talk in grandiose terms about the need for regulations. They tell us what they intend to do, somewhere over the rainbow, if I can use a colloquial, but they do not in fact put in place one single regulation that would protect this specific area.

Why do I bring this matter to your attention now? Because we are faced with a similar situation in respect to The Ecological Reserves Act. We have an opportunity which I suggest will not be followed up upon by the government. I would hope that The Ecological Reserves Act is more than window dressing, but I would suspect that is all it is.

Let us get back for one moment to the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area because I think the experiences there will bear out the suspicions which I have put on the record. The Minister will recall that on December 29th, 1980, the chairperson of the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area wrote to him and asked that regulations be put into effect. He said specifically that they wanted to avoid the establishment of any long-term problems in that area and they were experiencing some very specific problems which they brought to the attention of the Minister and they asked that a specific regulation be passed to ban tourism activities in the polar bear denning area until the following concerns are reviewed and guidelines set up.

In other words, they felt there was a situation there in respect to the eco-system in the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area that demanded regulations and they didn't ask that those regulations be permanent. They just said let us put in place regulations that will in fact protect the area until such a time as we can develop greater expertise and greater knowledge. They also stated in that letter that it was particularly important that regulations be set prior to the emergence of female polar bears with cubs in February. They went on to state, "we are concerned that the Wildlife Management Area will not have a completed plan passed by this time and we request special consideration."

What did they want in specific? They wanted a designation of a specific travel route so as to minimize adverse affects on the local trappers, the wildlife and the vegetation; the same type of regulations that we would anticipate being implemented under an Ecological Reserves Act.

They also wanted a study to determine type and intensity of tourism activities that can be conducted in harmony with the regular production of polar bear cubs. I have to point out as a sidelight but nonetheless an important aspect of this case that there was a natural resources office in Churchill which was staffed by a biologist and two technicians and an administrative secretary which in fact was supposed to conduct those types of studies. As well, it was supposed to work with local community residents in order to develop programs, policies, regulations, and other mechanisms to ensure the protection of not only the Churchill Wildlife Management Area but the whole surrounding area.

What has happened to that office? The biologist is now working out of Thompson. I don't know where the two technicians are and the administrative secretary has quit that office out of frustration with government policies, I might add, and in fact to my knowledge today, that office is not staffed. Therefore the very important and crucial work of that office

which was designed to protect the eco system in the area is not being conducted by the government. Not only do we not have regulations, but we don't have any program in place which would study the effects of not having those regulations in place. The government can't stand today and say that there is no need for the regulations. The government can't stand today and say that there is a need for the regulations because they don't know, because they are not committed to that type of activity on the part of government. We all know that they entered office with a mentality of deregulation. It's a Conservative philosophy — we shouldn't be surprised. Nor should we be surprised that while in office they have not brought forward the type of regulations which we believe would enhance the quality of the environment in the area. We are not surprised, but we are discouraged. We are discouraged because they said they would; because they promised they would; and as well the community wanted guidelines to be established and suggested that local trappers should be utilized as guides and consulted as to other concerns raised by the increased activity in the registered and community traplines. That could have been another aspect of the work of the Natural Resources Office which is no longer there.

There are problems in that particular area. We have to understand that the tundra is very susceptible to environmental and ecological damage. I believe that the Minister would accept that premise categorically. Every study that has been conducted to date has shown that is true, that that particular part of the province, as with any area where there is tundra and permafrost, does in fact suffer extreme damage if it is abused, and being tundra that damage is longstanding. It is not easily reversed. There are some who say that it is never reversed. I will say that it is not easily reversed, because I know I can substantiate that claim without fail.

I'm not denying that there are others who say it can never be reversed, and I believe that they can probably substantiate their claim as well, but the fact is, no matter which allegation you accept, the damage to the tundra is extensive and longstanding.

What's happening in Churchill? Well, let me read from the letter. It says that "Portions of the access trails which cross muskeg covered permafrost are having the muskeg torn up and the underlying permafrost is being allowed to melt. These portions of the access trails are being turned into an impassable soup with the consequence that the trails are being made wider and wider to bypass the muskeg holes.

"Your department has long been aware of the damage inflicted on the tundra by vehicular traffic. We would like to know your proposals for the upcoming spring to counter the irreparable damage which will be inflicted on the environment. It will be necessary that a combination of designated routes plus vehicle weight restrictions be implemented immediately."

That came to the Minister from the chairperson of the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area.

The Minister replied to that in a letter of January 22, 1981, and the Minister in that letter indicated, and I quote, "Your concern over the destruction of the tundra area east of the Churchill by summer vehicle traffic is justified." So he has confirmed that

their concern is justified. "I expect the management plan and its operational regulations to be in place by break-up." And at that time he indicated that it would probably include designated routes which were being considered and that staff surveying would be done to determine the extent of the damage over the summer, and that recommendations would be made for corrective action.

We asked the Minister about those regulations not too long ago, and we know in fact that there have been draft regulations drawn up; we know in fact that they have been considered by the community; we know in fact that they have been accepted for the most part; and finally we know that they're not in place, that they have not been implemented. (Interjection)— Well, the Minister indicates that they haven't come back. Well, let's talk about that then. The Minister of Natural Resources, from his seat, says that he doesn't know that they are acceptable to the community, he says that he doesn't know because they have not come back.

Well, there was a letter sent to the Minister on February 13th, 1981, again under the signature of the chairperson of the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area. A very powerful letter, Mr. Speaker. The Minister will perhaps recall the intent and the purpose of that letter. What the chairperson of the committee said at that time was that "The following motion was passed at a meeting on February 5th, 1981. The motion was as follows: That this committee" — that's the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area advisory committee — "withdraw its support from the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area and pursue the course of withdrawing the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area from the control of the Department of Natural Resources for the following reasons: (a) the inability of the department to implement a management plan and regulations; (b) the lack of concern for protecting and maintaining the polar bear population (not responding to denning area concerns); (c) failure to manage the area by closing and/or withdrawing biologists' positions in Churchill (positions which would be sensitive to the needs of the area);" — we just talked about that action on the part of the government which has been condemned by the committee as a whole — "(d) inability to establish route controls and vehicle restrictions as recommended by this committee;" — so the committee is saying that they have sent recommendations to the Minister, and that they have not been implemented. "(e) failure of the department to live up to their initial proposal September 17th, 1977 to the LGD Council and residents of Churchill; (f) lack of concern for protection and maintenance of trappers' livelihoods, safety and rights."

That's a fairly long and substantial list of concerns and complaints which criticize the government's inability to move forward with regulations and mechanisms which would in fact protect the very sensitive eco system of the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area.

There was a meeting on February 11th, 1981, in the community of Churchill, it was a public meeting, and I am informed that there were 54 people attending that meeting, including seven committee members and one secretary. Forty-one of those individuals supported the committee in their

recommendations and in the passage of this motion. One did not, and the remaining abstained. It must be noted as well, as the letter indicates, that the turnout was larger than the public meeting held in 1977 at which time support for the planned wildlife management area was expressed.

Now, they go on to say that they are certain that the Minister will be as anxious as they are to resolve this situation. Well, I would have hoped that the Minister would have been as anxious as the people of Churchill were to resolve that particular situation, but the record has proved otherwise. And I don't want to comment on the anxiety of the Minister, but I do want to point out that according to my information, and it is not as recent as of today, but it is of recent vintage, that the Minister has failed yet to respond to that letter in any way whatsoever; that the Minister has not even given the committee the courtesy of a reply. Now I hope I am proved wrong. I hope that the Minister can bring forward correspondence which in fact shows that he has, because then I would feel a bit more comfortable about The Ecological Reserves Act that we are discussing right now.

I would not feel entirely satisfied, nor be fully optimistic that The Ecological Reserves Act would meet any better fate than did the Churchill Wildlife Management area, but I would be at least a little bit more optimistic than I am now.

Right now I am fairly pessimistic that this Act, as well written as it is, as important as it is, and as necessary as it is, will suffer any other fate than has been suffered by the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management area. It is a good Act; it could be better; we are going to make suggestions to try to make it better, but we are concerned about the intent of the government bringing it forward and we are even more concerned about the way in which the government will respond to the legislation once it is in place.

Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, there are several other jurisdictions which have this sort of legislation in place. Alberta has it in place at present. New Brunswick has a draft regulation which is now being discussed. I am not certain whether it has been passed by that government or not. Newfoundland has a Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Act which is in effect. Saskatchewan has an Act. Quebec has an Ecological Reserves Act. And B.C. has an Ecological Reserves Act which was implemented in the early Seventies, Assented to on the 2nd of April, 1971, and which has been considered to be the model for most Acts across the country.

The fact is that we are catching up with the other provinces in respect to implementing this sort of legislation. The Member for Inkster when he addressed the issue the other day suggested that the Act was not necessary and he is probably correct to the extent that if we were comfortable that the government would proceed with the protection of the environment in an enthusiastic and a sincere way, that this Act could have been made redundant by their own activity. The Member for Inkster said that when the New Democratic Party was in government, ecological reserves were established. I would ask the Minister who is shaking his head now if he can indicate, according to his recollection, if any ecological reserves have been established since the

change in government; does he know of any? We know that there are four now established. Were any of those established after October 1977? — (Interjection)— So there was one out of four established after October of 1977 when the government changed hands.

If the government was truly intent on developing ways and means to protect fragile and sensitive and rare and unique eco-systems they could have established more. As a matter of fact, I would be more confident about this Act if the Minister could indicate right now from his seat that there will be the establishment of ecological reserves immediately following the passage and the Royal Assent to this particular Act which we are discussing now.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please. I believe that we are discussing the principles of this bill rather than details on everything other than the principles of the bill. I would hope that the honourable member would be a little bit more specific on the principles of the bill.

The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: I thank you for your direction, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I thought I had finally gotten back to the principle with the last statement and the Minister of Natural Resources agrees although I have to say in my own defense that when I talk about the way in which the government has failed to respond to some very urgent ecological needs in the Cape Churchill area, I am talking about the principle of the bill. I am talking about the way in which the government reacts to environmental concerns. But can the Minister indicate perhaps with a simple nodding of his head either yes or no, that he fully intends to bring forward upon proclamation of this Act, a number of ecological reserves which will be put in place?

For the record, I see no indication from the Minister which now leaves me even more concerned because I would have hoped that he would have taken this opportunity to put me in my place. I would have hoped that he would have stood there and said, yes, when that Act is proclaimed it is proclaimed for a reason; it is proclaimed because there is need, it is not just window dressing; it is not just a way by which the Conservative government is attempting to deflect criticism against them for their handling of environmental and ecological concerns in this province, but it is a working piece of legislation which was not absolutely necessary but was positive in the respect that it did highlight and focus a concern. It did bring public attention to that concern. It did set up an advisory committee which I think would be very important in the whole development of this system of ecological reserves. It did provide for very specified regulations and for that reason it was necessary. I could accept that. But it can only be accepted if in fact we see the establishment of those reserves at the time, at the earliest possible opportunity after the proclamation of this Act and I don't think that we will in any significant numbers.

Maybe the Minister will prove me wrong. I hope the Minister proves me wrong. By the way, I hope the Minister proves me wrong in respect to my condemnation and criticism on him concerning the regulations and the government mishandling of the situation in respect to the Cape Churchill Wildlife

Management Area. I hope he does. I rather doubt that he will. I rather doubt that his government will, but I do for the sake of that area, for the sake of the sensitive ecological areas in the province, that the government will take every opportunity to show that they really do care; that they're not just a government that brings forward a piece of legislation as an attempt to deflect criticism rather than as an attempt to build a better society, to build a better province and to preserve some of the rare and unique features of the Province of Manitoba.

Having said those few words on this bill, Mr. Speaker, I have indicated for the record, so that it is clear, that we support The Ecological Reserve Act, that we support the establishment of ecological reserves, that we think that this particular legislation, as the Member for Rupertsland said, can play a role in the development of those reserves and can play an essential part in the protection of sensitive ecosystems, but we have grave concerns about the way in which the government has acted in the past. Those concerns of course are based on very real experience and we have grave concerns about the way in which they will act in the future.

I wish to indicate to them that because we support the concept, because we support the intent, we will continue to bring pressure to bear on the government to ensure that they use this Act, as we will continue to bring pressure to bear on the government to ensure that regulations are finally put in place in the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area, and we will consider that to be part of our obligation and our duty as members of the Opposition. So I look forward to discussing this in second reading. I hope the Minister will take into consideration the recommendation respecting the mandatory establishment of an Advisory Committee for The Ecological Reserves Act and at that time we can discuss in more detail the specifics of the Act.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister will be closing debate. The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, just very briefly because I assured my House Leader and members of my caucus that this was one of those pieces of legislation that would receive fairly unanimous support from all members of the House and as such would not unduly lengthen the session. It was with that assurance, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that even though I introduced it somewhat late in the session I managed to have the support of my caucus and Cabinet to introduce this bill. (Interjection)— So far, Mr. Speaker, my House Leader says.

Mr. Speaker, if you listen to the honourable members opposite they really do believe and lead one to start believing oneself that they have that monopoly concern about the environment, they are the only people that can protect the environment and indeed they are only the people that have done anything about the environment.

Mr. Speaker, while the Honourable Member for Churchill was not addressing himself to the bill, he was using it, as per example the situation at the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area. Let me tell him, Mr. Speaker, that I do believe that that tundra was as sensitive during the eight years that the NDP was in power. I think the polar bears

needed some looking after during the eight years that the NDP were in power. So I simply ask him, the only one simple question that has to be asked: Which government established the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area? It was this government in their first year of office. Let's not just listen to rhetoric. Now we are talking about how fast we are bringing about the regulations, how much time are we letting for local participation in the development of regulations and, Mr. Speaker, again, that's something strange to my friends opposite because they tend to govern from on top.

The previous Minister of Natural Resources, whom I have a great deal of respect for, doesn't like this kind of legislation. He doesn't like to be bothered by advisory boards because he has often said so in this House; "I am in the Minister; I am the boss; they'll do as I tell them." That's one way of governing, Mr. Speaker, but it doesn't happen to be the Conservative way of governing.

We established the Wildlife Management Area in the first place. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland has asked about can he trust this government; have we done anything with respect to concern for parks development; for preservation of our ecological areas in our province?

Mr. Speaker, can any of you, if I count to ten, think of a major parks initiative undertaken by our friends, socialists, during their eight years in government? Not one. Spruce Woods, Birds Hill, Cathills, Assisippi, Hecla Island; all undertaken by a Conservative administration. Name me one acre of land that a New Democratic Party government in eight years of office has set aside for future use by Manitobans for parks and recreation. Mr. Speaker, why then do we have to put up with this kind of nonsense? It's the old story — you tell a lie often enough, loud enough, and sooner or later it gets to be accepted as being fact. But, Mr. Speaker, for the honourable member . . . No, Mr. Speaker, I challenge the honourable members. If I am being challenged on this bill as to whether or not a Conservative administration has had the sufficient public interest at will to set aside lands for various different reasons in the Province of Manitoba, I challenge any administration up to this date in time in the province's history to match the record of a Progressive Conservative administration in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, the other administration was very quick to assemble lands when it involved their state farm program. It was very quick to assemble lands for goodness knows what other reasons; lands for public housing purposes; lands for all kinds of reasons. But, Mr. Speaker, ask me, and I ask the question again: Name me one major initiative that was undertaken by the previous administration in the eight years that they held responsibility for office.

Mr. Speaker, about the only thing they did was build an outhouse in the Memorial Park here opposite to cause a bit of difficulty. That's about the only thing they did with respect to providing recreation in our parks system during their eight years of administration.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to get to the bill because I am speaking out of order, as was the Member for Churchill speaking out of order when he devoted 30 minutes to the problems of how soon or how fast or

how compatible the regulations will be forthcoming respecting the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area.

Mr. Speaker, I was unfortunately not in the House when the Member for Inkster addressed himself to this bill and, Mr. Speaker, he is correct. I do not really need the Act. But, Mr. Speaker, again it shows a little fundamental difference between the way a Conservative administration likes to operate as compared to our friends opposite. I would just as soon lay out the legislation in public so that people know how they can respond to this bill and I would certainly like to formalize it a little bit and for the honourable members' edification, let me tell them, we have an Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee. It is existing. It is called upon from time to time to advise the government on the five ecological reserves that we now have. Yes, it existed before but what this does is it formalizes to some extent. It also establishes how they shall govern themselves. It also establishes by statute, and in an open way, how they can be remunerated for instance for their meetings. The Honourable Member for Inkster would like to have that all done just quietly within his department you see. (Interjection)— Oh, yes, even to the extent that the chairman of Manitoba Hydro's expenses got mixed up in his department, Mr. Speaker. I would sooner have it up front. I would sooner have it laid out on the legislation. People have the legislation and they can deal with it an open way.

The Honourable Member for Churchill asked me do I have five or six areas immediately in mind that I want to declare as Ecological Reserves under this Act. Again, Mr. Speaker, I disappointed him by not vigorously nodding my head and saying, yes, I was going to grab all kinds of land in Manitoba. Of course that's not the way of this government either. If, and that's the reason for this legislation, we can be convinced that a particular unique feature, whether it is in rock formations, whether it is in forestry, whether it is of some other kind of particular feature that this bill can be applicable for, we have an open, understood — understood, that is, by the public — means of dealing with it. We could do it, as we have done in the past, as other governments have done in the past, have prevailed upon the statute authority invested in any government under The Crown Lands Act to have accomplished the same. I acknowledge that. But, Mr. Speaker, we believe that it's appropriate to have this kind of legislation, in keeping with other jurisdictions that have seen fit to enact similar legislation that enables a government of the day to have immediately at hand the necessary tools to move in and to protect a particularly unique resource base whose preservation or whose conservation, under specific conditions as set out by the Act, not tied necessarily in a total way from any future use, but indeed that the government of the day, the Minister of the day, upon advice from the Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee, can from time to time determine the use, the non-use or the limited use, conditional use, of certain lands so designated.

So, Mr. Speaker, I commend this bill to honourable members opposite. I am happy to say, Mr. Speaker, although they voiced some scepticism as to the intentions, and some cynicism, if I may say, about

the intentions of this government, I note that they nonetheless seem to support the bill in principle in second reading and I look forward to this being a bill that receives unanimous support through the committee stage and third and final reading.

Thank you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill on a point of order?

MR. COWAN: No, I would ask the Minister if he would answer a question or two with respect to the bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Yes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: I would ask the Minister if he can provide, not at this opportunity because I don't expect him to have them immediately in front of him, but in the near future a copy of the minutes of meetings of the Ecological Reserve Advisory Council, which he says is now existing over the past four years?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, if such minutes exist, I would have no difficulty in supplying them. I am not aware of the fact that these minutes are available. I would suspect that one of the reasons, because of the lack of this kind of legislation, the advisory committee that exists is a very loose one. It has no basis of fact or existence in statute. I don't know whether they meet in a regular fashion, whether or not the support that they have received from the administration of years ago and this present administration years ago, whether they received any kind of support that enables them to keep minutes or have a secretary available to them and so forth, but all the more reason for passing this piece of legislation. But, Mr. Speaker, I would certainly accept the question as notice and have that available for me perhaps when we deal with the bill in committee.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill with another question?

MR. COWAN: One final question, Mr. Speaker. Since we both addressed the issue of the regulations for the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area, can the Minister indicate at this point if we should expect the implementation of those regulations by the spring break-up of this particular year, as he had indicated to the Cape Churchill Wildlife Management Area advisory committee last February?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I am not capable of answering definitively for the Honourable Member for Churchill on that question at this time. I can indicate to him that it's a very large area of land that we are talking about. We are talking about people who have had a fairly unhindered or unimpeded use in that area, whether it's trapping or hunting and other uses that have been made in that general area. We are now talking for the first time of imposing a set of government regulations on that area, something by

the way which we have the courage to do and the previous administration never did, because it takes a bit of courage to do that. But we are not prepared to do that in a quick and offhand way or in a dictatorial way even if the recommendations come from that advisory committee, as well-intentioned as they might be. We have received certain recommendations from that committee but they are advisory only. We have the final authority and we have to be responsible for that authority. It's easy for a committee to make certain recommendations to me; I then have to make sure that those recommendations honestly reflect the best interests of that area and I, as Minister in this case, like the former Minister used to, will have to be prepared to take the responsibility for those regulations, not the advisory committee. You know, when the flak starts shooting, when they're hitting, that advisory committee will be nowhere near me; it will be aimed all at me.

So I will take my good time at imposing those kind of conditions on a very large land mass of the Province of Manitoba where no regulation existed before and I will resist the temptations and the encouragements and the pushing of the Honourable Member for Churchill for me to do otherwise.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with another question?

MR. GREEN: No, Mr. Speaker. A member is entitled to indicate that he has been wrongly quoted by the Minister. The Minister said that when I was the Minister, I said I am the Minister; I don't want advisory boards; I will do what I say and the advisory boards be damned, or words to that effect.

Mr. Speaker, I never made any such statement. As a matter of fact, the honourable member in the past three minutes has almost quoted me verbatim as to what I said. We had lots of advisory boards but ultimately I, as Minister, had to accept responsibility for the decision, and made it.

Now I would like to ask the Minister a question. The Minister has said that there are no minutes, no secretary, and they didn't have the resources under the previous administration. I don't know that they had any problems because I was never advised that they had any problems. Is the Minister saying that now that there is legislation, there will be a bureaucracy around this thing, which used to be able to be done without a bureaucracy?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, let me firstly acknowledge and withdraw the comments that I attributed to him, which were not correct. I accept the correction on the part of the Honourable Member for Inkster on that matter.

With respect to whether or not this bill will now establish a bureaucracy to do something that heretofore has been done without the use of that bureaucracy, if I don't answer this question very carefully, I am liable to lose the support from my own caucus and Cabinet on this bill in a hurry. So let me indicate to the honourable members that there is not envisioned the necessity for any implementation of any bureaucracy. I am sure that the same public-spirited citizens will continue to serve or will be

found from time to time to serve on this kind of an advisory committee. But what it does do, it also recognizes the valuable, the invaluable services, of members of the public, in most instances at no pay, in some instances perhaps at some nominal per diem consideration for expenses, who provide their time to counsel government on these matters from time to time. For that I do not apologize, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt a motion?

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

BILL NO. 56 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION ACT AND THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 56 — the Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Mr. Speaker, we have no further concerns on this particular bill and are prepared to let it go to committee for study at that stage.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, we have reviewed this bill and would be most anxious to see the regulations which will be issued pursuant to this legislation because the regulations will spell out in far greater detail what the government's real intent is in the various sections dealing with the funding of education.

It is disappointing, Mr. Speaker, that in looking at the future funding of education in the years 1982 and onwards that the application of the education support formula as prescribed in the bill will continue to widen the gap between the have and the have-not school divisions because you might have a continuing general decline in the school enrolment, you might have some general levelling off of education costs across the province, but at the same time you may still have school divisions with an increase in enrolment, with expanding programs; hence with higher education costs than other school divisions in general. The application of this formula, I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, I feel would militate against such school divisions.

You will also recall, Mr. Speaker, that when we had a meeting with the senior officials of Alcan, that one of the representatives of their company made an interesting comment, which I hope the Minister of Education made a note of, as being indicative of the general mood of the corporate sector, the mood and attitude of the corporate sector with respect to the manner of funding of education. I am paraphrasing what the Alcan official said but I believe that he did say words to the effect that he realizes that Alcan, if and when they do decide to move into Manitoba, that their contribution to education costs or to the funding of education may be quite substantial. They practically suggested to the government that whatever revenues the government should earn or derive from Alcan by way of education support, that somehow the benefits of that should be shared by all the people of Manitoba rather than just the division within which the plant may be located.

Now I appreciate the fact that via the education support levy that there will be some of that sharing but I think what Alcan was suggesting is that the tax base for the special levy will be enhanced quite substantially for the division within which the plant was located and I think that they probably felt even a bit uneasy about one school division being the sole beneficiary of that source of revenue, particularly if the school division within which Alcan should locate should be a relatively small one.

My other concern, Mr. Speaker, is that this bill does not deal with the problem that will continue to develop, that is, the differential between the have and the have-not school divisions. I am referring to the school divisions which may have a somewhat greater potential toward future industrialization and commercial development. Two things happen there, as I have mentioned previously to the Minister during the consideration of his Estimates. When a school division's industrial and commercial tax base expands, the population will likely decline somewhat and that's bound to happen within the Winnipeg School Division. As I indicated to the Minister, I would like to see that type of expansion now because it's certainly needed in the Province of Manitoba and it is my hope that the day will come when that will occur. But when the Winnipeg School Division expands and broadens its commercial tax base, say for example the downtown area gradually expands through the building of additional commercial facilities, and the support services, the apartment houses that will house the people working there; chances are that the school enrolment will decline and will decline very dramatically. And we know that this has occurred in the downtown areas, and does continue to occur, in the downtown areas of all cities. And it so happens that in Winnipeg the downtown area with a certain residential portion around it constitutes one school division; constitutes the largest school division. So, as the balanced assessment in a division such as Winnipeg increases, the enrolment will decrease, and hence, Winnipeg will be in a better position to provide additional education services for itself at a much lower mill rate and a lesser burden to the residential taxpayer than what other school divisions may have to pay for the same level of service.

So I'm disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that in drafting this bill that the Minister could not deal with that particular problem, with that particular issue, because it was debated in the House and was debated quite fully. So a long time prior to the introduction of this Bill, the Minister had ample opportunity to give the matter consideration.

Then of course, Mr. Speaker, I should also mention that the position of the Progressive Party is that services to people should be paid out of general revenue from the provincial purse, services to property from property tax revenue. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, it became quite apparent this morning during the consideration of the Estimates of the Executive Council, that given the fact that the property tax credits exceed the revenue from the Education Support Levy, that it would be quite simple for the government to cancel out both, cancel out the education support levy and that would eliminate the need for Property Tax Credit Program but as I mentioned this morning, if this government

is committed to some measure of equality or greater equity in the distribution of income and if it would be this intention to bring about some greater measure of relief to those at the bottom end of the income scale, then perhaps some other system could be devised to take care of that point. But the Education Support Levy could be eliminated and that would eliminate the need for the Property Tax Credit or for a good portion of it, at least equal to the level of the Education Support Levy. So that would remove the Education Support Levy portion of education funds from real property, then that would leave the special levy and that too, there might be ways to find to fund that from more equitable sources than real property.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I've said, it is our concern that this bill will not bring about any greater measure of equality between the more and the less affluent school divisions and that the differential level of support will continue to widen because the total amount of the education funding pie is going to be limited by a couple sections of the bill, one which states the Education Support Program base for the year 1981 and that everything is tied to that in years to come. So that certainly would not take care of any extraordinary needs that some of the suburban school divisions and perhaps some rural school divisions in time may have and they will be legitimate needs but the formula will not provide for adequate funding for them. So as I said previously, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister's approach is a new education funding formula was nothing really all that dramatic, that new, that different. It could perhaps be described as a sort of patchwork job and now the legislation that is tied in with it certainly makes it clear that the government does not have a program that would have the flexibility to swing with the times, as it were, to swing with the changing needs, that would not have the flexibility to recognize the differing needs with respect to education as from one school division to the other, that in the end the funding formula will still be a straitjacket that all the school divisions would have to fit themselves into, in other words, every school division will have to cut the coat to fit the cloth in designing their education program.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister will be closing debate. The Honourable Minister.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, Bill 56 embodies the necessary technical changes to put into effect the principles that we stated in the White Paper on educational finance and when we brought forward the new Education Support Program in January of this year. I would just like to touch briefly on those principles to more or less review them and their effect as we see them to this point.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, over two years of study were spent on education finance and during that time we had representations from a large number of organizations in the educational community and without the educational community, those in municipal affairs made presentations as well as certain individuals. A larger community gave us the benefit of their advice and suggestions.

Out of those many presentations, briefs, suggestions, recommendations, we came forward with a number of principles and, Mr. Speaker, one of

those principles that was advocated by all parties who made presentations and so on was that we retained the foundation principle, that it be embodied in any new program and we have done that in the Support Program. Also in their presentations they stated, and we found on further study of that particular area, that a major portion of school board expenditures should be covered by the Support Program.

Mr. Speaker, in fact this is what has happened. The Education Support Program this year will cover some \$423 million, as compared to the Foundation Program of a year ago that covered some \$221 million so the major portion of school board expenditures are embodied in the Support Program. Some 85 percent of eligible expenditures for 1981, Mr. Speaker, are embodied in this program.

Another principle that was advocated by all parties was increased equalization over the entire system and that of course has been put into place with the educational support levy, 37 mills on farm and residential, some 75 mills on other property and this is a uniform levy across the province — and the Member for Burrows is quite correct — it will raise some \$148 million and results in a pooling of those resources into the program and a sharing across the province. A type of equalization as I say that is supported by trustees, teacher organizations and others in the educational communities.

Another principle that was advocated by those who made presentations at the time we were studying educational financing, was that there should be an opportunity for planning beyond the current year and the new plan does just that, Mr. Speaker. It is a three-year program that will increase by the CPI factor each of the three years. I find it passing strange, Mr. Speaker, that a new three-year plan, unique in form, should be criticized in that people are now saying, people on the other side of the House at least have said, "Well what's going to happen at the end of three years? What are school boards going to do at the end of three years?" Mr. Speaker, school boards didn't know what they were going to do in the following year under the old system. They didn't know from year to year what the government might provide in the way of funding; there was no opportunity for forward planning. They now know the amount of support that they will receive from the Provincial Government for three years and it's the only program that does that for educational financing in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Another principle that we wanted to see embodied in this plan, and it is embodied in it, was of course the preservation of local autonomy and more than ever before, Mr. Speaker, school boards have a larger sum of money at their disposal to make decisions about than they have ever had before; a larger sum of block funding if you wish, and this is part and parcel of the local autonomy aspect. Of course, we still have retained that special levy jurisdiction of the local school board to raise those requirements that are there over and above the educational support grants.

Of course another principle, Mr. Speaker, that we felt was vital to the program and one that had to be in it was an increased share of the Support Program being provided from the general revenues of the province and in such a way affecting a shift from

taxation on real property to the provincial coffers and that's been accomplished for the first time; 80-some percent of expenditures are provided by the Provincial Government through direct and indirect funding and that of course came about through a \$70 million increase from the Provincial Treasury.

Mr. Speaker, when people say, well, what is going to happen next year and some honourable members say, oh, well, it's fine this year, we saw what happened but we don't know what the government will do next year. Mr. Speaker, we have a commitment to maintain that 80 percent level and we will preserve it during the three years of the program. We said in the White Paper on educational financing that a majority of real property taxpayers in the province should experience a decrease in their school property taxes in 1981 and this is what has happened and I'm tempted to read off to the honourable members the school mill rates for each particular school division in this province to illustrate that but I will restrain myself from doing it at this time but certainly it does substantiate and support that point. Only in a handful of divisions, Mr. Speaker, did we see any increase at all. In the majority of school divisions there was a decrease in school property taxes and in several others a levelling off, a stabilizing of school property taxes, which I think is very significant indeed. In fact, Mr. Speaker, every school division in this province received considerably more funding from the Provincial Government than they have ever received in the past. I think that is particularly significant.

The program also embodies the principle of incentives that should be provided in any sound program where it's considered necessary to encourage the development of programs and particular services. This program contains those incentives in the area of Special Needs Support that I've mentioned before, Mr. Speaker, in the area of English as a second language which is certainly a particular program and a service that is very necessary particularly in our urban areas and increased support in the Vocational Industrial Program area as well. Those three particular areas receive specific categorical funding, Mr. Speaker, and I suggest are necessary and a progressive part of the program.

We've built in safeguards against the effects of declining enrolments and it's also strange to me that all of sudden, Mr. Speaker, people are no longer concerned about declining enrolments, I think it's the Member for Burrows, now his concern is about increasing enrolments. Well, we will welcome those, Mr. Speaker, when they come about; they will be very welcome indeed. Our studies have shown that we don't expect any dire increases in enrolment in the next three or four years and, of course, this is a three-year program and we are flexible enough that at the end of those three years, and during the program, we will assess it and monitor it and make those changes that we see as necessary to make it fully operative in the system.

So, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention once again those principles that are contained in the new program because they certainly are the principles that will be embodied in the changes that we find in Bill 56.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 62, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)
The Honourable Member for Logan.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. JENKINS: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a change on the Committee on Privileges and Elections and substitute the Honourable Members for Rupertsland and Rossmere in place of the Honourable Members for Seven Oaks and St. Vital.

MR. SPEAKER: Are those changes agreeable? (Agreed)
The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I think the notice has been distributed but if it is necessary, I will indicate that the Privileges and Elections Committee will meet at 10:00 a.m. tomorrow morning to consider the two bills which have passed this afternoon, The Ecological Reserves Act and the bill just passed, The Education Administration Act.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources, 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.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I am taking this opportunity to use the one grievance speech which is allowed to any member of the Legislative Assembly, to bring to the attention of the Legislature the fact that the Conservative Government has failed to date to successfully negotiate a continuation of the previous Northlands Agreement with the Federal Government.

As you will recall, during the question period we put a number of questions to the Minister of Northern Affairs and the answers, in every instance, were exactly the same as those which he has been providing to us over the past number of months; that is, that the agreement is in the hands of the Federal Government; that the province is willing to sign the agreement but that the Federal Government refuses.

Every time we discussed this they held out a slight glimmer of hope and they said that they were optimistic or they were anxious that the government would be signing that agreement in the very near future and, in every instance, their optimism has proved to be unfounded.

So I am, with some hesitancy, arising today in my place to speak to some of the issues which I believe are related to the failure of the government to successfully complete the negotiations. I think the government has to take some of the responsibility for that failure; they can't lay it all on the shoulders of the Federal Government and say that it is they who are not signing the agreement; they in fact are party to the negotiations and if they have been unable to negotiate an agreement which is acceptable to the Federal Government then they must bear some of the responsibility for that failure.

I think that one of the problems in respect to their failure to negotiate that agreement is the poisoned atmosphere which exists between the Federal Government and the Provincial Government at the present time. We talked about that during the debate on the RCMP costing services and the failure of the Provincial Government at that time, and it is a continuing failure as well, to negotiate a successful agreement in respect to those costing provisions. We have talked about the same sort of failure of the Provincial and the Federal Government to meet head on on issues on a number of other occasions as well.

But the fact is that this funding agreement that we are talking about now, the Northlands Agreement, has in the past provided for many activities and numerous programs in northern Manitoba over the past number of years. You know full well, Sir, that it has expired over a month ago and I believe that the failure to reach a successful culmination of the negotiations is illustrative of the Provincial Government's lack of commitment to this essential program. They can say otherwise but the actions, I believe, indicate quite clearly that they do not have the type of commitment which is necessary to bring these negotiations to a conclusion.

That lack of commitment, I might add, follows upon their general lack of commitment to deal in any sort of a serious way with conditions in Northern Manitoba. In order to fully understand the difficulties that are bound to arise if this program is not negotiated in the near future one must first understand the need for funding and the purpose for which it is intended. It has been said, Mr. Speaker, that the north demands that extra miles be walked. That statement came to my attention the other day in the Inquiry into Uranium Mining in Northern Manitoba, which was designed to investigate ways and means of more fully encouraging and providing for the participation of native northerners in economic development in the north of Saskatchewan. That brief statement, in the context of that report, says a great deal about northern conditions and about northern living. The north does place great demands. It places those demands upon those who consider it to be their home and it places those demands on those who wish to make it a better place to live and to enjoy, regardless of their place of residence.

The way in which any government reacts and responds to those demands is a test of that government's ability to govern in the best interests of all Manitobans. Is it not true that if the residents of the north suffer, so does everyone in the province? Consequently, is it not equally as true that if the government fails the north, in some way or another, that failure touches all of us? I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that such is the case.

There is an old adage which comes out of the labour movement of a hundred years ago. In short it says, and I quote, "An injury to one is an injury to all." I happen to believe in those words very strongly because as a human being I accept the principle that we are all interconnected and for that reason we share each others joys and we share each others pains. If one of us suffers, then we all must suffer. If the people of the north suffer, so do all the people of the province.

Once one accepts the implications of this philosophy one also must accept the challenge and

the responsibility to attempt to build a society and a world without pain and without suffering. I have prefaced my general remarks with this philosophical introduction because I know from experience that when one starts to talk about the north in these Chambers one is bound to cause the Conservative members to respond in the most parochial manner. I warn them now that I will be talking about parochial concerns for the next 40 minutes. I can assure you, as to not attempt to arouse their concern, I will attempt to couch my words in the most non-parochial way possible but the fact will remain that we are talking primarily about the north.

I don't want them to immediately discard any of my remarks just because they have grown used to not caring about what happens in the north of this province; I want them to understand that they cannot escape their neglect by arouse their ears and their eyes. I want them to listen because whatever happens in Split Lake or in Gillam or in Shamattawa or in Churchill does indeed affect all of us. The fact is that we must all care.

The New Democratic party has proven it cares. I am proud of my party's history and record over the eight years during which it was in government and that is not to say that we were a perfect government. We enjoyed successes and we suffered through failures and there is no doubt that mistakes were made but they were mistakes that were made because I believe that government tried to do as much as could be done to correct the historical injustices and the obvious inequities of centuries gone by. So having made those mistakes, it also enjoyed great successes in respect to attempting to deal with some of the structural problems which confronted them as a government in northern Manitoba.

I can assure you that the NDP continues to care. The leader of our party and a number of members of the Official Opposition, some of them from the city, myself included, have been walking those extra miles in northern Manitoba. We have been travelling from community to community throughout the north conducting a series of meetings as part of our Northern Task Force Hearings. We have been listening to the hundreds of northerners as they came to share their concerns and as they came to share their ideas and their hopes. We have heard them speak passionately and eloquently about the type of north which they would like to help build, the type of activity, economic and social, in which they would like to participate. We have heard their problems; we have discussed their ideas and suggestions. More importantly, we believe that we have begun an ongoing and continuing dialogue which plays such an essential role in the development of programs and policies for any part of this province, not just the north, but if you were going to govern in the best interests of any part of this province, you must go to that part of the province; you must listen to what people have to say to you while you are there and you must take seriously their concerns, their criticisms and their suggestions.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, this is exactly the type of communication which has been rejected by the Conservative Government as it has turned its back to the north and turned a deaf ear to the people of

the north. It has been a hard four years, or nearly four years now, for all of Manitoba but it has been the hardest for those in the north. It has been said time and time again that Tory times are tough times. Nowhere is that more obvious than in the north and no one knows it more completely and more fully than those who have lived through the past three-and-one-half years in northern Manitoba under a Conservative regime. Essentially, those who have are angry and they are frustrated with a government which by its shortsighted policies has aggravated existing problems and in fact has created entirely new ones.

A quick review of a number of those problems highlights the basic need for the program to which I am addressing my remarks today, the Northlands Agreement. As well, that review underscores the need for the immediate conclusion of the long overdue signing of that agreement.

Foremost among those problems, Mr. Speaker, is the depopulation of northern Manitoba. It is not a phenomena that is confined to southern Manitoba under a Conservative Government. In the north, after many years of consistent and constant growth under a New Democratic Government, northern towns and communities are now losing their sons and their daughters as they are forced out of the province in search of jobs which are not available to them, Mr. Speaker, either in the north or in the province at large. Two years ago, I stood in the same spot in the Legislature and outlined in great detail the effect of Conservative policies in northern Manitoba. At that time, I talked about the lack of economic opportunity that came with the Tory win at the polls. Employment dried up in the wake of their acute protracted restraint — we all know the story only too well — unfortunately, in northern Manitoba very little has changed since that time. In fact, Mr. Speaker, if anything has happened, it is that the situation has worsened and there is an even greater overall population loss as conditions continue to deteriorate in the industrial communities. In my constituency alone, in the Churchill constituency itself, the numbers and the impact of that depopulation is significant. Since the last general census, all but three of the industrial communities located in the Churchill constituency have lost population — let me correct that, Mr. Speaker — three out of the four have lost population.

During that period Gillam has lost a total of 1,500 people; forced out of that community because of the Conservative government's refusal to recommence Hydro construction in the area. But Gillam did not suffer alone, Churchill has lost nearly a third of its population — that equals a total of over 600 persons — that have been forced from that community because of a lack of economic opportunity and much of the conditions which resulted in that lack of economic opportunity, Mr. Speaker, are as a result of that government's inability to provide the type of environment in which businesses and individuals could flourish in Northern Manitoba.

Lynn Lake has suffered the same losses with a decrease in population equaling 500 persons in that community. Out of the four industrial communities in the Churchill constituency, only Leaf Rapids has grown in size since that last census but that growth in Leaf Rapids alone, nowhere near equals the extent

of the losses in the other communities. In those industrial communities we have witnessed a net loss in population during that period of approximately 2,000 people — and that may not sound like much to those from Winnipeg who are used to dealing with a population of 500,000 — but in the Churchill constituency that represents for those four communities a 22 percent decrease in population over that very short period of time.

That massive out-migration affects every aspect of life in the North. The school system suffers. Let's look at the record in respect to the school system in those communities. There are fewer students enrolled in those schools, in those four communities overall, than there were in September of 1977 just before the government took office. The exact figures are somewhere in the area of 20 percent. In other words there is a 20 percent reduction in the number of students enrolled in schools in those four communities. Now fewer students mean reduced programs; fewer students mean fewer teachers and it is obvious that with that mass of a reduction, programs and services have to suffer as funding is reduced and as teachers are let go. The fact is that there are fewer teachers servicing those schools now than there were in September of 1977.

The students are not the only ones to feel the pinch, small businesses can't survive as their markets are cut back. In the community of Churchill alone there has been a 44 percent decrease in the number of business licenses issued by the local government district to local entrepreneurs; a 44 percent decrease in four years, Mr. Speaker. That is just another example of the results of that massive type of out-migration which has affected all of the province as a whole but has affected most of all, those in the North.

There have been some that have said that the Churchill constituency has suffered alone, that in fact is not the case. The Churchill constituency is not the only one to suffer from this economic havoc and I am glad to see that the Minister of Labour has returned to the Chamber, because in the Minister of Labour's own constituency the city of Thompson, the people of that community have been as hard hit by similar problems as has anyone in the Churchill constituency.

Let's listen to what they have to say about the situation there because the community of Thompson and the economic results of the three-and-a-half years of Tory government have been more studied than have the similar conditions in the Churchill constituency. I think you will agree, Mr. Speaker, the lessons that are to be learned in Thompson apply as well to the Churchill constituency.

I was travelling to, I believe it was Churchill, not too long ago, Mr. Speaker, last month and I happened to pick up a magazine which is available to everyone flying on Pacific Western Airways, it's called Sky World, and there was an article written by a Mr. Doug Whiteway outlining some of the things that have been happening in the North over the past number of years. Let's hear what Mr. Doug Whiteway has to say: "The public announcement in October 1977 that there would be 650 job cutbacks came as a shock." We all remember that announcement which was made by INCO in respect to their intention to cut back their employment levels in the

community of Thompson and that happened after a Conservative government had taken power; that happened after the Conservative government had assured us that there would be increases in employment, not decreases in employment, on the heels of their victory.

Let's return to what Mr. Whiteway has to say: "However, as it turned out the reduction in the workforce by 1979 surpassed this figure by yet another 1,000." There were 650 individuals that were forecast to be cut as a result of those production reductions in Thompson by INCO but in fact that number was exceeded by 1,000 individuals. That's a significant figure alone. Mr. Whiteway says, "Where once approximately 4,000 people had worked for INCO, by the end of the decade this figure had been halved." Are conditions any better today, Mr. Speaker? I would suggest to you that they are not. As a matter of fact we all know that the miners in INCO are being forced to take a summer holiday because of production cutbacks by that company in that community so the cutbacks continue and the extreme hardship on the individuals who are affected by those cutbacks continues.

Mr. Whiteway goes on to comment on the situation in Thompson and these, I think, are the important words that he had to say in that article. He says, "After this right hook the provincial government hit the town with a left hook by laying off an estimated 50 employees plus an undetermined number of term contracts." In other words INCO announced the cutbacks; that had a tremendous and profound impact on the community and the provincial government comes along and does exactly the wrong thing under those circumstances. I would suggest to you that their actions were ill-considered even at the best of times but it was not the best of times in that community, Mr. Speaker, it was the worst of times.

Mr. Whiteway goes on to outline the more obvious results of this double whammy by INCO and the Tory government. He says that construction and retail operations were hit first and that's a fact, there were cutbacks in those particular industries. What else does he say? He says, "Total job losses in closures and support industries were high." We know that to be a fact as well. He says that "Real estate prices plummeted as did housing sales." We know that to be a fact as well and this, I think, is the most telling quote of that article. Mr. Whiteway says, "People just left town, there was nothing else to do," and that's exactly what happened. But as powerful as that indictment is, Mr. Whiteway is not alone in his condemnation of the Conservative Government for their leading role in this economic tragedy.

A recent Free Press article says, "Recent cutbacks in employment levels at the mine, a depressed construction industry and government restraint have led to a diminishing population in the city," — and government restraint — so we see the effect of government restraint once again. So it was in Thompson; so it was in Gillam; so it was in Churchill and so it was in Lynn Lake. But if those industrial communities only lost jobs and population, they were lucky in comparison to the traditional communities of the North. Those living in Metis communities and on reserves were stripped of any hope they had as a Conservative government turned back the clock.

The headlines of recent papers bear silent but powerful witness to the frustration and to the

bitterness Native Northerners feel towards the Tory government. April 28th, 1981, "Mayor and council resign over awarding of contract". We know that instance full well, Mr. Speaker, that was when South Indian Lake after many years of what they considered to be abuse by the Conservative government and the Minister of Northern Affairs, finally resigned out of frustration and bitterness over the events and the intrusion of the government into their own affairs.

"The Minister of Northern Affairs Rapped in the North", April 29th, 1981, a day later; May 8th, 1981, "Community Government Still at Odds", again we are talking about the incident in South Indian Lake and when we asked the Minister of Northern Affairs to go up to South Indian Lake he told us he couldn't. So we suggested that he make a simple phone call to that community to try to straighten out what appeared to be a serious situation. I am not certain to this day whether he made that phone call or not, but I do know that there has been very little progress made in reconciling this particular problem.

We have a quote, January 8th, 1981, "Indians Protest Lack of Say in Northern Manitoba Plan." That Northern Manitoba Plan is exactly what we are talking about in this debate, Mr. Speaker, and that's the Northlands Agreement. We have suggested all along as have groups which represent Native Northerners both Metis and Indian, that there has not been the type of consultation which is necessary and which is essential to the development of plan which will meet the needs of Northerners as they see them.

Here's one from May 6th, 1981, "Northerners Feel Out in the Cold." These are the kinder ones that have come across my desk over the past number of months. There are more serious criticisms and condemnations of the Conservative government over that period of time and I would suggest to you that they have been made in all sincerity but out of frustration and bitterness by those most affected by the policies. The list goes on and on and on, ad infinitum.

What is even more telling than the headlines and the articles themselves is the way in which the Conservatives react to this serious and severe criticism. They react as they always do. They want to shoot the messenger. The Minister of Northern Affairs declares not that he is going to do something about the problem; not that he's going to take immediate action; not that he's going to have to the type of investigation which you would believe that this sort of criticism would demand, but he says he is tired of the rhetoric so rather than deal with the problems, he chooses to ignore them. Instead of attacking the problems, he attacks those who speak of the problem.

The words he so vehemently and violently decries are only a verbal manifestation of the existing conditions and those conditions need very desperately, Mr. Speaker, to be improved upon. You see the anger that is expressed in those headlines and in those articles is real, as well it is justified, and so is the frustration that is expressed in those particular articles. That alone is but a reflection of the government's mishandling of their responsibilities in Northern Manitoba over the past three to four years; that frustration and that anger is aggravated

by their constant refusal to listen and more importantly, Mr. Speaker, their consistent refusal to hear.

On this side of the House in the NDP we are proud of our record of listening. We are equally proud of our long-standing commitment to involving Northerners in shaping a better future for themselves and a better tomorrow for their children. So we intend to continue on with our Northern Task Force hearings because we believe there is a story to be told. We believe that there are ideas which can be developed out of that sort of constant and ongoing dialogue and finally we believe that there is a better tomorrow to behold.

I am especially pleased that the Leader of my party has given his personal pledge to continue with these types of hearings even after we regain the government of this province, so that never again will the citizens of this province feel so alienated and betrayed by their own government. But listening is not alone, we all know that. It must be coupled with positive action and nowhere is action more urgently needed than in the area of job creation in Northern Manitoba.

Cutbacks over the past four years in both the public and the private sector have greatly reduced an already restricted level of employment opportunities for Northerners. It must be noted that this lack of employment opportunities is as much a result of discriminatory practices that are centuries old, as it is from a lack of economic activity in the area. Both of these causes of unacceptably high employment levels in Metis and reserve communities must be vigorously attacked by any government which takes seriously its obligations to all its citizens.

Everyone in this Chamber is aware of the overwhelming need for comprehensive action by government to correct the structural problems in those communities, yet there has been so very little done by governments and industry alike over the past number of years. It is to the shame of the Conservative government, I might add, that they have shut down employment generating and training programs throughout the North. The Churchill Prefab Housing Plant was one of the first to go, Mr. Speaker, and we discussed that closure at great length in this House, I believe, during the first session of the new government yet, to this day, the government refuses to talk about the social costs of that closure. They refuse because they know that they were wrong. They have all the information; I know they do because it was available to them, that proved that if a social cost benefit analysis was performed in that operation that it would have been considered to be profitable. In other words, Mr. Speaker, if they had taken the time to try to determine the costs of closing the operation, as fully as they had taken the time to consider the costs of maintaining the operation, they would have determined, as did others who had taken that time, that it paid to have that operation stay open even although, if one did a straight balancing of the books, it appeared as if it would not. Yet, in spite of all that information which was available to them, they chose to close the Churchill Prefab Plant. I would suggest to you that that decision was as ideological as it was economic.

That ideological ax continued to strike as they flailed away at other projects with a vengeance that

was fueled primarily by their own dogma. The Pukatawagan operation in Wabowden was sold to private operators, and ultimately failed. They told us that they were selling it to the private sector so that it could flourish so that it could create more jobs, and yet in the end because, as a result of that operation, there were no jobs. Athapap Builders in Cranberry Portage met the same fate as the Tories struck away at these employment generating, in these training programs and, by doing so, knowingly destroyed economic opportunity for hundreds of northerners as well as took from them the opportunity to gain experience and skills through productive employment. And that list, Mr. Speaker, goes on and on.

And now faced with the results of their actions of the past three years, the Minister of Labour attempts to justify those shortsighted policies by declaring — and these are his words, or his sentiments, Mr. Speaker, to be more exact — that welfare pays greater dividends than do those types of employment projects.

Now the Leader of the Opposition brought this to the attention of the Minister during the question period; we brought this to the attention of the Minister during the Estimates and yet he stands by, what I consider to be, an extremely shortsighted and ill-considered philosophy that welfare would, in any instance, pay greater dividends than would the productive employment of individuals who were gaining both experience and job skills. That medieval approach to governing betrays the ideological bankruptcy of the present government.

We, on this side, we of the New Democratic Party, reject this simplistic bookkeeping categorically. We know from our own experience that the training of workers and the development of job skills pays dividends 100 times over. It pays dividends for those individuals who gain those skills and, as well, it pays into the society which puts those skills to work. We are committed to encouraging the full participation of all northerners in the economic development of their homeland.

The point has to be taken now that we have heard time and time again, throughout the course of three years in this Legislature, indications from the government that they are going to recommence at some stage the construction of the Limestone generating station. And yet we don't see them putting in place any of the type of training programs that would enable northerners, who are residents in that area and who have been long term residents in that area, to be able to more fully participate in that construction.

They talk about buying Manitoba products but they don't talk about developing Manitoba skills in Manitoba workers to ensure that we gain the full benefits of that construction.

We know that room must be made for Native northerners in the economic mainstream of society. We know that encouragement to participate must be more than just lip service; there must be training programs; there must be upgrading opportunities once northerners are employed. We've learned those lessons the hard way, Mr. Speaker, because we did not do all that could have been done, or perhaps it would be phrased better, all that should have been done when we had that opportunity. Not out of

malice but because we did not fully understand — and I might add, neither did any other government fully understand at that time in defence of the previous government — the full impact of those employment-creating projects and how to best incorporate the local residents into the economic opportunity which was afforded by those projects.

But we have learned from those lessons; at least I hope we have learned from those lessons. And we know that for those that have so long been denied the opportunity which is available to most of us we must have specialized and specific programs put in place. They have been denied that opportunity, Mr. Speaker, and we want to see them finally have a reason and a way by which they can participate more fully in any economic development ongoing in their own area.

But jobs and employment opportunities are only part of the equation and, as much as they are necessary, government must respond and react in other ways in order to make living in northern Manitoba more acceptable to residents. Northerners also deserve the same levels of basic services which are available to all Manitobans.

Now, one has to read that statement very carefully. We are not saying that they should have all the services that are available to Manitobans throughout the province but that, at the basic level, they should have all the services which are available. There is a tendency, and I fall prey to it more than most, when talking about social services in the north to go into a shopping list rendition of all the concerns and the complaints which are so frequently voiced by those most affected. If there were more time to do so I would probably fall prey to that tendency once again, Mr. Speaker, but being aware of the time restraints imposed upon me in any speech in this House, I will resist the temptation to go into a travelogue and a shopping list, community by community throughout northern Manitoba.

There really is no necessity to do so. The list, once it is boiled down, comes down to one essential ingredient; it is a matter of commitment. It doesn't matter whether it's roads to a community or whether it's internal roads in a community, the fact is that it is a matter of commitment. Those roads cost more money than southern roads and they cost more money on a per capita basis as well as on a per mile basis. Plain and simple they cost that extra money; they place that extra demand on the financial resources of any government. So governments must be committed to spending those extra dollars if all Manitobans are going to have, for example, equal road access.

During the eight years of New Democratic Party government, I believe a commitment to construction of roads in northern Manitoba was displayed moreso than in any other period in the history of this province. There were more roads built during that period than there ever were during any other similar period. And to name but a few of them, Mr. Speaker, there was the road from Thompson to Lynn Lake, which serviced Leaf Rapids, Gillam and South Indian Lake as well; there was a road to Split Lake; there were the roads to Norway House and Cross Lake; there was a road to Moose Lake; there was the Easterville to The Pas connection; there were all of those roads, and that's just a number of them, that's

not by any means the full list, which were constructed in northern Manitoba under that administration.

And it doesn't take long to compare the record of the New Democratic Party administration with the record of the Conservative administration. Not one community in the past 3 1/2 years, which was not already serviced by a road or which was not already part of a road network which was under construction in northern Manitoba, has gained access to a road during their term in office. It is ironic that the Minister of Northern Affairs would suggest that the key to the development of the north lies in the construction of roads in the north and, at the same time, when asked by the Member for Rupertsland to list off the new roads which would have been constructed by his government, was unable to provide even one example. He is condemned by his own analysis and by his own figures, Mr. Speaker.

But roads are only one part of the equation as well. We have to look at the other social services, and I only wish that there were more time to do so, which are necessary to northerners living in the north; medical services. In the past few weeks in this House we have discussed the Northern Patient Transportation Program; we have discussed the Medical Evacuation Program. On previous occasions during the course of three sessions we have discussed the problem which any government faces in respect to encouraging doctors to start a practice in northern Manitoba and to continue that practice in northern Manitoba. We know that there are programs that must be developed that meet this challenge in an innovative and imaginative way.

I think that it was a good sign that the other day we were able to convince the government of the legitimacy of more fully studying the medical evacuation services in the north. And I, for one, am not satisfied to leave it to them, now that they have made a commitment to that study, to proceed on their own, but will be providing them with encouragement and enticement at every occasion to make certain that that study does in fact result in better medical evacuation services for northerners.

As well, Mr. Speaker, we have to applaud the purchase of the Citation Jet and at the same time encourage them to more fully develop those programs which are long overdue and necessary.

Much of that which we have talked about today in this debate, Mr. Speaker, can be addressed by the successful signing and implementation of the Northlands Agreement, or the Northern Development Agreement as the Conservatives prefer to call it. But unless that agreement is signed in short order we are going to find ourselves in the situation where existing programs will begin to deteriorate and will begin to be denied and yet we have no indication from the Federal Government or the Provincial Government that retroactivity will be included in the agreement. So if I am going to offer any advice to the government at this time, and I think I should because I think this matter is one of extreme urgency, I can only encourage them to, in all due haste, act with sincerity and act with a sense of urgency to make certain that we don't, as Manitobans, lose this extremely valuable program for the development of the north.

If I had more time, Mr. Speaker, and you've indicated to me that my time is very short, I would

have gone into the many ways in which that program has helped to develop the north in the past but I think we are all aware of them. I can only hope that the government will put aside, at least for the continuation of these negotiations, their longstanding feud with the Federal Government and will attempt to bring to bear, as soon as possible, the type of pressure and the type of activity which will result in the successful culmination of those negotiations and will, by that fact alone, show some commitment to a better and greater development of the great opportunities which lie in northern Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The motion before the House is to go into Committee of Supply.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for Executive Council.

SUPPLY — EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This committee will come to order. I would direct the honourable members' attention to Page 7 of the Main Estimates, Department of Executive Council.

Resolution No. 5. Clause 1. Administration (a) Premier and President of the Council's Salary — pass; Resolution No. 5 — pass;

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,158,600 for Executive Council, Administration \$1,158,600 — pass.

That completes the Department of Executive Council. I thank you very much.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker

The Chairman reported upon the committee's deliberations to Mr. Speaker and requested leave to sit again

IN SESSION

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. KOVNATS: Mr. Chairman, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Rock Lake that report of committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

ADJOURNED DEBATES ON THIRD READING

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call, beginning right after Orders of the Day, Adjourned Debates on Third Reading, right through to the end of Third Reading.

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 10, The Builders' Liens Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

THIRD READING — AMENDED BILLS

Bill No. 27 as amended, was read a third time and passed.

**BILL NO. 29 — AN ACT TO AMEND
THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC ACT (2)**

HON. EDWARD MCGILL (Brandon West) presented Bill No. 29, An Act to amend The Highway Traffic Act (2), for third reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I intend to speak very briefly to this bill but if my recollection and the information which has just been provided to me is correct, this is the bill that dealt with the problem that was created by warnings which were given to individuals using three-wheeled mobility aids on the highway and we had quite some discussion during the course of the committee hearings on this, during which representatives of disabled and handicapped persons appeared and gave representation.

I was moved during that occasion, by the difficulties which they faced in respect to being able to do many of those things which you and I take for granted. Their concern was that the three-wheeled mobility aids, which they considered to be a little more than a modified wheelchair, motorized wheelchair, were being singled out by the government in respect to regulations which were necessary for them in respect to the way in which they could be used. At that time they admitted full well that there was a cause for some concern if these machines were abused but they felt that most people used them in an acceptable way and were not abusing the privilege but were in fact being abused by the society which attempted to prevent them from having full access to those vehicles.

So at that time the Minister of Highways and Transportation took their comments into consideration and came back to the committee suggesting that the clause of the bill that would in fact necessitate the licensing of these vehicles and would necessitate that other restrictions be placed on the use of these vehicles which may in fact have an adverse effect on handicapped individuals, be deleted. At that time we were pleased to see the deletion take effect because it did in fact allow for the continued use of these vehicles but we are concerned there has been no firm policy that has been presented which will ensure that the situations which gave rise to that clause in the first place last summer are not repeated this summer.

We have assurances from the Minister that there will be a committee struck which will deal with that problem and attempt to come up with regulations which meet the needs of the government and in fact, which meet the needs of the individuals who wish to use these mobility aids. That is all fine and well but in the interim we are left in a state of limbo, not knowing whether or not those mobility aids can and should be used to their fullest or whether or not they can and we have the experience, as I said, of last year where there were some difficulties.

I would have hoped that the Minister of Highways and Transportation would have taken this opportunity to place on the record a firm policy statement in respect to the way in which the use of those mobility aids is going to be dealt with by law enforcement officers in this province because as the situation stands now there is still a cloud; it's in limbo.

Now there's not much we can do about that at this particular date except to put on the record, our support of that committee and our encouragement to the Minister to act as quickly as is possible to develop that policy and to make that policy a matter of the public record so that those individuals who may in fact have been hesitant to use these mobility aids because of the situation of last summer, lose that hesitancy and feel comfortable in the use of the machines.

I think that we should be doing everything we can to encourage the use of those machines in an acceptable way. I think they provide a greater access to handicapped individuals; they provide them with an opportunity to be less disabled for the time being, to be able to do many of the things which you and I take for granted. So I believe it is incumbent upon the government to act with all due speed and to bring forward the type of changes which are necessary, which ensure that those machines will enjoy their greatest use and which at the same time are in fact, considerate of the demands on government to make certain that the streets are used in the proper way.

I note that the Minister of Highways and Transportation has made it back into the House, so I hope that he will in fact take this opportunity now to make a very clear, concise and definitive statement on the use of those mobility aids and the way in which law enforcement officers in this province are going to be directed or encouraged to approach that use.

I mentioned earlier and I'll mention it for the benefit of the Minister that we are pleased to see the use is not being restricted but we are concerned that without a definitive policy statement, some individuals who might wish to use those machines would not do so because of the incidents of last summer and their fear of those incidents being repeated. I think we owe it to them to make certain they understand full well that they should be encouraged to use those mobility aids as much as is impossible and in as acceptable a manner as is possible.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

BILLS NO. 34 as amended, 35 as amended and 38 as amended, were each read a third time and passed.

**BILL NO. 41
THE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT ACT
(1981)**

MR. MCGILL presented Bill 41, The Statute Law Amendment Act (1981) for Third Reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Speaker, again to be very brief and not wishing to allow one more chance at a kick at the cat, I would like to point out for the record that much of this particular Statute Law Amendment Act deals with correcting mistakes which were made during the heat of the speed-up of the preceding session. I know that this speed-up has not been as onerous as some; I would suggest to you that that only means that this speed-up was not as necessary as some have been in the past and in fact, this speed-up was not necessary at all.

I do want to point out that when we do get into speed-up during the end of a session and we start to move through these bills in rapid order, we don't have the time and the opportunity to review them as carefully as we would like to as an Opposition, and I would suggest that the Government members don't have that opportunity available to them as well, because it is their responsibility, whether they are members of the front benches or backbenchers, to make certain that that legislation is the best legislation possible.

What we find ourselves doing after a hectic speed-up like last year, is in the next session correcting those mistakes which were made in haste. — (Interjection)— The Member for Virden, whom I always agree with in respect to closing hour and stopping debate at an early hour in the evening whether we are in committee or in the House, is agreeing full well that when we do get caught up in, as the Member for Logan has described in the past, that annual trek into madness, we tend to make mistakes which are not necessary and which are entirely preventable if we just took our time.

So I would use this occasion not to prolong the session, not to prolong the Speed-up that we are in, but merely to point out that we can avoid these types of errors if we do take a fresh look at the way in which this House operates and start to develop ways and means by which we are allowed more time and more opportunity to more thoroughly investigate legislation and, by we, I mean all the members of this House, and at the same time, we don't get caught up into passing very important pieces of legislation just for the sake of completing the sitting of the House.

I hope that this reiteration of thoughts which I have put on the record before find an audience that is more willing to look at this in a different light than they have in the past. I think it is time that we very seriously consider developing a system whereby we don't have to put ourselves through the agony of Speed-up and consequently we do not have to come back year after year and correct mistakes which should not have been made in the first place.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

Bills No. 42, as amended; 46, as amended; 50, as amended; 52, as amended; 60 as amended were each read a third time and passed.

THIRD READING GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bills No. 11, 12, 13, 30, 36, 37, 44, 45, 57 were each read a third time and passed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you not call Bill No. 58 at this time. I understand there may be some

proposed amendments, but would you call, Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 10, Adjourned Debate on Third Reading; and then Third Reading on the additional supplement to Orders of the Day, Third Reading of Bills No. 16, 31, 33, and then Bill No. 51?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We have already dealt with Bill No. 10. It was stood, unless by unanimous consent we . . .

MR. MERCIER: There is leave to deal with it, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there unanimous consent? (Agreed)

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON THIRD READING: AMENDED BILL NO. 10 THE BUILDERS' LIENS ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Bill No. 10, The Builders' Liens Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't intend to take any time with this Act. I had adjourned the debate but we are prepared to have the bill pass at this time and see how the bill operates.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

THIRD READING GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bills No. 16, 31, 33 were each read a third time and passed.

REPORT STAGE

BILL NO. 51 THE SUMMARY CONVICTIONS ACT

MR. SPEAKER: Report stage of Bill No. 51. The Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. ANDERSON: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Emerson that the proposed new Section 58.1 of The Fires Prevention Act as set out in Section 30 of Bill 51 be amended by striking out the words "hinders, obstructs or disturbs" in the first line thereof; and substituting therefor the words "hinders, or obstructs".

MOTION presented and carried.

THIRD READINGS AMENDED GOVERNMENT BILLS

MR. MCGILL presented Bill No. 51, An Act to amend The Fires Prevention Act for third reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps before we close debate on this and pass this bill, the Minister, or perhaps the Mover who moved the

amendment, can explain to us why we wanted to remove "disturbs" from the Act? Is the Minister disturbed or is the member disturbed?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, there was some question about the overall interpretation of the word "disturb". It was raised in committee and I feel the other words cover it adequately and it will leave that doubt of the interpretation or application of that particular word, it will put that out of the way so there will be no question and no disturbing words in it that would bother anybody.

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

MR. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I just want to put on the record the way in which I believe Bill No. 51, An Act to amend The Fire Preventions Act was improved by co-operative effort on the part of the Opposition and the government, and I wish to thank the Minister for the way in which he approached those improvements which I believe were necessary to the Act.

While I'm standing I also want to highlight the fact that there was a reference made to male employees which was removed as well at committee stage and I think has had the effect of taking some sexism out of the existing legislation, making the language and the provisions of that Act less sexist. It went unnoticed for the most part but I think it was, albeit a small change, a very important change in the way in which we develop legislation in these Chambers, and I think it shows on the part of the government and the Opposition as well, a recognition of changing times and changing circumstances. I hope, as we go through other legislation which does contain references such as were contained in the Fire Preventions Act, that we are able to, piece by piece, clear up the language so that the language will in fact more accurately reflect the concerns of the time and the growing equality of all individuals within society.

So I would like to thank the Minister for the co-operative way in which he has brought that action about and, by doing so, hope to provide an encouragement for that type of activity to continue on the part of government and opposition alike.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, would you call adjourned debates on second reading of Bills No. 59 and 63.

ADJOURNED DEBATE — SECOND READING

BILL NO. 59 — THE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT (TAXATION) ACT (1981)

MR. SPEAKER: Adjourned debate on Bill No. 59, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act (1981)

standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan.

The Honourable Member for Logan.

MR. JENKINS: I adjourned this debate on behalf of the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAM USKIW: Mr. Speaker, I wish to take the few moments that are left in today's sitting, perhaps even not too many more moments in this particular session or even Legislature, to point out to the government that their taxation policy represents, particularly in the resource field, Mr. Speaker, colossal mismanagement of the affairs of the people of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Resources, the Finance Minister, the Minister of Energy have tried to persuade the people of Manitoba and members in this Assembly, throughout the course of this session, that their aim is to extract a greater degree of wealth from royalty taxes.

Mr. Speaker, I have never been one, and I believe it's true to say that our party has never been one, to depend a great deal on royalty taxation as a means of raising a great deal of revenue; revenue that is needed not only to balance the Public Accounts, balance our spending with our revenues, but to bring about expansion of needed programs, existing programs, and indeed new ones to further enhance the well-being of the citizens of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we have three examples to prove our case — at least three examples — to highlight our case, to prove our point, that this government is hung up ideologically on the question of how to handle the resource issue. Mr. Speaker, they have demonstrated to us and to the people of Manitoba that, with respect to where there was no risk involved in resource development, that they chose to play a minor equity role — I'm referring, Mr. Speaker, to the latest announcement with respect to potash development. They chose to play a minor role in the development of a potash mine knowing, Mr. Speaker, that —(Interjection)— yes, it's a minor role — knowing that the potash was there and that there was no risk on the part of the people of Manitoba to take all of the action if they so chose. But certainly, Mr. Speaker, as a prudent administration, it seems to me that they should have at least gone half way, at least half way, in recognition of the fact that they may not want to get involved in the marketing end and so on; that they would want to have a partner in the potash mine that already had an expertise in the area of marketing potash throughout the world.

But, Mr. Speaker, they chose not to do that, they chose to take a much smaller percentage of the mine which means that they have foreclosed for the people of Manitoba future earnings that may have well added, in abundance, to the revenues of this province for the benefit of the people of Manitoba. That is the most recent example, Mr. Speaker, and if there's got to be an ideological debate that is where it has to be and it ought to take place in the course of the election campaign that we will have in the not too distant future.

The other area, Mr. Speaker, is in the Trout Lake Mine. Again, an opportunity that was presented to the people of Manitoba through their own effort,

through their own risk capital, and again, we foreclosed our options for the future, our options for today with respect to the size of the role that we will play in that particular mining development. Again, we're foreclosing the opportunity for citizens of Manitoba to benefit fully from their risks, the risks they have taken, from the money they have advanced in taking those risks.

Mr. Speaker, the Tantalum story is indeed a complete story where that was the first such foreclosure of options for the people of Manitoba that they undertook; a development that was put there initially by private capital, rescued by the public, a lot of risk taken by the people of Manitoba. When it started to look good, Mr. Speaker, this government didn't want to see a successful venture in Tantalum on behalf of the people of Manitoba but indeed decided to give away an already existing, profitable mine to private interests simply for no other reason that I can determine, Mr. Speaker, than for ideological reasons.

Mr. Speaker, if there is ever an election issue that is the key one because it demonstrates to the people of this province and indeed fully demonstrates to us on this side of this House that the Conservative party has no intention of using the skills of management and good common sense in the administration of public affairs in this province but are bound to play the leading role for the shadows that are behind those people that are elected on that side to facilitate private venture gains at the expense of the people of this province. To take public risk and to hand over the benefits to multinational corporations is something that I cannot accept to the extent that it is taken by this government during the course of their first term in office.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm not suggesting to this government and to this Minister that we take a doctrinaire position, that we must own 100 percent of these ventures but when we know there is no risk, we ought to know the next question that comes is whether or not we ought to maximize our benefits. I say, where we know there are minute risks, Mr. Speaker, we ought to maximize in every instance the role of the province in those ventures. The Province of Saskatchewan has led us well in this direction. They have proven for all Canadians that the public can do a tremendous job in the ensuring of the benefits to the people of their province, the resource development potential that they have. Mr. Speaker, in closing, because I know that the time is running out for today, I want to say that this government stands condemned on their resource policy.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Kildonan that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour is 5:30. The House is accordingly adjourned and stands adjourned until 2 o'clock tomorrow afternoon. (Thursday)