

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

9:30 A.M., Friday, May 7th, 1965.

Opening Prayer by Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Presenting Petitions

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees

Notices of Motion

Introduction of Bills

Orders of the Day

MR. LAURENT DESJARDINS (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, before the Orders of the Day I would like to make a correction in the Tribune of yesterday, May 6th. I was misquoted in the paragraph in question. This was an article on pension. I read from the Tribune: "One such case, he claimed where a cabinet minister was appointed to the post at the age 30 and serving for 13 years in the position would bring him a total pension of \$226,000 if he lived to be 85 years old." Well this is wrong and I wouldn't want to mislead the public - this should read 75 years. If it was 85 it would be \$296,730, Madam Speaker.

MR. GILDAS MOLGAT (Leader of the Opposition) (Ste. Rose): Before the Orders of the Day I would like to address a question to the First Minister in his capacity as Provincial Treasurer.

The municipal corporations of the province who have diesel equipment are entitled to the tax rebate on diesel or to the use of purple diesel fuel. A number of the municipalities of the province have gasoline road equipment doing exactly the same work. Would the government consider giving them the use of purple gasoline for the type of equipment that is used for road work in the municipality.

HON. DUFF ROBLIN (Premier and Provincial Treasurer) (Wolseley): That's a matter of policy that will be dealt with in due course, Madam Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

BILLS No. 72, 76 and 77 were each read a third time and passed.

HON. MAITLAND B. STEINKOPF, Q. C. (Provincial Secretary) (River Heights): Madam Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Honourable the Minister of Municipal Affairs, that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole to consider the following Bill: No. 110, an Act respecting payment to Members of the Legislative Assembly and Ministers of the Crown upon their ceasing to be members or Ministers of the Crown.

MADAM SPEAKER presented the motion.

MR. MOLGAT: Madam Speaker, before the question is put, I rise to object to having this procedure. To begin with, the bill in my opinion should go to the Law Amendments Committee. It should go outside of this House and not be dealt with solely in this House. I think this is a subject on which the public of Manitoba has strong views. There is no reason that they should not have the opportunity to express them in the Law Amendments Committee as we do with many other bills that come before this House.

Secondly, the Minister announced yesterday that he was going to move amendments to this bill. The members of this House do not have those amendments before them. We have not seen the amendments that the Government is going to propose and yet we are being asked to go into Committee now and proceed with this bill. In my opinion, this is not the proper way to proceed on a bill that is as important as this and that has as important financial matters attached to it insofar as this province and the people who pay the taxes in this province, and I say that we should have the amendments as the government intends to propose them, that the committee should have the time to study them, because it is the only way in which you can make a proper analysis of these amendments, that you can work out what they actually mean in practice, take in the case of the members that's here. How else can members of this committee decide whether this is a fair or reasonable proposal that the government is coming forward with? To ask us to proceed now at this stage of the Committee of the Whole and so on, third reading, without having proper time to study the amendments, in my opinion is improper and I intend to vote against the motion.

MADAM SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

MR. DOUGLAS L. CAMPBELL (Lakeside): Well Madam Speaker, I simply want to put

(MR. CAMPBELL cont'd) . . . myself on record on agreeing whole-heartedly with the position taken by my Leader. I think it's absolutely wrong that this bill should receive the little consideration that it has up to date, and I think it's wrong that the public should not have an opportunity to express its opinion on the bill. Goodness knows, there'll be little enough opportunity for it to do so. I would not suggest that it should be heard at Law Amendments Committee this morning but certainly this is the idea of us sending a lot of bills out of the House to the various committees so that the public can have an opportunity to be heard; and on this one I think they should have an opportunity to be heard. However, it's right at the close of the session and I think we could not give the public due and timely notice in any case. Therefore, I would suggest to the government that they instead of rushing this bill through, that they delay its passage and let a committee of the House study it during the summer recess, and at that time the public could be heard; more information could be gathered; and this is the practice that I would definitely recommend. I simply would not support the motion to go into Committee of the Whole on it at this time.

MR. E. R. SCHREYER (Brokenhead): Madam Speaker, having renounced any interest in this pension legislation - in fact, having gone to the point of stating that I renounce or abrogate whatever pension right I might have for a period of 20 years - I feel I can speak freely. I'm not interested in the least, at this point, what happens to this pension legislation, but I think that all that need to be asked on this question now is what has been the past practice? On the past occasions when we have dealt with indemnity legislation, has it gone -- when we have amended the Legislative Assembly Act have the bills gone to Law Amendments or have they been dealt with in Committee of the Whole? If they have been dealt with in the Committee of the Whole on those occasions let's deal with this bill now in Committee of the Whole on this occasion. I don't think that we should start jockeying and manoeuvring, Madam Speaker. I have no sympathy at all for that tactic. I simply ask: what has been the past practice? My own inclination is that in the past when we have had a bill here to amend the Legislative Assembly Act, it has been dealt with in Committee of the Whole.

MADAM SPEAKER put the question and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. MOLGAT: Ayes and Nays, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: Call in the Members. The question before the House: that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider Bill No. 110.

A standing vote was taken the result being as follows:

YEAS: Messrs. Alexander, Baizley, Bjornson, Carroll, Cherniack, Cowan, Evans, Gray, Groves, Hamilton, Harris, Harrison, Hutton, Jeannotte, Johnson, Klym, Lissaman, Lyon, McDonald, McLean, Martin, Mills, Moeller, Paulley, Roblin, Schreyer, Shewman, Smellie, Stanes, Steinkopf, Strickland, Weir, Wright and Mrs. Morrison.

NAYS: Messrs. Barkman, Campbell, Desjardins, Guttormson, Hillhouse, Johnston, Molgat, Patrick, Shoemaker, Tanchak, Vielfaure.

MR. CLERK: Yeas, 34; Nays 11.

MADAM SPEAKER: I declare the motion carried. Would the Honourable Member from Winnipeg Centre please take the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bill No. 110, Section 1 passed --

MR. NELSON SHOEMAKER (Gladstone): Mr. Chairman, before we proceed too far with the bill, I wonder if there is anyone in the committee that can substantiate this \$20,000 figure that has been used so frequently as being the cost to the taxpayers of this province - the annual cost - if the bill is implemented. It has been quoted in the paper, it's been quoted in the House, and I think the only way that this \$20,000 figure can be supported is by statistics that have been acquired from other provinces. That is, what is, say ten years hence, what is the likely total number of members that could conceivably be on pension, and what is the likely amount that those ex-members could receive? Then it is a simple, simple -- applying arithmetic to it. Now someone, someone must have done this to arrive at a figure of \$20,000. Surely they didn't just snatch it out of the air. I, Mr. Chairman, I think was elected at the same time that you were - probably you were in before I -- but I think nearly 80 percent of the members of this House came in in 1958, and we've had three elections since that time; and when I entered this House, as I remember, the total indemnity was \$3,000 in 1958 - \$2,000 indemnity and \$1,000 expenses to make a total of \$3,000.00. And then, as I recall, that was increased in 1960 to

(MR. SHOEMAKER cont'd) . . . \$4,000, one-third of which was not taxable and two-thirds that was considered indemnity - \$2,667.66 indemnity and 1,332.33 or something like that being expenses, for a total of four. And then in 1963, all of the rural members who are obliged to live away from home during the session - the total indemnity including the expense allowance rose to \$5,400 - exactly an 80 percent increase over 1958. If you apply 80 percent to 3,000 you get 2,400 and now we have 5,400.

Now, on the occasion of the increase, each of the increases that I have referred to, I -- the way it was put to me was this way: "Are you in favour of an increase in indemnity or a pension? Do you want one or the other? Do you think that -- which would you favour?" This is the way that it was put to me. Now the Honourable Member for Brokenhead said which did I favour. I said, back in 1960, that I thought that I would prefer a pension rather than an increase. But now we've had two increases. I thought it was "and/or". Now they want both -- (Interjection) -- Who asked the questions? As a result of a consultation with the various Party whips - this is the way it got to me. Well all right, this is my version of it. Anyway, anyway Mr. Chairman, I would certainly like to have my answers, or answers to my questions: Where does the \$20,000 figure come from? Where did it come from? How much is it going to cost the tax-payers? Because that's what they're interested in.

To make it a little easier for my honourable friends, let us suppose that there was this same type of change-over in two or three years hence that there was in 1958. Let us suppose there was that kind of a change-over. How many would go on pension? This is conceivable. They've had a pension in Ottawa, I do believe, since - someone said yesterday 1950 was it, or '51? How many are on pension down there now?

MR. SCHREYER: Not enough.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Not enough, my honourable friend says. Well, that's another subject. That's another subject. But it seems to me that most of the members that were elected when I was would be entitled to a pension. My honourable friend the Minister of Agriculture he seems to be delighted with glee. I suppose he can see those pension cheques rolling in right now.

HON. GEORGE HUTTON (Minister of Agriculture) (Rockwood-Iberville): Mr. Chairman, I am not delighted with glee over that but the Honourable Member for Gladstone never fails to amuse me.

MR. SHOEMAKER: Well, I don't make a charge for it anyway, Mr. Chairman. But to those members that came in in '59, the way I understand it they would not qualify for a pension now, if we had an election next year. Is that right? They won't? Well, ok, let's have an answer to that one too. I'm getting "yes" and "no" answers all over the place on that one. But, if there is any relationship at all between the amount of money spent immediately prior to an election and the votes that are collected -- and Mr. Chairman, you heard about the cash register story last evening; my honourable friend wasn't here to ring the cash register - but if there is any relationship, then you can conceivably see that a member would do his utmost to get elected for another term if it meant another pension. He would probably proceed to spend another \$10,000 of his own money with the anticipation of getting a pension or an increase in it. And so Mr. Chairman, I think that this committee deserves some more or less concrete answers. Where did the \$20,000 figure come from? How many can we conceivably have on pension in any given year say ten years from now, twenty years from now, or so on?

MR. ELMAN GUTTORMSON (St. George): Mr. Chairman, as I read the legislation, '59 with the count -- for those members who were sitting in the spring session of '59 and then returned after the general election of May 1959, that would count for two years, as I read the legislation. 1959 was a double year for many members. Is this correct?

MR. STEINKOPF: Mr. Chairman, each year that -- or each session that a member sits here and gets the full indemnity is counted as one session, one year. There was one session, I believe - was it in '59 or '60 - in which there was a full indemnity paid, and that would count as one session. All the others since 1959 have just been regular sessions. So somebody sitting in 1960 would have to his credit today two for 1960, one for 1961, one for 1962, one for 1963, one for 1964, and one for 1965 - making a total of seven sessions. In order for that person to be eligible they would have to complete the session in 1966 and, having completed the eight sessions, would be eligible. If there is a session in 1967 before an election is called then they would have nine sessions to their credit, and it wouldn't be necessary for them to run in the 1967 election, if it was after the session, to be eligible. And of course anyone who was first elected to the House, as I was, in 1962, could not be eligible until they have run another election and had been elected and got the necessary eight sessions, which in effect would be

(MR. STEINKOPF cont'd) . . . ten sessions, because it's only reasonable to conceive that you'd finish the whole term of the legislation and take the extra two years of your term.

On the questions asked by the Honourable Member for Gladstone: he tried to get some concrete figures or a concrete basis on how I arrived at the \$20,000 figure. This figure, as you know, was reported in the papers and elsewhere as a result of the answer that I gave to the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition when he pressed me to make some kind of an estimate of what the cost would be to the Treasury. Now, this is almost an impossibility because of the fact that there is no actuarial experience to go on anywhere. It is impossible to equate this to what has happened in Ottawa or in any other Legislature. The unit is much too small to come up with a figure that is comparable. When I say the "unit", there are only 57 members and it has to be a tailor-made guess - and that's all it can be - for this House.

I worked that \$20,000 figure out, I must say, myself in much the same fashion as the Honourable Member for Gladstone gives us a lot of his homespun philosophy and his hot stove or small stove kind of figuring that he is very capable of doing, and I only wish it were he that had the chore of explaining how I arrived at the \$20,000 rather than myself, but I took it over a 10-year period and 10 years by \$20,000 is \$200,00, and taking a percentage figure of those who would be casualties in 1967, assuming that that was the year of the election, taking in mind an average age of the members of the House -- I also had a column in which I put down my ideas of the state of their health, and as I did this a little earlier in the session, I probably would have to change that a little bit now. Some of us have been worried to death a little bit more than one could expect. The figure, of course, could be nil for the next many years - it could be very small - and now with the amendment in, with the proposed amendment that we are going to make this morning, that figure of \$20,000 probably is even more realistic than what it was before, because it gives the younger man the opportunity of taking the money now and at the end of 12 years having no pension at a time when maybe some of these older men will be coming into the scheme. So really for anyone to state -- and I've checked this with some friends of mine who are in the pension business and all of them threw up their hands and said "your guess is as good as mine." The \$20,000 figure at best is a figure that we can work on. I would have preferred not to have had to give it, but anyone who has had anything to do with a pension plan knows that in the first few years the casualty rate could be very high and it could level off and it has its peaks and its valleys. On the other hand, the reverse could happen. You could get along for a number of years without having any charge on the pension plan. An accident of any kind in a pension plan where there is a death benefit or a benefit to a widow also could throw out your figures. In this case we haven't got that so that the only problem we have here is what happens in an election.

I don't think one should treat this lightly or politically or to make the predictions that have been made on the other side of the House that there would be a general turnover. All one can do is take an average turnover, and on that basis I think that you'll find that the figure of \$20,000 over a period of the next 10 years is a fairly reasonable estimate of what the cost will be to the Treasury.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I think that what will be decided here today is very important. I think that there's more than one question that we should ask ourselves. First of all, there should be the question of the pension, the principle of the pension. Well, that can vary. If it's any pension, if this feathering our own beds, as I said, if it's not reasonable, it's not the same at all as having a reasonable pension of \$50.00, \$60.00 or so. I think that's the first thing we should do, is decide what kind of pension. Now I think also, as I mentioned before, that the time is important. I cannot see how anybody that claims to be interested in the people of Manitoba, that is so worried about promoting and helping the people of Manitoba, can even consider talking about this pension at this time when we're forced, when we're forced to put a tax on heat. How can we come here and talk about our sacrifices and we have forced to put a tax on heat? We're asked many times, well all right, if you don't want a tax on heat, where would you raise the money? And I for one have said in the past, we'd start by cutting down some of the money we spend, not increase like we are now.

Now it seems like most of the things that are done in this House with this government that everything is kind of tailor-made, everything falls into place. Now if the members -- and I think there's a lot of people that are sincere, that think that a pension is a good thing. I think that many members of the NDP believe in this, but I think that they are being fooled by going on anything, even if they don't accept the kind of pension, just because they don't want to see the principle defeated; and I think this is wrong. It's fine for the Honourable Member for

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd) . . . Brokenhead to say, "well, I would not take it." Well there's a reason for that if he doesn't want to take it now, but certainly not that St. Paul's College are paying him that much money and with a growing family that he can throw money away. I think that he feels that it's not quite right to take it at this age, to take it for such a long time. His motives are his own, of course. Well, that doesn't mean anything because one member says, "well, I won't take it." That's just like saying well, we trust everybody so sign a blank cheque and give it to them, and then after the work is done let them fill in the amount. But it's not always going to be that person and I don't think that we've got a right to play with this.

Now, Mr. Chairman, what would we do, what would the Honourable Minister that brought this into force -- he's supposed to be quite a businessman. Can anyone tell us here in two days if all of a sudden the employees of any plan would say, "This is what we want?" Not have any figures at all and "this is what we want," and the employer would say yes? We don't even trust the people in labour to organize their own strikes, but this is fine because we are both employee and employer and we can dictate. It doesn't matter; we can railroad this. And I'd like to see anybody challenge me that this is a railroad. The Honourable the Minister himself said that \$20,000.00 -- somebody asked him so he had to give an amount. He had to give a figure because the Leader of the Opposition asked him, and he agrees that well it's something that came out to him like it does to my honourable friend from Gladstone when he talks about his philosophy. He just thought \$20,000 -- that would sound good. I say, Mr. Chairman, that this was misleading and it is misleading when you can get very easily \$7,000 a year for one Cabinet Minister and he tells me that \$20,000 -- maybe he meant this year. There won't be much this year. We're talking about an average.

If you have a plan or a small business, you have an insurance man; they'll come in and prepare all kinds of plans to let you study it even if you have two or three employees, but here we're 57; we're going to rush it through the last day of the session; we're going to rush it through. And it's the same thing again: if anybody dare say anything, well there you go again. There you go rocking the boat again. Don't say anything; it's done everywhere else. Well Mr. Chairman, I've got news for them. I don't care if it's done in Ottawa, in Timbuctoo or in Lower Slobodia, and I don't care if it's a Liberal government. We are elected to run the affairs of Manitoba and nothing else. Nothing else. And it is ridiculous and asinine to always point at Ottawa and say, "What do you do in Ottawa?" If and when I was ever elected to Ottawa I'd take care of my responsibilities or try to take care of them. And we're supposed to shut up because the Pearson administration decided that. Well I couldn't care less. This is not my responsibility. And if under the same conditions any Liberal government anywhere decides to do the same thing, bring it in the same way as this government, I think they are just as callous as this government is. And I don't want to mince words on this at all because I'm tired of this business of whenever you start talking about something, shift the field to Ottawa and laugh, and, "well this is what they did and after all, after your name is Liberal and it's Liberal under their name also." I don't care about that, and because it's done in Ottawa or Quebec I don't care either. That doesn't prove a darn thing. I think it proves maybe if this is done the same in all the provinces, I think the people are entitled to think what many of them have been thinking about politicians.

Don't we realize the responsibility that we have? You place a fellow in jail for stealing a couple of loaves of bread, and we're going in there and we're going to make a big thing, we're going to vote ourselves pensions of \$588.00. Now we've got a big amendment. Well you know what this amendment would do. Instead of collecting \$588.00 this Minister of 30 years old would wait a little longer and then he'd have the maximum of \$10,990 a year or \$219,800 at age 75 -- not much less than he had before. Well, we've got a responsibility here and we can't go just because a Minister said it cost \$20,000 and he figured it out the same as my honourable friend from Gladstone does when he talks about, when he quotes papers and so on. This is not good enough. We have to find out about the pension, and as I said, maybe the NDP are interested in this pension. There's two things.

I would be ready to discuss the pension. I don't say that I approve. I'm not too sure. I don't think we make such a sacrifice. We're talking about the former Attorney-General -- the Minister of Mines and Natural Resources got up yesterday and he made such a plea -- the sacrifice that he had made. Well he was Crown Prosecutor, I think, a few years ago, just out of Law School. I wonder if he was making \$17,500 and he had a car. Do you think this is going to hurt my honourable friend when he goes back in private business that he has been Attorney-General of this province? Who is he trying to kid? Who's he trying to kid? Probably if the

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd) Conservatives get in power he has a very good chance of maybe becoming a judge. Who's he trying to kid? What kind of sacrifice? There's sacrifice like some people, like the Leader of the Opposition who's working for the CNR -- (Interjection) -- that's right, I meant the opposition to our opposition because I don't consider that government. But anyway Mr. Chairman, when my honourable friend works, apparently he loses some seniority and so on. Well, that's fine. And my honourable friend the cash register, who's gone now, talks about, well, he made a big thing. He got up and "what are you going to do when they vote on it?" Well that could explain anything. I was supposed to crawl back in my seat because I was going to take the pension. Well I can tell him that he can prepare any documents that we'll both sign together. I'll tell him that I won't take anything. But there's a difference also with a private member's pension of about \$50.00, \$60.00 a month for those that believe in pensions, and \$588.00 or nine hundred and what is it? Well it's \$920.00 or so. There's a big difference -- there's a big difference. Have we got the right to wait until the last minute and very here -- nobody can come in; all the doors are locked -- we're going to decide that as of this day, well this is it? We'll have a pension?

The Minister of Labour was afraid to talk. Oh no, there's a big committee studying this. We've got more committees. There's committees studying everything. We're told take it easy on certain bills, take it easy on certain things. This is the -- oh this will be discussed in Ottawa or so on; there's committees. Then all of a sudden, bing bang bang, \$588.00 for the great sacrifice that we're doing. Which one here on the front bench made that many sacrifices? I'm not running any businesses or anybody down. Which one here made more than \$17,500? Oh, and we want to be in line with the other people -- we looked in Ottawa. This was just accepted, Ottawa's thing. This is fine. So does that mean -- we're quoting now the salary now. But everybody says our salaries are too low, \$4,800.00. We do the same thing at Ottawa in this pension. Maybe we'll do the same thing as Quebec. Maybe next year the indemnity will be \$15,000. Don't forget that the 70 percent of \$15,000 which is the maximum is a little more than 70 percent of \$32,000, so what else is that going to do when we're dealing with human nature? What is that going to do? Don't you feel, Mr. Chairman, that this will encourage more sessions? More sessions where we'll be fully paid for more added expenses. We had a terrific session here last summer just so the government could turn around and take the money from the people and give them back \$50.00. This is what we had at session and how much did it cost? Well now we'll probably drag it on a little more so it could count as a full session so we get paid the full indemnity and then that will be another cost. This is the way that this government has done that and they don't care about a thing. As I say, how can you bring in a thing, a pension like this, when you're charging a tax on heat? How can you?

The Honourable Member from St. Vital says that he understood, he agreed this was bad, and that was the first thing to come out. He felt that this was the first thing to come out, and now we're going to saddle people with more expense. What are we going to do? This was supposed to be the last thing before the sales tax. Well I guess it must be right to assume that we'll have a sales tax. We know that the ability to pay doesn't mean a thing. We have reviewed the question of the income tax for the hospital premium. We are told -- we're being warned now, prepared, that the premiums on hospital will go up. We're told that we reached -- we went as far as we could without bringing in a sales tax, so therefore that only leaves now -- this is it today, we are trying to prepare the way for a sales tax. It doesn't matter if all the other provinces have a pension. All the other provinces do a lot of other things but we want to stay here in Manitoba and do what we think is right, in other fields anyway. We are very jealous of all our responsibility and our rights in Education -- it doesn't matter what the other provinces do. But in this thing, well this is what they do in Ottawa. This is the Pearson plan.

Well, if this is so lily white, and if this is all done above board, why don't we get this election and let the people decide, if they'd sooner pay a heat tax and give a nice fat pension to the members sitting here who are making so many sacrifices? Why don't we let them decide? I think that's fair enough. We are told all over the place that the people of Manitoba are so intelligent. Why don't we let them decide? I think this would be fair enough. If we insist on pushing this through, if we can slap the people of Manitoba in the face the way we are doing today -- and I say that the people in the back benches of the government, except you Mr. Chairman, looked at only one thing; they don't realize what they are doing. They don't realize what they are letting the members of the Cabinet do to them, or some members of the cabinet. If they are looking only at their \$50.00 and \$51.00, or \$60.00 a year, that's reasonable enough, if they believe that we should have a pension, and I say that this is what the NDP

(MR. DESJARDINS cont'd) party is doing. I agree with some of them that we could maybe discuss this question of pension, but not this kind of pension; and it's not good enough for the members as I said: "Well, I won't take it for the next 15 years. I'll give it to somebody else."

I can't see where anybody -- if we need it that much, if all these sacrifices -- we've got to take it. There's nothing to stop these people -- some people have said well let's get decent wages. There's nothing that prevents any of these people here to come in and say well we'll buy a plan, and I'm sure that if we asked the Great West Life or anybody why don't you propose a plan, just how much would it cost us to have a decent pension, I'm sure they'd arrive with something very soon.

Now if this government is sincere, if this government really means what it says, it's going to wait and it's going to throw this out, and it's going to discuss the question of principle alone. No strings attached, to start with. For or against the principle of a pension. And then it's going to get all the facts and present it to us and let us study it, not arrive here this morning and this is what we have and then we are told we have a figure of \$20,000. A member asked me what it was. I didn't like to give the . . . but I had to say something. I had to . . . know that I knew what I was talking about, so I said \$20,000. I don't think that this is fair enough.

Then there was another suggestion: the great thing -- well you know we always get this one. "We'll get better men; we'll get better men; so therefore let's get a good pension, a great big fat pension." But everything is calculated in about eight years, because that's about the time that the cabinet finish their in here; not ten years, not six years but eight years.

There was a suggestion made in this House here yesterday. If this is the case, let's study it. There's no great rush. Some problems have taken very many years and you have to go slowly. How many times have I heard here, in this House, "The people of Manitoba are not ready for this." Well, are the people of Manitoba ready for this when they are paying these taxes all over the place on heat and so on? Are the people of Manitoba ready to retire us on a great big fat pension? There was a suggestion made that they should come only after the next election. That's reasonable enough. Let's study first of all the principles of a pension. Let's have all the facts in front of us. If we are that virtuous, we're not too worried about us. Oh no, this is an awful word, "feathering your own nest." We're thinking of the calibre of people here. Well they won't change much before the next election, so what about that suggestion of the Honourable the Leader of the Opposition who stated that we should wait until the next election and not make this retroactive. By one vote. All we have to do is raise our hand and say, "Me too", bring a vote and it's retroactive for eight years; and this is going to cost \$20,000. Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that we owe it to the people. I mean let's remember this, if we feel this is right. As I said, you steal a couple of loaves of bread and you go to jail, then all of a sudden bang, - we close the door and we decide today we are going to make a pension without any figures in front of us, without anything. I said that this was callous if this goes through. I think that we should oppose it. I think that the government should be ready to go to the people if they want this, and if they insist then I certainly will implore the Lieutenant-Governor to veto this callous bill

MR. FRED GROVES (St. Vital): Mr. Chairman, I don't really think that I can allow this matter to get out of committee without saying a few words on the principle of pension. I think as far as the Ministers are concerned that the Honourable the Minister of Mines and Resources yesterday dealt with that situation very well, and I can think, Mr. Chairman, of two. Two come to my mind right away. Ministers that served in the previous government, one of whom occupied the highest office that one can occupy in this province next to the office of Premier. These two gentlemen, after they became political has-beens - which we all become after we are defeated - went around with their hats in their hands looking for jobs, and were forced in order to keep the groceries coming into their kitchen to accept mediocre clerical positions. That I think was not right. I think the two gentlemen that I'm thinking of, that the people of this province owe to persons like this who have served in this Legislature for probably the best of their productive years, availed them something more than that.

Now with respect to pensions for the members, I can think, Mr. Chairman, of many people in my constituency whom I think would make better members here than I, and I can think also of lots of people in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface that in my opinion would make much better members than he, and the reason these people are not here, Mr. Chairman, is because they can't afford to be here. They can't afford maybe the loss of their jobs, which happens in many cases and has happened to those who have decided to

(MR. GROVES cont'd) enter public life. They can't afford the loss of income which is the case in many such instances, nor can they, as the Honourable Leader of the NDP mentioned the other day, nor can they afford to lose all or part of the pension rights which they have built up over a period of years. And Mr. Chairman, these are the people that in our community are doing the work for the community clubs, for the YMCAs, for the churches and for the other organizations that we really should have representing us, not only here but on the municipal councils and school boards in our communities; and one of the reasons why these people are not serving is because of -- they don't mind the time because they're devoting it already, but because of the financial sacrifice that it's necessary for them to make.

If one looks around this Chamber, you'll find that most of the members are either professional people or people that own businesses, that carry on while they're serving in this Chamber, with the exception of the cabinet ministers of course who have full-time jobs; and you'll find, if you look around the Chamber, very few people that are depending upon wages for their income and that are depending upon an employer's pension plan to which they contribute for their security in their old age. Very, very few. You'll also find very few small farmers in this Chamber, and again these are people that cannot afford to make the financial sacrifice that's necessary to serve here, and yet these are the people that we should be encouraging in my opinion, to serve. And I think that, having said that, that there is a large, a very large body or class of people in our province that really are not represented here by persons of their own calling, and I think one of the reasons for this is the financial sacrifice that they have to make.

So Mr. Chairman, I think that once one listens to all the political arguments about pensions for MLAs - and I invite the Honourable Member from St. Boniface if he wants to in the next provincial election to bring his pretty little cards into my constituency and I'd be glad to discuss with the honourable member the matter of pension. So Madam Speaker, I think that in passing this bill, the principle of this bill can only serve to avoid the two tragic instances of which I am thinking insofar as Ministers are concerned, and can only help to encourage persons that are not able to serve here, that have lots to offer and they're unwilling to do so because of the sacrifices that they have to make. So I thought I shouldn't let this opportunity go by without saying something on the principle of this legislation that we have before us.

MR. SCHREYER: Mr. Chairman, when I was 16 and 17 years old I worked in a funeral home and I came to realize then that if one was looking for lucrative fields that this was one such. Now it seems to me that one can make a case that the public interest must be protected, that the cost of consumer goods and the cost of government and the cost of elected representatives should be kept from getting too high; but I would point out that the cost to the public of maintaining a system of representative assembly is not a costly one. There are many services and goods that people pay for which are much more costly than this, and yet I think that this is one of the most important because around the system of democratic assembly around it is based the whole system of law, justice and freedom that the people enjoy.

Now of course there is such a thing as an indemnity being too high and a pension scheme being too generous, and of course the converse applies. It is possible for an indemnity level to be too low and for a pension scheme to be too low, or obviously if it's non-existent, it's too low. I take the position that the people do not object to paying a reasonable indemnity to their elected representatives. We've come a long way from the turn of the century when no indemnity was paid at all, in which case as someone pointed out here, it was not possible for ordinary folk to run for office. Just those who had the means and who wished to operate from a perspective of noblesse oblige could afford to sit in a Chamber such as this.

I want to make this one point, Mr. Chairman, before I take my place, and that is in this country we have three levels of government: federal, provincial and municipal. Inasmuch as the federal level of government has provided for a pension scheme for several years now, and in view of the fact most of the provinces have provided a pension scheme for elected representatives for a few years now, in view of the fact that this province is now providing one such, I think that we should not lose sight of the third level of government. It seems to me that people, elected representatives who -- the closer they are to the people they serve, the less appreciated they are. And this is certainly true in the case of municipal officials. There is no compensation for them in the sense of to protect them against accident. Right in my own area, a municipal reeve lost his arm a year ago when he was helping out in the course of municipal business. No compensation. I know it's difficult to work out all these schemes but I'm suggesting that we should have a close look at the legislation vis-a-vis elected municipal officials,

(MR. SCHREYER cont'd) to see what can be done with respect to their position.

I notice in the paper yesterday that one of the city aldermen has given notice of motion that the City of Winnipeg look into ways and means of providing a pension for city aldermen who have served beyond a certain minimum number of years. I support the concept behind that statement of that alderman to the hilt, because I think that it is - for whatever reason - all too true that people do not appreciate the efforts of their representatives the closer the representatives are to them. And I have no hesitation in saying that provincial representatives have not been getting the same recognition - not that it's that important - they haven't been getting the same recognition and the same consideration as the federal. And municipal people have not been getting the same consideration and recognition as the provincial, not to mention the federal. So I think that this legislation is proper, perhaps not in every detail, but it's certainly proper; and I think that it is incumbent upon us to look closely in the next year or two to see whether or not the same kind of recognition and consideration might not be extended to municipal officials who have served their areas for a period of whatever number of years - 8, 10, 12, 15, or whatever it might be deemed fit.

I might say finally, Mr. Chairman, that I support completely the amendment proposed by the Honourable the Provincial Secretary, the amendment having to do with the minimum age limit. I think that it does a good deal to remove potential criticism, and I think not only that, it stands on its merits, because without this amendment there would have been an obvious focus for criticism in the legislation.

MR. ROBLIN: Mr. Chairman, we are not likely to finish in the next 30 seconds so I think the committee should rise so that we can attend the law amendments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shall I report progress and ask leave to sit again?

MR. ROBLIN: Yes, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam Speaker, the Committee has been considering Bill No. 110, and begs leave to report progress, and asks leave to sit again.

MR. JAMES COWAN, Q. C. (Winnipeg Centre): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. Vital, that the report of the Committee be received.

MADAM SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried.

MR. GUTTORMSON: First Minister a question. May I ask him a question of business please? If Law Amendments Committee does not complete its work this morning, will we be going directly to Law Amendments this afternoon?

MR. ROBLIN: We will have to wait and see what happens, but I think that whatever the case may be we will meet here at 2:30 and if we decide that we want to adjourn to Law Amendments we will make that decision at the time.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce that the House do now adjourn.

MADAM SPEAKER presented the motion and after a voice vote declared the motion carried and the House adjourned until 2:30 Friday afternoon.