

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
Tuesday, 24 February, 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**

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. MORRIS McGREGOR: I beg to present the third report of the Standing Committee on Economic Development.

MR. CLERK, Jack Reeves: The Standing Committee on Economic Development beg leave to present the following as their report:

Your Committee met on Tuesday, February 24, 1981, to consider the Annual Reports of Channel Area Loggers Ltd., and Moose Lake Loggers Ltd.

Mr. John Christensen, President and Chairman, and Mr. R. J. Kivisto, General Manager of Channel Area Loggers Ltd. and Moose Lake Loggers Ltd., provided such information as was required by members of the Committee with respect to the Companies.

The Annual Statements of Channel Area Loggers Ltd. and Moose Lake Loggers Ltd., for the year ending March 31st, 1980, were adopted.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

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

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Virden.

MR. McGREGOR: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Springfield, that the report of Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS
AND TABLING OF REPORTS**

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Community Services and Corrections, I wish to table the annual joint report of the Department of Health and the Department of Community Services and Corrections for the year 1980.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the 1980 annual report of the Manitoba Labour-Management Review Committee.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. ARNOLD BROWN introduced Bill No. 31, An Act to amend An Act to Incorporate The Mennonite Collegiate Institute.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time I would like to draw the honourable members' attention to the lodge on my left, where we have a former member of this Assembly, Mr. Russ Paulley.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, further to the questions that I posed to the Minister of Education yesterday, I would like to, this afternoon, ask the Minister of Finance whether in view of the material that was prepared by the Federal Social Ministry pertaining to cost sharing post-secondary education, demonstrating that the Federal share of post-secondary education in Manitoba has risen to 70 percent while the Provincial share has decreased to under 15 percent, if the Minister can advise this Chamber whether he is preparing analysis similar to that already prepared by the Federal Government pertaining to the distribution of costs involving Federal-Provincial and other means of financing post-secondary education?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member of Finance.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, First of all let me say that we can only assume that the information tabled by the honourable member yesterday is what he says it is — leaked documents being what they are, I think there's some question of that. However, assuming that it is accurate then I have to say that it is a grossly misleading analysis of the situation that exists and it is brought to you by the same people that brought the health scare in the election of 1969, and we will be preparing an analysis, Mr. Speaker, but we will not be making statements on the basis of erroneous and misleading information and I would urge the Leader of the Opposition not to play into the Federal Government hands but to be certain of the information that he is using.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, It seems to me when we discussed playing into the Federal Government's hands, that this Provincial Government has already

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played into the hands of the Federal Government in this particular area.

Mr. Speaker, then I further ask by way of supplementary to the Minister, further to the question posed to the Minister of Education, whether this Government intends in its negotiations which are on the verge of taking place with the Federal Government pertaining to this critical area of post-secondary financing, cost sharing, whether the Provincial Government is going to at least demonstrate some credibility in view of the said record, not just by way of that particular document tabled, but by other information that we have referred to earlier, going to establish a target percentage as to the provincial cost-sharing of post-secondary education in the Province of Manitoba, whether it be 20 percent, 25 percent, 30? Is the Provincial Government going to establish some target in order to give itself some credibility which, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Government unfortunately has been losing rapidly in the last year or two in respect to this field?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition seems to have a penchant for using not only inaccurate information, he also has a very short memory because he should be aware, as much or more than anyone else on that side, that the funding arrangements that are now in place with the Federal Government dealing with post-secondary education, health care and other areas, are those funding arrangements that were negotiated when the Honourable Leader of the Opposition was a member of the Schreyer Government. The actions, Mr. Speaker, that our government is taking are entirely and totally consistent with the intent of those funding arrangements. The information which the honourable member is using is information published in the *Globe and Mail*, information published by a group of university people, all based on information leaked by the Federal Government in an effort to establish an erroneous cases that is analagous to the health funding case, and I urge the honourable member not to fall into that trap.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, when we deal with negotiations in the agreement under way, Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about is welching on the part of this government, in spirit, pertaining to those arrangements.

Does the Minister indeed, by his statements just announced, deny that the Federal Government is now picking up the bulk of those costs as opposed to only 50 percent of those costs some three years ago?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I stated earlier, and I state again, that the information in the document tabled by the Honourable Leader of the Opposition yesterday is a grossly misleading distortion of the funding picture. Let me give you one example, Mr. Speaker. There are tax points included in the 54 percent level of Provincial income tax that the Federal Government claims credit for as federal financing. Now, tell me, Mr. Speaker, if tax points included in our Provincial Government's level of taxation should be claimed by the Federal Government as their contribution, points that come off of our level of taxation, from our taxpayers in

Manitoba, to fund our educational programs, and the Federal Government is trying to tell us that's their contribution.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am amazed. I am sure the Minister of Municipal Affairs must be squirming in his seat because what the Minister of Finance is suggesting is what the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in Manitoba is doing vis-a-vis the municipalities, and has been for the last five years.

A question to the Minister of Finance, further by way of a supplementary: Will the Minister acknowledge that the Federal Government yielded tax points to the Province of Manitoba for the specific purpose of financing post-secondary education?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition demonstrates an amazing ability to distort the situation that exists. He talked about tax points going to the municipalities. We include that in the level of provincial taxation and we turn around and give it to the municipalities. We don't try and say that the municipalities are levying that tax directly on the people and that we are going to take credit for it. We include it as part of our taxation picture, just as the money that is going to fund post-secondary education is part of our taxation picture and not part of the federal taxation picture. If they want to up their tax level, we'll reduce ours by three or four points, whatever the figure might be. We'll come in with a provincial level of taxation substantially below what it is now and then we'll let the Federal Government talk about how much money they want to contribute.

MR. PAWLEY: It appears increasingly difficult to obtain any information from the Minister, increasingly difficult, and of course, Mr. Speaker, this is not unusual.

Again, to the Minister: Is the Minister denying, and I can't force the Minister to answer, denying that the Federal Government share, by way of yielding tax points, has indeed resulted in more and more share of the costs of post-secondary education being assumed by the Federal Government and less and less of the costs of post-secondary education being picked up at the provincial level? Would the Minister please favor us with a specific response?

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education and I have both said that we will be providing a detailed analysis, but contrary to the Leader of the Opposition, to the habit expressed by the Leader of the Opposition, we prefer to deal on facts and not get caught up with things like the Well's Land and Cattle Company allegation.

We will deal with facts, Mr. Speaker. We will demonstrate the position; we will demonstrate that what this government did, and what those members did when they were in government, is entirely consistent with the funding mechanism worked out with the Federal Government, because the Federal Government was concerned, Mr. Speaker, that when they were matching expenditures on a dollar-for-dollar basis, that their expenditures were going to rise beyond what they were prepared to do. They entered into an agreement with the Schreyer Government which was going to help the Federal

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Government put a cap on their expenditures and encourage the province to be more careful with their expenditure of funds.

Mr. Speaker, whatever pattern was established, was established during the first year of the agreement when those members opposite were in government. What is being done is entirely and totally consistent with the agreement at the time and the effort which is now being put forward by the Federal Government is analogue to Begin's campaign to demonstrate that the provinces were diverting funds from health care into highways, which Judge Howell showed to be erroneous. The same kind of campaign is now being started to justify the Federal Government withdrawal from the area of post secondary education. Mr. Speaker, we do not intend to fall into that trap again and I urge the Honourable Leader of the Opposition not to fall into it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to address a question to the Honourable the Minister of Economic Development with respect to the industrial development progress in the province during the past year, that is, during the year 1980.

The Honourable Minister made reference to various manufacturing projects and manufacturing investment that was to occur in 1980. Can the Minister now advise the House of any concrete evidence showing that the industrial sector in Manitoba has shown some signs of growth in the past year, that is, during the year 1980.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Economic Development.

HON. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I think it's a well known fact that the industrial investment as far as expansion and new facilities in the Province of Manitoba in 1980 was up 29.8 according to Statistics Canada over 1979.

MR. EVANS: I thank the Minister for that information, but I'd like to ask him a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, and ask the Minister how does he account for the fact that Statistics Canada has now reported that industrial project construction in the Province of Manitoba has declined from \$24.2 million in 1979 to \$21.8 million in 1980. That is the first 11 months of these years; that is a decline of 9.7 percent.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker —(Interjection)

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. If honourable members would address their remarks to the Chair, I'm sure we would not have the difficulties.

The Honourable Minister.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Brandon East still doesn't like anything that is a plus. We were over last year; in 1979 we were over 1978 and the total of the three years, since 1977 through to the end of 1980, we were up to something like 72 percent in industrial investment

as far as expansion and new investment is concerned.

The honourable member doesn't like it if it's a plus, and we have been ahead of each year. We were ahead of 1977, in 1979 we were ahead of 1978, and in 1980 we didn't get quite the same but we have had a plus every year.

MR. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary then. Perhaps the Premier would like to answer this in view of his interjections, if not, the Minister of Economic Development. How can he explain then, talking in terms of these statistics related to industrial construction in the Province of Manitoba, how can he explain why this good country of ours, Canada, is up 23.6 percent and every other province in Canada other than New Brunswick is also on the positive side? How can he explain why only Manitoba apart from New Brunswick has shown a sharp decline in industrial project construction in the year 1980?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take a look at the figures that he's referring to. I'm not familiar with the ones he's referring to. The member picks out figures sometime in the morning and comes running in here at noon and quotes them. I don't intend to comment on those figures until I've read them.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER: I have a question to the First Minister. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition in his press conference indicated the position that he took on the Constitution, was his personal position, not necessarily that of his caucus. Could the First Minister indicate that the position that he's taking on the Constitution is his personal position or that of his caucus?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I'm not only happy but I am proud to be able to say that when I stand in this House or before any platform in Canada or in the United Kingdom and talk about the position of the Government of Manitoba, I am talking about the position of the caucus, unlike my honourable friends opposite who have 23 different positions it seems on every topic.

MR. DRIEDGER: A supplementary question to either the First Minister or to the Attorney-General, has at any stage of the game, the caucus, or the party opposite given their position on the constitutional matter?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne): I think, Mr. Speaker, the answer is no.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the answer is no.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for The Pas.

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MR. RONALD McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Resources I would like to address a question to the Acting Minister of Resources who I assume would be the immediate past Minister of Resources. I wonder if the Minister could indicate in light of the information of a large fish kill near The Pas, Manitoba, at the Birch River Dam, managed by Ducks Unlimited, whether the Department of Resources will be doing a full investigation of this disastrous incident with regard to the northern fishery?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, our department doesn't normally conduct investigations in another province. I could draw to the honourable member's attention that this particular problem happens to be in Saskatchewan. I can tell him that apparently it is not a problem of the magnitude that has been reported, that rather than some 10,000 fish, it is probably closer to between 100 and 500.

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that this dam controls water right on the border of Manitoba and that a large fish kill in that area affects the fishing on the Saskatchewan River at The Pas, Manitoba, where there is a commercial fishery that has been restricted, where the quotas have not been increased because of the limited supply, the limited stock of commercial fish available, I wonder if the Manitoba Department of Resources will be trying to find out what happened and what went wrong, so that they can assist the fishermen in the The Pas area to ensure that there is an adequate supply of fishing for Northern Manitoba.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, certainly the staff of the Department of Natural Resources are concerned about anything that affects the resource in Manitoba. I would be happy to correct the misinterpretation, or misinformation that the honourable member has about this situation. It is my understanding that the fish that have been killed in this case are pike; the fishery to which the honourable member refers on the Saskatchewan River is basically a pickeral fishery. The reason that this sort of thing takes place is that the fish leave the Saskatchewan River and some of the larger rivers to go up into the smaller ones to spawn each year, and the fingerlings then return down the river into the Saskatchewan. Some of the adult fish remain up the smaller streams, and this is not an unusual thing at all, it is the sort of thing that occurs rather frequently and it is unlikely to have any impact on the problem that the honourable member refers to as existing in the Saskatchewan at The Pas.

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

MR. McBRYDE: Mr. Speaker, the opinions of the Minister just expressed, do not match with the opinions of the fishermen at The Pas, Manitoba, who feel they will be affected by this situation because this is a spawning area for fish from the Saskatchewan River.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister, with this further example of problems with Ducks

Unlimited's control of wildlife habitat in wildlife areas in Northern Manitoba, I wonder whether or not the Government of Manitoba will now be more cautious and less quickly enter into long term agreements with Ducks Unlimited, noting the fact that the present Premier was an active board member of this organization. I wonder if now the province will be a little more cautious and a little bit more considerate of the interests of the people in Northern Manitoba before they rush into agreements with Ducks Unlimited.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what kind of comments the honourable member is making, whether he is trying to cast aspersions upon the First Minister for having served on the board of such a fine dedicated organization as Ducks Unlimited, and he is accusing us of rushing into agreements. I can assure the honourable member that any agreements that this government has ever entered into with Ducks Unlimited have been agreements to carry out projects that this government wished to see carried out.

Ducks Unlimited, in the area of the member's constituency have done extensive work to maintain wildlife habitat there, which is in the interests of many of the honourable member's constituents. I would be happy to know what his position is. He has remained strangely silent over the past months with respect to the maintenance of the Saskram area and I would be pleased to know what his position is.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. JUNE WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Honourable Minister of Community Services. On February 3, I asked the Minister some questions about alleged misuse of funds by the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood and he pointed out that he was satisfied that the Brotherhood had received \$130,000 from the province and had paid out at least that much for rent and office expenses. Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that both federal and provincial contributions to the Brotherhood went into the same account, the same pot, has he investigated the budgeting and expenditure practices of the MIB? I want to emphasize that I am not asking about the Four Nations Confederacy, which I understand is properly handling its accounts.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I have written to the Provincial Auditor and requested that he seek copies of the audit that is being done by the Federal Government and to advise me of any wrongdoings or rightdoings in the matter. I am sure that if there is anything wrong, that I will work with the Attorney-General to make sure that proper steps are taken.

MS. WESTBURY: On the same day, the Minister indicated he was satisfied that the provincial contribution to the MIB's core administration were properly accounted for because of an audit report showing office expenses in excess of \$40,000 a year. In view of the fact that the former financial

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comptroller has said that money allocated for office expenses was improperly diverted under the guise of paying for research studies which were neither commissioned nor prepared, is the Minister also having these statements investigated for possible fraud?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, my comments related to the audited statement that referred to the 1979-80 operation of the MIB. At that time it was audited and was listed as being used for the areas of expenses that we had given the moneys for.

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

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister indicate whether he is having the statements to the effect that money was improperly diverted for research studies which were neither commissioned nor received, is he having that statement investigated, Mr. Speaker? Would he be kind enough to inform the House?

MR. MINAKER: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier to The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, we had requested that the audited statement that is being carried out, I understand, by the Federal Government, that we would receive copies of same. The Provincial Auditor, I understand, has requested those copies, and they will be investigated at that time when they are received.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Yesterday the Minister of Labour indicated that an interim permit would be given to an appropriate air carrier in order to continue the service into northern communities which previously had been served by Lambair, so that that would be continued with the least possible disruption. Can the Minister now indicate if that permit has indeed been issued and if in fact it has, can he indicate which carrier, or which carriers, are the recipient of that permit?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, there has been a very temporary interim licence issued to L-Air of Thompson, the expiry date being Friday noon. I think this may possibly have been dealt with on a more permanent basis except there has been a further application for consideration of support of Lamb's come forth, I understand, by the Indian people in Northern Manitoba, a group of them. Indications are that they wish to participate in the operation, financially, of Lamb's. The courts I understand are going to deal with that issue tomorrow morning — pardon me, Thursday morning, and if it's upheld I suspect that Lamb's may be back in business. If it's not dealt with by the courts in a manner in which they feel that would carry the company, there's all likelihood, and I'm guessing at their time schedule that Friday morning, after dealing with that application Thursday morning or that presentation Thursday morning, Friday they will give a permanent licence. The permanent one, I again suspect would

last in the neighbourhood of a year, 10 months to a year, until a hearing could be held by the Federal Transport Commission to see who in fact should have the final rights that Lamb's now hold.

MR. COWAN: My supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, is to the Minister of Northern Affairs, and I would ask the Minister of Northern Affairs if he can inform the House as to what action he has taken as Minister responsible for Northern Affairs to monitor any potential problems which may arise out of the current situation in respect to the air services to communities previously served by Lambair?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. DOUG GOURLAY (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I think my colleague the Minister of Labour has answered that to a certain extent and the fact that an interim carrier will be looking after those communities that are currently serviced by Lambair, and I understand that there are only some two or three communities that would be not serviced at all if there was no other carrier issued a permit at this time. But certainly we are concerned about the air service to the northern communities and we'll be watching it very closely.

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

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Northern Affairs informed us of his great concern in this regard and we don't doubt him, however, what we are asking for is specific actions or programs which he is going to put in place to monitor any changeover or any continuation in order to ensure that the level of service is being maintained, and that is a very specific question asking for a specific answer in regard to programs or action that he will be taking under his responsibility to ensure that service to northern communities is maintained during these difficult times.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, at the present time there are many questions unanswered with respect to the Lambair situation and I think it would be inappropriate for me to make any statements at this time with respect to any subsequent air transportation that we would be looking to assist at this time.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. LLOYD G. HYDE: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to direct to the Honourable Attorney-General. Could the Honourable Minister advise the House what progress, if any, was made with these talks held yesterday in Ottawa with the Federal Solicitor General, the Honourable Robert Kaplan, regarding the RCMP policing contract with the provinces, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, there are two main issues, I think, before the Federal and Provincial Governments, the first relating to accountability of

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the RCMP to the Provincial Attorney-Generals which is considered to be somewhat of a problem in some other provinces, and the second issue of more importance to Manitoba is the question of cost.

On the first issue we were able to consider some drafts submitted by the provinces and drafts submitted by the Federal Solicitor General on the question of accountability and officials from the Federal Government and the Provincial Governments will meet next week for two or three days to attempt to put together a satisfactory draft to all governments concerned.

On the question of cost, there was no indication from the Federal Solicitor General that he had a better offer to present to the provinces. The officials next week will examine further and evaluate some of the criteria which the Federal Government have used in making their proposal and the question of cost will still have to be further considered. At the same time the provinces did not indicate that they would back down from our position of avoiding any other but an inflationary increase.

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

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I ask this question to the Acting Minister of Natural Resources, since the Minister of Natural Resources is not here today. I ask him with respect to the recent takeover bid of Abitibi by the Thompson Corporation in Toronto, and I ask him what actions his government will be undertaking to prevent the spectre that we had in Manitoba of Tribune by the takeover of Thompson so that the same type of a situation does not arise in terms of a pulp and processing plant paper mill in Manitoba in Pine Falls.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid that the honourable member is once again mixing facts and drawing a very long bow, but I will take the question as notice for the Minister of Natural Resources.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask the Minister whether he will be reviewing his ill-founded agreement of give-aways to Abitibi now that there is a likelihood of Abitibi's control being taken over by Thompson.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, what the members opposite are — seem to be consistent in their socialist philosophy that what are fair and equitable and competitive agreements to every other form of government in the province always seem to be termed as give-away by our socialist friends.

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

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask the Minister whether a reduction of some \$6.00 per cord in cutting fees is not a give-away to the corporation of Abitibi.

MR. RANSOM: Not when the first \$6.00 was extracted under the threat of expropriation, Mr.

Speaker, and not when the alleged \$6.00 reduction means that corporate citizen of Manitoba is paying the same rate as anyone else in this province has paid for the use of the resource.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm just wondering who owns the resources referred to, but I have a question to the Minister of Mines. In view of the fact that every lease agreement entered into by previous governments in this province, successive governments, NDP, Conservative and Liberal, have been public information, dealing with potash, when can we expect the one that you people entered into last year, the so-called letter of intent to be tabled?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I have answered that question a number of times last year for the members of the Legislature. If and when an agreement is signed with regards to potash, all the details of it will be made available.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, a supplementary. Does that letter of intent have an expiry date after which if there is no further agreement the minerals and the leasehold totally reverts to the province without any right by IMC as against the province with respect to those minerals, and what is that date if there is one?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, the understanding with IMC was for a 12-month period which expires about the end of April.

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

MR. SCHROEDER: Could the Minister answer the last part of that question. If there's no further agreement by the end of April does IMC have no rights with respect to the Crown lands in Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I believe the member said Crown lands. Is that correct? Or did he . . . ?

MR. LYON: No he didn't. He doesn't know the difference.

MR. SCHROEDER: Well, if I could expand on it. The mineral rights, the potash rights, which are the subject matter of the lease.

MR. LYON: He thinks the state owns them all.

MR. CRAIK: No, Mr. Speaker, the Crown only owns approximately 50 percent of the mineral rights in that area.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Dauphin.

MR. JIM GALBRAITH: I have a question for the Minister for Economic Development. I have in my

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hands here a pamphlet that was put out in the Dauphin area by the Leader of the Opposition and in it it states that a business closed in Glenella, Manitoba, Glenella Creamery; I would like to ask the Minister of Economic Development when this creamery closed.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for Economic Development.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, when I was speaking in a Throne Speech debate, I pointed out that that brochure that was put out was inaccurate; that the Glenella Creamery is open and doing business and still is. I can only say that I'm very surprised that the Leader of the Opposition would allow a pamphlet that has been proven inaccurate to continue to be distributed in this province.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the Attorney-General. On February 12th, in this Legislature, the Attorney-General indicated to me that following a fatal accident in the CNR reclaim yard three years ago, that he had written the CNR asking them to conduct a search of the reclaim yard to ensure that there weren't any other shelves lying around that lead to that fatal accident.

Can the Minister indicate whether he received a reply from the CN indicating that they had indeed complied with the request of the Attorney-General, and is the Minister satisfied that that reclaim yard is now free from any shells which might explode?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I'll take that question as notice and respond tomorrow.

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

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I don't know who the Acting Minister of Agriculture — oh, the same the Minister of Finance is the Acting Minister of Agriculture. I wonder if the Minister of Agriculture, the Acting Minister, would indicate when the decision was made for the transfer of personnel in the Department of Agriculture from Winnipeg to Brandon and why it wasn't announced during the Estimates process; whether this was a last minute hairbrained idea of the Conservatives pending an election.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, the intent of the move was announced in Brandon some time ago; in October, when the Cabinet was on one of our tours keeping in touch with people of the province, we announced the intention to do that. I can only assume, Mr. Speaker, that the research work done by the members opposite was not of sufficient quality to enable them to even raise the question during the Minister of Agriculture's Estimates.

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

The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Finance, that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the Honourable Member for Virden in the Chair for the Department of Labour; and the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Government Services.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY — LABOUR AND MANPOWER

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor (Virden): This Committee will come to order. We are on 2.(a)(2) — The Honourable Member for The Pas.

MR. McBRYDE: I wanted to point out to the Minister, in order that he might be able to take some action on it with his colleague, the Minister of Highways, that I was recently invited to attend a meeting by the IWA representative from The Pas in terms of safety in the logging industry and I think those meetings were quite worthwhile in terms of getting input from both industry and labour as to what the new regulations should be in the logging industry.

One of the problems that came up in terms of safety in logging was the safety of the logging truck drivers as it relates to the situation of the weigh scales. The situation right now is, I think, that any truck that's overloaded has to change its load around so that they meet the weight restrictions that are on. What happens at The Pas is that the logging trucks drive a considerable distance before they hit the weigh scale. It could be a long way; it could be from up the Fay Lake Road all the way into The Pas. If they hit the weigh scale which is two miles from the unloading site at the ManFor operation in The Pas and they're overloaded, what the driver does is climb up on top of his load and try and dislodge some logs and throw them off so that they meet the load restrictions.

In light of all the hazardous situations we looked at in going over those regulations, and it seemed like the restrictions could be done with changes in the regulations, and changes that were agreed to by Labour and Management there with the staff of the department, could be brought into effect. But this one requires some sort of a co-operation and some sort of an arrangement with the Minister of Highways and that's why I'd like to bring it directly to the Minister's attention.

This practice seems to be quite a dangerous one because — I suppose there's a couple of things. One is it's fairly hard to judge in the bush the weight that the load is going to have. The second problem is of course that there are truckers and owners and operators that do try and get around the weight restrictions — they do overload and they know they're overloaded and they try and run the scales

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and operate when the scales aren't operating, etc. So that is a problem. What happens now is that if they are caught overloaded the owner of the truck pays for the fine but it's the driver of the truck who has to risk his life to climb up on the load and dislodge the log.

My understanding from the representatives of the Labour Union that has an agreement with Abitibi, in the logging industry for Abitibi, is that when they're hauling tree lengths, the driver of the truck climbs up on the load with a chain-saw and cuts some of the logs off in order to get under the weight restrictions. This in their mind, and it seems to me, is one of the most dangerous practices that could be involved, climbing up on a full load with a chain-saw running; one slip and it could be very hazardous, very dangerous.

I would like the Minister to be fully aware of that situation and to see if there was some way . . . I suppose in my mind it would be preferable to increase if it would be possible under the highways regulations, to increase the fine for logging trucks, but allow them to continue to the unloading ramp if it's nearby so that the load could be unloaded in the normal safe manner that that operation is handled in. I think that's the only way you could get around having them take advantage of any leniency in the transportation regulations and the highways regulations is by making a stiffer fine. That would also put the onus on the operator and the penalty on the operator rather than on the driver, who is sometimes an employee and sometimes is an owner-operator. That is my recommendation to the Minister. I was hoping to catch him and the Minister of Highways together sometime to raise this matter with him but I thought I would use this forum since the Minister was here and willing and able to listen.

MR. FOX: Last year I raised the question of the fact that in the mechanical section we were going into more of a flooded system in respect to refrigeration and I suggested that there should be a hard look at it in respect to safety in this area. I'm just wondering whether The Workplace Safety Act has had any communications and had any directives in respect to those safety committees that are operating in this area or whether they've had any feedback in respect to this area and if there are any steps being taken to have special equipment for areas that have this kind of hazard and whether there has been any training directives forwarded towards those kind of safety committees so that they could deal with it adequately at the plant level.

MR. MacMASTER: The information I have, Mr. Chairman, is that there has been no feedback back from the safety committees; I suppose we were lacking in initiative to go to the safety committees. If the member will leave it with me I'll assure him that our division will go to them now seeing as there's been no feedback of allegedly no problems with them. That doesn't necessarily mean that the Member for Kildonan hasn't got a point. I will assure him our people will go to them and see what's going on in that respect.

MR. FOX: Mr. Chairman, I realize that we are going to deal with Worker's Compensation under the Minister's Salary, but while we are under the

Workplace Safety Health Department I would like to again get information and assurances from the Minister that this Act and The Worker's Compensation Act are being correlated and work together. I realize that the inspection is being done through the Workplace Safety but it follows that since the accidents are reported at The Worker's Compensation level and of course if they are because of hazardous conditions or any other conditions then they should be looked at through The Workplace Safety Health Act, and again the communication correlation should be going forward and backward between the Safety Committees of the various employment areas that are involved. Can the Minister enlighten us as to what is taking place in that regard?

MR. MacMASTER: I appreciate the point that the member is making. I'm assured that during the course of the past year there has been a great deal of communications and working relationships been established between ourselves and The Workmers Compensation Board.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2) (a) — the Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Can the Minister inform me what official correlation there is? Can he inform us who is responsible to report to who? Which way does it flow?

MR. MacMASTER: I understand it is not a person per se. Our staff deals with their staff on an ongoing basis and there is exceptionally good co-operation. There just hasn't been a problem in them receiving information if they require it from us or us receiving information from them.

MR. FOX: I thank the Minister for that information but I was just trying to determine if there was a procedure or is it just left to individuals to make various communication with other individuals. I would imagine there should be some kind of a laid out procedure from the department that in certain instances this is done and in certain other instances something else is done. I know that when there are fatalities there are inquiries and so on but there must be some procedure laid down that is followed.

MR. MacMASTER: The direct official relationship is between the director of our Workplace Safety Division and Ralph Boyes with the Compensation Board but because that's an official one doesn't mean that there isn't a great deal of communication take place between the other staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (2)(a) — the Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Last year . . . the Minister indicated that his department would be undertaking a review of the lung function tests and the x-ray tests, I would hope that the Minister would be able to provide us with some information respecting the outcome of that review by his department.

MR. MacMASTER: Ongoing discussion has taken place as we outlined. I made reference to this the other day and I do not wish to go into details on it at

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the moment but labour has expressed some concerns and so has management and our people are appreciative of their concerns. We expect that there will be a new procedure established in the near future. If the Member for Churchill would wish, when that procedure is established for his own edification, I am quite prepared to unofficially or officially — whatever he likes — let him know what that new procedure would be. It relates primarily, Mr. Chairman, to the time of return of the results. That certainly is of concern it appears to me from what I've gathered from all three parties.

MR. COWAN: . . . going to discuss it in a bit of detail, perhaps to provide some suggestions, if possible, or at least to better understand the program myself because I, too, have been approached by individuals and organizations who have suggested that the program is not working to the utmost.

One of the questions that have been given to me time and time again is one respecting the licence which is given by the Department of Labour upon the completion of the x-ray and lung function tests. It has been the understanding of many that licence was a licence that meant that a worker was fit for employment and therefore would not have any abnormalities show up on the x-rays or through the lung functioning test. However, I've also been informed that is not the case, that licence just means that the individual has had the test and is not indicative of any of the results of the test. I would hope the Minister would be able to clarify as to the exact intent of that licence and what it does mean so that when asked these questions in the future we can provide a more definitive answer than we've been able to do in the past.

MR. MacMASTER: I understand that part of the flaw in the system — if you can call it that, I suppose that's it — is that so often as in other systems if there's something wrong people are certainly made aware of it; if something is not found to be wrong then in some cases they're not being made aware of the fact that there's no problem. That seems to be an inadequacy in the entire system which . . . my people brought that to my attention, that has to be cleared up, they should be told officially, yes to all intents and purposes you're fine or as well as those who do have a problem.

MR. COWAN: What action is taken if an abnormality either radiographic or one arising out of the lung function test is found? Is there a specific waiting period before the individual is informed? Is the individual called back for more tests or in fact if the abnormality is not one which can be diagnosed easily, is it the procedure to wait until the next year to see if that abnormality has changed or stayed the same?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I was trying to clear up when the doctor came into it because I knew the doctor was involved in it one way or the other. When the people go for their tests they're asked to identify who their family doctor is. If there's any abnormality to the testing, the doctor is then informed and he then takes over from there.

MR. COWAN: Is the individual informed of the abnormality?

MR. MacMASTER: Apparently not. Apparently the individual is not informed, that his doctor is informed and the doctor then informs the individual as to the type of retesting, send him out, send him in, bring him in, whatever the case is that the doctor then decides what should be done.

MR. COWAN: This would appear to be a policy of the department. I would hope the Minister would be able to provide some insight as to why they have chosen not to inform the individual, and that is in fact what has happened, they have an option to inform the individual, and yet they do not inform the individual and prefer rather to inform the doctor. I have nothing against informing the doctor, that's a very important step in the process, the family physician, however some individuals do not have family physicians in the mining industry and that could be a problem, especially in northern communities where you have such an extreme rotation of doctors, you could find people missing out on being informed because of that and it would appear to be a simple matter to inform the individual that there was an abnormality and at the same time, say we have also sent a copy of this to such and such a doctor whom you may wish to contact in respect to further information. Why is it that they are following the process of not bringing the individual in at the earliest possible moment in the supplementary question of course because the Minister indicates that they are reviewing this? Is that one of the areas where we might see some action on the government or where the government plans to take some action in the near future in respect to informing the individual of any abnormality as well as informing the individual of x-rays and lung function tests that do not show any difficult situations or problems?

MR. MacMASTER: Yes it is, Mr. Chairman, one of the areas that we think that we can make work better, I guess you can describe it. I'm not sure if you had to pick one or the other which would be the best procedure; that you inform the employee, the worker, and hope that he sees a doctor or that you report something abnormal to the doctor and trust in his professional ethics that he certainly will get a hold of the worker. Workers, I have been lead to believe, do in fact — it's demanded of them that they name a doctor in their community. So I think we've covered that and the doctor when he is informed, you certainly would like to believe that immediately he would contact the worker. I suppose the best method in that precise situation is that both were informed and that covers if the doctor has left, or if the doctor is busy or if the employee doesn't want to bother and at least both sides know about the situation and it's a better system than what we have in place today, I think.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Bob Anderson (Springfield): The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: It is not a matter of either/or as the Minister said; we don't have to pick one or the other. Often we can include them both together and that appears to be the intention of the government and I commend them on that because that will be an important change in respect to how these results are relayed to the individuals and what they do with

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them. I just want to point out for the record, one problem with naming a doctor in the community by the individual and that is that doctors go through northern communities where a lot of your mining activity is located, very very quickly and that you could name a doctor and by the time the tests got back there could be two doctors already through the community and that would certainly represent a potential area for problems in the relayance of the information to the individual, so we do have to take that into consideration. I think if they put in place a system where the individual and the doctor designated by the individual are informed they will have covered all the options and have the best system. When can we expect that sort of change in policy to be implemented?

MR. MacMASTER: Well, Mr. Chairman, I would have liked to see it implemented before now. The Member for Churchill is aware, I'm sure that it was myself that raised this problem or as I saw something that wasn't quite appropriate I raised that myself approximately a year ago. The parties have been talked to on both sides of the situation, being the employer and the employee. That's one of the problems that we hope to resolve and I understand that meetings are scheduled or will be scheduled in the very near future to hopefully clear up a situation that government, of all political stripes, has found very adequate for the last 10, 15, 20 years, whatever the case may be. It's like every other system you have in place; it's fine until it's reviewed enough and it's found that it could operate better and that's really what the review is all about.

MR. COWAN: Does the Minister have with him the information as to the specifics as to how many x-ray and lung function tests were given over the past year and how that relates to the previous year, whether there was an increase or decrease, and if there was a decrease, why that decrease occurred?

MR. MacMASTER: It's in the Annual Report, Mr. Chairman, on Page 12. There were 5,160 x-rays and 4,841 function tests given in the previous year.

MR. COWAN: That would be an increase or a decrease from the year previous?

MR. MacMASTER: I understand it's a slight decrease in numbers.

MR. COWAN: The next question that would follow of course is the reason behind the decrease in the number of tests that were performed.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. JUNE WESTBURY: Mr. Chair, I wanted to ask relative to the Workers Compensation Board and in view of the British Columbia Supreme Court Justice's ruling to the effect that WCB must open its confidential medical files to claimants wishing to challenge the Board's disability ruling, whether there is any change in policy in this province or whether the Minister intends to make a statement on that or what can he tell us relative to the Manitoba position?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Would the Member for Fort Rouge repeat the first part of her question?

MS. WESTBURY: Repeat it? Sorry. The Speaker told me to keep my voice down in the House so I'm trying to keep it down everywhere. B.C. Supreme Court Justice John Bouck has ruled that the Workers Compensation Board must open its confidential medical files to claimants who wish to challenge the Board's disability ruling. I don't have the date; I have the clipping without a date on it. Oh, it looks like February 24, that's today, so that's impossible. This is a report from the Vancouver Gazette. I wondered if the Minister intends to make any changes in Manitoba. I guess he's just not aware of the ruling and perhaps I should him an opportunity to become familiar with the ruling.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware of the ruling but I am aware of the issue that is live in some people's minds. It's not objectionable that those files be confidential in a lot of people's eyesight but it is in some and I won't get into the degree. The Lampe Committee that reviewed the compensation situation in Manitoba, did a lot of things. It was comprised, that committee, as the Member for Fort Rouge may or may not know, of Mr. Art Coulter, Mr. McBain and Mr. Lampe. That report will be forthcoming in the future. I don't know whether they've dealt with that precise issue but I suggest to the Member for Fort Rouge that issue was certainly raised during the course of the hearings that were held throughout the Province of Manitoba along with a good number of other issues as it relates to the whole system. So to precisely answer your question at this moment, I do not have any intention today of giving consideration to that. I certainly have a lot of intentions of giving a lot of consideration to that report when it comes in. We may find that report deals with that precise issue; I can't tell you what that is.

MS. WESTBURY: Just to clarify the situation it was open to claimants, not just open generally — it would be claimants themselves who would be able to see what is in their files and what doctors and WCB staff members have to say about their disabilities. Well, I'll be following that up at some later time.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (2) — pass — the Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, I'd like to put on the record my thanks to the Minister for his prompt provision of the informational bulletins and the posters that are being distributed by the Workplace Safety and Health Branch now. He provided those to me last night and I didn't place on the record that had happened and I think it's important that it is on the record.

While discussing those I would like to again make my standard request for a mailing list for those bulletins specifically and will try to assist the Minister in providing what other names we may be able to provide to him in respect to that. I prefer to do it that way because we don't have any set mailing list ourselves that we can give to the Minister to have him add to, so we can just look through them, see what we think may be areas where the mailings can go out, it might be helpful and then give it back to the Minister. I'd also ask the Minister if those mailings are going to the doctors in the province and the occupational health nurses or to the nursing

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association so that they can be passed on to nurses who have some interest in occupational health as a specialty area.

MR. MacMASTER: At the sake, Mr. Chairman, of getting myself in trouble before I've seen the list myself, I can simply say I hope so. Once we've got that list together I intend to forward a copy to the member and I would certainly hope that people interested in occupational health in the Province of Manitoba are on that list. If they're not then the Director of Workplace Safety and I will have a little chat about why they're not on the list; it's quite simple.

MR. COWAN: If there any additions that we might be able to make, they should not reflect badly on the director, it's just that we have different perspectives and we approach a problem in different areas and develop contacts that the other people don't necessarily develop. So I think we may be able to assist in that regard, however, I don't want to see that assistance to be taken in any respect as a reflection on the director. I've found the director in my conversations and correspondence with him, asking him for assistance in problems that have been presented to me to be extremely helpful and can only commend his activities in that respect.

The Minister indicated during a public speaking engagement, I believe it was last year, perhaps it was the year before, that he was concerned about the lack of expertise among the medical doctors and the medical profession including the academic part of the medical profession in occupational medicine and at that time indicated that action needed to be taken. I would ask him what action he has taken in respect to a very prominent need in respect to a lack of knowledge, and there are no kind of words that can be used, a lack of knowledge on the part of many doctors respecting occupational hazards and occupational diseases and illnesses.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, doctors are like a lot of other professional people within society who do not always make themselves available of information that's available, do not always get into other areas of medicine if you wish. What I was saying at that particular seminar was that the doctors sometimes appear to stand back — sometimes I said — even in fact occasionally chastise and criticize without themselves getting involved with and giving advice where advice could be sought and familiarizing themselves with the workings of our division. I forget what the issue was, it was one of many that we all involve ourselves in. I had many members of the profession come to me later and say that I was right — that they themselves have not involved themselves to any great degree. The MMA, Manitoba Medical Association, has expressed some interest and I can't give you specifics over the last year or so in learning what some of the workings that we're doing are, and have volunteered themselves to sit on committees if we so choose to appoint them to committees. I'm guessing but I think there is a committee someplace along the line that we did in fact take the recommendation from the MMA and appoint one of their people to a committee within government.

MR. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, I'm going to take the argument a step further. I don't believe that it's

just a matter of the medical profession not involving themselves fully in offering criticism. I think the matter that they have not given the type of priority that I would like to see and I'm certain the Minister would like to see given to the area of occupational medicine. I have a number of people come to me from time to time as I'm certain the department does, as I'm certain the Minister does with what they believe to be occupationally related medical complaints and we have a hard time finding a doctor in this province who has developed the expertise especially for dealing with some of the more exotic areas to be able to treat them with a certain degree of authority and finality. They just have not been exposed to the whole area of occupational medicine. They do not appear to have taken a great interest in the area of occupational medicine. I don't think it's necessary to point out that there is very little emphasis placed on it during their training and during their education, and yet it is an area of growing concern. It is an area where we have an abominable lack of knowledge and lack of experience and where we need to fill a gap and a growing void and yet it is an area where there does not seem to be a prioritization by the medical profession itself.

So the Minister has his work cut out for him in respect to this and that's to try to convince the medical associations of the necessity for prioritizing this particular area of concern and putting into place programs at the medical college level that will in fact provide some experience and provide some lessons to new doctors in respect to occupational medicine, but the Minister's task is more than that.

I would throw a suggestion out to the Minister for his comment and hopefully for his action and that is that Manitoba become one of the front runners in respect to occupational medicine in Canada and develop an occupational health clinic. I know the Minister has been approached with this concept before and I've been approached with it before and I have to admit when I was first approached with it, it took me quite some time to examine it, to deal with it and to fully understand the significance and the ramifications of it. What finally convinced me was when an individual came to me not too long ago with what that person believed to be an occupational disease and we searched around for a doctor that could deal with that and had a great deal of difficulty in finding a doctor who would make the type of examinations and provide the type of treatment which we felt was necessary. That is not an isolated case. The problem is that too many family physicians don't look first to occupational causes of illness, yet we know that occupational factors do in fact create serious medical problems for workers. They are not trained to do that and workers don't know where to go when they think there may be an occupational related illness. Matter of fact, when they do go to the doctor, and this happens often, not in every case but often, when they do go to a doctor, and they say — I believe that this may be an occupational related disease, the doctor is somewhat hesitant to take their advice, to take their suggestion. And that happens, doctors, and I don't fault them, are locked into their training and locked into their own experience and because there has not been a prioritization of this problem in the past we find that they're not thinking in that way; they're not approaching the problem from that perspective.

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What an occupational health clinic would do would be to set up a clinic and we on this side believe very strongly in that concept, a health clinic that would deal specifically with occupationally related diseases and illnesses. The effects of that would be multifault. Firstly, it would provide a place for workers who suspected occupational illnesses to go. In other words they wouldn't have to search around from doctor to doctor, to doctor, to doctor, to doctor, trying to get somebody to listen to them, and that's what they have to do now. They have to make that circuit and go around and around and around trying to find somebody who will say — yes, I agree with you, this may be an occupationally induced disease but what can I do about it because that's the next step. What do I know about it? And any doctor who wants to go into treatment in that area has to go through a vast amount of literature, medical literature, has to get in touch with other experts in the field. It is very difficult for a doctor to start to deal with occupational diseases and illnesses. So the difficulty is not only that with finding the doctor but once the doctor is found the doctor wants to work with the patient in this respect. The difficulty is now for that doctor to get the proper information.

So, an occupational health centre would provide support services for doctors who want to specialize in the area, very very important and secondly, would provide support services for general practitioners and others experts in the medical community who wish to have access to information to deal with their own patients in respect to occupational diseases. It would be an expensive program, certainly it would, but I think that it is an area where this type of positive action is long overdue and when looking at it from the perspective of financial commitment I think the Minister would agree that given the great cost of industrial diseases in financial and human terms to the people of this province that it would be an investment, a capital investment, that would be well suited to provide great returns. So the question to the Minister is if he can provide us with some insight into his own feelings in respect to the development of an occupational health centre in this province and if we can expect any action in the near future in that regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris MacGregor: The Honourable Minister.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, before I get into the commitment of thinking whether an occupational health centre is something that is needed I would like the opportunity to talk to the MMA. I'd like them to tell me in their minds the numbers of people in their profession in Manitoba who they would deem to be occupational, good occupational health doctors. I don't know whether that number will be 10, 20 or 100 or 200. Maybe it's a matter of working with the MMA and finding out really what they deem to be occupational health doctors, good qualified people that can deal with that type of problem and determine the numbers that they think are in place in Manitoba. It might be something very serious, it might be not so serious, but there may be people in that profession that we are not aware of that are very qualified today.

I have taken the point of the lack of people, the knowledgeable in that field, allegedly by the Member

from Churchill, and I don't wish to dispute whether there is a lack of numbers of people in that area till I determine in a good conversation with officials of the MMA just what they deem to be the numbers that are available in this province that are professionally qualified to deal with those type of problems.

MR. COWAN: That is a first step but it certainly is not a satisfactory step by itself, let me put that caveat on it. You will find that there are certain doctors that are in fact familiar with certain aspects of industrial disease such as those doctors who have developed some expertise in respect to lead in this province. And that's just a handful, very very few compared to the number of general practitioners or experts in other areas, and you will find that there are a few who may have developed some expertise to a limited extent greater or lesser about asbestos another issue that has come up. But I think that you will find that very few of them will qualify themselves as industrial health doctors or industrial health experts, or medical profession who in fact, prioritize industrial health and have developed a great deal of expertise in it. So when the Minister talks to the Manitoba Medical Association I think that he will find that is the case and one of my colleagues has passed me a note here with a suggestion on it; I think it is a good suggestion.

Firstly, that he report back later to us on this discussion, I would anticipate those discussions would take place in the very near future because it is an urgent problem.

And secondly, ask the MMA for a list of doctors whom they believe to be specialists in the different areas of occupational medicine and ask them for permission to make that list public and to do so at that point; to make that list public so that if there is a number out there that is greater than I expect it to be or I allege it to be than at least all the workers in this province will have an opportunity to contact those individuals whom they feel may be able to help them in their specific area. But I think that the Minister will find that the numbers are limited and that the doctors themselves do not consider themselves to be experts in that field for the most part and so I think that there is a problem there.

I would hope that the Minister would make those discussions, would have those discussions and then would publicize it perhaps as an informational bulletin as well as a press release that would go out. Perhaps as part of an annual report. There are lots of avenues where the Minister could provide that information to great numbers of people. So I would hope he would take that action.

But he also has to talk to the employers in respect to this. I think he also has to talk to the unions. Now, I have not talked to the employers in respect to this but I have talked to the unions and I have, time and time again, come up with dissatisfaction in respect to access to medical doctors who are expert in the area of occupational medicine. So taking their advice and taking their concerns I would expect that the Minister will find the same, because if they were in fact available, the unions of all persons, would have been able to seek them out because they are constantly looking for doctors to carry forward cases to Compensation. They are constantly looking for doctors to deal with industrial hazards that they find at their work places.

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But having done that, even if there were several hundred and I don't even think the Minister thinks it would be that number of persons who consider themselves expert in one or more areas of occupational hygiene and medicine, even if, that would not preclude the necessity or preclude one of the motivations to have an industrial health centre. The industrial health centre would be a focal point. It would be a place where people would automatically look to for that kind of information because let us assume that there are 100 doctors out there who consider themselves expert; I'm not saying that there are. Let's just use that as a round figure number. They're tucked away in different areas, they are isolated from each other because there is no faculty of occupational medicine although I know it is one of the areas that the Advisory Council has looked into and is still looking into, and I wish them every bit of luck with their deliberations in that regard. The fact is that there is no faculty of occupational medicine now in Manitoba. You can't blame Manitoba because there are not very many across the country, I think maybe Ontario is the only one where they have an occupational medicine faculty that's set up and functioning well. I may be wrong in that but that's my understanding of the situation. So it's certainly not Manitoba's problem alone, it's all of our problem. But with the lack of an occupational health faculty, there is no focal point for doctors to go for information for reference. There is no focal point for workers to go for information in reference or for employers to go because we know the employers are concerned with industrial diseases and occupational hazards within their own workplaces. We may argue as to the extent of that concern but I'm certain that they make enquiries from time to time as to where they can get good medical expert advice in respect to the problems that they have.

There is a great necessity for that sort of focal point; I think an occupational health centre in this province could provide that; therefore, even if there were 100 doctors tucked away that had some limited or even great expertise in occupational health, it would not answer the problem. The non-unionized work force, the general public, the employers themselves would probably not have access to the names and places and a list would not provide to them the type of emphasis that is necessary.

I encourage the Minister to not only do that action which he has suggested he will do, which we consider to be an important step but unacceptable on its own, but to pursue it further, to continue the discussions with the University of Manitoba in respect to a faculty of occupational medicine. I understand that those aren't proceeding too quickly and that's why we offer our encouragement and support to the Minister in that respect, as well as to talk with his colleagues and try to encourage them to make Manitoba a front runner in respect to occupational health and safety and to establish an occupational health centre in this province. — (Interjection)— I apologize to the Minister. I'd like to just go back to the lung function tests and the x-ray tests for one moment, make one other point which I had forgotten to make before; that's in respect to the issuing of a licence by the department to persons who have taken the test. Can the Minister change the terminology that's used so as to clarify the

situation to the individual who is receiving a permit to work underground in order to ensure they do not interpret that licence as a carte blanche approval of their lung function tests and their x-rays?

MR. MacMASTER: That point can be considered under discussions with Labour and with Management.

MR. COWAN: I just wanted to make that point because I think it is an important area that has to be addressed; I know there's a great deal of confusion, at least in Northern Manitoba. I'm aware that the lung function tests are also performed and the x-rays are also taken on individuals outside the mining industry but I have less contact with foundry workers and other workers so I can only bring to this table the questions that have been presented to me by the miners in this respect, but I know it's a larger problem than that and that the lung function tests do take in a larger occupational sector than just the mining industry.

Moving to another subject, I would ask the Minister if he can provide us with any indication as to the activities of two Sub-Committees of the Advisory Council, the Asbestos Sub-Committee and the Construction Industry Sub-Committee. I know that both of those have been involved with the completion of regulations, or at least the development of regulations as well as trying to bring forward some public information in respect at least to the hazards of asbestos, and I'm certain in respect to the construction industry as well.

MR. MacMASTER: The Asbestos Sub-Committee has done a lot of surveying of contractors who are knowledgeable in the asbestos field in co-operation with the Winnipeg Construction Association. They have been surveying workers who are knowledgeable about asbestos in co-operation again with the Construction Trades Council. They are presently drafting an information publication on asbestos. They are presently putting together proposed regulations on asbestos control and discussions have been held with concerned groups such as the Manitoba Association of Architects, Engineers, a variety of organizations in the province who in one way or another touch the asbestos scene in the province.

MR. COWAN: I know that one of the members of the Construction Industry Sub-Committee mentioned that the construction industry had done a survey on asbestos, had termed it, and these are his words, an "amateur" survey but what that survey did show was that many people were unaware of the hazards associated with asbestos. So there is a great need for some public informational campaign as well as an industry informational campaign to be undertaken.

This is one of the most well documented of the serious carcinogenic problems that we have in this province. I think all the cases of occupational cancer which had been approved by the Workers Compensation Board in this province — perhaps I shouldn't make the generalization "all" — I think that the vast majority, that's a safer way to phrase it, of the occupational cancer cases which have been compensated by Workers Compensation Board in this province have been those related to asbestos exposure in some way. So it is the best documented

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area of concern that we have in respect to the situation here in Manitoba. So I would ask the Minister if he can be more specific in giving us a date as to when we can expect regulations and when we can expect the public document, the booklet which has been prepared based on material from other jurisdictions which is probably a very good booklet which has been prepared, will be published.

MR. MacMASTER: We expect the publication to be ready for distribution in approximately a month. On the construction end of things, the first-aid regulations are being reviewed. A code of procedure for confined entry and excavation which is very important to the construction industry is being worked on presently. We are also endeavouring to establish a safety committee structure which may be somewhat awkward for the construction industry but we're still working at it and the unions and management have now agreed that that procedure in some way should be put into practice and general construction regulations are being reviewed for possible suggestions to myself.

MR. COWAN: The question which I addressed the Minister was one of when we can expect regulations in respect to asbestos control in this province as well. He answered part of it but that was the part that he hadn't answered.

MR. MacMASTER: The committee is still working on them, Mr. Chairman, and I do not have a definite date when they'll be prepared to bring them forth for recommendation.

MR. COWAN: The reason I asked that is because almost six months ago or even more than six months ago one of the representatives of the Specification Writers Association of Canada, Vice President of Construction, Specification Canada, said and I quote "That the specification writers are aware of the asbestos problem but until it is legislated they can only do so much". What they say they do is bring it to the attention of the client but then it is up to the client to decide whether or not they are going to include asbestos in the construction of their buildings and their edifices.

He also says and I quote again and these are quotes from the sub-committee minutes of the Advisory Council dealing with asbestos. The quote is: "Industry in general is not sufficiently interested in the problem," and the Minister is aware of that. That's no reflection on industry, it's just a reflection on the ability of society to change quickly to new-found hazards although asbestos is not a new-found hazard — perhaps I shouldn't be so kind — it's a hazard that's been around for quite some time and the history of it is a very varied history and one which is rampant with examples of neglect by industry and others in respect to controlling this very hazardous substance.

So what the individual is saying in this respect is that they know there is a problem, but unless there's some teeth in the legislation, unless there is some regulation, something to grab hold of, they are going to be unable to deal with the problem because it's up to their client and they have a client relationship and it's up to their client to determine whether or not that asbestos goes in if the client directs them to do

so, they must do so. They are also concerned that industry is not sufficiently interested in the problem. Those are their words, not mine; although it would be my impression as well.

We know that close to a year ago a draft regulation was distributed to the asbestos community so we know that they have been dealing for quite some time with it and we hope that the Minister would have been more specific as to when we could see that regulation come forward. There are other areas of concern here especially in respect to the asbestos situation in the schools which is one which has been an ongoing problem, which the government has taken some action but again we don't believe enough action in respect to. However, we wish to save those discussions for another department's Estimates where we can talk about them in more detail.

We do have to commend on the basis of the information we have now, the department's involvement in asbestos removal procedures. Manitoba seems to be in the forefront in respect to putting together good teams that can remove asbestos, however, we have to condemn at the same time the lack of regulations, the lack of what we believe to be a comprehensive review of buildings for asbestos and positive action to make certain that asbestos is not brought into the environment in any greater numbers than it absolutely has to be. There are safe substitutes now which can pretty well preclude the total discontinuance of the use of asbestos so that's another area of concern.

In respect to the construction industry we're looking forward to the regulations, we know that the construction industry says if they need separate regulations that are separated from the industrial safety regulations and we would like to see that accomplished as soon as possible because that's another very hazardous profession, and that committee has been around now for a year-and-a-half and we would hope that they would be coming forward with some very concrete suggestions as to what those regulations should be.

As well, we know that they are working on attempting to set up a functional Workplace Safety and Health Committee system for construction industries. Of course the Minister is aware that there are difficulties in that in respect to the type of specific work-site activity where you have a work force rotating through it and there is some discontinuity on the part of the workers and the part of any committee. So those regulations should be forthcoming in the near future too, we would hope.

In speaking of regulations we have been asking for a couple of years now for regulations on lead and of course there is a lead in benzol regulation in place now but we do not believe it to be comprehensive enough. I would ask the Minister if they are anticipating putting any regulations in place respecting the use of lead and if they are not, if he can inform us as to any changes that are anticipated in their so-called Lead Control Program.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, there are no regulations being proposed as this particular time. We are looking at the possibility of reducing the levels that are currently in place in the province deemed to be acceptable at this time but that is outside of the program that we have in place which

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has worked with a degree of success. There is no regulations being contemplated in at this time.

MR. COWAN: We have to admit that program has worked with a degree of success in one industry or one specific site for certain, and it took a 2 by 4 as the Minister indicated yesterday, to get some action. However, we're not so certain that it's worked at the other places where it has been directed and I don't think the Minister could state with any sense of finality that it has worked in the instance of Northwest Smelting and Refining to be specific. We're also quite concerned that it has not been extended to other areas where there's most likely a problem with lead. There have been some surveys done. The Minister has not provided us with copies of those surveys. We have asked for them and we are concerned that there is not enough being done to route out this problem wherever it exists. However, we have had some long talks on this particular subject and I don't wish to belabour it just to put on the record that we still have those concerns, we will have other opportunities to discuss them, and allow the Minister an opportunity to provide us with an update. We know that it has been suggested by experts that the levels that they are using presently are not acceptable levels in other jurisdictions and that other areas are dropping the levels quickly because as our knowledge of the problem becomes greater there is a necessity to drop those levels. The situation is going to get worse instead of better, at least our awareness of the situation is going to make it appear to get worse rather than better. So we are concerned that not enough is being done in that particular area. I don't know if the Minister wants to comment on that. As I say, there are other opportunities which we will probably take advantage of although I can't promise the same.

The, and I don't have the news clipping before me, it's somewhere here and I haven't been able to put my finger on it. But there is a news clipping in respect to occupational cancer in this province and one of the representatives of the Workers Compensation Board said that he felt that the compensable cases for occupational cancer in this province clearly reflected the extent of occupational cancer in this province. I'd ask the Minister if he can provide us with some insight as to his own opinion as to what appears to be a wide discrepancy between the statistical perception of the problem and the perception of the problem on the part of that representative of the Workers Compensation Board.

MR. MacMASTER: I can't, Mr. Chairman, I haven't read the statement by the member of the Workers Compensation Board. I have to advise the Member for Churchill as all other members that I would want the representative of that particular organization to give me a statement not necessarily what he said in the newspaper, that paragraph 4 and paragraph 14 might have been used in the newspaper, with no disrespect to them. But if the Compensation Board has a statement to make to me in that regard, I'll make a note of it and ask them to make it to me specifically so I can deal with it.

MR. COWAN: Perhaps you will allow me to approach the situation in that respect and maybe I

can better rephrase the question. We know in 1978 there were just under 5,000 cancer cases in Manitoba, if we use 1978 figures, and we know statistically that anywhere from 50 to 1,000 — and I'm using the low end of the statistics and the high end of the statistics — of those cases will be occupationally related and the figure that is most often used is in the area of 20 percent. Some scientists suggest that it's one percent, some scientists suggest that it's 40 percent and my office says that it's anywhere from 22, I believe, to 38 percent, but 20 percent is the figure that is generally accepted as that percentage of cancer which is caused by occupational factors. So what we have is an area where we can expect anywhere from 50 to 1,000 workers in this province to have contacted cancer as a result of occupational exposures and therefore should be compensable, that cancer should be compensable.

However, what happens and what has happened is that the average number of cancer cases identified by the Manitoba Workers Compensation Board amounts to less than a couple, or about a couple each year for the last 10 years, so the discrepancy between the statistical estimation and the identified causes is very obvious and I would ask the Minister if he will agree with this statement. The statement is, that occupational cancer, if one uses the Workers Compensation Board figures, is grossly underidentified in the Province of Manitoba, as in all provinces, I don't mean to restrict that statement to this province, it has nothing to do with the government in place, I want to make that very clear. I am not attacking the Minister on this, I'm just saying that that statement appears to me to be a true statement and I would ask the Minister if he would agree with that.

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, knowing what can or cannot be done with statistical information and reports, as the Member has said, there are some very supposedly intelligent people in the world that claim 1 percent, some claim 5, 10, 15, 20 percent, and the Member is right, some claim a very larger percentage. I, as the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board, am not going to say they are delinquent in their duties of assessing who is and who isn't. I don't think it's my role at this particular point.

I would hope that they're using the best knowledgeable professional people at their disposal, of which they have many, to make their determinations. The numbers certainly are somewhat different to some publications that are produced across the country and I am not going to take the side of any one of the publications that the member might wish to use, be it the 1 percent or the 40 percent. I think the Compensation Board is doing their best, going into a very difficult, sensitive, awkward area with the information that they have at hand and I am not prepared to chastise or question their judgment at this particular time.

MR. COWAN: A quick question to the Minister, would he therefore agree with the statement that the percentage of cancers that can be directly related to occupational exposure, would be somewhere between 1 and 40 percent?

MR. MacMASTER: I know the numbers game and the Member for Churchill is smiling; 1 percent of

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something equals much more than the Compensation Board is presently . . . that's not a new approach to the Member for Churchill. No, I'm simply saying that the Compensation Board is doing what they deem to be their best today. There are decisions made across our country, and not only in Canada but in the United States, that are being used as landmarks and opening up the way for review by compensation boards of their present positions in all jurisdictions in the country. Those types of decisions are being made, I suppose not daily, but periodically decisions are made by boards and medical officials and medical knowledgeable people that are laying claim to establishing cases on behalf of workers, which are then in some cases deemed to be acceptable and compensation boards are changing their approach on their considerations of different evidences that are produced daily across this country.

MR. COWAN: I assure the Minister that I am not attempting to play a numbers game in this respect, although I want to draw the obvious parallel between the identified causes and the estimated causes, because I think it does show that we are grossly underidentifying the extent of occupational cancer in this province. But I'm not doing that to suggest that the Workers Compensation Board is delinquent in their duties. I'm suggesting perhaps, their duties have been not outlined to them well enough, have not been specified to them well enough, but I think that if anyone is delinquent in this respect it's not the Minister, it's not the Minister's government, it's not our government, it's not our parties, it's not any individual group; it's certainly not the Workers Compensation Board, but it is society in whole. It is society in general that has been delinquent for far too long in respect to this and it's only through the use of these sorts of opportunities that we can bring this situation to the awareness of the public and try to convince them to approach the problem in a different way, because the way that it's being approached now it not the right way. I can say that categorically.

I am certain that the Workers Compensation Board is doing its best in respect to the opportunities that are provided to it to do things in respect to occupational cancer. That sounds a bit confused, but what I'm saying is, given the attitudes of society, given the attitudes of all of us, given the information that they have, that it's very difficult for them to do much different than they are doing, although I reserve the right to question any specific judgment that they make, as I know the Minister would reserve the right to question any specific judgment. I think that it is up to the Minister and the government to provide them with greater direction in regard to identifying and compensating cancer cases.

It's my understanding, and I don't have access to all the information and it is sometimes difficult to get the information which we want, but it's my understanding that most of the cancer cases which have been filed with the Board and have been accepted, were filed with asbestos as a causative agent and I've said that before. I believe there have been 19 asbestosis claims as of last year received by the Board and that number may be altered by one or two. The vast majority of those were filed by insulation workers who, of course, have come in close contact with asbestos for a number of years,

although they are not by far the only ones to have come in contact with asbestos; 68 percent of the 19 have died already and 26 percent died of mesothelioma.

Now, mesothelioma as the Minister knows, is a type of cancer which is directly attributable to asbestos exposure. It's rare outside of asbestos exposure. I'm not even sure if it can be found outside of those persons who have not had asbestos exposure, but at least it has been very closely linked with asbestos exposure. We know that 11 percent of those who made those asbestosis claims died of lung cancer. But if we start to mix the figures again — I don't want to play the numbers game, I don't want it to be perceived as playing the numbers game — what I want to say, is that the figures that we have now show us that something is drastically wrong with the way in which we compensate cancer claims. It's been found through the literature and through epidemiological studies that there should be statistically five lung cancers to every mesothelioma cancer owing to asbestos exposure. If that's the case and we have five identified in the Province of Manitoba then we would expect 25 lung cancers related to asbestos exposure. I mean it happens everywhere else, why doesn't it happen here. Well, I would suggest that it does happen here. The fact is that because we have only identified and compensated a couple of lung cancer cases that we are grossly underestimating and under-identifying the extent of occupationally induced lung cancer as a result of asbestos exposure. That's just one area.

We all know that there are great numbers of suspected cancer agents, about 2,000 to be exact, even though there are far lesser numbers, under a couple of dozen, of clearly identified positive known cancer agents. The difference is based on experience mostly. But we know that outside of the cancer cases that were brought before the board on dealing with asbestosis that five of the seven claims were rejected and that the three that were accepted were listed as asbestos exposure as a causative factor so the board is not looking at other factors so the board is not looking at other factors outside of asbestos exposure for compensation for cancer and yet we know that there are other factors. So, it's an area of great concern, it's an area where we need to review and rethink our entire approach and I hope the Minister would direct the Workers Compensation Board to undertake that sort of very important activity.

I promised the Minister yesterday that we would, barring any outside problems finish by the Private Members' Hour with this particular section of the Estimates and I intend to keep that promise. I would ask if any of the other persons in the panel have any questions now because I don't want to be perceived as running through the last few minutes. However, I will have questions if others don't.

MR. FOX: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I was going to ask the Minister in respect to the construction retraining program that is going on whether there was going to be — this was in conjunction to the fact that there was quite a lot of unemployment in this area whether there was going to be any special emphasis with respect to some of these safety programs on that educational program or is it just going to be a straight retraining and upgrading of personnel?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, a portion of the upgrading course for the tradesmen which we have implemented a week ago, I guess it is, a portion of that upgrading course directly relates to Workplace Safety.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Logan.

MR. WILLIAM JENKINS (Logan): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have two or three questions for the Minister. For the 438 Health and Safety committees in place in the province can the Minister report how often do these committees meet? Do they meet weekly, bi-weekly, monthly? Are Minutes of the meetings kept? And does the Health Safety committee receive any notice of Minutes or copies of Minutes that are kept of those meetings? And if so, what recommendations have these committees made, not only to the Minister but to their own management with regard to improving the health and safety regulations in the work areas that they represent? And if none of these things are in the affirmative, then how does the Minister's staff determine if the committees are active and functioning as laid out in the legislation?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, the Safety Committees are required to meet once every three months. By and large they meet once a month and a copy of their Minutes are forwarded to the Workplace Safety Division.

MR. JENKINS: Does anybody review these Minutes and what recommendations have these committees made in any way, shape or form for improving health and safety regulations to the Minister?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Chairman, it is a difficult question to answer because there are hundreds, and hundreds, and hundreds of sets of Minutes. Our Workplace Safety Division deals with these committees and when they go in and deal with the committees we put on many many seminars for employers and employees and their problems are dealt with and discussed and our advice, sought or otherwise, I might add, is given on the possibilities of easing out of the problems that they find themselves in, and recommendations how to deal with some of the situations that they discuss.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: . . . to try to sum up our impressions of this particular section of the Estimates we consider, or at least I consider this to be one of the most important sections of the Estimates. I am certain that the Minister considers it to be very important as well. I only wish that we had the time to pursue all the areas which need pursuit. However, we would be here for quite some time and we would have to sit late into the night and there is always another opportunity, another time, to bring forward the questions which are either unasked or unanswered during the course of the Estimates. But we do believe that now, given this is our fourth set of Estimates, that we should make some general statement as to our perception as to what has happened in this department and what should be happening.

We have some general criticisms to bring forward and that is not meant as reflection on the Minister and it certainly is not meant as a reflection on the employees in the division. It is meant perhaps as a reflection on society. It is meant perhaps as a reflection on us all. However, we will specify areas where we think the government has failed because that is our purpose here today and we will specify areas where we think they can achieve progress because that as well is our purpose. And we will also specify areas where we think we have suggestions, which should be brought to the attention of the Minister and the Minister has indicated that he will receive them in the manner in which they are given and give them all due consideration. That is not to say that we are indicating, or anticipating that he will take all of them forward in the way in which they are presented. But I'm certain that he will give them the type of consideration that is necessary.

We still believe that there are inadequate staffing levels in this particular part of the department and again I have to specify that is no reflection on the individuals in the department. We just do not believe that this area which is one of the most important areas under the Minister's responsibility has been given the type of attention and prioritization that is necessary. The Minister is certainly not to fault for that because he had a very difficult situation to work with when he first took over responsibility for this portfolio and there had been staffing level drops and there have been drops in the amount of money available to the division. However, since that time we have still not seen the type of progress which we think is necessary.

We do take great exception to the fact that there are no regulations, that it has been three years since this department, the Minister has had some responsibility for this department or the government has had responsibility for this department and all we've heard is a lot of talk and no action in respect to regulations. Now, the Minister will tell us that they are under review; the Minister has told us that they are under review; the Minister will tell us that it is a difficult problem and maybe he overestimated the ability of the department to put those regulations in place. Perhaps it was a matter of over-enthusiastic approach to providing deadlines and schedules. However, not one regulation according to the the information which has been provided to us in this Estimates has been brought forward. It has not been finalized.

Let's look at the regulations that have been talked about, the construction industry, wants the construction safety regulations separated from the industrial safety regulations. That's been reviewed and redrafted where necessary and yet we see no regulations. The Minister promised us and in all fairness to him, he said it was probably an over-enthusiastic promise to come forward with hearing conservation regulations but they have not come through. Those regulations have not come through. The first-aid regulation, and given the scope of all regulations, a fairly simple regulation to bring forward, it's not a complex area. It's been two years in the making; it was sent for legislative review last year, March of 1980 or before that even, and we still have no regulation before us.

The logging regulation has been in preparation for nearly a year. The rollover protective structures

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regulation has been a year in the works as well. The asbestos regulation has been mentioned from time to time for close to a year now. The regulation for lead which the Minister indicates he has no intention of bringing forward is one which we think is necessary and we are disappointed that they are not going to bring one forward.

Even where we have a situation where the regulations that currently exist today are not consistent with other regulations and legislation within the province, we have no action, such as the spray-painting regulation in the sanitary and hygienic welfare regulation, where the first is not consistent with the Manitoba Fire Code and the second is not consistent with the Manitoba Building Code and yet we don't have those inconsistencies clarified.

Perhaps the Minister wants those regulations in place, I don't know and I don't intend to impute motives on to the Minister. However, we know his government's attitude in respect to regulation and deregulation. We know his political party's attitude in respect to the importance of regulations or perhaps it should be better phrased, the non-importance of regulations. They see them as something that hampers rather than something that helps; something that hinders rather than something that assists; but the fact is that we believe that these regulations are overdue. We believe that they are very necessary and that belief of ours is not ours alone. That belief of ours is shared by the Advisory Council; that belief of ours is shared by the employers in this province. As I had indicated, even the Specification Writers Association suggested those regulations have to be forthcoming before any sort of positive action will be taken. So the regulations are necessary.

The employees and the unions want those regulations and the Minister tells us time and time again that he's going to bring those regulations forward and they don't happen. Well, we would certainly welcome them when they come but we are tired of hearing about them. We want to see something on paper; we want to see something brought forward. We want to see something go through the Manitoba Gazette because they are important. The Minister knows they are important to all those groups which I mentioned before and know they are important. They are important for guidance and in that respect we want to see codes of practice come forward with them and they are important for providing protection and supplementing a very good Act, The Workplace, Safety and Health Act, which by the way needs some amendments. It needs some amendments; it needs some changes because it's been in place for a time now. We've an opportunity to watch it work and we know that there are areas that need clarification; we know that there are areas that need some extension. We know there is that probably aren't working properly and need changes. That's no reflection on the previous government; they put forward a good Act, a very well developed Act, but we all know that from time to time we have to review legislation, we have to see how it's working and we have to change those mistakes that were inadvertently built in as well as we have to make changes in that legislation which reflect the changing society; the new knowledge that has become available to us, the different approaches to problems.

So we think that those regulations should be forthcoming and if I can specify one regulation which is probably the most complex and most complicated but perhaps the most needed regulation, I would specify one on toxic chemicals, on labelling, on handling, on storage, on working with those chemicals. It's an area that the Minister has said that we're going to see some action but, again, we have not seen the action and we're disappointed that we haven't seen the action because we know that he knows the importance of that particular regulation. We know that the Advisory Council which is the main group in this province entrusted to advise the Minister of problem areas has suggested as early as October 14, 1977, three days after the last election, that there is a need to co-ordinate federal and provincial action in the area of toxic substance control. They said this is so important that we want this conveyed to both the new Minister, who is not the Minister that's before us today but the previous Minister under the Conservative Government, and that Minister's Deputy Minister at the earliest possible convenience. We know a week or two later or a month later, they say that they feel that at present there is very little done in the way of legal control of such substances in Manitoba. We know the Minister has said that. The Minister said that in Estimates last year that there is some major problems with chemicals and if we were to put this on the table of the Advisory Council at their next meeting they could come up with exactly the same statement. It needs to be prioritized and there's very little by way of control.

Now that is not an area where the Minister can act alone because other provinces have tried to act alone and if we should do anything as legislators we should look to what's happening in other jurisdictions to see what mistakes have been made and what positive action has been taken and then develop in respect to our own philosophy, applied that information to our philosophy, and develop what we consider to be appropriate courses of action. But we would hope that the Minister at the very least would be calling together all the provincial Ministers, all the persons involved in this area and the Federal Government because they must play such a key and essential role in the development of these regulations and bring forward a comprehensive plan to put in place the type of legislation and regulations which is so long overdue and so very necessary before a desperate situation becomes even more desperate.

There are areas where the Minister, as a provincial representative, can take it upon himself to put in place regulations in respect to toxic chemicals and the jurisdiction would be all that of the provinces, such as the storage of those and the handling of those, the testing of them, the setting of threshold limit values and the setting of certain requirements for them. But it's a problem that has to be approached in co-operation with the other provinces and the Federal Government and we would just hope that we would see more positive action in respect to bringing that together to have all that happen.

We are also concerned that the codes of practice which are not certainly a replacement for regulations but are a supplement and an explanation of regulations dealing with confined entry, excavation, first aid and heat stress, all codes of practice which have been promised have not come forward yet.

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We believe that, as does the Minister believe, to his credit, education is such an essential part of the work and the activity of the Workplace, Safety and Health Branch and that education has to take certain forms. And the codes of practice is one way in which information can be brought forward to workers, that they can be provided educational mechanisms to enable them to better understand the problems that they confront and the solutions which may in fact assist them in confronting those problems.

We are also extremely critical of the Minister's — and excuse me, I don't want to reflect upon the Minister — of the department's inability to meet the Minister's schedules. Now whether that's a problem with the department or a problem with the Minister will have to be determined internally; however, I have in the past commended the department, in my experience with them, in dealing with them, they have been extremely speedy in their responses. As a matter of fact, they have been much faster than I have been sometimes in responding to requests and they have always come forward with what I believe to be acceptable and excellent information and responses to those requests. But there is something has to be done because we have been told so many times of goals that were expected to be fulfilled and all we had ended up with in the end result was unfulfilled expectations.

Now the Minister has said that he was perhaps over-enthusiastic. I have suggested that's a fault of all of us who see a problem and want very dearly to see that problem dealt with but that does not excuse each and every instance and there are just too many instances. The Mine Safety Review Committee is one where we had delays during the committee, unavoidable delays perhaps but delays nonetheless, and yet we had a report that came forward last year and we don't see any positive action coming out of that report because there's been another committee to look at that and we're not certain what will happen with the recommendations of the implementation committee but we know that there have been problems there.

Yet we know that there were certain recommendations that came out of the Wright Committee Report on the metallic mining industry and safety conditions in that industry that could have been implemented immediately had the Minister chosen to take that course of action. We had only hoped that he would have done that. It might have resulted in safer conditions in the metallic mining industry but he chose not to. We are concerned that nothing has come forward yet even though it's indicated that it should come forward shortly. We are most concerned that when it does come forward we don't know what's going to happen with it because the Minister in the past has told us that he's relying upon information from other bodies such as the Advisory Council and the Advisory Council provide him with very specific information, very strong suggestions, recommendations and resolutions and he ignored it. He ignored it and he said, I am the Minister and I have a right to ignore it and he's absolutely correct. He is Minister and they are only recommendations made to him but then please don't tell us that he expects very good criteria to come out of that. Please don't tell us that he's going to act immediately upon the receipt of that information if that is not the case.

The same with the Workers Compensation Review. We hope that the review — and I have not seen the review yet, I know that it is a lengthy review and that's about all I know about it beside the fact that it's at the printers but we hope that is worth the wait. I am certain that it will be worth the wait but again it's a matter of deadlines not being met, of dates being set that were unfulfilled. In respect to informational bulletins and we think that's a very important activity of the province, we thank the Minister for providing those of them that have developed to us as speedily as he did, however, not enough have been developed — in the Minister's own words and in our own words.

You know, two years ago, the Minister said that he wanted to work them into a regular series that would come out on a monthly basis. It was what he at that time called a newsletter or part of a newsletter. Now we heard a promise of that newsletter again two years later in these Estimates but we have not seen a newsletter. We think it is probably an important function of the division but we have not seen it and we have seen very few informational bulletins. We have not certainly seen informational bulletins on the basis of one a month.

Again, we severely criticize and expect to be bringing this up at other opportunities, the Minister's decision not to appoint a Chief Medical Officer. I don't want to remind the Minister that he gave us guarantees in this committee two years ago that that was going to happen in the very near future and he has given us guarantees again and again that it was going to happen and yet just the other night, last night, he said, no, he had changed his mind and he couldn't provide us, or at least in my opinion, he couldn't provide us with an acceptable reason for changing his mind.

We bring up the fact that the jurisdiction dispute in Flin Flon and Snow Lake with who actually has responsibility for the Workplace, Safety and Health in those areas has not been settled yet. It's a problem, in all fairness to the Minister, it's a longstanding problem and when they were in Opposition they were bringing it forward to our government. I went back and looked. At that time they were saying, when are you going to do something about it? We have to take some responsibility for not being able to accomplish what the Minister has said that he will be able to accomplish and I hope he is. I hope he is able to deal with that but the fact is it has not been done yet. We believe that the approach of the Minister to the Safety and Health Committees is a wrong approach. We believe that the Advisory Council gave him good information, a good suggestion and he rejected that.

Now in the few moments that are left to me, I just want to say why we are so concerned about this, because this is a very major problem in this province. As we said before, we believe that the extent of industrial disease, we believe that the extent of occupational illness is under-estimated in this province. So the statistics that we are going to be giving to you at this point are given with that caveat but in the first 11 months of 1980, there were 43,046 accidents reported to the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba. That is a significant problem for the Province of Manitoba, much less for the individuals who experience those

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accidents. Now, not all those accidents were serious accidents. Some of them were accidents that were those requiring medical aid only but I can base an assumption, given statistics of past years, that thousands of those were temporary disabilities and permanent disabilities numbered in the hundreds and fatalities numbered in the scores. So the situation is not getting much better if it is getting better at all and that is the reason why we want the committees; that is the reason why we want the Chief Medical Occupational Officers; that is the reason we want the regulations, not for the sake of them themselves but because there's a very serious problem.

We think that the problem with occupational cancer is one of the major problems in this province and again I don't mean to isolate Manitoba; in all provinces in all the industrial world. We are not satisfied that the Workers Compensation Board is taking the right approach. We don't think they're delinquent but we don't believe that they have been given the right direction. I know the Minister wants to give them the right direction and I hope that he will give them the right direction, but he himself would have to admit I think if he was so inclined, that given the statistical evidence, the difference between the estimation and the identification of occupational cancer is so grossly out of line that we have to direct some very quick attention and very quick action to it and we're not even talking about industrial diseases. If we are beginning to get a handle on occupational cancer, we still have a major problem with industrial diseases and that will come up during this session and other sessions no matter who's in government, there will be consideration of developing better means of dealing with industrial diseases.

As well the problem is not one of just individuals losing income, losing livelihood, losing arms and legs if you want to be gross about it, it's a matter of society and it's a matter of the cost to society. I'm reading from a document which comes out of the Workplace, Safety and Health Division approximately four years ago, or three-and-a-half years ago, in which it stated at that time in 1976 the total costs of main benefits paid by Workers Compensation was \$18,162,000 — we know it's up over \$20 million now — and I'll be finished in just one minute, Mr. Chairperson. We know that if take the figures that are given here, that for every dollar paid in compensation a further \$8.00 to \$15.00 are lost, we're talking about a problem that is costing our society hundreds of millions of dollars every year, and for the individuals, and for the society, and for the sake of all those who must face occupational hazards we can only encourage the Minister to come forward with many of his promises of the past and to take positive direct and forceful action to rid this province of that slaughter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 2.(a)(2) — pass.

The hour of 4:30 having arrived, I move the Committee rise for Private Members' Hour.
Committee rise.

SUPPLY - GOVERNMENT SERVICES

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Albert Driedger (Emerson): Call the Committee to order. For consideration of the Committee, Page 68, Resolution 70, Item 2, Field Services. 2.(a) — pass — the Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Chairman, a couple of points. I asked the Minister yesterday if he would give me a copy of the statement that he made so that I could refer to it when necessary and I wonder if he could provide that copy to me now.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Mr. Chairman, as we move down the various items, the items that were raised in the statement will be revealed and my honourable friend will have an opportunity to question them as we go along. Most of those items relate to — that I indicated — relate to the construction program that comes at the final number that's contained in my Estimates.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I also wanted to ask the Minister where we have in the Estimates, the question of contract caterers, restaurants, etc. Can he indicate where we'll be discussing that matter?

MR. JORGENSEN: That would come under Supply and Services, Mr. Chairman, we'll get to that item directly.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (a) — pass; (b) — pass; (a)(1) — pass; (a)(2) — pass; (a) — pass; (b)(1) — pass — the Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, there are a couple of points I wanted to discuss with the Minister at this point in time, concerning the maintenance and continued improvement of our physical plant, which is one of the most sizeable expenditures, if not the most sizeable expenditure in the entire department, and I wanted to ask the Minister whether he could outline the policy of the government in regard to preventive maintenance, whether the department is planning to spend sums of money on a regular basis to maintain the plant, or whether they are attempting what is known as crisis management, whereby when there's a breakdown, they respond. Now, I assume one of the Minister's problems is that his staff isn't here. I don't know where they are or when they are coming, but I wondered if he might give us some indication.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I'm not too sure what has happened to my staff, but I can tell my honourable friend that it is the policy of the government at this time to carry on a fairly substantial program of preventative maintenance and when my officials arrive, I'll be able to detail that program for him a little more in detail. But it is the intention of the government to set aside a fairly substantial amount of money, which will be made available for preventative maintenance.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, perhaps I could repeat my question to the gentlemen who are now entering the Chamber and ask them for the government's policy at this time, given expenditures here of some \$17 million to maintain the physical plant, which includes all our buildings and all kinds of other equipment that we have, and ask them whether they are continuing a policy of preventative maintenance whereby we're spending sums on a regular basis to

maintain the plant, or whether because of Budget cutbacks and government policy, the old restraint policy which is now observed disintegrating, whether they are involved in what might be called crisis management?

MR. JORGENSEN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, Preventative Maintenance, Item 2.(b)(3) in the amount of \$235,000 which represents funding for minor, that is, non-recurring preventative maintenance activities in a cost range that are below \$10,000.00.

These activities are normally initiated by district personnel, utilizing the local contracted services or Department of Government Services, Construction Department forces. The second one, fundings for preventative maintenance is further complemented by capital funding for upgrading major repairs as identified in the Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets which approximates about \$1.5 million and \$2 million for the fiscal year 1981-82.

This funding is allocated in three areas, \$108,000 for fire safety upgrading, that is re minor specific projects carried out by district personnel utilizing support service and for private sector contracted service; \$304,000 is allocated for smaller preventative maintenance capital projects in a cost range of \$10,000 to \$25,000; and the fifth, \$1.5 million for other specific major upgrading or repairs to physical plants such as major roof repair replacement, major painting programming, utility services and repair and replacement of major equipment, such as boiler flats, air conditioning equipment, etc., structural mason repairs and finally the Dutch Elm Disease Prevention Program.

I might just mention as typical of those upgrading projects being carried out in the current fiscal year 1980-81, and this category represented by the following programs: boiler replacement at the Selkirk Mental Health Centre Power House; the roof replacement at the Selkirk Mental Health Centre Power House; water and sewage facilities at the Headingley Correctional Institution and as I said the Dutch Elm Program.

In the Acquisition/Construction budgets, miscellaneous fire safety programs again, I might just compare those two with what was spent in 1980-81 was 16 million and in 1981-82 it's our intention to spend in the order of \$19,220,000.00. So there is a fairly substantial increase in that Maintenance Program being carried on at the present time.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I also want to ask the Minister about a particular proposal which has been made over the years but no Minister of Government Services or Public Works has been able to get to first base on the matter, and I want to throw this out as a challenge to the present Minister so he can go out in a burst of glory or at least in a puff of cold air. I commend to him the long overdue notion and the long overdue proposal to air-condition this building. I wish the Estimates, Mr. Chairman, were being discussed in the summertime, the good old summertime when it's about 90 degrees-plus — maybe we will be having a hotter than normal summer and the hotter the summer the greater the need for an air conditioning of this particular building.

I might mention to the Minister a few points in that regard, that in the summertime, in this particular building, there are days when the staff cannot work; the efficiency rate falls significantly; people leave the building sometimes ill or are let go at an earlier hour and this, of course, particularly takes place at the south end of the building. The one office that seems to bear the brunt of this uncomfortable summer prairie heat is the Minister of Agriculture's and similar offices on that particular side. So I simply say to the Minister, does he have any plans to do something in this regard? Again I mention to him that there are some offices which are air-conditioned or air-cooled. For a number of reasons the Premier's office and the Cabinet Room are pleasantly air-conditioned, Mr. Chairman. The Minister of Highways office is air-conditioned and I think one other one which escapes me for the moment. (Interjection)—Not the Clerk of the Assembly but some of the Ministers were fortunate in that regard.

Across the way is our power plant and from that power plant are buildings in this legislative core area complex that are in fact cooled from that central facility. The Norquay Building, as an example; the Woodsworth Building, as an example; and it undoubtedly will be tapped for the Law Courts, etc. or I assume that there will be that particular improvement made. Plans are available in the Minister's office that were done some four, five years ago so that it would be a simple matter to commence, even in some phased way, an air cooling of this particular building. I ask the Minister whether he has given this any thought or whether he would be prepared to consider putting this building into modern times, as opposed to what was built in 1920 at a considerable cost, which would probably be of the order of some \$75 million to \$85 million or more, maybe even \$100 million to duplicate this building. It would be only a fraction, 1 percent of that cost to properly air cool or temperature control this building in the summertime.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I was one of those that occupied one of those offices in the south end of the building for a couple of summers and I am aware of the discomfort that can be experienced by those who occupy those offices. But I found a way of alleviating it to a considerable extent, first of all, you get to the office early and before the sun comes beaming in too brightly you pull the drapes and the blinds and turn the fans on and it remains reasonably comfortable during the rest of the day. So there are ways if one wants to to minimize the impact of the heat of mid-summer.

But to answer more specifically my honourable friend's question, I might point out to him that the estimate for the air-conditioning of this building would run somewhere between \$2 million to \$3 million, and I can just say to him now that with that kind of an expenditure involved the air conditioning of this building does not reach that high degree of priority; that I'm giving active consideration to carrying out a program of air conditioning. However, having said that, whenever alterations are being made to the building and that during the course of maintenance and . . . does occur from time to time, we do endeavour to place air ducts in the walls wherever we can so that at one time or another, if the point is reached where a decision is made to

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completely air condition it at least part of the ducts that will be necessary to convey the air to the various offices will be in place. So I suppose the answer to my honourable friend's question is simply that there's no specific plans to carry forward a \$2 million to \$3 million program at this present time but whenever maintenance is carried on we have that in view for a future date.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I have to question the Minister's figures because I know that only a few years ago the estimated cost was of the order of \$1 million. I find it hard to believe that we're jumping from 1 to 2 to 3 million in a matter of four or five years — I cannot understand nor accept those suggestions. The Minister is telling us how to survive and any man who can withstand the heat on that side of the building I think could probably enjoy the Sahara Desert. The Minister says well if you do this and you do that you'll find it cooler; take off your clothes and I suppose he would also give advice that if you wear your parka, your mitts and your overshoes and your hat, you'll find it not as cold in certain parts of the building, but I assume that people should be able to work in a comfortable environment. I don't think that's asking a lot for an employee, I mean, I say to the Minister that if he wants his computerized system downstairs to operate properly, to produce Hansard properly, he's going to have to do something about working conditions down there. I would say that if anybody from a union like the MGEA lodged a complaint about working conditions then that would be about the easiest place to attack, because of the machines, and because of the location, it's unbearably hot and uncomfortable in that particular facility and I don't see how anyone can work under those conditions.

So, I ask the Minister —(Interjection)— well, you know, I'm asking the Minister a question. I have to tell you that I fought this battle and I have been fighting this battle since 1966 in this Legislature. I have argued for this in this Chamber, as a member of the Opposition, and I have argued for it in Cabinet and my position has always been the same, so I'm being totally consistent. I could not persuade all of my colleagues, or a majority perhaps, to accept this policy but it certainly wasn't through lack of trying and I'm asking this Minister whether he would not agree that it is a reasonable request, as a working condition for an employee, to expect to work in a general range of temperatures as opposed to the 90 and 100 degree range that is felt in this building, which surely affects morale and surely affects production. And I say to the Minister he should seriously consider this, and I want to ask him pointedly whether he intends to bring in any piecemeal implementation of air-conditioning because it could be broken down into stages, it could be broken down into floors; and I also ask him specifically, as a detail, whether he is familiar with the working conditions of the Hansard staff which I think is intolerable and in violation of provincial laws and work codes.

MR. JORGENSON: To the question of my honourable friend, with respect to the working conditions in the Hansard office, I can tell him that part of the expenditure of funds for maintenance in this particular year will be the installation of a unit in

that office in order to bring the temperatures in that area down to levels that the staff will feel at least comfortable. We have also installed, or will be installing, fans in the elevators, another area that gets rather warm, to try and keep those areas as cool as possible for the people who have to be working in there.

But I want to say to my honourable friend that, as desirable as it may be to have the building completely air conditioned, one has to have regard to the amount of money that is available and my honourable friend is displaying what seems to be a characteristic trait on the part of honourable gentlemen opposite and that is a complete disregard for the money that may be available and the means of acquiring it. I shouldn't have to repeat, for his benefit, the fact that the money comes from the taxpayers and there appears to be a limit to the amount that they are prepared to contribute and I would think that he would recognize that, desirable as it may be to have working conditions as pleasant as possible in this building, at least until such a time as the funds can be made available, we are going to have to attempt to improve those conditions, perhaps as my honourable friend has said, on a piecemeal basis in those areas where the greatest need exists and work from that point.

I'm surprised at my honourable friend saying that five years ago the estimate for the air-conditioning of this building was only \$1 million, which to me indicates that my honourable friend has simply lost track of the rate of inflation that has occurred in the past few years. I think those figures, by themselves, is a fairly accurate measurement of the rate of inflation and if he hasn't become aware of that then I would suggest that he gets his head out of the clouds and plants his feet more firmly on the ground and recognize the difficulties that this nation and other countries face in the world today with respect to this rising spectre of inflation.

My honourable friend made some joking remarks yesterday about the President of the United States and I can tell you that if there is one person that has recognized the problem for what it really is, and I am not going to comment on his answers to the problem, but that is a situation that must be faced there. But I can tell my honourable friend that the problem is a real one and he is at least recognizing it; that is something that seems to have escaped my honourable friends opposite.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I won't get into too much of a debate on that last point at this time. The Minister is saying if you do things it costs money; that is what he is saying and I agree. But I want to tell him that if you don't do anything it costs money too and if you think you can run a department and have people work under uncomfortable and unpleasant working conditions, and that doesn't have a price tag, I tell you it does. That if people are slumped over their typewriters and their desks because it's so uncomfortable and stifling, then you are not getting production; and if people are becoming sick and have to go home you are not getting production; and if they have to leave early on certain days you're not getting production either.

That is a common occurrence in this building, that is a common occurrence, and I invite the Minister to walk around and find out how production is in a

building where you have staff that is working under difficult conditions; whether they are taking longer coffee breaks or whatever they are doing; or whether they're hiding in a part of the building where it's more comfortable; I ask the Minister to consider that, that has a price tag too; and when you don't build that has a price tag too; and when people are laid off that has a price tag; and when they leave the province, that has a cost. So it's not just a case of an activist government spends money and taxes have to be levied, it's a case of an inactive government, a government that sits back and does nothing, that they also lose in a sense of there is a cost incurred by the taxpayers and by the citizens of this province.

Mr. Chairman, I want to deal with that more when we come to the Minister's Salary, but I do intend to debate the Minister on that point again.

I just want to say in passing —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, I'm getting drowned out by my own colleagues; I wonder if you could . . . well, I have some here and some there and I wonder if you could ask them, in view of Estimates, whether we could have some order here?

MR. CHAIRMAN: At the request of the member who was speaking, I would ask all of the honourable members to please carry on their conversations in a manner that will allow the person who has the floor to speak and be heard by all of the other members.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So I say to the Minister that when private industry supplies descent working conditions to their employees I think we should expect Government to do the same. There certainly must be people who have quit the Civil Service because they found the working conditions, in the physical environmental sense, so unpleasant that they simply packed up went several blocks away into a more comfortable environment and continued to work for them. Mr. Chairman, many people, many people including MLAs now have air-conditioned homes in this province and air-conditioned cars and they don't find that unusual, they don't find that extravagant or luxurious; in many cases people assume that that is a normal state of affairs and they leave their air-conditioned house in their air-conditioned car and go to their air-conditioned office. Now not all of us are that fortunate, not all of us have that type of income or home or apartment etc. but nearly everybody, nearly everybody who works in an office has air-conditioning, that is not considered a luxury in the 1980s, maybe it was in the forties, maybe it was in the days of John Bracken and Doug Campbell, but certainly when we get into the fifties and the sixties and the seventies and so on the buildings that we put up were air-conditioned and the space that we leased was air-conditioned. So I just want to say to the Minister I don't regard civil servants as second-class citizens and I hope that he doesn't either.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to also explore with the Minister the question of contract cleaners versus using staff, Government Services

staff, to clean the buildings, because there have been complaints made by the MGEA on behalf of civil servants and on behalf of the cleaning staff in this particular regard. The allegation is that the MGEA has charged, last October 20th in a brief presented to The Honourable Harry Enns, who was then the Minister of Government Services, that the cleaning contractors are providing a poor quality service and that this is another example of, in most cases, being penny-wise and pound foolish. Now you have both extremes and in some rare instances you have the Government paying \$10 an hour to certain contractors, which would seem to be a rather high amount, and in other cases, I guess they're barely paying the minimum wage. It certainly can be cheaper, the Government can sometimes get it done cheaper if they contract out their services. The question is what are they getting back, what is the quality? So if they're saving a few bucks by contracting out and then the result is that instead of, say, the floors being properly swept and vacuumed every night it's done every two or three nights, this is not necessarily a desirable state of affairs and I'd like to ask the Minister if he could outline what the department's policy is in this regard and whether he might not be going too far in terms of the balance between in-House and contracted-out services?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, during the course of the past four years the ratio change that has taken place between Government cleaning service and contract services has altered about 7 percent; it's been a minimal change. My Honourable friend has questioned whether we get value for the dollar that we spend when we hire contractors to clean the buildings. Well I'm sure that he is aware that the contract provides that if the cleaning service is not up to par and is not being carried out in terms of the contract there is a provision for dismissal and the renewal of contract with someone else. So essentially then it boils down to if the quality of the work is desired, it boils down to a large extent to the supervision; and I can tell my honourable friend that we have taken steps to ensure that building managers are provided training to enable them to become qualified in the administration of the particular buildings in which they are operating. That has, I think, been a great benefit in ensuring that the quality of the work that is being done is properly supervised and we get the value for the dollar that we spend; and in that connection I can tell my honourable friend that we have done some surveys of our own to determine, first of all, the extent of the difference between contract services and MGEA services; we have done some investigating to determine what the relative costs are between contract people and the MGEA and I can tell my honourable friend that the yearly cost per square foot under contract is 42 cents per square foot. The yearly cost per square foot for Government staff is \$1.56 per square foot. Now the MGEA may have argued that they provide a better more reliable service; I can say that service can be provided just as reliably and just as good providing that the supervisor, the maintenance manager, is doing the job that he is expected to do; and that applies not only to those jobs that are under contract but those that are under the government staff. So there is a fairly significant difference in the cost of providing

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cleaning staff in these buildings, as between the contract people and the Government staff, and not withstanding the arguments of the MGEA, our own surveys would indicate that we can get the job done at much less cost by private contractors.

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

MR. J. R. (Bud) BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I was interested in the Minister's response to my colleague and I wonder if the Government could tell us, in your studies, when you comparing 42 cents to \$1.56, whether the employees that are providing those services on a contract without basis have any security of tenure; whether they have any paid vacation plans; whether they have any pension plans, you know, what security have these people got? The argument that the Minister uses to support contracting out goes back a long long way.

I was in another area just last week I was speaking to someone who was involved with the City of Winnipeg and they chose to use an outside of Winnipeg printer to print something which is charged to the taxpayers of the City of Winnipeg because it was a few cents cheaper. I asked this person why they chose to give it to this person who doesn't pay taxes in the City of Winnipeg; but it's cheaper, it looks good on the books right now. So there is always pressure on people to do that and, say 42 cents, a \$1.56 you know is rather a cursory manner of looking at something like this.

It was interesting — I forget what it was now. I used to have that suite up on the far side on the third floor in the east wing and I was in there one night when the staff were cleaning it up and they told me the amount of time they had to do it; and they did a thorough job. You know I could cut that down to 26 cents by just chopping their hand, you know once over lightly with one of those dust mops. So when you're carrying out comparisons like this they don't mean too much in themselves but to the principle of contracting out. You know, without being a pedant a person can adopt some principles and the principle of contracting out in the Civil Service is something which I personally don't like. I remember some of the flack we used to get from members opposite when we contracted out at a different level. If there was a job that had to be done for a short period of time or it was something new and we wanted to test it we hired people on contract, they used to give us a lot of flack on this; they seem somewhat inconsistent. If the principle of contracting out is a bad principle, albeit that not contracting out may reflect in more dollars being spent, I'm showing the civil service numbers going up which, after the arguments that my colleagues across the way made during the last election campaign, they want to show a reduced number. So they have opted for this general principle of contracting out, the Provincial Auditors, for example, rent. Instead of strengthening the capacity of an independent audit under the purview of the Legislative Assembly, as has been the historical practice, this Government contracted out the work — I forget how many it was, I believe from last year 16 firms were contracted. This is a propensity of this Government to contract out, because it looks good on the books especially when they come out with figures like this 42 cents vis-a-vis

\$1.56, which really doesn't mean that much, Mr. Chairman.

The principle of contracting out, the Government once again demonstrates their inconsistency. They criticize the Government to which they formed the opposition and now here they are doing it more and more themselves, and I believe in areas like this it's more cosmetic than real.

I was wondering Mr. Chairman, under Government Services, where we would be able to discuss parking fees charged by the private sector. Is that included under this — it's not included in this department. Then where is the Cafeteria, is this under this particular item? Is it under another item to follow? — (Interjection) —

That's why I didn't want to be out of order. The fees charged by private entrepreneurs who want the air-conditioners, swimming pools, is under another item.

With reference to the catering service downstairs, I'd like to put on the record a couple of remarks relative to that operation. The former government didn't follow my recommendation and perhaps this government won't also, but I thought the Legislative dining room and cafeteria should be made a component of the Red River Community College, that it shouldn't be operated in the traditional way because it is different, but I still think Mr. Chairman, it is an excellent milieu in which people who want to be involved in the culinary arts can receive the training and we do subsidize these types of operations and if a private entrepreneur makes a dollar, I have no objection to that. It isn't from that standpoint I argue with contracting that particular facility out. It's to the basis that I think that it should be part of the Red River Community College and that it should be a training facility for people, the whole thing, wine stewards, waitresses, cooks, chefs, the rest of it. I think that they could give better, consistent service and that the subsidy which flows to that place naturally could be used in a better manner, not to feed MLAs well, but nevertheless, the public has access to it and I think it could be a showpiece in that regard and give the people who are training at Red River an excellent exposure to the problems in the culinary arts and especially catering to the people who float around in society at the administrative level and learn practically their tastes and what the problems are in catering to the people who float at that level.

Being a hamburger joint operator myself, I know what some of the problems are at that level, but nevertheless, I am not that familiar with the day-to-day operation of a first-class restaurant. Of course, that's what that place downstairs was originally intended to be so I would ask the Minister when the present contract is up for renewal, that consideration be given to that to look at operating it in conjunction with the Red River Community College as a training component.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, my honourable friend posed an earlier question in connection with the difference between contract and government staff with respect to cleaning services. I just want to add one further remark to his comments. He questioned whether the same type of wages and the same type of benefits were provided to the contract staff as was provided by the government. I don't

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know what kind of benefits are provided by the private sector, but about 30 per cent of the costs that we incur in hiring government staff are made up of those benefits, but still would not bring it down to the level that we can contract the jobs for. I can tell my honourable friend that these jobs are all put out on tender and those people who bid on them are the ones that are prepared to provide the service at the cost, from the point of view of the taxpayer is the best bet that he can get. I've always felt it was a responsibility of government to attempt to ensure that the taxpayer gets value for his dollar. After all, he's the one that's providing the money to do these jobs. Our studies have certainly indicated that there is a benefit in contracting this job out.

My honourable friend makes a distinction between hiring a person on contract to do a specific job without a tender but just simply negotiating with that person to do a job and the contracts that are left on this basis by tender. I would like to point out to him that in my view there is a difference. So, I don't see any conflict in the position that we took when we were on that side of the house, as opposed to the position we're taking today, because we're talking about two different things.

With respect to the other area which my honourable friend spoke of, and that is the question of Red River Community College training program for catering services, that is part of the program, I am advised, that people who go through that course, do have an opportunity of working with caterers to gain further experience. Whether it has been done here in this building, I don't know, my honourable friend may have a suggestion that we could look into it. But, on a general basis that opportunity is provided for those people that are training at Red River. So his suggestion is one that we can certainly have a look at.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass. The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. BOYCE: To go from the last to the first, yes, I understand that the attempts by Red River Community College to involve the people who are in the training programs with different entrepreneurs, I understand Ritz is one of the better ones, we get very good co-operation from them in that regard. But that isn't what I was suggesting. It was that it be under the aegis of the Red River rather than under Ritz, who is faced with this necessity of making a dollar. For example, there is no money in ice sculpture. I doubt very much if I was the manager for Ritz downstairs would I spend the money to do some ice sculptures. Nevertheless, it's the idea that — it's not original, there are other areas that do that, I haven't spoken about my Greek experience for a number of years. But in Athens, there is a school that does that and different organizations support it, in that they have banquets there and the cost is kept at a minimum, it's not in competition with other agencies, that it is a delicate balance.

Relative to your point on contracting out, I believe that the Provincial Auditors, or the auditing function was tender. So you know, that doesn't really make my argument fallacious, as you use any parallel or any analogy, it has some fallaciousness to any point that you want to make.

Here again, it's the final line net cost to the taxpayers that sometimes governments have to take

in. With the City of Winnipeg, there's a perpetual argument of contracting out on garbage services. They compare the cost of picking up garbage, with the private contractor you have to have it out not less than one foot from the driveway at a certain time and if it isn't picked up or it is not collected, while the city employees, they walk through three feet of snow to pick it up out of the backyard.

It all depends on the service which is being offered, but to the principle of contracting out, the argument is valid and perhaps you should carry it to its rather ridiculous conclusion that we put up for tender the jobs that you and I are doing, and the lowest bidder gets the job. Perhaps, that's the way we — (Interjection) — you know, it's to the principle itself. It looks good on the books and when the number of civil servants is reaching a critical point, the pressure is on government to start to reduce the numbers in the book, I've been there too and I realize that's a problem and the cost is also a problem.

Nevertheless, I imagine if you look — I don't know who is the successful tender, I don't know the individuals involved. But, traditionally they don't pay, they're not unionized, they have no fringe benefits, their turnover of staff is almost irrelevant and these are the employers who traditionally have exploited labour and the exceptions to that rule, but just prove the basic rule that these people are exploitive of labour, whether it's picking up garbage or cleaning. It is a place of employment for people just entering the labour market and people have used that argument for years, but nevertheless, if it is a proper wage, people will stay.

Personally, Mr. Chairman, I think the whole pay scale in all of our society is upside down in this regard. The people who clean up our messes, I think, should be perhaps paid more than those who create them. Nevertheless, we pay the Bobby Hulls a million dollars a year and somebody that's cleaning an office \$6,000 a year. You know, this is some of the values of society. So, I'm not going to go into that philosophical debate, all I'm saying is that with contracting out, it is not, in my view something which is in the public interest, in this regard.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, the key issue here is something called inspection. Because you know it's all very well for the Minister to bring out the statistics, roll them out, and I would like to examine some of them and compare some of them with the staff that drew them up, but there has been, in the Winnipeg area, if not throughout Manitoba, in the past few years, a price war going on in regard to contract cleaning. I'm told by people in the industry that the lowest bidder tends to get the job and the level of enforcement and the level of inspection is in many cases negligible. So there's the two components — I guess there's more than two components: There's the standard set and the way the program is written to be met and then there's the price paid; and then there's the question of whether or not the cleaners are in fact, meeting those requirements.

My information is, that in many cases, although somebody wins the price war and the bidding war,

that the standard of inspection or the level of inspection is low or inadequate. I wonder whether the Minister would care to comment on that. He seemed to suggest that the building managers are the ones that are responsible for inspections. Maybe he meant to say that they were the ones who, in effect, were to be vigilant and to determine whether or not the contractors are meeting this particular standard. If they are, then I guess there's no complaints, but I assume that there are inspectors or inspection staff within the department that go around to see whether or not the standards are being met and in particular, looks at complaints. And I ask the Minister if he can make any comments about the number of inspectors he has or about the number of complaints or any comments about whether there have been any contracts terminated in the past three and half years, whether it has been found, in particular instances, that say, private contractors were not meeting standards and that the contract was taken away from them and the matter was reopened.

MR. JORGENSEN: My honourable friend had two specific questions; the first related to inspections. I am advised that there are about five building superintendents or managers that spot-check from time to time. Then, of course, there are the building managers within each of the buildings themselves who come under their supervision. And we have recognized the problem that has been pointed out by my honourable friend, the question of inadequate performance on the part of some of the people who are hired or contracted to do this service. As I indicated in my earlier remarks, our answer to that problem is to improve the level of supervision so that the contract that has been signed by a contractor or the job that is being done if it is by government staff, is being done according to the standards of the building managers and superintendents who have the work performed.

With respect to his second suggestion, as to whether or not there have been any contractors that have been dismissed as a result of inadequate performance, I can tell him yes, there was one just recently in January, I believe it was sometime, that was let go because of his non-performance. So that does happen and it is our intention to attempt to improve the quality of the work that is being done first of all, and secondly, to make sure that the taxpayer is getting value for his dollar.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, the other point that I want to make quite forcefully to the Minister is that one must also take into consideration in comparisons of cost, the personnel themselves, and I think it is true to say that there has been an attempt by the department and by the government to hire people who are in some cases, handicapped; that there are employees in this building who suffer from a variety of physical handicaps and I know that at least in one instance I believe, there is a young woman who is working as a cleaner who is retarded or mildly retarded. Consequently, I don't think that one can simply say that it's price that determines everything. If the department is either interested or required to hire people who are handicapped, then I don't think it is fair to, then, on the other hand, attack their level of productivity and/or the wages paid to them. You can't have it both ways. If the private sector doesn't

have to operate with these considerations, the government sector does and that must be taken into account.

The other thing is that I think the government tends to pay a fair wage. We usually don't pay the highest wages, but we also don't pay the lowest wages. I think that when you consider that the people who work for us receive a modest but fair wage, then that must be taken into consideration. Many of the cleaners I think, paid a few cents over the minimum wage, are interested in production and speed rather than in many cases, interested in quality. So I simply want to underline that to the Minister when he pulls out comparisons which I think, although they may be true in a dollar and cents basis, must be seriously questioned when other factors are fed into that particular computer.

But the point I want to make the most, is that it's only by enforcement of our contracts and our conditions that we know we're getting value for our money. Now, the MGEA gave the Minister a brief last October and they claim that where a contract was calling for 32 man hours that they were getting 25 hours of work back. Well, if that is the kind of savings that we're getting, then instead of getting what would be a minimal work week, we're getting a reduction of 25 percent in the hours required. That has to be considered as well.

Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask the Minister, on that particular point, a brief was submitted to his predecessor in October, it listed, I suppose, a number of complaints and concerns and, I wonder whether the Department has responded to that particular brief on a point-by-point basis.

MR. JORGENSEN: I am not in a position to make a point-by-point response to that MGEA brief. That brief is currently being examined by the department and a comparison is being made. I want to tell my honourable friend, though, that in connection with his remarks that certain contractors can do the job or have done the job in less time than was indicated, does not necessarily suggest that the job is not done as well. If they can do the job in a shorter period of time, then that would indicate to me — and still perform up to the levels that they're intended, that indicates to me that the contractor has an operation in place that can be regarded as quite efficient.

Our concern is to ensure that the level of service is provided and to ensure that, our supervisors and building managers do the kind of checks that are necessary to ensure that the specifications of the job are being adhered to. If that is being done, then I don't know what valid complaint my honourable friend could have other than a philosophical argument that the government should be employing all of these people all of the time rather than having them on contract. Well, he and I differ. I think we have an opportunity in the ratio that is now established, 65 percent or 58 per cent of the staff is government staff, or 58 percent of the work that is being done is being done by government staff and 42 percent by contract staff. That gives you an opportunity to make that kind of a comparison. I am telling my honourable friend that as I have indicated earlier, we can get the same work done for much less by contract staff, but it is necessary to ensure that you have proper supervision. To that end, we are dedicated.

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MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister suggesting that if government personnel can complete the job in less time than estimated that they can leave early, that they can, say, take a day off, if they can do an eight-hour job in five or six hours, they're free to go home?

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I also would like to ask the Minister if he might indicate when that brief will be answered. That brief was submitted October 20th which is four months ago. Can the Minister indicate when the brief will be answered. It seems to be a sufficient period of time.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I don't know if there was any particular indication in the brief and I don't recall it now that they requested a reply, but we are providing a reply to the Minister of Labour who is responsible for the Civil Service Commission.

MR. DOERN: My final question here, Mr. Chairman, was on that ratio the Minister talked about, 58 to 42 percent, which is shifted from I suppose, what was 51 percent to 49 percent, at least, my arithmetic is correct. He said there was a shift. I want to ask the Minister whether the government's policy for the past several years has been to reduce the government staff through attrition and that there have in effect no replacement on the hiring of employees who are retired or leave the service for other reasons. Is that policy still in effect and if so, why?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated the ratio has been reduced by seven percent, there has been a seven percent shift and that has been done by attrition. There have been no lay-offs. To add further to remarks that I have made, I meant to say that there are certain buildings that are perhaps better done by government staff and there are other areas which perhaps are better to hire a contractor. So one tries to sort those things out and use the method that is most appropriate for a particular building.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; (2) — pass; (3) — pass; (4) — pass; (b) — pass.

(c) Workshop - Improvements and Alterations to Buildings and Grounds. (l) Salaries. pass; (2) — pass; (3) — pass; (c) — pass. I'm sorry, there was (4) that I didn't pass in that item, (4) — pass; (c) — pass.

(d) Leased Accommodations. (1) Salaries — pass.
The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, one of the problems with orders for return is that it often takes awhile to get them back and I've sort of lost my enthusiasm for submitting them because if it takes almost a session sometimes to get a response — well, my honourable friend from Fort Rouge says she's still waiting from the last session and that, of course, is common on the parts of government to drag their feet. I think that there is a certain responsibility on the part of government to give a response to a question instead of throwing it on the pile and replying to it a year later.

I wanted to ask a couple of questions about leased accommodation. This is a large expenditure by government, some \$7 million. I wanted to look at the leased space on the part of the Highways Department and the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, because it would seem to be logical for the government to provide a building for Autopac whereby they could put all of their people and also put the associated staff from Highways, and it's been known in the Civil Service for many years that one of the worst buildings to work in in Manitoba was the Highways building on Portage Avenue, that people were crammed in there like sardines and that as a result there was some adverse effect on the efficiency of that particular government department.

So, Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask the Minister first of all, if he could make some comment on the Highways Department operation which, instead of being put together with Autopac we had a number of locations around the city, now we have Autopac in Eaton Square. We also have, I suppose, that related portion of the Highways Department, Motor Vehicle Branch, I assume, located in the Credit Union Central building. I ask the Minister whether he could comment on that Highways operation in terms of the new building and also, what has happened back on Portage Avenue from whence they came?

MR. JORGENSEN: As my honourable friend perhaps is aware, the Highways Branch was moved to an accommodation that was rented from the Credit Union Central, I believe it was 49,000 square feet. In the meantime, the building that they been located in, is being renovated to provide accommodation, not only for the Motor Vehicle Branch but other aspects of the Highways Department as well. He made reference to the desirability of putting up a building rather than leasing space. That's what they did in Saskatchewan, and as a result, their rates increased fairly substantially this year, I believe, 28 to 30 per cent largely as a result of the necessity of having to pay for that building.

I might point out to my honourable friend that we have done some surveys to attempt to determine the preference of one method over another and in doing those comparisons all factors were taken into considerations, which would include, for example, if you were attempting to make a case or put up a building, an edifice to house a department, you would take into consideration land acquisition costs, construction costs, construction related consultant fees, total property and construction costs, amortized payments for a total cost at 15 per cent over 40 years, estimated annual grants in lieu of taxes and operating costs, and all of those factors that enter into the construction of a building and you compare that then of course, with your lease cost estimate.

We have discovered that the unit cost for putting up a building would amount to \$21.49 a square foot rentable per year. Now this compares to lease costs that are available at the present time of \$13.84 rentable per year. So, there's a fairly significant saving in renting space at this particular time. Times could change, but in view of the availability of rental accommodation and in the light of the high interest rates at the present time, it just didn't make sense and still doesn't make sense to be putting up buildings rather than leasing.

So, I'm afraid my honourable friend would do some calculations of his own on the merits of rental accommodation at this particular time that we're talking about as compared to putting up buildings at high interest rates and high construction costs. He would find that the argument would be very much in favour of rental accommodation at the present time.

I am reminded that there is a qualification to be made in that general position, that would be when you're putting up special kinds of buildings, a good example comes to mind, the Law Courts Building right here, you can't readily dispose of buildings that have been constructed for Law Courts for any general use. So with those exceptions, the argument that rental space is more desirable at this time than putting up buildings, is one that is borne out by the figures that we have been able to accumulate and the facts of the current situation with respect to building costs and interest rates.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I have learned something today. The Minister is explaining that there is a method in their madness. That when you have a poor economy and there's a lot of unemployment and a lot of out-migration, that the result is you empty the province of people and that empties the buildings and then the buildings become available at a low cost and you can then save money. So, there is some logic in government policy to grind down the economy, because then farther down the road, a Minister can jump up and say that he's able to lease property at a low rate because there's nobody else available to occupy it or nobody else available to bid on it. So, I say that this is, rather than a virtue which the Minister is trying to make out of leasing and not building, that he is in effect underlining the fact that the economy is poor — and I tell him that this is a circular argument — and I want to explore this with him again, that it is because of the government's failure to meet some of their requirements that you have a winding down of the economy and that you have a higher unemployment level and that you have a level of construction that is among the lowest in the history of this province.

I read figures to the Minister the other day; a 20-year low in housing, some people say the worst since the great depression and thousands of tradesmen leaving and so on. So, that's the other side of it. So, if on the one hand you're saving money by leasing; on the other hand if you're not constructing and stimulating the economy, you have people leaving. I don't think we can be proud of the fact that there are For Sale signs or vacancy signs all around the province and in the City of Winnipeg, in particular, and this is really a reflection of the poor economy. The Minister is not helping the situation by presumably saving money, he is simply exacerbating the situation and aggravating the situation, so I would like to speak to him again on that matter and debate that matter when we come to his salary.

MR. JORGENSON: I suppose that I should despair of ever attempting to convince my honourable friend that if there is a lag in the construction industry in this province, it is largely as a result of over-building

of Hydro — and I don't want to get into that argument but my honourable friends must have been aware of it in 1977 when they discontinued construction at Limestone — over-building of office space in the City of Winnipeg and over-building in housing. Now, surely there must be a lesson to my honourable friends to learn, that if you build just for the sake of building, just for the sake of keeping construction workers busy, there comes a time when the costs are going to have to be borne by somebody. You cannot expect to construct buildings at high interest rates and leave them empty for a period of time while the costs mount up. It becomes necessary to adjust your building program to what your requirements will be.

At the same time, I think it is necessary to recognize at the present time the difference between constructing buildings that have been put up by somebody else. Those buildings were constructed — my honourable friend talks as though if the private sector puts up a building that doesn't constitute employment — that it is only when the government does it that people are employed. Well, I reject that argument and surely my honourable friend has the common sense to recognize that point of view.

I simply say to my honourable friend that where it becomes necessary to put up buildings, we will be putting up buildings. If we can lease buildings, as indeed Autopac has done and got a very good deal as my honourable friend may find out when the report of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation comes before the Committee, he'll have an opportunity to ask them questions on that and perhaps put some of the wild stories that have been circulating around here, to rest. (Interjection)— Well, my honourable friend will have an opportunity to pose those questions. But I would just tell my honourable friend that one has to recognize the circumstances that exist at the present time and not be carried away with the idea, that just because the government isn't putting up buildings all over the province, that there's no building going on. Employment is created just as much by the private sector; employment is generated and the spin-offs are just as good from the private sector as they are from the government sector.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I don't think the Minister can cite one example, not a single example of a building that was constructed by our administration that was not needed. I don't think he can give us a single example of a building that was unnecessary or unneeded. But I tell him that what our government tried to do was to phase in construction and relate government construction to the state of affairs in the industry, so that there were attempts made by the New Democratic administration when things were booming in the private sector to dampen or hold back on government projects, to delay them or defer them. But when things were slow there was an attempt made to bring projects forward in an attempt to balance the boom or bust psychology and the boom or bust in the construction industry. You know, I don't think that is radical policy. I don't believe that sort of attempt to relate or phase in construction in relation to what is going on in the private sector is radical politics or radical economics. It simply is common sense and I say to the Minister that right

now in Manitoba things are in a sorry state of affairs that this government has made Manitoba a depressed area, an area that is in the Maritime camp rather than in the Western booming economy camp. I have said to him before that the people west of us regard Manitoba as a depressed province, a place where there is no action. They don't see us as part of the new west in the sense of an area rich in resources where the new political coat of Canada is taking place.

We're not playing poker with the big boys from Alberta and to an extent, or of British Columbia or Saskatchewan. They are the people who are making money, they are the people who are reaping the benefits of their resources and their governments, I suppose, must to a certain extent, get the credit for that.

The Saskatchewan Government seems to be doing extremely well politically, I don't think there is any danger of that government being replaced. They have undertaken projects that seem to be extremely popular in terms of potash development, the oil industry, etc. The Lougheed government I suppose, will last as long as Peter Lougheed. I suppose that he will be either 65 or 75 and then he will retire and then somebody else will take over; there is no danger there. We can't say the same of course, for Bill Bennett, he's not doing very well at the moment. He appears to be in trouble because of some of his policies, and in particular, on the non-economic side I think on the scandals and some of the social programs.

Well, the Minister wants me to talk more about Manitoba so I will talk more about Manitoba. In Manitoba, the government is one of the key industries in the province. Maybe it is number one, you know, the government may not count for a great deal against the mighty oil well of the Alberta corporations or of MacMillan & Bloedel in British Columbia, but the Manitoba Government in relation to all the other major industries is in fact, important.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I ask you to remind my honourable friend that the item that is being discussed now is Leased Accommodations under the Department of Government Services. It has nothing to do with oil wells in Alberta, British Columbia politics or Saskatchewan potash.

MR. CHAIRMAN: To the honourable members, I usually allow a great deal of latitude, inasmuch as that I would hope that the honourable members who are speaking are trying to make a point and at this point I'm not prepared to stop them from making their presentation, but I would ask the honourable members that the item under discussion is Leased Accommodations.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I was trying to broaden the horizons of the Minister but I have to narrow them now to make my point and that is, that the Minister doesn't like the role of government. He feels uncomfortable as do his colleagues about the role of government in the economy. I'm not embarrassed by the role of government. I believe government has a role to play, and so the Minister is arguing that he is delighted that he doesn't have a construction program in place to attack the economic problems.

He says he's happy not to be able to build new buildings, he's happy to be able to go to various places in Manitoba and in the City of Winnipeg and rent vacant space. I tell him the reason that space is vacant is because he is not constructing buildings, he is not stimulating the housing industry, that he is not undertaking projects in conjunction with his colleague the Minister of Economic Development. In other words, it is like a vicious circle. He saves money he says, by not building and then he can go and rent space cheap and I tell him it's because the government doesn't have a positive program of economic development and a construction program and he is a construction arm of government. It's because of that that he is able to pick up the space cheap and all the time he's picking up cheap space and saving money, on the other hand he's losing people, he's losing jobs, he's losing economic output and the province is sinking.

And that, Mr. Chairman, is my point. So we're talking about leased space versus constructed space. I don't want the Minister to say to me or to the Chamber or to the people that things are terrific in Manitoba because he can go to all kinds of empty buildings and get space at a low price. I say that is the result of poor planning and that is a state of affairs that he should apologize for, rather than be proud of.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. J. WALLY McKENZIE: Just so I could put the Honourable Member for Elmwood's mind to rest when he leaves the Committee this afternoon and have a good rest tonight, I just had the Investment Dealers Association of Canada of January 14th report handed to me today. I'll just read the last paragraph: "In summary, the provincial economy continues to grow in a stable and positive manner. The future should provide exciting opportunities not only in the development of our natural resources but also investment opportunities."

Now, I am sure the honourable member will feel much better; he knows the province is in good hands.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; (2) — pass; (d) — pass.

(e) Employee Housing, (1) Salaries — pass; (2) — pass.; (e) — pass.

(f) Security Services, (1) Salaries — pass; (2) — pass.

The Honourable Member for Roblin.

MR. McKENZIE: One question on security. I understand that the Honourable Member for Point Douglas had his office broken into and his files were apparently taken away. I wonder whether there have been charges laid or have they found the culprit? I wonder would the Minister give me any information on that please?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, that particular matter is in the hands of the City of Winnipeg police and to the best of my knowledge a report has not been submitted as yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (l) — pass; (2) — pass; (f) — pass.

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(g) Gimli Industrial Park, (1) Salaries — pass — the Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could give us a brief summary here of what has been happening in the past four years in terms of the success of this project. I think that there has been quite a success story here about the Gimli Industrial Park. You will recall that not too long ago the Federal Government decided to close the Air Base and that almost spelled disaster to the Town of Gimli and it was through the efforts of our administration that the base was turned into a park and with housing and with industry and has been I think successful ever since. It certainly has provided a lot of employment opportunities for people in the Gimli area. It has provided moderate cost housing and with other developments in the area, I think the Town of Gimli is in a pretty healthy state. If it hadn't been for the Gimli Industrial Park and other efforts by the province, I think it would have spelled disaster. So I just wanted to know if the Minister could give me a brief report on what's been happening in terms of the number of companies in the area since 1977, whether it's been gradually increasing or holding or slightly declining. I wonder if he could give us some numbers in terms of employees or companies or amount of revenue from those particular places.

MR. JORGENSEN: I'm advised that the level of employment and the occupancy at the Gimli Industrial Park has remained relatively the same over the past three years. We are contemplating and endeavoring to move some government functions there in order to more fully occupy space; more recently the Department of Natural Resources has moved in to the area and there have been enquiries recently and we hope that further space can be rented in order to more fully take advantage of the space that is available at the Industrial Park.

At the present time, there are 31 individual occupants, including private companies, individuals, and government departments and agencies located in the park occupying approximately about 83 percent of the space that is available.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (l) — pass; (2) — pass; (g) — pass.

(h) Alterations, Furniture, Furnishings and Incidental Expenses - Project Management, (1) — pass.

The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Minister whether he could comment on a report that I have and I don't want to place too much emphasis on this because I'm not too certain of its veracity, but it was mentioned to me and I haven't been able to confirm it, so therefore, I don't put it forward with any enthusiasm or force, but it was suggested that at The Pas Correctional, that there was a rumour that a large number of chairs or furniture was stolen and again, I don't have confirmation of this so I put it forward very hesitatingly, but has there been any problem there in terms of the delivery of furniture and has there been anything missing to the best of the Minister's knowledge?

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Chairman, I visited the Correctional Centre in The Pas last week. I saw an

awful lot of furniture lying around ready to be installed. No mention was made to me by the building contractors or the people who were on hand at that particular time of any disappearance of any furniture. I am not going to suggest that may not be the case. All I can tell him if it is, it has not been brought to my attention.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (l) — pass; (2) — pass; (h) — pass.

(j) Energy Management and Technical Services, (1) Salaries — pass; (2) — pass; (j) — pass.

Resolution No. 70 — pass. Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$29,795,100 for Government Services, Field Services, \$29,795,100.00 — pass.

Resolution No. 71, Clause 3. Supply and Services, (a)(1) Salaries — pass.

MR. JORGENSEN: I suggest, Mr. Chairman, it may be an appropriate to call it 4:30.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30, I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour and Committee will resume at 8:00 o'clock this evening.

Committee rise.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, we're now under Private Members' Hour. The first item of business on Tuesdays is Public and Private Bills.

Bill No. 14, An Act to Amend The Medical Act.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker I would like the indulgence of the honourable members to have this matter stand.

MR. SPEAKER: We'll then proceed to Resolutions.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RES. NO. 6 - USE OF SEAT BELTS

MR. SPEAKER: Resolution No. 6, the Resolution of the Honourable Member for Elmwood. Are you ready for the question? Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

The Honourable Member for Radisson

MR. KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, Resolution No. 6. I'm only going to speak on it for a couple of minutes. I don't believe in speaking for 20 minutes and saying what you have to in five, but I've listened to some of the debate on this subject and I can't quite agree with many of things I've heard, particularly the things that the Honourable Member for Elmwood has suggested.

I guess after investigating and not really checking into all of the statistics because statistics usually are for losers. I think that the proper thing to do is to go to the people that are directly involved, which we as their representatives, should be speaking on their behalf and I have done so Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to cite two cases and these two cases are what have helped me to make up my mind on whether I'm going to support mandatory seat belt legislation or freedom of choice.

I was talking to a widow not too long ago and the widow became a widow because of an accident that occurred in a car, where the car overturned in a small ditch full of water; the husband was drowned; he couldn't get out of his seat belt and was drowned. There was another occupant in the car and the second occupant was able to get out, had his seat belt done up, but was able to get out. A tragic occurrence which would not have happened had seat belts not been in use.

I would cite one other case where a particular friend of mine was thrown out of the car on impact in having an accident and not wearing a seat belt; not wearing a seat belt saved this party's life, because at the time that the car was examined immediately after the accident, the motor and everything else from the front part of the car had moved back to exactly the place where this party had been sitting prior to the impact, was thrown out of the car and their life was saved. I just cite those two examples, Sir, and that would be the reason on my not supporting mandatory seat belts. I will support the right to use seat belts, but mandatory seat belts will not ever be supported by me, Sir. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker. I have participated I think in this debate every time it has come up, not because I have had a great deal more to say in it than other members, but because it is a very very interesting discussion as to just what laws the state is entitled to enact to regulate peoples' lives.

I am convinced, Mr. Speaker, that seat belts probably would save lives. I am not convinced that they would save my life or the life of another person and the fact is, Mr. Speaker, some people may find that they feel more secure by wearing seat belts and therefore do things that they would normally not do if they weren't wearing a seat belt, and it is impossible to decide psychologically just exactly how it is going to affect the individual person. Unless I was convinced that the not wearing of a seat belt would harm somebody else, I do not see what right the state has to require somebody to wear a seat belt.

Now The Honourable Member for Elmwood has several times said that if you speak against this resolution you are speaking against the wearing of seat belts.

MR. DOERN: No, they have spoken against it and they have said they are for the wearing of seat belts.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I am speaking against this resolution and I am generally for the wearing of seat belts.

MR. DOERN: They aren't; two of them are.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, howsoever I find that there seems to be a gap in the logic of the Member for Elmwood with the greatest of respect. He says that if you speak against this resolution you cannot be for the wearing of seat belts.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, if I could be allowed to speak on a point of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a question? The honourable member on a point of privilege.

MR. DOERN: This point has been alluded to before. I have said that several members on the opposite side have spoken against and given illustrations that would discourage anyone from wearing seat belts, about death and destruction caused by seat belts, and then inconsistently and contradictorily they have then said that they are for the wearing of them, that is what I have said.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I have listened to the debate very carefully and I have heard members like the Member for Radisson give illustrations as to how it is possible to be hurt by wearing a seat belt and I have heard them give these illustrations to indicate that to some people the choice of not wearing a seat belt, they feel is for their safety.

At the same time the very same members, not in any way in my mind contradicting themselves and I don't have to defend them because I would take the same position, have said they believe that seat belts should be worn. There have been accidents by people who wear seat belts which could have been saved; there have also been no doubt and nobody has argued against it, accidents where people not wearing a seat belt could have been saved if they were wearing one. I have not heard anything different from honourable members opposite and members on this side. It's not a New Democratic Party issue although last year in the House I heard some members get up and say, let's forget this nonsense, argument about rights.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the main reason, well I will have to quote chapter and verse of remarks that were made to that effect from the Member for Churchill last year. I have heard the members who are for the compulsory seat belts disparage those people who argue against it on the basis of civil rights. I have heard it said on numerous occasions. I have heard the very same people, Mr. Speaker, and that's why this year this argument has some added significance, I have heard the very same people argue in favour of an entrenched Bill of Rights.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to now illustrate how an entrenched Bill of Rights works, so that those people who are arguing for it understand what they are proposing. —(Interjection)— No, let's just take this resolution as being passed. Let us assume that the government brought in a bill which has been brought in in three provinces in Canada, four provinces in Canada, saying that the wearing of seat belts is compulsory. Let us assume somebody is prosecuted for the wearing of seat belts, and the person in answer to that prosecution, says that this is contrary to the entrenched Charter of Rights which talks about life, liberty and security of person and liberty means the right to make a choice as to whether I will or will not wear a seat belt to protect my life, and I tell the honourable member that numerous such cases take place in the United States, numerous; and the Supreme Court of Canada would have the right to say, and as a matter of fact in my particular view at the moment it would be a more reasoned

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argument, that such a statute is beyond the jurisdiction of the province because it offends against the entrenched Charter of Rights, and therefore the statute is illegal.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that wouldn't particularly bother me except in principle because although I believe that it shouldn't be passed, I also defend the right of parliaments to pass it. But if you had an entrenched Charter of Rights, not only would you find that the argument is that it shouldn't be, but that it is illegal for any Legislature to pass such a law and you couldn't get that changed if one province, namely Ontario or Quebec, vetoed it, or a western region vetoed it, or you couldn't get an amendment by means of any amending formula; and if you did get an amendment, it would be contrary to the entrenched Charter of Rights, guaranteeing life, liberty and the security of the person.

So this debate has a particular significance this year, Mr. Speaker, because again the people generally who I have heard speak in favour of entrenched rights, also speak of compulsory seat belt legislation and the two are not only potentially, but probably contradictory of one another.

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

MR. LEN DOMINO: Mr. Speaker, I want to say first that I wouldn't go anywhere without wearing my seat belt. When I travel in my automobile, I wear a seat belt. But I am not willing, and I'm going to vote against this bill and I want to take a couple of seconds to explain why, but I am not willing to insist that everyone else wear their seat belts.

I am willing to use whatever influence I have to encourage the government to increase educational activities so that everybody should be aware of the fact, because unlike maybe some members on this side of the House, I have absolutely no qualms about seat belts. I believe seat belts are better, they save lives, and that we should all wear them. And I think the incidences where seat belts cause a problem are very few and far between, and those occasions when they can save you from a serious injury, are many.

However, the argument that worries me and that troubles me the most is the argument that well, society has the right to insist that we all wear our seat belts because if we don't, the individual not wearing a seat belt may be injured and then the majority of us have to pick up the hospital costs or the costs of the children, etc. I worry about that argument and the implications of following that argument through because there are many many — one of the front bench members mentioned smoking — there are many many examples of how we could legislate on the same basis, the same matter of principle.

For instance, hunting; hunting creates accidents. We could outlaw hunting of wild animals in this province on the same basic rationale that if we did so, our hospitalization costs for the rest of society would be reduced. We could outlaw contact sports because there is no doubt about it that playing football creates injuries. You're looking at a person who played football and then had to avail himself of the very generous hospitalization plans in this province —(Interjection)— some members are concerned about where my injury was. The doctors

were forced to put my knees back together because they were seriously injured, but I'm not willing to ban or prohibit contact sports because even though it costs society a few extra dollars, I managed to survive with most of my mental faculties in good condition, and I just want to say very quickly that that argument worries me and I think that argument's a dangerous argument, the argument that society has the right to impose restrictions on individuals simply because it might cost the rest of us more money.

I think it's a dangerous argument that opens up a whole new area for the state to intervene in our lives. I'm willing to put up with state intervention, we all are, because we live in a complicated society and we live in a society where we're very crowded and if we're not careful, one person's freedoms encroach on another person's freedoms.

But as has been mentioned here, this is not that kind of an incident. If you refuse not to wear your own seat belt, you might cost society a few more dollars somewhere down the road, but the injury is only to yourself. If I am in an accident and I am wearing my seat belt and the other gentleman in the other car is not wearing his seat belt, he pays certainly the highest price because he pays the price of his own health. So I'm willing to advocate that we all wear our seat belts. I teach my children that; I teach the kids in school that; I urge people who get in the same car with me to wear a seat belt because I don't want them bouncing around during the accident smashing into me. But even in that case, where there is a direct implication to me in a very real sense, I don't insist on it, because it's against my very nature to compel other people to do anything. So, Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote against this bill or this resolution. I am not used to voting against bills in this House at any rate. I am going to vote against it for those very reasons.

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

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker, just a few words on this resolution and the amendments that have been proposed. At least some members on the government side are prepared to now tread a lot more softly on this issue, well realizing the —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. I believe the honourable member has already spoken on the resolution. I believe the honourable member spoke after the Member for Emerson. Are you ready for the question?.

MR. URUSKI: The Honourable Member for Elmwood had thought that I had the right to speak and he said he'd be back very shortly, he did want to speak on this amendment. He's just across the way, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: There are numerous members in this Assembly. If they want to speak on the bill. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have listened to some of the debates. I would like to stand

in support of this resolution. There have been some suggestions made that this is forcing people to do things, that it is not right, that it is equivalent to forcing people to put on a jacket in the wintertime. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is not at all an appropriate analogy in this case. What we are talking about with this resolution, is a situation where we are protecting ourselves against other people's negligence.

When I'm driving down the street, I do try to protect myself in every way possible, against the stupidity and negligence of other drivers. I believe that I have the right to the protection when I'm driving down the street, of other drivers protecting themselves against my negligence and stupidity. I believe that they have a duty to protect themselves against a mistake that I might make, a momentary lapse in which I might wind up hitting a vehicle. It might be my fault. I believe that the people in the other vehicle have a responsibility to protect themselves. I believe that the people in the other vehicle have a responsibility to make sure that I don't damage them to any greater extent than they can possibly avoid, and one of the ways in which they can avoid greater injuries, is by wearing a seat belt.

It seems to me that when a person gets into a motor vehicle and gets into a position where he may be damaged by another person, that he has a duty not only to himself as he would by wearing a jacket in the wintertime, but also a duty to his neighbour, to protect himself against his neighbour's negligence and when you have matters such as these going through the courts, the person who is at fault, it seems to me, should be able to stand up and say well, here you are, you didn't wear a seat belt and that surely was a negligent act on the part of the individual who wasn't wearing it.

Now we had a court decision last year which, I believe, the Court of Queen's Bench ruled that not wearing a seat belt in Manitoba is not negligent because we don't have any legislation here. So I would suggest that it is up to this Legislature now to change the law, to make sure that it is negligent not to wear a seat belt. I believe that that can do something to cut down on the rate of serious injuries on the highways. It won't cut down on accidents. We heard the Minister of Highways a few days ago, talking about our accident rate, that's not the issue, seat belts won't cut down on accidents. Seat belts will cut down on injuries and I think we have a responsibility toward ourselves and to our neighbours to cut down on injuries in every way possible.

I might say that we do it with respect to safety regulations on the rest of the motor vehicle. You can't buy a car anymore that doesn't have signal lights. You can't buy a car anymore that doesn't have a certain quality of headlight, a certain quality of door, a certain quality of dashboard, etc., all of those things built in for safety protection. I would suggest that this is just one more safety feature to protect individuals in motor vehicles against the negligence of their neighbour.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Now the question is the Motion as amended. The Honourable Member for Elmwood. The Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In speaking to the Motion it was interesting as I said, to hear the Member for St. Matthew speak about his good record in terms of promoting the safety and I certainly compliment the Member for St. Matthews, if he is using that kind of promotion and good safety-mindedness to have people wear seat belts in his vehicle that travel with him, that he encourages their use and he in fact asks them to wear that seat belt when he is driving.

Mr. Speaker, some of the arguments that he made, the analogy of legislating the use of certain equipment in contact sports that we should outlaw the sport, if we would legislate certain types of wearing apparel. Mr. Speaker, whether they legislate it or they put it into practice, I'm not certain which, but they certainly will not allow you on a football field if you don't wear that helmet. Has anyone seen a football player go into a game without wearing his protective equipment? No, Mr. Speaker. They don't have a law saying that has to be done in terms of legislation but, Mr. Speaker, I think the Member for Radisson would know that.

MR. KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, there is a law or rule that regulates that you must wear that protective equipment.

MR. URUSKI: Oh, Mr. Speaker, I was being more lenient on the Member for St. Matthews then I thought I was, Sir. There is a rule in the football area that you shall not play unless you wear certain equipment.

Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. Matthews says I miss the point.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member on a point of order.

MR. DOMINO: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I just wanted to point out that what I was saying was that even with the equipment, the very act of playing football creates in some people's minds, an unnecessary medical expense and if you're going to insist people wear seat belts . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. We can't have speeches interrupting other speeches. The Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Maybe I now understand the Member for St. Matthews somewhat better but, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the contact sports and the injuries one can sustain in a sport certainly, Mr. Speaker, one could go a long way along the line that he has mentioned. But the fact of the matter is, the safety equipment in whatever sport or whatever area that one decides to participate in, is in many instances mandatory in terms of that safety equipment's use.

Certainly there can be injuries, Mr. Speaker, sustained when you climb out of bed if one wants to go to that extent. You can slip on the carpet and fall on your elbow and hurt yourself, if you want to go to that kind of an extreme, Mr. Speaker, so that injuries are not certainly just prone to sports or other activities.

But in terms of the safety of motorists and their occupants in the vehicles that they drive, at least I

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have to say that it is now generally well accepted that the use of seat belts does lessen the extent of injury and that's the whole point, Mr. Speaker, it does lessen the extent of injured individuals. It's been pretty well proven, Mr. Speaker, that that is the case and that is the whole point.

Mr. Speaker, one could support the amendment and the amended resolution, Sir, that if one could see that there was a conscious and determined effort to expand the safety programs that the Provincial Highways Department and Provincial Government has, but certainly those few signs that are posted on the highways and the odd bit during safety week, that the Manitoba Safety Council puts out, they are trying to — there, we almost had an accident, Mr. Speaker, maybe the Clerk of the House could have worn a seat belt in terms of walking down stairs, Sir — maybe he didn't need a seat belt but he certainly could have used a helmet had he gone down those stairs.

Mr. Speaker, if there was evidence that's been presented by the government in terms of an expansion of their program, one could certainly support such a resolution; but certainly one can't go around and pat oneself on the back and say that yes, we want to continue our comprehensive safety programming.

I'd like to know, where is that comprehensive safety programming? What are we talking about, Mr. Speaker? Last time I spoke I listed a number of areas that we started to work towards and lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, since I was Minister responsible for the Motor Vehicle Branch and the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, we're going back about five years, three-and-one-half of which my friends across the way have been in government.

Where have we moved? Where is this comprehensive safety programming, Mr. Speaker? Is it those blue signs that you see on a few of the highways saying "Buckle Up"? It helps, albeit, it does and that's one area, that's one little program that is visible to some degree to the motoring public in the few places that we've got those signs.

What else, Mr. Speaker? What else can we point at? You know, the Member for Emerson, he presented this amendment. I want to hear him. What else can we point at? Where is that comprehensive program? Where is driver training in our schools, Mr. Speaker? What else can we point at?

We know that we've given the Manitoba Safety Council an additional \$30,000 a year. No, we certainly can't say that it's up to them to do it. I mean they're doing, I believe, as good a job as an agency can, with the amount of funds that they receive, both from the courses that they offer, that they can generate the revenues, that they can generate themselves and from the public through to the Government of Manitoba, they're doing as good a job as they can.

But certainly one can't get up in this House and say, continue its comprehensive safety programming and pat oneself on the back. Mr. Speaker, I mean that is going a little bit above and beyond the call of duty of the Member for Emerson, to pat his own Minister to such a degree, unless he didn't draft the amendment up, Mr. Speaker; unless the Minister drafted the amendment up himself and the Member for Emerson, without reading it thoroughly, brought

this amendment in and read it and then now he says, oh my goodness, what did he do? What did I get myself into? Where is that comprehensive programming? Where is that programming?

We got a few blue signs on the highway saying, "Buckle Up", but that's it, that's it. —(Interjection)— No, Mr. Speaker, we only see one sign at a time. They may move it around but there are a number of signs, I believe, I don't think that they do that. So Mr. Speaker, we can certainly support congratulating the private groups in the Province of Manitoba for whatever work that they have undertaken and are attempting to do to promote safety.

But, certainly the government can't say we're listening to those groups because, Mr. Speaker the University Group that did the study on the use of seat belts and the effectiveness, I think that survey that was done overwhelmingly supported the use of seat belts, Mr. Speaker, so this government hasn't really listened to those private groups that the Member for Emerson, who proposed this resolution, says that we should congratulate them. Congratulate them but you certainly are not listening to them. You certainly haven't done a very good job of listening to those groups. Certainly the Member for Portage hasn't listened to the doctors that have sent letters to this Government, in terms of saying that seat belts should be legislated, he is the Member for Portage and he should read his own correspondence, that the doctors from Portage La Prairie, from the Clinic, have sent in and have publicitized; certainly you're not listening to those people.

If you were listening to the people in the know, the Medical Profession, you would have done it long ago, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Member for Elmwood brings me a copy of that letter from the doctors, and it isn't one or two doctors, there's about a dozen doctors who signed the letter. "Portage doctors urge compulsory seat belt usage", Mr. Speaker. The doctors in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Portage support and urge the legislating of the use of seat belts in the Province of Manitoba. You congratulate these groups, but you're not listening to them, so of what value is it, Mr. Speaker.

Be it resolved that this Legislature encourage the voluntary use of passenger restraint systems. Mr. Speaker, if we could say that there is some active, some real organized effort on behalf of the public of Manitoba through its government to promote the use of seat belts, I would say; Look I'm backing off, I really think that it's pretty adequate. But to say that there's some effective program is really flying in the face of reality, Mr. Speaker, because there is no program. That's the part that I really object to, Mr. Speaker, to congratulating a government that has not really even attempted; I shouldn't say they haven't, they've attempted in a very low priority way to give some advertising by the roadsides, Mr. Speaker, that the use of seat belts is a good thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, if the Member for Emerson is not embarrassed he should be. He maybe should get up and amend this resolution and indicate that his Minister has not come up with the program that he would have liked to have in this amendment. I mean, certainly I don't fault him for wanting the good programs, I support him for wanting them, but to come out and say that there is something when there isn't, I say, Mr. Speaker, that's going a bit much. So,

Mr. Speaker, while I could certainly go for a comprehensive education program prior — and that would be the way to do it — comprehensive education program to promote the use of safety equipment in vehicles; what do they call it, Passenger Restraint Systems in vehicles; a good promotion prior to bringing it in. That would be the right approach, Mr. Speaker, but to congratulate a Minister of Highways for doing nothing is certainly not doing justice to the need for safety on our highways.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question, the Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have, in previous years, not participated in this particular debate and, as the old aphorism from Guys and Dolls goes; this must be the longest standing, not crap game but debate in town. The analogy of a crap game though, Mr. Speaker is not that inappropriate because, I think, in a sense, what we're doing when we refuse to act on the Member for Elmwood's resolution is gambling with the lives of people and I believe, along with my colleagues, that that is inappropriate, Mr. Speaker; and particularly inappropriate in the context of all the information that we have in front of us on this subject. It is not my intention to exhaustively rehash all the arguments that have been made by my colleagues in favour of seat belts and, certain members opposite, opposed, Mr. Speaker.

But I will comment, Mr. Speaker, on one general aspect, and that is the seeming adamant of the members opposite to have it all ways. Mr. Speaker, they indicate that, on the one hand, they know of cases where people, if they would have been wearing seat belts, restraining devices, would have suffered grievous injury or death; on the other hand, they tell us that they favour them, they recognize that they can't, as a matter of general principle, be a good safety device. But then, Mr. Speaker, they attach the corollary in the rider that they will only favour them in voluntary circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that the government can have it all ways. The issue is too fundamental, it's too important, it should not be dealt with on a "political basis", Mr. Speaker, but rather, Mr. Speaker, it should be dealt with on a highly objective scientific premise; strictly on the empirical evidence which forms the basis by which many other jurisdictions have now acted on this important issue. I don't think, in this regard, Manitoba could be accused of being in any sort of vanguard; we clearly represent a rear guard action, Mr. Speaker, much delayed, much delayed.

Mr. Speaker, I want to address myself only to three issues which I do not believe have been adequately debated and discussed in this forum. Those issues, Mr. Speaker, will be children's rights; the effect of seat-belt legislation on Autopac; and Mr. Speaker, finally health costs.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, dealing with the issue of children's rights, I want to say that I believe that it is the right of every child to be protected from harm and it is the responsibility of every adult who has charge of a child to take whatever measures are necessary to protect that child from life-endangering situations.

Mr. Speaker, I wish that all adults in this Province and in this world were capable of making those decisions for themselves; I wish they were all able to evaluate circumstances in such a way that they could conclude when it was appropriate for a child to be buckled up. But Mr. Speaker, the facts are that many many people are not so responsible and children are, in fact, jeopardized. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure we all agree that it's axiomatic, that children are not competent to look after their own welfare — I'm talking now with respect to young children — and I believe is a matter of certain fundamental rights that there should be legislation that requires that they be buckled up. I suppose I can accept, to some small degree, I have some great reservation, I can accept to some small degree a situation where an adult, as a result of failure of buckle up is seriously injured or killed, I can accept that, that's voluntary self-liquidation, Mr. Speaker. I cannot accept a situation where an adult, through his or her negligence, determines that a child should suffer such injuries; that I cannot accept. And I don't think that any member in this Legislature can accept that situation; and I think that we should do something about it. It's a bit of a joke that we should have to repeat this endless debate ad nauseam, and I believe it is quite reflective of the government's general opposition to taking any affirmative action with respect to any pressing issue.

Mr. Speaker, the second point I mentioned was the question of Autopac. The courts in this Province have now determined that a motorist who drives in certain circumstances, not all circumstances, but in certain circumstances is contributory negligent as a result of not wearing a seat belt. So, if that person suffers an injury that might not have been suffered if a seat belt was being worn; and if the courts can determine that; having reviewed all the evidence brought to bear in the case, then that individual will be deprived of certain benefits. It seems to me that it's a travesty of justice and it's a bureaucratic nightmare that in this province we do not have legislation which informs people of that situation and protects them from that peril. It's absolutely irrational that we live in a jurisdiction where the courts have made this sort of determination and the government hasn't bothered to make appropriate revisions to its highway traffic law.

Obviously, the government should either, by legislation, reject the interpretation of the courts and say that the lack of a seat belt is simply never to be construed as contributory negligence and that is an edict; or they should go the other direction and inform all drivers that that is the case and that they should be on their guard; that they are imperilling themselves when they fail to buckle up. But this Government resist logic, Mr. Speaker, in this regard as in many other respects and they don't act.

And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that this is simply negligence on the part of the government. The government has a responsibility to do something. I tell you they can do what I construe to be the wrong things and rule that the courts are not allowed to take this into consideration, but they should do something.

Mr. Speaker, the third point I made was health costs. I believe that citizens who buckle up, and I suppose citizens who drive prudently, cautiously and

defensively have a right to be protected from the perversity of those who won't be concerned about their own health and well-being. And I think, Mr. Speaker, that it's a question of rights, that people who drive responsibly and cautiously and defensively, who would never be held liable for an accident and who generally are not involved in accidents, and if they are, Mr. Speaker, there's insurance coverage which remunerates MHSC for injuries that they suffer, Mr. Speaker, I think that those people should have rights too and we should recognize them.

I think that we should respect their right to save taxes. To pay fewer taxes and, Mr. Speaker, there's evidence — and I won't review it because I believe that the evidence which has been brought forward is ample, substantial and conclusive — there's evidence from all quarters that the absence of seat belts simply rules and mitigates in favour of more serious injuries. And Mr. Speaker, that entails additional hospital costs, health care costs and it's, in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, humbly and respectfully it's folly. We should do everything possible to reduce our costs so that we can focus those precious resources we do have on very immediate and critical health care needs.

We want to de-emphasize accident health care and emphasize prevention. But we don't do that, Mr. Speaker. This code of voluntariness, this theoretical ascription to human freedom and rights, effectively works a hardship on everyone else, on all the others. And I just don't see it, Mr. Speaker, I don't see it.

So, Mr. Speaker, I certainly want to be on record as favouring this particular measure. If I am a part of a New Democratic Government I will certainly vote in favour of such a measure, if and when I hope it is brought before the House. I presume, notwithstanding changes in our Caucus, that it still will be and I recommend this particular resolution to the House.

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

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have participated in this debate during the last session and done so because then, as now, I believe it to be a crucial issue and a very important issue, although I do believe that we will probably not resolve it any better than we have resolved it in the past. I think that it is going to take a change in government and I'm not even certain that that, in fact, would bring about a resolution of the problem. But the fact is I do think the record is fairly clear that this government is not going to act in any other way than they have already indicated they are going to act, by both experience and in fact by the amendment that they brought forward.

The amendment that they brought forward. Mr. Speaker, is one that is quite similar to other amendments that have been brought forward on this resolution and is, as well, quite similar to other amendments which have been brought forward on other resolutions, and that is that it deludes the intent of the resolution; that it places before us a subject which we can debate, in which a government can vote on without being embarrassed; and I think it is that purpose only. I don't believe that the purpose of that amendment is anything greater than to avoid some embarrassment for the government

members. We can, or at least I can, support the first BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, and that is that the Province of Manitoba continue to implement its comprehensive safety programming and, of course, we support that and we think that it should be implementing its safety program, although we do reserve the right to question the comprehensiveness of that program. We would have preferred to have seen some definitive statements as to the requirements of that program; the policy within that program; the program action that's being taken; the mechanisms in which they are proceeding with that program; as well as some statistics to help us try to make a judgment as to whether that program is in fact being effective or not.

So whatever safety programming they have in place certainly they should continue it. However, I don't believe that they have proven that it is comprehensive; I don't think that they have proven that it is effective either. But we certainly would not want them, because of the resolution that was brought forward by the Member for Elmwood, to discontinue any activities that they already have in place. I don't believe that was the intent of the Member for Elmwood; I think the intent — and if I can impute motives in a positive sense — in this case, to place before us a very crucial issue, one in which he believes very strongly about and one which demands attention and action on the part of government. Attention and action, I might add, that we are probably not going to see given the passing of the amendment.

And I believe as well that the Province of Manitoba, as per the first WHEREAS, should be congratulated for their successful efforts in the promotion of safe driving in the province. But again, we reserve the right to question just exactly how successful those efforts have been. If there have been successful efforts, well then by all means, congratulations are duly offered and I'm certain accepted. But they cannot bring us any definitive information which shows that they have been any more successful than any other jurisdiction or which shows that they are in fact having unqualified success with their efforts. So while we can work with that first BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, we certainly believe that the questions that are raised by it are far more than the answers that are provided in it and for that reason we believe this debate should continue.

It's the second RESOLVE, of course, with which we are going to have problems, or at least with those persons who believe in the mandatory aspects of seat belt use are going to have problems, and I am one of those. I want the record to be clear, as it was clear last year, that I think there is a place for mandatory seat belt legislation in this province; and I think that it is overdue; and I think that as the evidence continues to come in and the evidence continues to mount, we will find that, given the statistics and given the extrapolations and the assumptions that one can make from those statistics, is becoming more and more obvious that this type of legislation will, in fact, do great benefit to drivers and the general public in this province. So I have to disagree entirely with the second RESOLVED in respect to the replacement of mandatory use of seat belts with voluntary use of seat belts.

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Of course we should encourage continued voluntary use of seat belts, but for those persons who aren't voluntarily using seat belts, we should provide a greater incentive to convince them that they should be using seat belts. And I don't think that is in any way inconsistent with other statements that I and others have made in this House.

I said before that the evidence points to a situation where mandatory seat belts are most likely protecting the individual and protecting the society from medical costs and other factors which act to the detriment of individuals in societies and last year when we debated this we talked about some statistics. I have an article which has come to me since then, or at that time, but I did not use and I think it's important that we put some of the information contained within it on the public records so that the public can know exactly what the benefits of mandatory seat belt legislation are.

There is a report prepared by the Provincial Transportation Department in Alberta that concluded that if each of the 688 people, who died in traffic accidents in that province during 1979, had been wearing seat belts, 329 would have been saved. Now that's a significant percentage that would have been saved because of the use of seat belts.

While the members opposite, and some members on this side, can say that in fact seat belts in some instances do, in fact, work against the individual and perhaps do cause more injury than would have been caused without the use of seat belts, and we can't deny that that doesn't happen from time to time. We will suggest that statistically it is such a minor significant factor in the whole argument that it is one that can be discounted for the fact that it does not, in fact, happen all that often, and I think it's in less than one-half of 1 percent of all the accidents were seat belts considered to be a factor that worked against the safety of the individual, rather than for the safety of the individual.

As well, there was a Swedish study of some 28,780 accidents that involved 37,511 belted and unbelted front seat occupants. They found that fatal injuries occurred at speeds as low as 20 kilometres per hour when occupants were not wearing belts. In other words, an accident at 20 kilometres per hour combined with an unbelted occupant, a front seat occupant of a car, could in fact result in a fatality. However, there were no fatalities at speeds under 90 kilometres per hour among those who were wearing belts. So again, I think the statistics are significant; I think the argument is fairly specific and clear. In that instance seat belts did make a major difference; a major difference in what happened to those occupants who were involved in accidents under 96, I correct the record, it was 96 kilometres per hour.

And surveys have also been conducted in a number of provinces that have passed laws requiring seat belts to be worn and found dramatic increases in usage rates, as well as decreases in the severity of accident rates.

As a matter of fact, the Alberta Transportation Report says and the quote is: "It estimates the economic loss of Alberta caused by the failure of 85 percent of Albertans to wear safety belts are in the range of \$5 million in annual direct medical costs and an annual cost of \$25 million for indirect costs such as increased welfare expenses and loss of productivity".

Those are fairly significant figures for the Province of Alberta, but we know that the figures for the Province of Manitoba are just as significant given the correlation with our population and we know, in fact, or we are told at least, that the use of seat belts in this province would greatly reduce the number and the severity of accidents, or perhaps I should rephrase that, it may not greatly reduce the number of accidents, but it would certainly greatly reduce the severity of injury in those accidents and that would be translated into savings for the province as a whole; savings for you and I and every individual in this province by way of medical costs, welfare costs, Autopac costs.

The Member for Roblin, during the debate on minimum wage, read to me an editorial from the Free Press that was in disagreement with the statements that I was making in respect to the minimum wage.

I have waited for the opportunity to be able to read back an editorial of the Free Press to him, although I don't want to make it a practice. I just want it to be known that if we are going to start resorting to . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We are not dealing with the minimum wage now, we are dealing with seat belt legislation. If the honourable member cares to confine his remarks to seat belt legislation he may proceed.

MR. COWAN: I had not intended to deal with the minimum wage; I intended to deal with the subject matter of Free Press editorials and how they relate to seat belts and I need only read the title of the Free Press editorial which says: "Seat belts do save lives", I think to make the case of how they do relate to seat belts.

The opening statement of that April 8th, 1980 editorial is that there is scant room to debate the facts of the case for using seat belts in the front seat of cars. Well I disagree with that statement. I think there is a lot of room to debate; I think that we should debate the issue; I think it's healthy to debate the issue, but I do agree with the intent of the article and that is, that seat belts do save lives. A general assumption of the argument is that and I agree with that and it is a Free Press editorial and if the members opposite take Free Press editorials to be more than they are, then I only want the opportunity, on occasion, to be able to read them back to them.

I want the record to be clear that I do not take them to be more than they are, Mr. Speaker, and I am not going to place a great deal of faith in Free Press editorials even when they do support the position that I happen to be taking on a particular issue, nor do I want them read at me from the members opposite if they are not going to place their full faith in those editorials. So I think that was a point that needed to be brought forward.

The issue that we are discussing is one that many times gets caught up in emotional debate and emotional argument and I've tried not to do that, although I have a tendency to emotionalize arguments from time to time and fully admit to that.

I try to present the facts as I see them. I think that, as I said last time, this is an issue that does test the ability of politicians and that it does transcend partisan politics because it is an emotional issue,

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because it is in fact an issue that people feel very strongly about. I will be concluding my remarks on this note; that I had stood in my place today to place on the record, once again, the fact that I do support it because I think they do work; I think mandatory seat belt usage is in the best interest of society and I am somewhat concerned, as a matter of fact I'm gravely concerned, that the Government of the day does not share that impression to the extent that we will see the passage of any sort of mandatory seat belt legislation from them; and can only look forward to other opportunities, other times and places to debate the issue, to try to convince them of the appropriateness of our arguments. As the Member for Elmwood said, who introduced this resolution, we shall rise to debate this again.

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

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the honourable member would permit a question which perhaps he, better than some of us . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The hour is 5:30.
The Honourable Government House Leader.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Economic Development that this House do now adjourn and resume in Committee of Supply at 8 o'clock.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 tomorrow. (Wednesday)