

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 20 April, 1981

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MATTER OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

MR. LEONARD S. EVANS: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of personal privilege. This is my first opportunity to raise this matter, Mr. Speaker, since the printed proceedings of the Public Utilities Committee were only distributed Thursday afternoon after I had left the Legislature for a meeting in my constituency.

On Page 128 of the Thursday, April 9th Meeting of the Public Utilities and Natural Resources Committee of the Legislature, it was stated by the Honourable Minister of Energy, and I'm quoting, Mr. Speaker, "I want to say that if we're going to introduce some political motivations into this thing, we should point out that Mr. Dennis Scott was also the Member for Brandon East's campaign manager, and a very active NDP member, and was on the Board by virtue of his political association with the former government."

Mr. Speaker, this is not a true statement. Mr. Scott was never my campaign manager. Secondly, Mr. Scott has never been active in provincial politics to the best of my knowledge, and I would add, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Scott was chosen because we wanted to have representation from the City of Brandon on the Manitoba Hydro Board and thirdly, Mr. Scott had had 22 years of experience in the field of electric power.

However, even if he had been active politically, Mr. Speaker, I would trust that that would not have disqualified him, or indeed anyone, from serving on any board or commission of the provincial government. I note that Mr. Bill Wilton, an automobile dealer in Brandon is now a Hydro Board member, and it is public knowledge that he has been a senior fund raiser for the Conservative Party for many years and has been very active in many ways on behalf of the Conservative Party.

I also note that Mr. James Thornborough, a Brandon lawyer and Conservative candidate against me in Brandon East in the last election, was appointed to the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I believe the honourable member is going beyond the bounds of the point of personal privilege that he raised. I would thank the honourable member for bringing to my attention the point of privilege. If he would stay with the point of privilege that he raised . . .

The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to conclude, I simply wanted to make the point that I don't believe political affiliation should disqualify anyone from serving on a provincial board.

However, the statement by the Minister of Energy is incorrect and I would trust that he will

acknowledge his error and perhaps withdraw that statement.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member has brought forward a point of personal privilege.

The Honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I have no difficulty whatsoever ceding to the superior information given to us by the Member for Brandon East and I accept that. Any suggestion I made of him being the member's campaign manager, I certainly withdraw.

MR. SPEAKER: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

Order please.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to announce to the House and to table at this time a Letter of Intent that this government has just signed with the Aluminum Company of Canada.

It outlines the arrangement by which Alcan will proceed immediately with a multi-million dollar feasibility study for a world scale smelter in Manitoba. This is a major step forward in this government's program to broaden the industrial base of the province and provide more opportunities for Manitobans. I should point out that Alcan already has conducted a \$500,000 pre-feasibility study. The company, which has its head office in Montreal, with aluminum operations in many other parts of the world, was so heartened by the results of this first study that it now will undertake a full-scale feasibility study which will cost, at a minimum, \$5 million. If, as we expect, this indepth study leads to a decision to build a \$500 million-plus aluminum smelter in Manitoba, it would be Alcan's first inland smelter and will trigger further expenditures of more than \$500 million toward new Hydro generating facilities.

What has attracted Alcan to Manitoba is the fact this province offers an abundant supply of stable priced hydro power from our northern river systems. This is a crucial factor in the production of aluminum. There is no other major industrial process which needs as great a quantity of electrical energy per unit of production as this metal. Alcan has informed us that the size of smelter it would like to build in Manitoba, a facility with an annual production capacity of 200,000 metric tons of aluminum, would require nearly 400,000 kilowatts of firm power 24 hours a day. This would make Alcan the largest single consumer of power in the province.

In the letter of intent signed at noon today by myself on behalf of the government and Mr. Patrick Rich, President of the Aluminum Company of Canada, there is a special provision dealing with the supply of power to this proposed smelter. This calls

for Alcan to negotiate with the province and Manitoba Hydro, arrangements whereby Alcan will acquire a minority ownership interest in a hydro power station. This will establish for the company a firm power base for its smelter. For its part, Alcan will assume its full share of the cost of such a power station, including construction costs, interest and other expenditures.

The company also will be granted water rights by the Manitoba Government as a participant with Manitoba Hydro in a joint venture agreement covering this power station project. Alcan will pay water rentals and other charges for this consideration. This joint venture approach on the one hand provides Alcan with an assured supply of power at a predictable cost and on the other, provides cost savings to Manitoba Hydro ratepayers. Since the costs of new development on the Nelson River would be high and produce power rates well above the ratepayers in Manitoba now having to pay, the proposed arrangement with Alcan involving capital input by the company into Hydro construction can best ensure that our system rates be kept as low as possible.

Mr. Speaker, I should emphasize that Alcan has a declared policy of refusing to apply for any special grants or subsidies in Canada and has therefore not made any request to the Manitoba Government of this nature. The company will be opening an office in Winnipeg, from which it will conduct a wide range of detailed studies covering such areas as engineering, transportation, power supply, environmental issues, labour supply and the most suitable site for the plant. The intention is to establish the smelter within roughly 50 miles from Winnipeg and the company is talking in terms of about four square miles of land required. The proposed smelter would take about four years to construct, this work involving an average of about 600 jobs per year.

The smelter itself, because it will be a 24-hour operation will require a payroll of about 700 employees. There will be a great number of economic spinoff benefits from an industrial enterprise of this size. What is encouraging, in particular, to the government is the fact that Manitoba's distance from ocean ports, which will be used to take in raw materials from overseas, is not a decisive disadvantage. Alcan has indicated that this economic factor appears to be counterbalanced above all by our secure supply of hydro-electric power.

We are confident that Alcan within the next year or so will have weighed all the factors on completion of this detailed feasibility study and will undertake construction of a world scale smelter in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate further that Mr. Rich, who is with us today from Alcan, is staying over and is available for the members of the Legislature to meet with him and meet with the Alcan people. We have tentatively scheduled a briefing where they will be present. We set it for 5:30 because that's the adjournment time for the House this afternoon, however if it is the desire of the House, I know that the House Leader is quite willing to talk to other members in the House to see if you wish to advance that time if it's more convenient for all members of the House, but the intent is to give the Members of the Legislature as full an opportunity to ask

questions and perhaps get some further insight into what this aluminum development is and what the experience has been in other parts of Canada and what arrangements have been there.

So, Mr. Speaker, with those words of introduction, this is one of the more pleasurable moments I've had to speak to, Mr. Speaker, in this regard in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly members on this side of the House of the New Democratic Party welcome this statement. We are pleased that there has been the progress that there has been with the Aluminum Company of Canada and certainly everyone knows in this province that we do need development. We've had so little of it in the last few years.

However, I do note, Mr. Speaker, in looking at the statement that we are still in the study stage. It is not yet final and it could turn out to be other than what has been suggested here by the Minister.

I would like to note in particular, Mr. Speaker, that this development could not have taken place, or could not even be considered if the Nelson River had not been developed by the New Democratic Party Government and particularly that we used the regulation of Lake Winnipeg to ensure that Manitoba Hydro would have sufficient water or indeed more water than they would otherwise have in a drought year, and I think this is particularly important.

Obviously the key to this for both the company and the government and certainly the people of Manitoba, will be the price of the electricity. What price will the electric power be sold, both in the short run and in the long run, and I think it's very important, Mr. Speaker, for the people of this province that the price negotiated or whatever the arrangement may be, in terms of minority interests, in terms of other equity arrangements or water rental arrangements, that whatever the bottom line is, that that not be a giveaway price, that it be a price that is indeed fair to the people of Manitoba in the long run.

The other factor I would note, and I'm sure the company would be cognizant of this as well, being in the business for a long time, and that is the environmental concerns. I would trust that all environmental matters will be given sufficient review and that we insure that any environmental damage that might occur would be minimized if the project should indeed go ahead.

I stated, Mr. Speaker, that we haven't had too much good news in the last year or two regarding economic development in this province. I noted, for example, in 1981 the forecast is for only six-and-a-half percent total investment to occur, which is the second lowest in Canada of any province and indeed one-third of the Canadian average. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, this is in the nature of private investment, this particular announcement, and yet if you look at the private investment that has occurred in this province in the past three years, that is the years 1978 to 1980, we've only averaged 7.8 percent per year which is less than the rate of inflation.

So, at any rate, Mr. Speaker, I would say that while we welcome the announcement, we trust that the government will take all due precautions to

insure that the interest of the people are looked after. I hope that the government is not over-anxious in the matter because not too much has happened in the last year or two. Certainly we want the development, but we want the development so that all of Manitoba will benefit when it's developed and in the years to come.

Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. STERLING R. LYON (Charleswood): Mr. Speaker, I desire to lay on the table of the House copies of the Constitutional Accord signed by eight of the ten Governments of Canada last Thursday in Ottawa. I believe, there are copies available in English and in French, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): To your direction at this point and in view of the fact that the First Minister has indicated the comments are available as to whether or not at this stage there is opportunity for response from the Opposition to the documents which the First Minister has tabled.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable First Minister rose to lay on the table documents and I would think there is 40 minutes coming up very shortly in the Oral Question Period to ask questions, at which time I'm sure honourable members will have the opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Yes, on a point of order and for clarification, I understood this item that you called for was either Ministerial Statements or Tabling of Reports. There are no reports being tabled; there's no report from any committee or from any department of government or under any statutory authority. The First Minister took this opportunity under Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports to lay on the table, which means for public information, and I think he called it an Accord with comments thereto in English and French.

Mr. Speaker, I think I call upon you to interpret the nature of the document that was tabled and I suggest to you that it's not a report but is in effect a Ministerial Statement which is tabled in such a way as to make it available to the Legislature and to the press. Now the fact that there are 40 minutes coming up for questions, thereafter there's Debate on the Budget, and the Leader of the Opposition has already spoken, and others have spoken, and that means that there is not the opportunity to respond to that extent.

MR. SPEAKER: I thank the honourable member for his comments, but I believe that the tabling of the letters by the First Minister does not constitute a Ministerial Statement at all. It is nothing more than the tabling and as such is not subject to the courtesy that is normally given to Ministerial Statements, so we will proceed with Notices of Motion.

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge on a point of order.

MS. JUNE WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, on the point of order that was raised by the Honourable Member for St. Johns, Sir, you have indicated that we can ask questions in the 40-minute question period, but, Sir, I don't think you know that enough copies were not made available, so that anyone except the Official Opposition could have a copy of this paper, and it's rather difficult for those of us who are here in any other capacity than as members of the Official Opposition to ask questions on a paper which has not been made available to us, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I have always found that members of the Chamber, if they used their wits, were always able to get whatever they seemed to want in this Chamber.

Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Hydro. In view of the statement which the Minister responsible for Hydro just read to the House pertaining to Letters of Intent signed today with Alcan, can the First Minister advise as to whether or not Manitoba will continue to exercise its rights to fix the rates pertaining to Hydro charges insofar as Alcan is concerned under the agreement?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I'm not clear what the question is from the Leader of the Opposition.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Leader of the Opposition repeat his question?

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, the question is: Is the government giving to Alcan certain concessions in respect to rates that will be charged to Alcan pertaining to Hydro? What is the arrangement pertaining to the rates that will be charged to Alcan as a result?

We witness that they are intending to provide Alcan — the Government of Manitoba — a minority undivided ownership interest in a power station. Can the Minister indicate what the arrangement is on the part of the Government of the Province of Manitoba pertaining to the rendering of rates to Alcan?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I think perhaps the Leader of the Opposition could take a little longer and read the Letter of Intent and perhaps take advantage of the briefing session this afternoon and that could be gone into, and I think perhaps by that time you'll be able to get a little clearer picture. But, perhaps, if I can briefly indicate to him what is involved here is Alcan becoming involved as a minority in a minority ownership position in a power plant that would be constructed in association with Manitoba Hydro, and there would be a joint venture agreement as is indicated in here in the Letter of Intent whereby they would undertake for operation,

transmission, and other things that are presently being negotiated.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then I gather from what the Minister has said by way of response that the rate will be one that will be negotiated or is the share. Then to the Minister, is the share that will be provided to Alcan of the power station, one yet to be negotiated, one-fifth, one-quarter, one-half interest, etc.?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it's not accurate to say that the rate would be negotiated. The percentage of the ownership interest still has to be yet defined depending on the size of the station and the demand requirements and the portion of the station required for the purposes of the aluminum operation. So, it's not a matter of negotiating a rate. The only rates that enter the picture are the tariff rates with regards to operation by Manitoba Hydro for the operation as well as the transmission and other services.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then further by way of question to the Minister responsible for Hydro, if Alcan will indeed own the production of Hydro pertaining to the power plant, can the Minister advise whether or not there will be any conditions attached to the agreement to insure that that agreement can be terminated in the event of certain conditions within the 35-year period referred to in the agreement?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, there would have to be further examination of it. I should indicate to the Leader of the Opposition, again, that the final agreement and the joint venture agreement still have a fair distance to go in the negotiating stage.

I want to add, in answer to my previous question, that I'm talking about the relationship between Alcan and Manitoba Hydro specifically with regard to rates. There are in addition, as the Letter of Intent indicates, other rates applied; water rental rates and other rates that are mentioned in here in the agreement that takes place between the Province and Alcan as opposed to between Alcan and Manitoba Hydro.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a question to the First Minister. In view of the Conference of eight Premiers held this past Thursday in Ottawa, can the First Minister confirm that during those discussions there was no discussion whatsoever pertaining to the Charter of Rights or the entrenchment of equalization insofar as the . . .

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

I believe the honourable member is asking an entirely new question. The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I didn't think there was any . . . this was intended as a new question and I was recognized, Mr. Speaker.

Again to the First Minister, can the First Minister . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. There were several members in the Chamber had indicated they wanted to ask questions. It has been traditional to allow the

Leader of the Opposition the lead-off question and as many supplementaries as he desires, but to ask a complete new question does cut into the time of other members of the Assembly. If there's agreement amongst the other members to allow the Leader of the Opposition to carry on with other questions, I have no objections. Has the honourable member agreement? (Agreed)

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the First Minister, can he confirm that as a result of the Premiers' Conference this past Thursday, in which eight Premiers met together for some six hours to discuss the constitutional proposal to make to the Prime Minister of Canada, that during those discussions there was no mention whatsoever as to a position to be presented to the Prime Minister of Canada pertaining to the entrenchment of a Charter of Rights, or equalization?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I can confirm to my honourable friend that at the discussion of the eight Premiers that took place Wednesday and then there were further discussions Thursday, in Ottawa, that the bulk of the discussions centered around the Accord, which my honourable friend has seen, which has been tabled in the House, today, and the Amending Formula that is part of that Accord. The question of the Charter of Rights as referred to in a story that appeared in the Montreal Gazette and the alleged argument surrounding the Charter of Rights did not take place at all.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, just by way of supplementary, the First Minister indicates the alleged arguments pertaining to the entrenchment of a Charter of Rights did not take place. Is the First Minister then confirming that there were no discussions whatsoever pertaining to the entrenchment of a Charter of Rights at the Conference of Premiers'?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, there may have been mention of it, but there were certainly no debate of a nature that is mentioned in the Montreal Gazette story. One couldn't say in six hours that it wasn't mentioned, but it certainly wasn't the subject of any debate of the nature mentioned in the . . . Mr. Speaker, if the Member for St. Johns would prefer to answer the question, let him go ahead. (Interjection)—

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK (St. Johns): Yes, I would, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised that the Member for St. Johns would confer the business of the House onto the First Minister. (Interjection)—

MR. CHERNIACK: When I can take advantage of him, I would be glad to do it.

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

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the document that has been presented to us indicates that the Province of Manitoba is now going to give or confer an equity ownership on a hydro-electric facility in the Province of Manitoba, which is the only private equity ownership in any hydro-electric facility that we now have, may I ask the Minister, who has signed this Accord whether there was any negotiation as to whether or not equity ownership of a Hydro facility in Province of Manitoba would be given to a private company?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it would be helpful if the member would indicate as to whether there was negotiation with Alcan or with others or with . . . Maybe he could clarify that question somewhat.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about with Alcan. I'm asking whether the Minister, without negotiation and willingly, permitted an equity ownership in a Hydro facility in the Province of Manitoba to be given to a private company solely because a private company would not participate in this program without such equity ownership?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, the answer is with regard to negotiation — yes, this emerged from the negotiation.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the Minister whether as an alternative to privateering part of the public Hydro development capacity of the Province of Manitoba, whether there was any negotiation of the other style, namely as a quid pro quo and as a means of providing for this facility, that there would be some minority ownership on the part of the people of the Province of Manitoba in this new industrial development?

MR. CRAIK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, that was examined as well.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder whether that examination was pursued and whether or not it was possible for the people of Manitoba, rather than giving equity ownership of our hydro-electric power to a private company, whether the people of Manitoba by providing a quid pro quo, some program namely could obtain equity ownership in a future developmental project in the Province of Manitoba?

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can say a little more on my previous answer, which I think deals with the follow-up question by the Member for Inkster, that was examined as part of negotiations. The government's position in the final analysis was that we felt that the people of Manitoba would gain an economic rent; an economic rent can be gained without necessarily it owning part of a production facility and as a result that possibility is built into the future negotiations.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question of the First Minister regarding his statement that the bulk of the meeting concerning the amending formula in the Premier's accord did not concern a Charter of Rights, so that may mean that there was some discussion of it. I ask the Premier whether any Premier requested that the Charter be discussed as a matter on the agenda in regard to possible consensus, or did the Premier of Manitoba rule out such a possible consensus before or during the Conference because of his well-known bias against it?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Well, Mr. Speaker, I can assure my honourable friend that the Premier of Manitoba could not make a final determination as to the agenda that would be discussed by eight Premiers in Canada, either the present Premier or a former one or anyone in the future, I would hope. What I can tell my honourable friend is this, that what he sees in front of him, the Constitutional Accord, was the basis for the discussion for the meeting of the Premiers before that Accord was signed and unveiled to the people of Canada last Thursday.

As my honourable friend can easily see, there is no mention whatsoever of the Charter of Rights in that Accord.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, that is the reason I'm asking questions. In view of the fact that there are reports that Premiers Lyon and Levesque sabotaged or scuttled a broader agreement, broader than the Accord that was signed, how did the Premier determine that there could be no consensus by the Premiers on the Charter of Rights? Was this a determination that he made a priori? Did he take a straw vote? Did he do a phone survey, or did he decide for them?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I believe I've already said it once in the House. I certainly said it in a press conference earlier this weekend. There is no substance in any way, shape or form to the story that appeared in the Montreal Gazette, which appears to titillate my honourable friend from the Socialist Party.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the First Minister's well-known selective memory, or poor memory, and in view of the fact that he said that the bulk of the Conference did not deal with this subject, which still leaves open the possibility that some time was spent on the Charter, I'm asking the Premier whether he would for example comment on the position that he holds in regard to a Charter of Rights and the Premier of Quebec. Is it not a fact that both of you share the same opinion on the matter, and I ask the First Minister whether he discussed the possible consensus on this question with the Premier of Quebec prior to the Conference or at any point during the Conference?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'm trying to be as fair to my honourable friend and his rather heavy-handed

questioning as I can, by indicating to him that in the course of a discussion of six hours, it would be wrong, I would think, for anyone to say that a particular topic had not been mentioned. I can say with the full support of all of those who were there, that the topic of the Charter of Rights was not negotiated in any way, shape or form, in the manner as presented by the Montreal Gazette, much as my honourable friend would like to believe that lie.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the First Minister. Could he advise as to the effect of the new formula with respect to a province opting out of a new program, for instance, if there was a new program such as Medicare or sharing in education, which was proposed and one province decided not to take that program, would that province automatically as of right receive a similar per capita payment from the Federal Government, or would that be subject to negotiation in each specific case?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, if my honourable friend is referring to one aspect of the amending formula which is attached to the Accord, namely the so-called opting out provision, he will see that the so-called opting out provision as presented in the Accord applies only where provincial powers are being derogated from, in other words where provincial powers are being diminished, and that as the Premier of Saskatchewan and others have attempted to point out I think quite successfully, is the situation that would arise in very few occasions in Canada. First of all you would have to have the Parliament of Canada and the Parliaments of seven of the Legislatures voting to derogate or diminish some provincial power. After that unlikely circumstance had taken place, then you could have the situation arise, where one, two, or three of the provinces who had not supported it, could opt out of that provision and there is provision in the formula for compensation to be negotiated in the event of that rather unlikely eventuality occurring.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Possibly I could give the First Minister an example. When Medicare was enacted, one might say that that was a derogation from the powers of the province in that there was a Federal takeover in a sense of the costs, and as the First Minister will recall, the Weir government was dragged, kicking and screaming into that program. Now if such a similar program was to be proposed in the future, could the Minister give an example of what would have happened had that particular proposal been made under the new formula which the First Minister now wants to bring into effect for Canada?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid that my honourable friend's hypothetical example is not a very helpful one because if my recollection is correct,

the universal or national Medicare Plan that was announced by the Pearson Government back in the middle Sixties did not contemplate, and to the best of my knowledge did not cause an amendment to the Constitution to take place.

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

MR. SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A final question to the First Minister: In view of the fact that the purpose of the Ottawa Conference purported to be to agree on an amending formula, can the First Minister withdraw this pamphlet, which he is sending around to the people of Manitoba, in which he says in point number five that an alternative agreement was entered into last summer? Why would you have had to have a Conference to agree on an amending formula, Mr. First Minister, if you already had one last summer? What was the purpose of this Conference?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, it has been manifest for some time that my honourable friend had at best a fleeting grasp of the issues involved in this issue in this matter. Perhaps I can indicate to him and refresh his memory or perhaps for the first time imprint upon his memory this historical fact, that at the September Conference of the eleven First Ministers in 1980, there was general agreement upon what was called the Vancouver Consensus, which was an amending formula which all parties agreed required further refinement. There was general agreement by the 10 provinces on that as a principle. What the eight provinces have done in the Accord, which I laid on the table today, is to, laboriously over the last several weeks and months, have worked out those refinements to the Vancouver Consensus to the point where it is now a working part of an Accord, which is presented to the Government of Canada as a way of breaking the impasse or the roadblock that has been created largely at the hands of the Federal Government which insists on proceeding unilaterally with an amending formula and with a package which does not carry the consent of eight of the ten provinces of Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, my question to the First Minister is this: In coming to a unanimous consensus was the unanimity achieved as a result of an agreement that the will of the majority should become the unanimous recommendation, or were there Premiers who specifically objected to any particular aspect of this so-called Accord?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend asks an interesting question. I suppose hypothetically she is asking this — at a meeting of eight Premiers if one chooses not to go along with the others, is he forced in by some form of one for all and all for one. The answer to that is clearly no. The document, the

Accord, that was signed by the eight Premiers last Thursday in Ottawa, tabled in the House here today, Mr. Speaker, represents the considered opinion of the eight governments of Canada and the consensus at which those eight governments arrived.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, then may we take it, and I want to have this perfectly clear, and that's why I am asking again, not the same question, Mr. Speaker, but a related question; was there not one of the eight Premiers who objected to the opting out provision of the amending formula?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I can only invite my honourable friend, if she is pursuing the historical record to engage the Premiers in question in correspondence and they can perhaps answer the detailed questions which would have more historic interest than they have at the present as a means of breaking the impasse. What I can merely say to my honourable friend is that a consensus that is arrived at on an agreement usually represents — and I am speaking now hypothetically — usually represents a compromise on behalf of all of the parties. It doesn't represent the perfect document that this province or that province would have. It doesn't represent all of the highest and the best points that every province would wish to have, but it represents the best area of agreement that the provinces could work out amongst themselves, and certainly using that as hypothetical example, I can say to my honourable friend that the Accord in question followed that traditional method of negotiation among the provinces in Canada.

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

MS. WESTBURY: Thanking the First Minister for his explanation, would he tell us then how many of the provinces objected to the opting-out provision?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the day. The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to the First Minister. Will the Premiers be placing publicly paid for advertisements on their constitutional position in the newspapers, radio, and television, and will they be doing that this week?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I don't know about radio and television, but I do believe that there will be print ads appearing across Canada carrying the substance of the Accord arrived at by the eight governments of Canada in order, if I may say so, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that the truth about the Accord comes out rather than some of the distortion that we have been reading in the press and hearing from the Federal Government.

MR. PARASIUK: In view of the fact that this Accord was signed with great fanfare on public television, with conceivably the people of Canada looking in on this, could the Minister indicate whether in fact the agreement to place these publicly paid for ads was

made in that public meeting of the Premiers, where they signed the Accord, or were these ads agreed to before any response could be derived from the Federal Government and the other two provincial governments? If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, are the Premiers proceeding with some sincerity to try and reach a compromise with respect to the Constitution, or instead are they proceeding on a basis of using paid media advertising to escalate the constitutional confrontation as opposed to trying to develop some type of compromise on this issue?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I don't know the particular kind of a world in which my honourable friend lives, or where his mind resides, but I can say that it would be apparent to any person of reason that the eight Premiers were attempting to reach an Accord which would break the current constitutional impasse into which the Prime Minister and the Federal Government have thrown this country — a most divisive impasse — and in connection with that they and their Ministers and their governments have worked long and laboriously to achieve this Accord which is of historic significance to this country. I merely suggest to my honourable friend that if he is worried about words such as confrontation, continuing confrontation, and so on, that if he will take the time and the care to read the Accord, he will find that one of the conditions of the Accord was very simply this — that the provinces who were involved in the present court reference actions would abandon those actions immediately if the Federal Government and the two other non-participating provinces were to become parties to this Accord.

Mr. Speaker, I can't think of any better way of demonstrating that this Accord was meant to be a document of conciliation to end the current constitutional impasse in Canada.

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

MR. PARASIUK: In view of the fact that the Conservative Government of Manitoba has already used public money, taxpayers' money, to pay for blatant political propaganda regarding the Constitution, will the Minister, as Chairman of the group of eight Premiers, withdraw those proposed ads as a show of good faith in order to try and develop a sincere compromise Canada-wide on this issue instead of using publicly paid for propaganda as a means of diverting public attention away from the real bread and butter issues facing Canadians and facing Manitobans?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I can only assure my honourable friend that the government of this province, and I'm certain the provincial governments of the other seven provinces will take those actions in the public interest that are guaranteed best to continue the momentum that has been achieved by this Accord which is of historic importance to this country.

My honourable friend may be preoccupied with print advertising that practically all provinces have engaged in with respect to the constitutional position. I'll be happy, on one of these occasions, when I have time and can pay attention to such trivialities, to lay on the table of the House copies of

all of the other documents that all other provinces in Canada that have engaged in the attempt to stop the Federal Government from this very divisive action have been sending to their people right across the country. I believe Saskatchewan has been one of the foremost proponents of ensuring that the people of Saskatchewan are well informed as to how divisive the Federal Government's proposals are.

I don't know that other Oppositions in Canada are as purblind as the Opposition we have in Manitoba, which is so desirous of supporting Mr. Trudeau and his attempt to divide this country that they're trying to distract the attention of what eight governments are doing to break that impasse.

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

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister reporting for Manitoba Hydro. Regarding the Letter of Intent, I'd like to ask the Minister if the joint venture agreement implies that Alcan would have a minority share of the next generating station, does this also imply that Manitoba Hydro would have a majority share of that station and hence a majority ownership of the power?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

MR. CRAIK: If I heard the member correctly, Mr. Speaker, yes, there are only two parties, one is minority, the other is majority. The majority is Hydro, and I think his statement is correct.

MR. WALDING: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. Is the Minister then saying to us that the signing of this agreement would commit Manitoba to the production of more power generation when it's assured us by the Chairman that the present generation surplus is in excess of 40 percent?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, if this were in fact a commitment at this point in time, my understanding is that it would commit the construction of the Limestone Station, yes.

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

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, is it the policy of the government to use this agreement to produce additional excess power in order to export it to Alberta on its western generation system? That being the case, is this agreement contingent upon getting an agreement with Alberta and Saskatchewan to take excess Manitoba power?

MR. CRAIK: Both negotiations are still under way as well, Mr. Speaker, and until they're completed, or further along, it's really not possible to provide all of the information that may be contained in the double-barrelled question from the Member for St. Vital. But I think that his question was, is it necessary to have the western power grid in place in order for the majority portion of this plant to require a decision to proceed, and I think the answer is probably no.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to address the Honourable First Minister. In view of the stated objectives of the eight Premiers to attempt to bring out a conciliatory proposal which might be acceptable to the Federal Government, and in view of the previously stated requirement by the First Minister of Canada that there would have to be an acceptance of an entrenchment of constitutional rights, and in view of the proposed amending formula which would make changes to the entrenched Constitution acceptable in some way under the amending formula, did not the eight Premiers consider that it would have been possible to negotiate or to agree to negotiate a much more limited entrenchment of constitutional rights which would then make it acceptable to the Prime Minister of Canada and would still protect what so many Premiers seem to be concerned about, and that is changes to the formula, protected under their own amending formula?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid I really don't understand what my honourable friend is getting at in his question. If he would like to shorten it and sharpen it, I'd be happy to try to answer.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Member for St. Johns repeat his question?

MR. CHERNIACK: I won't repeat it in those words because the First Minister doesn't understand them. I'll try other words, Mr. Speaker.

The eight Premiers met, they stated, in order to try to arrive at a proposal which would be more acceptable to the Government of Canada. In doing that, they knew full well that the statement of the Prime Minister was that he could not discuss any changes which would eliminate a Bill of Rights, or a Charter of Rights, and the eight Premiers, did provide in an amending formula certain protections that would protect them in the event they didn't like any changes.

Was it not feasible and did they not discuss the possibility of negotiating a substantially reduced but entrenched Charter of Rights, which could then not be changed except under the amending formula, and in this way, have opened up the requirement that the Prime Minister meet with them to discuss a reduction in his proposed entrenched Charter of Rights, and that they could then have, to some extent, agreed with certain aspects that were automatic and certainly such as should be acceptable to all Canadians?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I deal with the first part of my honourable friend's question in which he takes, as something as firm as Hammurabi's Code, a statement made by the Prime Minister of Canada. Without intending any reflection particularly on the Prime Minister of Canada, I merely indicate to the Member for St. Johns that the Prime Minister of Canada has been performing more flip-flops on this constitution and the constitutional issues over the last several weeks than one would have ever thought possible. So to suggest that there is any firm position of principle that the Prime Minister of Canada holds with respect to any part of the constitution, I think is rather a wild assumption at this stage.

It was the same Prime Minister of Canada who said that he would push this bill through Parliament before the Supreme Court; it was the same Prime Minister of Canada who said that he would have the hearings out of the House of Commons and the Senate before Christmas; it was the same Prime Minister of Canada who said that the provinces, by referring this matter to the Supreme Court were merely involved in a delaying action because it was purely a political decision. Contrast those statements, Mr. Speaker, with what actually happened and what the Prime Minister of Canada is saying today, if one wishes to find out what the flip-flops are that are being performed by the Prime Minister and by the Federal Government, realizing, I hope, as they do, that they are attempting to impose upon the people of Canada a very very divisive document, and that if their attempt is successful, it will lead to a very grave situation in this country with respect to the unity and the continued unity of this country.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with that as a preliminary, let me say to my honourable friend, he's asking the general question: was there consideration of the topic? I said, I believe in this House, I certainly said it for the news media on any number of occasions that the major job that was before the Premiers of Canada, the eight Premiers of Canada who are working on this matter and brought it to fruition last Thursday, was to seek a refinement of the Vancouver Consensus as a means of attaching it to the Accord which was tabled in the House today which would be the easy way of breaking the impasse that has occurred as a result of the Federal Government's proposals.

Now why do we say that? We say that because we should not, and we feel this position very strongly, we should not be asking the Parliament at Westminster to be enacting as part of the law of Canada substantive provisions with respect to a Charter of Rights or any other matter that do not carry the support of eight of the ten provinces of this country. That is fundamentally wrong, and the provinces will not, and have not, and will not agree to that, Mr. Speaker. I realize that there has been a favorite bargaining technique on the part of the Prime Minister, and that is to ask for the extremely outrageous, and then to fall back to a position which is only semi-outrageous, and say, well I've compromised, why won't you compromise, up to the semi-outrageous.

Mr. Speaker, the eight provincial governments of Canada are not going to be led down any garden path by that kind of negotiation tactic which we have seen the Prime Minister of this country use to the disadvantage of the public interest of this country on too many occasions.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the First Minister, in view of his diatribe and his attack on the Prime Minister of Canada, whether or not this opinion of his did not, to a very substantial degree, deny the statement that he is making about their efforts to break an impasse in that there was no attempt made at all to indicate to the government of Canada or to the people of Canada that the eight

Premiers were prepared to discuss a much more limited and yet, entrenched Charter, so as to be able to discuss acceptance of the amending formula?

Is the First Minister of this province saying that all that he said about the Prime Minister of Canada is correct, and that in spite of that he thought that it was possible that they could break an impasse by bringing in a new amending formula, and therefore were they prepared to meet over this weekend to talk to the Prime Minister of Canada to see whether or not they could indeed break an impasse?

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, if my honourable member cares to check the record, he will find that — I believe it was on the 3rd of April, I wrote to the Prime Minister on behalf of the eight Premiers, suggesting that we were having our meeting in Ottawa on the 16th of April, that following our meeting, we would like to meet with him to discuss the agreement that we have been negotiating, some ten days or so elapsed, we had no substantive response from the Prime Minister. When we did receive one, there was talk about having a meeting after the constitutional package had come back to Canada and we could discuss at that time, as I recall the substance of his letter, the further discussions about amending formula and so on.

The point being, Mr. Speaker, in short form, that the Prime Minister did not respond to our letter, in which we had asked him for a meeting. He made some glib comments in the House, he made some to the press about a meeting, but not formally. As a result of his response, what we did, Mr. Speaker, was to respond to him immediately, we gave him the courtesy of a reply immediately and said that we were proceeding with our meeting in Ottawa and that we would communicate the substance of our accord or agreement to his office.

Our officials were in touch, and as a result of that the Accord was communicated to him shortly after the Accord was signed.

The Premiers of the eight provinces have always been ready to meet with the Prime Minister of Canada; the Prime Minister of Canada apparently has not seen fit to answer our request for that meeting. We stand ready to meet with him again, if that can serve any useful purpose, but the Prime Minister has not indicated that he sees any value in such a meeting.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for Question Period having expired, before we proceed with Orders of the Day, last week a Matter of Privilege was taken under advisement by the Chair, on Wednesday, April 15th . . . Order please.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if I might, before you get into the point of order that I have been apprised of, that arose when I was away, there was apparently some question about a word that I used, and I waited until I got into the House today to take a look at the Hansard. It was a response, I believe, that I made on Tuesday, the 14th of April, to the Leader of the Opposition. I'm reading now from Hansard in response to that question: "This House,

Mr. Speaker, has been treated to a barrage of triple hearsay, unsigned letters and the like, over the last two or three days on a kind of a trumped up issue that my honourable friends think is the biggest thing that's happened to him in his life as Leader of the Opposition. I can only say if my honourable friends have any evidence that is worthwhile signed under oath that is," and then there was an interjection, "I merely say, Mr. Speaker, that this House, in accordance with your ruling, should not be acting on the basis of unsigned letters or things of that sort. Now if my honourable friends can document anything of substance with respect to this issue of fabrications that they've put forward so far, then the House, I'm sure, would be prepared to give it another look. But on the basis of the non-evidence that has appeared thus far, my honourable friends are really wasting their time and the time of this House."

Mr. Speaker, the question I'm told arose about the use of the word "fabrications." I'm quite prepared to withdraw the word "fabrications" because it was clear in the text of what I was saying, and certainly clear in my mind, that what I was attempting to say was that letters that you have declared to be not admissible before the House because they are unsigned and undated, evidence of that sort is not the kind of evidence that should trigger a full-scale inquiry in the House, and I was merely trying to back up that fact.

If the word "fabrications" that was used in that context finds offense with one of the members, I have no hesitation in withdrawing it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the motion before the Speaker on the basis of words that were used in this House, I'm not challenging the First Minister, my motion is directed with respect to what has been done by the Member for St. Vital, which has been referred to as putting forward fabrications and a half-hoax and if I am being subjected as a member of this House to fabrications or a half-hoax, I am entitled, as a matter of privilege, to have that referred.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. There doesn't seem to be any consensus then to have the word withdrawn. Is that the way I read it from the members?

The Honourable First Minister.

MR. LYON: Mr. Speaker, if it will help the situation, I have no hesitation in withdrawing the word "fabrications" because the rest of what I said stands, because that is the ruling that you, Sir, have made.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster on a point of order.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, the word "fabrications" being withdrawn doesn't change the matter. The Member for St. Vital has brought matters to this House which had been referred by two honourable members; one is a half-hoax and one is fabrications, and I am concerned with whether I am being hoaxed or subject to fabrications by the Member for St.

Vital, and if that is withdrawn by the First Minister it doesn't withdraw the possibility that I am being subjected to a fabrication or a hoax.

(Interjection)— That's right, I want it investigated, I want it investigated.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. On Wednesday, April 15th, the Honourable Member for Inkster rose in his place to raise a Matter of Parliamentary Privilege of the House. In the motion the Honourable Member for Inkster makes reference to the use of the word half-hoax or hoax by a member of the House in respect to some papers, which were attempted to be laid before the House. The word "half-hoax" or "hoax" was used outside the House.

On the basis of Beauchesne's Fifth Edition, Citation 19(3), I think that statements made by a member outside the House cannot be used as the basis of a Matter of Privilege, therefore I am going to exercise my prerogative and strike from the Resolution the reference to "half-hoax" and "hoax".

The deletions are as follows: One, in the third paragraph of the preamble, the words, "has used the words with relation to a document that it was part of a half-hoax"; number two, in the fourth paragraph of the preamble, the words "a hoax or"; number three, in the substantive part of the resolution, the words, "or hoax".

The motion as corrected would then read as follows:

"WHEREAS a matter has risen affecting the parliamentary privilege of the House, in that a member thereto has read from a document which is as yet unidentified and which on its face appears to be a submission to the Commission in conducting an enquiry commissioned by the government, which submission was never made, and;

"WHEREAS the question has arisen as to whether in fact the document is a submission that was made to the Board of the Manitoba Hydro Electric Company, and;

"WHEREAS a member of the House has used the word "fabrication" with respect to the said document, and where it is a matter affecting the privilege of all the members of the House, if one of them has been unwittingly induced to engage in any matter which can be referred to as a fabrication, and;

"WHEREAS the question of the origin and validity and authenticity of the said document is readily ascertainable;

"THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the question as to whether or not a fabrication has been perpetrated in the House be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections."

Since that time we have had the First Minister rise in his place and withdraw the use of the word "fabrication", which according to Beauchesne is a non-parliamentary word and I am now asking the honourable member if he is prepared to withdraw the Resolution that is in his name.

The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I believe that the Resolution presented a prima facie case of privilege and I still think that it does, and furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I am not going to try to deal with your ruling or to reflect on your ruling, but the use of the

words "half-hoax" outside of the House with respect to something that a member has done in the House, I believe that I could, if it were necessary, find passages in Beauchesne which would support that as being a Matter of Privilege. But nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the members of the House are entitled to know, withdraw or otherwise, whether a fabrication is being foisted upon them and I believe that the motion contains a prima facie case of privilege.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. In my opinion, a prima facie case of a breach of parliamentary privilege has been established by the corrected Resolution and I would therefore refer the matter to the House for determination.

The question is now before the House. Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words in support of referral of the Resolution to committee.

Mr. Speaker, there is no question but that the use of the term "fabrication", the use of the inference that the Member for St. Vital indeed was engaged in some effort to deliberately hoodwink members of this Chamber is one that warrants the matter being referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to concur with the forwarding of this matter to Committee. We are prepared to agree, while the First Minister is not prepared to agree to this matter being forwarded to the Committee so that we can obtain the truth of this matter. The First Minister likes to make reference to double hearsay and triple hearsay and he has called for affidavits, he has called for evidence.

Mr. Speaker, the case has been soundly presented, soundly presented again and again, not only in the House itself but in committee, adequate case to call for this matter to be forwarded to the two committees, so that before committee, Mr. Speaker, we can obtain the evidence of all those indeed that can, by their sworn testimony, provide evidence; whether it be the former Chief Legal Counsel of Manitoba Hydro, Mr. Steward Martin — and I ask the First Minister; what is he afraid of? What is the First Minister afraid of in his reluctance to see the former Chief Legal Counsel for Manitoba Hydro come before that Committee and advise the Committee whether or not the document, which was released in this House by the Member for St. Vital, was a fabrication? Why should the First Minister not proclaim loudly and clearly for all to hear . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I believe the House has already made a ruling on the document involved and the member should not reflect on a ruling that has already been made in this Chamber. I would suggest the honourable member is out of order if he continues to reflect on a ruling that has already been made.

MR. PAWLEY: Not when the document can be tabled. What we are dealing with is the issue of whether of not the Member for St. Vital attempted to perpetrate a fabrication in this House by reading from that document in this Chamber, whether he was

trying to hoodwink this Chamber into actions that this Chamber ought not to proceed with. That is the issue. That is the issue, Mr. Speaker, and I am saying to the First Minister if indeed he suggests that one of my colleagues has been attempting to perpetrate a fabrication in this House, let the First Minister let all come forth by way of evidence and material sworn testimony, all witnesses indeed that are material to the subject matter at hand to submit evidence in that respect. We challenge the First Minister to permit that to occur, Mr. Speaker, because what we have seen up to this date has been continued blocking, stonewalling and coverup in regard to this issue before us and, Mr. Speaker. The remarks by the First Minister cannot be taken in isolation from the remarks that were made by the Minister responsible for Hydro. Members heard the remarks which were uttered by the Minister responsible for Hydro, remarks to the effect that the Member for St. Vital was engaged in what the Minister responsible for Hydro suggested would end up in being half a hoax.

Mr. Speaker, the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Chair has already ruled that things mentioned outside the House are not a matter of the privilege of the House. If the honourable member is challenging the ruling of the Chair in that respect he should better use another method.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not . . . your ruling, but I'm amazed that you, Mr. Speaker, are suggesting that I can't even make reference to a statement made by the Minister responsible for Hydro outside this Chamber, because that is what the tenure of your suggested ruling is, because the Minister responsible for Hydro, on a public program, on a public program, leading up to the statement by the First Minister in this Chamber, accused the Member of St. Vital of engaging in half a hoax, suggested that indeed that the distribution of this document — it might very well, okay, it might very well lead to a half a hoax — suggested that the document itself, according to some unknown testimony that he provided by way of public air, would end up being a two-page document rather than a seven-page document. That kind of background gave rise to the First Minister suggesting in this Chamber that the Member for St. Vital, a member who was attempting to do his duty, a member that was attempting to bring to this House at the earliest possible time, all knowledge that came to his attention. The Member for St. Vital who exercised the courage and initiative, Mr. Speaker, courage and initiative to read into the record of this Chamber, a document that he had received and the Member for St. Vital that was prepared to say, I am prepared to go to Committee, I am prepared to let the truth come out, is the government prepared to let the truth come out? That's what the Member for St. Vital is asking, and the First Minister's response was, "no, no." The First Minister made reference to trumped up charges.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I believe that too should have been the matter of privilege — trumped up charges — that members on this side had been engaged in trumping up charges to bring to bear in this Legislature. Mr. Speaker, that is an absolute and total falsehood on the part of the First Minister —

the First Minister knows that to be an absolute falsehood and the First Minister was engaging in that sort of conversation; that's the least you can say for it in this Chamber.

So, Mr. Speaker, the First Minister has come to the defence to the Minister responsible for Hydro. We expected that the First Minister would do so; we expected that the First Minister would defend his Deputy Premier, come what may. That I suppose was to be expected from the First Minister, but for the First Minister to suggest by way of terms "fabrication," by way of "trumped up charges," that the Member for St. Vital or any other member on this side was attempting to mislead this Chamber, indeed was an attempt to throw a red herring into the discussions which have taken place in respect to this matter.

The First Minister is obviously trying to hide something, Mr. Speaker, and the only way that he could continue the exercise of hiding, concealing the truth in this matter, was attempting to place the Member for St. Vital on trial. Mr. Speaker, it is not the Member for St. Vital that is on trial, it is the First Minister, it is the Minister responsible for Hydro, as to whether they've been permitting the truth to come out in respect to this matter. I want to tell the First Minister, I want to tell the First Minister, Mr. Speaker, so there is no misunderstanding on this, you may again use your majority, use your majority again to defeat efforts to obtain the truth in respect to this matter, use your majority again to prevent this matter from going to Committee, but I want to advise the First Minister that we are going to continue to raise this matter, we're going to continue to speak to this matter, we're going to continue to bring evidence bearing on this matter to this Chamber. There is no amount, Mr. Speaker, there is no amount of intimidation or threats that is going to prevent members from this side from proceeding with this.

The First Minister may believe that he can, by suggesting that we go to hell, that we go to hell, that that will resolve the matter. Mr. Speaker, let there be no misunderstanding. Let there be no misunderstanding on the part of the First Minister, members across the way, we will continue to raise this matter again and again until we force this government, as reluctant as it is, as anxious as it is to continue this coverup, to continue the blocking of questions in this Chamber and in Committee to reveal the truth, so that Manitobans will know the truth in respect to the matter before us.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. HARRY J. ENNS (Lakeside): Mr. Speaker, I rise only to indicate to you, Sir, that with all due respect, the government has no alternative but to vote against the motion before us. No responsible government could do otherwise. I remind you, Sir, and it's not a question of worrying about the intent of the Honourable Member for St. Vital. The fact of the matter is, what did he engage in? He brought into this Chamber the kind of document, Sir, that simply cannot be acted upon but in any other way than this government is reacting to.

Mr. Speaker, he read — and the whole case, the pitiful case of the Leader of the Opposition is based

on the kind of document that the same Winnipeg Free Press, that delights in printing stories from the Time, wouldn't carry in their letters to the editor's column; unsigned, undated, unverified. They have a policy about those kinds of things and, Mr. Speaker, the dilemma that we would be in, the dilemma that we would be in that if we referred this to a Privileges and Elections Committee, tomorrow another member would read from some other unsigned, unverified, unvalidated document, and where would the business of the House be, Mr. Speaker?

What I simply want to underline, Mr. Speaker, are the straws that the Leader of the Opposition is clutching at to make this an issue to attack the veracity of the Minister responsible for Hydro or anybody in this government, Mr. Speaker. It is really quite an unbelievable performance, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition has substantial research facilities attached to his office, many of them added to and provided by this government. The Leader of the Opposition can contact the former Minister or the former Chairman of Manitoba Hydro, at his choosing, Mr. Speaker, I happen to know that there is no case, absolutely no case. Mr. Speaker, I won't use the words that have caused some difficulty in the House, "fabrication," what have you, but the facts speak for themselves. The facts speak for themselves. An unsigned, unvalidated document that this House is supposed to refer to a responsible Committee of this House for some, you know, investigation. This is the kind of witch hunting that the Honourable Leader of the Opposition wants to engage in?

Mr. Speaker, I'm simply appalled at the thin ice the Leader of the Opposition is prepared to skate on and, Mr. Speaker, I give him fair warning. The longer he wishes to skate out on this thin ice, the further he gets away from shore, the bigger the splash will be when he breaks through that ice. Mr. Speaker, there are after all, responsible credible people, who in their due course of time will come forward and make the facts known to the Honourable Members in the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, we have no alternative but to vote against this measure.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J.R. (Bud) BOYCE: Mr. Speaker, I want to assure you that the Member for Lakeside shan't provoke me today, and I will not speak louder, but it is somewhere in the same realm of which we speak today when the member did provoke me a little and I think I was hollering at the time.

The First Minister in response to a question this morning made reference to Hammurabi. Well, perhaps they shouldn't teach the Code of Hammurabi in the law schools anymore, but the Minister just a moment ago, the Minister of Natural Resources used the expression, "no responsible government can support this motion" and this, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what this question is all about. The First Minister talks about the arrogance of the Prime Minister but there's a difference between the functioning of this House as a Legislative body and a functioning of government.

There's a question before this country, once again, and this is in my opinion the third occasion that the Conservative Government in the Province of

Manitoba is eroding my support for the protection of rights by legislators, because we have a confusion, that the government runs this House — the government runs this House. We're talking about a privilege of the House; we're not talking about the comfort of the government.

There is politics involved in this question, certainly, it is the position and the responsibility of the Opposition to embarrass the government and perhaps there is something in what is transpiring which will embarrass the government. That is not the question which is supposed to have been decided by members of a Legislative Assembly, upon whom it is incumbent to protect all rights of each individual one of us in this place — each one of us in this place, who is elected to represent a constituency and albeit we get into a convenient system where we could pin party labels on ourselves, and we have to go along with certain party positions. (Interjection)— Well, in some regards I am sorry I left or felt that I had to leave, because as I said in another speech, the New Democratic Party, when it would form the government, threw one of its own Ministers out of the House, one of its own Ministers, because it felt that it was incumbent upon them to protect the rights of the members of this House as legislators. This government has not done it on three occasions. They have used their majority to thwart the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of this House.

Mr. Speaker, they're doing much about, you know, protection of rights, and if you refuse to function, even if it's at the embarrassment of one of your colleagues. I didn't particularly like to vote to throw out the Minister of Labour in the NDP government, but I thought it was my responsibility to vote to remove that man from the House because he had not behaved in a manner which the rules stipulate that he shall behave and of all the — well, in my judgment rather silly things the former Member for Rupertsland, we threw out of the House because he didn't wear a necktie. Every member of the government supported it. So, Mr. Speaker, I know there's big announcements going on — Alcan in millions and 700 jobs and 10 million on a feasibility and \$500 million, but what are we talking about, Mr. Speaker, at this time? You know, the public out there expects you people who are elected, all of us, to do our job regardless if the press is around or not.

I worked with a lot of you people over there for the last 12 years and you're just as interested in people as I am, but when it comes down to the crunch like this, you people yourselves in the back benches — (Interjection)— go back to sleep, go back to sleep. I'm not going to get into it with the Member for Lakeside because he brings out his blue herrings all the time, Mr. Speaker, and tries to divert the attention of the people from the issue, the issue before this House, the members of this House. It's a privilege of the House and we have a Committee of this House which is established to review it. How that Committee will determine the question should be left up to the Committee, but here we have a government who purports to be looking after the interests of people, making a big to-do about it across this country, that they're the protection of the rights of people. How can they do this? I know there is one other alternative open to me and that's to throw out the government which we will try and do,

but nevertheless at the present time each member over there once again, Mr. Speaker, should exercise his Legislative responsibility regardless of what party he belongs to and refer this motion to the Privileges and Election Committee of the Legislature.

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

MR. WALDING: I want to thank you, Mr. Speaker, in taking one move to protect the members of the House as individuals by ruling this motion in order and capable of debate. The Minister of Natural Resources said that the government is not going to support this and that they are going to vote against it. Mr. Speaker, we are not asking the government to take action in this regard; we are asking all members of the Legislature to take action in this regard and there is a big difference, Mr. Speaker, because this is not a matter of government policy as against the Opposition policy, this is a matter of the privilege of each individual member, and any individual member here could find himself or herself in the same position that I find myself right now, Mr. Speaker.

There is a matter of privilege before the House that has to do with a suggestion that the House has been misled or was given wrong information, information that might be a fabrication or that might be a half-hoax. There is also the questioning by the First Minister, Deputy First Minister and the Member for Inkster that my integrity is at stake here, and that I either wittingly or unwittingly have misled the House.

I want to refer back to that document that seems to be the basis of the problem here, Mr. Speaker, and if you will recall it was on a Friday morning that I received a copy of the document. In quoting from it, I did not make any claims in advance that it was anything that could be identified. In making the remarks that I did that morning, I said that I had information that I thought would be of assistance to the members.

Mr. Speaker, I received that document in the mail about 10 o'clock that morning, just as I was coming into the House and I read it over, noted that it had no letterhead, that it was not dated, it was not signed. The only form of address on it was, "Mr. Commissioner," or words to that effect. I read it over, Mr. Speaker, and I had no means of knowing whether in fact it was what it purported to be or whether in fact it was a hoax. In quoting from it to the members, I never claimed that it was authentic or that it was not, but according to my reading of it, it had a ring of truth to it, and I had no reason to dispute that the document was in fact not . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The Honourable Government House Leader on a point of order.

HON. GERALD W. J. MERCIER (Osborne): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I believe you have already ruled that the so-called unsigned letter cannot be referred to in this Chamber, cannot be referred to, Mr. Speaker, should not be reread, should not be referred to, should not be quoted.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for St. Johns on the point of order.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, as I recall it, this document was — the Member for St. Vital attempted to table it. You took under advisement whether or not it could be tabled and then, Mr. Speaker, and I recall this fairly well, and of course it's in Hansard, you on a later occasion stopped the Leader of the Opposition from referring to the document because you said you had not yet given your ruling as to whether or not it could be tabled. Therefore you said — I don't know if you appealed to him or whether you ruled — that he could not refer to the document until you had given your decision on whether or not it could be tabled. On the same afternoon and within moments — I think just at the conclusion of the Question Period — you then ruled that it could not be tabled. That's my recollection.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot understand the suggestion by the Leader of the House that you or anyone else would attempt to stop anybody from referring to any document of any kind as to what it says or does not say. The important matter that you ruled on was whether or not it could be tabled and I think that is the clarification which the House Leader needs. Of course, Mr. Speaker, you would know best what you ruled, but it's a matter of record, and I would think that it would be a very very serious ruling that would deny a person to refer to any document, signed, unsigned, a scrap of paper, whatever, in making his presentation. It is a matter of opinion as to what is in the document and what it purports to tell us, but not to be able to refer to it, Mr. Speaker, I think is something which says we must indeed have an entrenched Bill of Rights, at least in this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader on a point of order.

MR. MERCIER: On the same point of order, Mr. Speaker, Beauchesne's, and I think I am looking at the 5th Edition on page 116, clearly says that an unsigned letter should not be read in the House. When quoting a letter in the House a member must be willing to give the name of the author. I think of these conditions, their authenticity, their authorship, cannot be vouched for by the member, they cannot only be not tabled, they cannot be referred to or quoted in any way in this House.

The Member for St. Johns refers —(Interjection)— if it is his concept that an entrenched Bill of Rights is a kind of step this country needs to allow unsigned documents, completely unauthorized, unchecked documents to protect the rights of people, he has a strange version of what a Bill of Rights or a justice system should do to protect people.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Kildonan on the point of order.

MR. PETER FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I would like to suggest that the Honourable House Leader should really look at the parliamentary procedure and the parliamentary process because it does guarantee us freedom of speech, and if we don't have it in this Chamber, I don't know where we are going to have it. I do believe people are entitled to express opinions about whatever they think is relevant in respect to the debate. At the present time we are having a debate on the privileges of this House and on the privileges as they cast dispersions upon a

number of members in this House, and I think that all the relevant data, that is information that will make us able to make a decision in respect to the matter of privilege as to how we deal with it, is pertinent and cogent to this debate. I can't see the Honourable House Leader trying to stifle debate by a ruse which he and his party have over time and time again utilized in this Chamber.

There was a draft report in respect to the Manitoba guidelines to the . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The point of order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader, I think he may have been referring to a ruling the Chair made that you cannot reflect on a ruling that the House has made and that is maybe the distinction between what he thought had occurred, and I would have to say that the point he has raised was really not a point of order.

The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, if I may proceed, I was not referring to or quoting from a letter this afternoon. I accept the ruling that you made, Mr. Speaker, that the document was not and could not be tabled. That's fine, that is finished. The Attorney-General in rising on a point of order seems also, along with his two colleagues, to be questioning what I had said in the House and the basis for making those remarks.

Mr. Speaker, if there is any better illustration of the need for this motion to go through, the Attorney-General has just given it. His colleague suggests that the government is not going to permit this to happen. Well, Mr. Speaker, the remarks that I read to the House on that Friday morning, I made in good faith, Mr. Speaker. I did not believe that they had any basis other than in truth. I had no reason to believe that they were malicious or a fabrication or had been made or written in any other manner but in complete authenticity. That is what is being questioned, Mr. Speaker, that either wittingly or unwittingly that I had mislead the House or caused something to be used in this House that was a fabrication or a half-hoax. Mr. Speaker, I only ask that the members give me the opportunity to clear this question that hangs over me. It gives me a chance to clear my name and remove this suggestion that my integrity is to be doubted in this House, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make a few comments about this issue as well. The Member for St. Vital has asked that this matter be referred so that he may have an opportunity to have any clouds or any slurs on his reputation clarified and dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that there has crept into this House on all sides of the House, a style of speaking which throws discredit on members of this House. Some people are better able to do it than others but I would not excuse anybody from the accusation that he, as a member of this Legislature, or she — I'll just make it broad enough — has not on occasion used means which are not of the most straightforward way of debating issues.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's not just the word "fabrication," it is other methods with which attacks

have been made on the issue before us which have made it clear that there is doubt being thrown on the motives of the Member for St. Vital. Mr. Speaker, it is, I think, necessary, that time be wasted if indeed in the minds of some, time is being wasted, to clarify whether or not these kinds of suggestions, the half-hoax idea, the trumped up charges idea, the fabrication idea, the question of motivation of the Member for St. Vital; all of that should be dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, I want to draw to your attention the stupidity of the Conservative caucus and the Conservative government. Here there is a statement made that the Senior Counsel to Hydro has given advice to Hydro telling them that they ought to make some sort of public statement or public appearance on the basis of the fact that the Tritschler Commission was being conducted in an improper manner and biased, and the stupidity of the Conservatives was to rise immediately to deny the possibility of that having been done. When they were told that there was clearly discussion, let me first remind you, Mr. Speaker, the Minister reporting for Hydro denied that he knew anything about such a suggestion. Later on he admitted that he had a report from the then acting chairman of Hydro that indeed Counsel did not like — I forget the words he used — was disturbed about the way it was being discussed, and the Minister for Hydro admitted that he was unenthusiastic about the suggestion that the manner in which it was being dealt with should be challenged.

Mr. Speaker, the stupidity of it is that it would have been much more sensible on their part had they said, well, these accusations have been made, the Board of Hydro listened to them, the Board of Hydro decided not to deal, not to proceed further, and let the matter drop as in saying, well okay, somebody had an opinion with which we did not agree. The fact that they were denying and now they are attempting to suppress any opportunity to ascertain whether or not the advice was indeed given and in the form suggested by the Member for St. Vital, is stupid, Mr. Speaker. That's really what it is, because they can keep hiding behind it. They would have been much more sensible, politically and otherwise to say yes, that may have been the opinion of one person. But, Mr. Speaker, the important thing is that they have denied it in every way that they could and they've announced already before the Debate had just entered into being discussed that the government is voting against it. In other words, denying an opportunity to ascertain whether or not the Member for St. Vital acted in good faith. Mr. Speaker, we have the Member for St. Vital requesting the opportunity to have it investigated, and hiding behind all of this is of course damaging to the Conservative Party and that's why I say it's absolute stupidity. It would have been much easier to have said, yes, that may have been a document prepared by the Council and that indeed it was one with which Hydro did not agree. Rather than that, they are making a real effort to suppress any discussion of it, even to the extent of denying the opportunity to be given to Legal Counsel himself to clarify whether or not this was his document. Think, Mr. Speaker, of the problem that is faced by a person who is denied the right to speak even when his name is being bandied about by all the media in

the newspapers to the effect that he did or did not make a statement and the document has now been submitted which appears to be something that may well have been a statement prepared by Legal Counsel, and they, the Conservatives are denying him the opportunity to say in any form at all that it is true or it is not true.

Mr. Speaker, this document that we have seen has been distributed, has been reported on, is a document which in itself is not a piece of advice to Hydro. It appears to be the draft of a statement which could be made or should be made to the Tritschler Commission. If anyone be as very technical, that person would say, well, that's not a piece of advice given. That in itself is not a letter of advice. It starts out: "Mr. Commissioner." It is an address to the Tritschler Commission accusing the Tritschler Commission and its Counsel of carrying on in a manner unacceptable to the person who drafted that form, and the question of how it came into the hands of the Member for St. Vital I think is unchallenged except by certain comments made by members of the front bench.

The Premier of the province speaks about false allegations. You note, Mr. Speaker, the word "allegation" in itself means — it is alleged, it is claimed to have been said, but when the word false is attached to it, it means that the allegation itself is false. The allegation is false, not the statement is false, and the First Minister said that. He talked about triple hearsay and tried to bring in question of motivation by speaking of someone whom they appointed to the Hydro Board. Why did he say that, Mr. Speaker? The only reason the reference by him and by the Minister reporting for Hydro to Mr. Scott as a person appointed by the NDP is to indicate that that person might have false motivations, and then of course whoever referred to it would also be attacked as having bad motivations.

The First Minister spoke of dredging up pieces of paper all they want. If they want to produce this piece of paper, I'd love to see it. Mr. Speaker, everything else he said denies the fact that he'd love to see it. He'd love never to have heard of it, Mr. Speaker. He would love that it was never put on a piece of paper signed or not signed and now he and his group are denying the opportunity to the Member for St. Vital to find out whether this piece of paper has any validity to it or not. That's why I say that he falsely stated that he would love to see it. Mr. Speaker, I am sure he deprecates the fact that it ever came to his attention. Now he and his group are going to make it to the extent that they can, absolutely impossible to find out whether or not it's true. You know, Mr. Speaker, I stood here; I asked questions of the Minister reporting for Hydro. Would he agree to have Steward Martin be released from the solicitor-client relationship, and he said, oh, yes, if he wants to be released I recommended that Hydro consider it; consider it. He didn't say grant the release but that they should consider it and if they agreed to do it, he would go along.

I pressed him, Mr. Speaker, and I asked him whether he would be prepared to recommend to Hydro that they should release Steward Martin whether or not he asked to be released. Well, he hedged a bit, but then he said, if they want to on their own initiative . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order, please. The honourable member is telling a very nice interesting story but would he get back to the matter of privilege that is before us, please?

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, it is not in my concern; it is not part of my concern to tell an interesting story. I am attempting, Mr. Speaker, to speak and to persuade members who have already received instructions from a Minister that they should vote for this resolution, because the resolution, the resolved portion letting out the preamble, says that the question as to whether or not a fabrication has been perpetrated in the House be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections.

I want them to vote for it, and the reason I do, Mr. Speaker, is that I was talking about the efforts of the front bench to attack and to downgrade the motivation of the Member for St. Vital. I'm showing it as an example that the Minister for Hydro in attempting to show how fair he would be to Steward Martin in releasing him from the restraint on his speaking about this document which has been referred to and read from, that he said, oh, well, I will leave it to Hydro. Who is Hydro, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Kristjanson, who fought the efforts of the decisions of the NDP all along in regard to Hydro? Who is another director of Hydro? The very Counsel who was attacked in this document, this document, this draft document that has been referred to; Mr. Scott, that is his name. It's a different Scott, not Dennis Scott, but the Scott who was the Counsel to the Tritschler Commission, is the person who is being criticized in this draft document and the same Mr. Scott is a member of the Board of Directors. I don't know the extent to which he's prepared to release Steward Martin but he ought to. That's my point.

There is stupidity in an attempt to prevent this matter being discussed, the matter that the Member for St. Vital brought in. There is stupidity in attempting to attack his motivations, there is stupidity in an effort to suppress an opportunity to find out what the truth is and you know, Mr. Speaker, the reason it is so stupid is that if the truth came out and that indeed, Steward Martin did prepare that draft and did submit it to Hydro, then all it is is Mr. Steward Martin's attack on the Tritschler Commission for which these people should not be accountable. After all, all they did was to prepare a set of terms of reference for Mr. Tritschler to deal with and if he went beyond it or if he went beyond it some other way, it's not their fault but, Mr. Speaker, what they're trying to do is to prevent any attack on the content of the Tritschler Commission Report and there is an attack. It has been made by an unsigned document, by a draft that has been submitted and they fear that, Mr. Speaker. They fear that so much so that they are prepared to talk about triple hearsay, about unsigned documents, about questionable documents. It wouldn't take long, Mr. Speaker. I am sure that it would be not a full morning of the meeting of Privileges and Election Committee to ascertain the extent to which a fabrication has been perpetrated. It is the fear of the government and the fear of the Conservative Party and the fear of the members of the front bench particularly, that more come out of this than meets the eye, that forces them to order the caucus to vote

down this resolution, and that's a pity, Mr. Speaker, because Privileges and Elections are matters which are here to protect the individual. When I spoke about the probability of a need for an entrenched Bill of Rights in this very House it is because I fear, Mr. Speaker, very much fear, the matter in which the House Leader and his group are attempting to frustrate the opportunities of members of this House to be heard freely, to express their point of view and to be believed in what they say.

The rule that I've been taught, Mr. Speaker, in Beauchesne and otherwise is that one should not challenge the truth of a statement made by another honourable member. That has been done, in the case of the Member for St. Vital and that, Mr. Speaker, is being done only too often in this House and mainly from members who call out from their seat, and I am not excusing anyone or exempting anyone from that accusation.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, and I've part of this House all along, that the standards within the House have deteriorated and anybody who likes can accuse me of having contributed and I would say, yes, probably I have but, Mr. Speaker, we have to make a start to improve on it and one start would be by voting in favour of this resolution. I would like to see some integrity that makes every member feel that the Member for St. Vital has the right to have his actions justified or criticized after there has been a proper hearing by the Committee on Privileges and Elections and I therefore challenge the Conservatives. (Interjection)— You see, Mr. Speaker, a member up there, a member in the background there who doesn't deserve to be recognized as such, says he has to prove it in this House. Mr. Speaker, you have ruled that a prima facie case has been made; it has been made. (Interjection)— Pardon? Now I identify him. What did the Member for Minnedosa want to say from his seat?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. We can only have one speaker at a time in the House. At this time I recognize the Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but I did respond in the same way that the First Minister responded to me during the Question Period when he asked me if I wanted to make a speech and indeed I did. What did you want to say?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. If the honourable gentleman will direct his remarks to the Chair we may not have all these interruptions.

The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: I said that it was the Premier of Manitoba who stood today on his feet after he'd been recognized by you and asked me if I wanted to make a speech at that occasion. So, Mr. Speaker, in the same way, I am at fault by following his example.

Mr. Speaker, what I'm saying is that I'm challenging the members of the Conservative party to have the guts, if they need guts, to have the integrity, if they need integrity, to have the good common sense which they may need to enable the Member for St. Vital who has requested to appear

under this resolution before the Committee on Privileges and Elections to make a statement under oath if necessary and to call such other witnesses as may be required, to justify whether or not the accusations made on him by Conservatives are correct or not. That is the challenge I give to them and I tell you in advance, Mr. Speaker, I don't think they will rise to that challenge. I expect that maybe I have provoked one or more of them to get up and make a speech and I will doubt very much, Mr. Speaker, that that speech can justify their not proceeding without casting further attacks and further insinuations of false motivation on the part of the Member for St. Vital or any of us on this side.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, this resolution reminds me of the story that the Member for Inkster has told in this House on a number of occasions where the boy murdered his mother and father and then went before the court to plead for mercy on the grounds that he was an orphan.

Now I would just briefly, Mr. Speaker, like to review what my understanding is of the background of the Resolution before us and that is that the Member for St. Vital attempted to table a document in this House which was addressed to no one; it was signed by no one, and if I recall correctly the Member for St. Vital said that he could not vouch for its authenticity or take any responsibility for it, and you, Sir, ruled that that document could not be tabled in this House.

Now, the Member for St. Vital and members on that side of the House are saying that somehow we should now allow for this resolution to refer the question to Privileges and Elections in order that the name of the Member for St. Vital should be cleared. What sort of besmirching of the character of the Member for St. Vital has taken place, Mr. Speaker? He has referred to a document for which he takes no responsibility, no responsibility at all.

Then the charge, Mr. Speaker, he has already denied taking any responsibility for that. The members, including the Leader of the Opposition, continue to misquote what the Minister of Energy and Mines said. He did not say that this was a hoax, or a half-hoax. He said, I would not be surprised if this turns out to be. There's quite a different situation there, Mr. Speaker.

So what we have now is that the members opposite have brought forward a so-called document which they take no responsibility for, they are trying to use that to attack the government in a way that is not entirely clear, and they are saying, first of all, that we as the government should respond to that sort of attack and that we should prove ourselves innocent of the charge that they were making, Mr. Speaker, which had no foundation whatsoever. They now have changed their argument around because they could see that argument was not going to wash, they have now changed it around to the point where they say, we are supposed to refer this to Privileges and Elections in order that the Member for St. Vital should have his name cleared, Mr. Speaker, should have his name vindicated.

That is a most curious kind of argument in saying that we are denying him the right to clear his name,

that we are suppressing discussion, he's saying that somehow the person who allegedly wrote the document is having his name bandied about. Mr. Speaker, I ask you, who began to bandy his name about, was it the members on this side of the House? No. We didn't introduce that so-called document, we didn't identify who the so-called document came from, indeed the members opposite did, Mr. Speaker. They have created this situation, in making allegations against the government, and they are now asking us to prove that, and what the First Minister has said — or asking us to disprove it. And what the First Minister has said is that when the members opposite can introduce one shred of evidence, then we would be prepared to react. If this House is to be asked to react to every situation where the members opposite make an allegation against the government, and the government then is expected to respond to disprove that allegation, Mr. Speaker, then that is a total reverse of the system of justice as I understand it, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure as most of the members on this side of the House understand it, that when we are presented with some kind of evidence and some charges made, then we have a responsibility to disprove that, Mr. Speaker. When we are confronted with information which no one on that side of the House will take any responsibility for, then surely we should not be asked to disprove it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. If honourable members want to carry on private conversations, I suggest they remove themselves from the Chamber and carry them on in private.

The Honourable Minister of Finance.

MR. RANSOM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I don't think there is any necessity for me to beleague the point at all. I believe that I have outlined the circumstances that surround this resolution, Mr. Speaker, the attempt to turn the system upside down as I understand it, and if the Member for St. Vital is concerned about his reputation, then I'm afraid that he has brought that on himself by introducing a document for which he says he can take no responsibility.

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

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Is it any wonder that the public have so little respect for politicians, the way things have been going on, and it seems to be getting worse and worse all the time?

It seems to be now that you can do anything in the name of partisanship, the main thing seems to be, get re-elected at all costs. —(Interjection)— That's right. Yes.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, and if my honourable friend, the Minister of Highways thinks he's got something funny, I'll tell him that I would imagine he's referring to the fact that I changed parties. I think that you will look at things and I think that it is a known fact that usually people who switch

parties do not get elected. I think that is a known fact, and I've been here longer than anybody on that side of the House. So I must be respected by my constituents just as much as you. Just as much as any of you here. So don't give me that malarkey. I think it takes guts sometimes to be able to say, all right, this has gone far enough. This has gone far enough and I will go on what I believe, not necessarily what a party or a leader believes. I think this is the important thing, and I don't apologize for that at all. And I think I'm as well respected, if there is such a thing as any politician that is respected in Manitoba or anywhere else, I think I'm as well respected as any single one of you. So you haven't got me backed against the wall and you haven't embarrassed me at all.

Mr. Speaker, for anybody that follows what is happening, I think that they will see the arrogance of this government. I have never seen so much name-calling, implying of motives, as I have in this last session or the last two sessions. There is not once that the First Minister didn't get up and start by insulting every possible way, everybody that doesn't agree with him. There's no respect. They're trying to get together now with the Prime Minister of this country . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. We have a motion before the House. I hope the honourable member would address himself to the motion.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I am very much addressing myself to the subject. I'm talking about the fact that some people here are not trusted, and some of the things that have been said, like was said by the First Minister, that started all this. And then there's name calling, with the Prime Minister of this country, because they don't agree with him, there's name calling by everybody . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that he address himself to the matter of privilege that is before the House. The honourable member has the resolution, I hope, before him . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: That's exactly what I'm talking about, Mr. Speaker, if you would care to listen.

MR. SPEAKER: The resolution before the House is the motion of the Honourable Member for Inkster, dealing with the motion, that be sent to a committee, and that is the motion that is before the House.

The Honourable Member for Kildonan on a point of order.

MR. FOX: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the relevancy of the motion in respect to aspersions on members is what we are really discussing. That is what the matter of privilege is about, and so therefore I'm sure that relevancy will have to be taken into context when we discuss how we conduct ourselves in this House, how other members reflect upon other members in the House, that's all part of the relevancy of the matter of privilege before the House.

So I think the Member for St. Boniface is in order when he refers to what we have done in this House by various members of the House.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, just to remind you, part of the resolution is: THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the question as to whether or not fabrication or hoax has been perpetrated in this House, be referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections.

And I am exactly explaining or trying to explain what caused this and how we are now facing the situation that we are.

Mr. Speaker, I was saying that I have never seen so much name-calling. There has been name-calling, and I took part of it, in certain times, but the worst thing, and I lay all the blame on the shoulders of the First Minister because he is the Premier of all this province. There has been hatchetmen before, but the Premier of this province doesn't get up once that he implied motives, he doesn't care, he's one that professed to be so interested in a parliamentary form of government, he doesn't care about the rules, he threatened the Speakers, he's threatened everybody else, and this is why we are faced with the situation the way we are now.

All of a sudden, the Minister, who never withdrew anything before in his life, all of a sudden is saying, I will withdraw, yes. He withdrew because he thought this would be the end of it. Because this is what — he thought it would be the end of it.

Now the member said that this was a criticism of government. I don't see this document at all as being a criticism of the government, it was something that was addressed to a board. And I agree with those, Mr. Speaker, and with you, Mr. Speaker, to say that it is very difficult to try to bring anything, and it's questionable if it should be done at all. Maybe the Member for St. Vital never should have brought this document here, because it is very serious, and if anybody can come in and read anything, then it is a difficulty and sometimes it would lead to people fabricating things. That is a possibility.

If the people that send these things really want to help, or think they have something, they should sign it. I agree with that. And your decision is not the one that is being questioned. But Mr. Speaker, there has been an effort to get at the truth. The fact was that a statement was made that this is — that then — if he was allowed, or he did read the statement, and then it was a fact and his integrity was questioned, was he purposely trying to mislead the House. Did he invent that, and that is the question. This is what we're looking at today.

Mr. Speaker, the members can get up and read all kinds of rules, I think the important thing is, what are we faced with. We're faced with the situation that the public of Manitoba do not know if somebody is purposely lying or if there is more than meets the eye. And it would have been so easy, Mr. Speaker, for the Minister to say, okay, I will ask that Mr. Martin be released of any commitment that he may have as lawyer-client, and that he should come forward and make a statement, because the important thing now is to look and to try to find the truth. That's the important thing. Not try to hide and say, you're criticizing us, and it's up to you to prove it.

All right. The thing is, it would be so easy, everything points out that the document was written

by a Mr. Martin. It would be so easy to call him, to call the committee, and this is what we're asking today, to call the committee and ask him, did you really write this thing? Was it your document? That would be so easy.

Now what is it, is this government so afraid of the truth? What is it? It might be embarrassing, if we bring this thing up — it's always unfair. And this government did the same thing when they were in Opposition. Many, many times. They've took documents that — in fact the Liberals — the Conservatives in Ottawa were taking a document that was suppose to be leaked from the Prime Minister's Office, and they made a big thing out of that.

The thing is that you want to get at the truth. That's the important thing. That's the important thing, and we wouldn't have this situation of so much bitterness between members. Goddamnit, we're all members, we're all Manitobans, we're all human beings. Yes, it gets me mad, and don't be such a bunch of hypocrites, if that's the worst thing you ever heard — what a bunch of hypocrites.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I would ask the honourable member to withdraw the use of the word hypocrite. It is an unparliamentary word and I'm sure he has a knowledge of the English language to substitute a . . .

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, if you read Hansard, I think I said don't be a bunch of hypocrites, is that wrong? I said, don't be a bunch of hypocrites, is that wrong, if you say that I have to withdraw that statement, don't be a bunch of hypocrites, I will. But I did not make an accusation, I said, don't be a bunch of hypocrites.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Finance on a point of order.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for St. Boniface clearly said, what a bunch of hypocrites, Mr. Speaker, and he should withdraw that remark.

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

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, Mr. Speaker, it's possible that I did say that, and if I did I have no problem in withdrawing that at all because it's not — and I hope that it might be an example to set for the First Minister of this province, that when he calls us liars and he gets up and implies motives to everybody, that maybe someday he will withdraw it instead of threatening the Speaker. I hope that this will be the case.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the government is not even on trial. There is a document that we want — it might develop that something happened that the Minister responsible knew what was going on. That's a possibility and that's the chance you take. You are talking about the — excuse me I can't address any member directly, but through you to the Minister that spoke earlier, I mean the Member for Lakeside — he said, you be careful because it will be a big splash. Let's have the splash right now. Let's see who is going to get wet, and if it's us, so be it. Instead of

wasting time, instead of going along, let's find out and let's let the people know what the truth is. The important thing is not all the rule books that you can read, it's right now, the people are asking themselves, where is the truth, and we have a chance to tell them. It would be very, very easy to call a committee; we call Mr. Martin who has to come, and then we say to him, did you write this document or not? It is very, very easy and nobody is going to be hurt by doing that at all. It's just the fact that you ask him if he wrote it, then it becomes his opinion, and we can argue that if you want.

There has been so much, even the House Leader got up and didn't even want us to talk about the content of this document that was read. How can you discuss this resolution without referring to it, Mr. Speaker, it would be completely impossible?

Now, Mr. Speaker, the thing I am saying is that it has been so difficult because of the arrogance of this government and especially the First Minister, and the worst thing is that you have so many of these younger people who have been there for the first term and have never seen the other Premiers, anyone that you want to mention in action — sure there have been hatchet men on every side, but not the Premier himself — and what are they going to do — they have to cheer because it's their boss. It makes it embarrassing for the Speaker, and very difficult to make decisions when he is threatened, and all the other young ones, and they are going to grow up with this feeling that this is the way you should behave. That's unfortunate, and I am sure that some of the older members, and I won't embarrass them by asking them if it's right, but some of the members who know the rules, and who have always tried to defend the system that we had, who have said that they are not running in the next election — I wonder why? I wonder if they are not a little embarrassed by the way things are going because it is bad for the whole country, and it is bad for everybody, and there is always somebody who is going to try to outdo each other by name calling. This is what happened and this is why we are in this situation now.

When I first got in this House, Mr. Speaker, you would debate but you could be friends, now there's so much damn bitterness all over the place. There is so much bitterness because there is the enemy . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member once again that he stick to the subject matter before us.

The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, you are making it very, very difficult. I don't know what you want me to say. I can't talk about things — why we are in this situation. I have never seen that before. We have had some leeway and now you are telling me that I can . . . I don't know what you want me to say. I am very much sticking to the resolution, as much as anybody else that spoke.

Mr. Speaker, the important thing is that the people of Manitoba want to know the truth. We have to look at the situation the way it is now. There has been an accusation made by a member that he might have — granted, maybe he never should have brought this in here, but he did, and it was read, and it was reported. And now the important thing is, did he

invent that? Did he the night before prepare or write this document and send it to himself? One of the members, and let it be recorded, that the Member for Minnedosa is saying yes, that's exactly what the Member for St. Vital is doing, by shaking his head.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa on a point of order.

MR. DAVID BLAKE: Mr. Speaker, I was merely agreeing with the member. He said maybe the Member for St. Vital could have written that document a week or so ago and brought it into this Chamber, and I am merely saying yes, he could have. There is no date, there is no signature on it. He certainly could have. I was merely agreeing with the member. I am not accusing the Member for St. Vital for doing that.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The honourable member is making a statement but it's not a point of privilege.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, I agree, I don't know what the point of order is. I am just saying that's exactly what he was doing, agreeing with me, that he feels that this is a possibility. Now, do we really want to know then if that is the case.

A MEMBER: Ask him.

MR. DESJARDINS: Are you going to believe him if I ask him?

Here — did you do it purposely? Did you write yourself that letter? —(Interjection)— He tells me, Mr. Speaker, to pass on the message to all these people to vote for the motion and they will find out. That's a reasonable . . . What would happen if this motion is passed? If this motion is passed the committee will meet; they will ask Mr. Martin to come in front of the committee; he will be released, he will be asked to tell the truth and the first question that somebody will ask him — did you write this document or did you send it? And he will probably say no, and then did you write it? And then we will find out if the Member for St. Vital wrote this letter to himself.

A MEMBER: Well he said he didn't.

MR. DESJARDINS: I beg your pardon?

A MEMBER: He said he didn't.

MR. DESJARDINS: Oh, yes, but you don't believe him. The Member for Minnedosa was saying it's possible that he did. He's not sure. So all of a sudden, Mr. Speaker, they believe that we might be telling the truth. Well if you are so interested and if you don't want to be a . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. We can only have one person at a time and at this time it is the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, again as I say, the situation is very clear. What caused all this is not important now, the important thing is that in front of the public there is a document that exists that has

not been tabled, that has not been signed, and some people are insinuating that this was fabricated by the Member for St. Vital.

We have a good chance of finding out by just calling the committee, calling this person, and saying did you write this document or not and we will get the answer. Isn't that what you are interested in more than Beauchesne and all those things? Are you not interested in the truth and in letting the public of Manitoba know what's the truth, or do you want to hide behind something else? Do you want to hide behind something else and say okay, it's not up to us to prove?

You know there are documents that came in before. I remember bringing a document and there wasn't that much to-do about it. I read a letter here that supposedly came from the Dental Association, and it was a kind of guideline for the members on how to treat the government dental program. It was accepted. A few days after, the then President of the Dental Association admitted that he had written it. But when I first brought it in, it wasn't signed.

Mr. Speaker, if we are really interested in finding out what the truth is and put an end to this, let's vote for this motion, and in a day or so, at one meeting we can find out what the truth is.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?

The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Just on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines had indicated earlier that a briefing would be available at 5:30 for members of the House. The Opposition House Leader advised me that he is prepared to agree to adjournment at 5:00 o'clock for the purpose of members of the House receiving the adjournment. In order that the time could be fixed and the arrangements made, I wonder if there is unanimous consent to adjourning at 5:00 o'clock for members to receive this briefing.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there agreement? (Agreed)

The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

HON. GARY FILMON (River Heights): Mr. Speaker, I am sure that I, like many others, didn't expect to get up to speak on this particular motion when it was introduced. I am sure that there have been so many different things said that it probably doesn't need a further contribution, but members opposite seem to be so desirous of continuing to debate this particular resolution, of continuing to keep it in the forefront of attention, that I have to wonder what their objectives really are, and I suppose I am going to be criticized for imputing motives, so I won't impute motives, I will just suggest that there seems to be a great desire on the part of the opposition to avoid tackling some of the real issues that are before us.

They seem to prefer to debate this which seems to me to be a total non-issue, in favour of the Budget debate, in favour of discussing some of the real positive things that are happening in the province today like the announcement of Alcan. They seem to be —(Interjection)— I am just leading into it, just as members opposite did. The Member for St. Boniface just spent 15 minutes leading into it and never did get to the resolution so perhaps I can —(Interjection)— Well it didn't . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. If the honourable member will address the Chair we may not have some of these interruptions.

MR. FILMON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I will be glad to address you.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite are looking at this particular non-issue in favour of some of the real issues that are before us and I think that it is just an excuse for the Opposition to avoid all of these very serious debates, to put up a smokescreen and to totally divert the attention of the House from the basic issues that are facing us.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kildonan on a point of order.

MR. FOX: I would ask the Honourable Minister to retract what he just said. He is imputing motives to the Opposition in respect to this question, and the question is a matter of privilege and the Honourable Minister hasn't addressed himself at all to it. All he has done is imputed motives so far.

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

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, if it appears to be a smokescreen to me, then that's my view of it, and — (Interjection)— I beg your pardon?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. There has been a request of the Honourable Minister that he not impute motives to the Opposition.

The Honourable Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

MR. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, that's the last thing on my mind. I wouldn't suggest that there were any motives on the part of the Opposition, but at the moment, perhaps because of the haze that's overcome all of us here by virtue of the absence of justification for the resolution that's been put forward, I must admit that there is an appearance of a smokescreen to me over this entire issue. There's a cloud, and I think that the cloud certainly is obscuring the facts of what is before the House, because the motion before the House, Mr. Speaker, deals with a matter that could very well have been dealt with in committee stage. But of course we had the very unusual spectacle of the Opposition walking out, deigning to deal with the whole issue of the Hydro report, and instead having to come forward with . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I point out to the honourable member that what occurred in a committee is not a subject for debate in the Chamber.

The Honourable Minister.

MR. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Instead of having that properly dealt with we have to bring it forward in this manner and, Mr. Speaker, we have had comments during this afternoon's debate, by the Member for St. Johns, who merely read to us the question and answers that he . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Vital on a point of order.

MR. WALDING: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Minister has referred to a committee and has made the suggestion that this could be dealt with there. Is he not aware that both of these questions as to fabrication and a hoax were raised after the committee had ceased to sit?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member did not have a point of order.

The Honourable Minister.

MR. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The whole point in question is the fact that this is in effect dealing with a document, despite the fact that on the surface we are attempting to deal with two words, it's one way of introducing the whole discussion of the so-called document, or sheet of seven leaves that purports to be some information to do with a legal opinion, and this is a whole way of circumventing the ruling that's been made by the Speaker, in my opinion, of getting down to this particular issue and having that whole thing aired before a committee. It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite are just contradicting themselves every time they stand up to speak.

The Member for St. Boniface got up to criticize the Premier for his language in the House for the manner in which he dealt with issues, and then he used stronger language than I have heard in my year-and-a-half in this House. He used the name of the Lord in vain, he went on and called people on this side hypocrites, he went on and on slandering members on this side of the House, when he purported, or presumably he was getting up to criticize the Premier for doing something of that nature, and I just don't understand it.

It seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that the motion seeks to have everything that you've already ruled on brought before the Committee in a different way. It's just packaging it in a different form, putting different wrapping and different bows and strings on it, but at the same time it's twisting around the issue that was previously before the House. It perhaps is creative, it's perhaps inventive in the manner in which the Member for Inkster has brought it forward again, suggesting that in fact he wants to give the Member for St. Vital an opportunity to prove that he was not duped in any way or he didn't have this whole thing brought over him in some sort of a joke. But at the same time we're still talking about an inadmissible document, an unsigned, undated, unsubstantiated and obviously illegitimate document, that even the member who presented it in the House will not take responsibility for it. Why? Because it's in their interest to keep this whole issue in the milieu of rumours, of innuendo, unattributed remarks, hearsay, basically red herrings, Mr. Speaker, so that they can be repeated and regurgitated, dragged over the coals on and on in the House, avoiding all of the real issues that could and should be debated here today.

We should be talking about all the positive things that are happening in our economy, but we're not and, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand why; I don't understand why. Perhaps they don't want to talk about those things, but you know, it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, that this whole issue, if one looks at it for what it really is, it can't possibly make any difference, even if we did substantiate the document, even if we did substantiate whether or not it was a

half-hoax or whether or not it was fraudulent or any of those possible suggestions. It wouldn't make any difference, because if you look at it, what members opposite are suggesting that the Minister of Energy did, at some point in the past, was to object to a legal opinion. A legal opinion that purportedly said that the Tritschler Commission was overstepping its bounds of authority.

Well, if the Minister of Energy had been concerned that that might have been happening, all he would have had to have done would have been to walk into Cabinet and extend the Terms of Reference, the authority of the Commission, so that he didn't have to worry about anybody's legal opinion. He had the authority to do that and he had the mandate to do that because the whole purpose of the Tritschler Inquiry was to bring out the whole sordid mess of what had happened under the NDP Government in the Seventies when Hydro was mismanaged, totally mismanaged, when the funds of the people of this province were inappropriately dealt with . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We do have a motion before the floor. I wish the honourable member would stick to the subject matter.

MR. FILMON: And the motion that's before us, Mr. Speaker, seeks to discuss an issue that couldn't possibly have been an issue because of the fact that we, as a government, the Minister in his authority, had the power to go to Cabinet and extend those Terms of Reference, because it was the mandate of that Commission of Inquiry, to bring out all the facts so that Manitobans once and for all would know and understand what had happened to Hydro development in the Seventies and that, Mr. Speaker, is what has caused the members opposite to be so upset, so agitated, to bring all of these kinds of issues about semantics and words that were used before us so that they can avoid the real issue and the real issue is that they are very very upset by the findings of the Tritschler Inquiry and they don't want to face up to them, so now they're trying to discredit their . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. I suggest to the honourable member he stick to the resolution before us, which is a resolution to refer a particular subject to a committee.

MR. FILMON: So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that there's absolutely no need to refer this matter to a Committee, that anything that can be said, can be said within this House, within the various debates that will go on within the Committee structure of this House. It has already had an opportunity to examine Hydro and so, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that there's absolutely no need whatsoever to refer this to a Committee and deal with it in any other way.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, a number of members of the government side continue to make reference to a document, to a document as being the subject of this motion. Mr. Speaker, this debate does not deal with whether or not a particular document is admissible or inadmissible. You've ruled

on that, Mr. Speaker. That is not the issue, but the issue is that there have been charges made that certain honourable members of the House have committed a fabrication, have committed a half-hoax and that, Mr. Speaker, is the subject of this resolution.

Now the second term you have ruled out, so let's talk about the perpetration of a fabrication. That is the matter which we want the Committee to resolve and it has nothing to do with the validity or the invalidity of a document.

Now the Honourable Minister of Finance will try to make us believe that. When he got up he, you know, he tried to bring us up-to-date or to refresh our memory on what had occurred and he made reference, you will recall, Mr. Speaker, to the fact that the Honourable Member for St. Vital had made reference to a document and quoted from a document and attempted to table it, and then of course you ruled it out of order, but he forgot a couple of other details. He forgot the two details which precipitated, which brought this motion into being, and that is the reference by the First Minister to the comments of the Honourable Member for St. Vital as being a fabrication, the reference by the Honourable Minister of Mines as making reference outside this House, as to the comments made by the Honourable Member for St. Vital as being a half-hoax.

Then of course, the Minister of Natural Resources was very quick to rise to his feet and to indicate to the House that the government will not vote for this motion, which is a very very strange position to take by the Honourable Minister. Doesn't the Minister want the accuracy of the accusations made by two of his colleagues from Cabinet that substantiate it? Doesn't he want to know? Apparently he doesn't, apparently he doesn't.

Now the Honourable Minister of Finance also indicated, also stated to the House —(Interjection)— and I'd be very happy to hear from the Minister of Highways. I'd be very happy to hear from the Minister of Highways, and I hope that he participates in this debate rather than just continue yakking away from his seat as he's accustomed to do.

Now the Minister of Finance says, how can the Minister —(Interjection)— Mr. Speaker, don't . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. It is customary in this House to refer to other members as being honourable members. I hope the Honourable Member for Burrows would continue to use that custom.

MR. HANUSCHAK: I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I meant to call him — well, I was tempted to call him an honourable punk, but I can't because that will be a contradiction in terminology. One can't very well call anyone that, so therefore, Mr. Speaker, I will ignore the Honourable Minister of Highways, as I normally do.

The Honourable Minister of Finance said —(Interjection)— yes, for the benefit for the Honourable of Health — the Honourable Minister of Finance said, how can the Member for St. Vital, who is the initiator of everything that happened here that lead up to this resolution, the instigator of it, now want to take advantage of this. Well I'm glad, I'm glad that the Minister of Finance is taking that

position. I'm very glad because that puts me into an excellent position to deal with a matter raised by the former Minister of Finance, who is now the Minister of Energy and Mines, because now I can call him the perpetrator of a fabrication and a half-hoax, which he did in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I want to make reference to the fabrication, the half-hoax that the Honourable Minister of Mines perpetrated and the fabrication and the half-hoax you will recall, Mr. Speaker, when you were sitting on this side of the House, when the Honourable Minister rose in his seat and read from an unsigned, undated document, during the Estimates debate of my department, when I was Minister of Education . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. Order please. May I point out to the honourable member that he is referring to something that has happened, not in this particular debate at all, not in this debate at all. I have asked the honourable member if he would keep his remarks germane to the subject matter before us.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I simply made reference of that matter to indicate to you that there is a precedent and that there is a comparison and if the Honourable Minister of Finance is going to say that the Member for St. Vital cannot hide behind something which in his opinion, he initiated, I'm glad to hear that, because that gives me the right on the same — applying the same rationale, that gives me the right to tell the Minister of Mines that he's a perpetrator of a fabrication and a half-hoax, exactly on the same basis.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance on a point of order.

MR. RANSOM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think it was just this afternoon that it was pointed out to this House that the use of the word "fabrication" was unparliamentary and in fact we saw the circumstance where the First Minister withdrew such an allegation and I suggest the Member for Burrows should withdraw his allegation.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable . . .

MR. HANUSCHAK: If he's going to take exception to the comments that I make, he can take a similar course of action as the House is attempting to take now.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The word has been pointed out as being unparliamentary. There has been a request made of the Honourable Member for Burrows to withdraw the use of the word.

The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Well then, Mr. Speaker, I withdraw the use of the word "fabrication," but I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the document which had previously been read into the record of this House, that the subject matter of that document was a fabrication and on exactly the same basis, applying the same rationale as the Honourable Minister of Finance attempts to apply to the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

Now the Honourable Minister of Health — oh, I wasn't aware that the Minister of Health is a speaker; he's going to rule on whether or not my withdrawal was acceptable or not. Now whether "chintzy" is a parliamentary expression or not, I don't know. Well, we'll check into that later. Mr. Speaker, for a government to refuse and indicate that it's going to vote against a motion, to indicate whether charges made by one of their colleagues are correct or not, is simply beyond my comprehension; it's simply beyond my comprehension, as many things that this government has done are beyond my comprehension.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I rise to make a few comments on the resolution that's before the House or the motion from the Member for Inkster on the fact that we have heard honourable members opposite lay before us the case that there are new members in the House and that kind of carrying on should be put before a Committee, to be put to rest.

Well really, Mr. Speaker, what are we seeing brought before the House? We're seeing the Member for St. Vital who referred to a document and which, if we were to check the Hansard and the comments he made, that he referred to some author of the document that he had, whether in fact what was in that document had any bearing on the operations of a particular utility or of what was happening within government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing the members opposite try to say to the government, try to say to the government that here we are, here we are trying to cover up something, that in fact there's nothing to cover up. The Minister of Mines and Energy has made it very clear, the course of action that he's prepared to take, and now we're being asked to establish a committee to clear the name of the Member for St. Vital. What kind of a kangaroo court are they expecting us to perform? It reminds me of some of the actions taken by the New Democratic Party two or three years ago when they didn't have support for the Member for St. Boniface. There was some question on his allegiance to the party.

If the Member for St. Vital has a document that he in fact believes is true and authentic, then why doesn't he tell his colleagues opposite the whole story? Why do we have to, as a government, establish a committee and put the whole thing before it? Mr. Speaker, there's no question in our mind that the Minister of Mines and Energy is acting, and has acted, in a very responsible manner, and will continue to do so.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think we're wasting the time of the House. I think what it has turned out to be and what will continue to show is that here we have members of long term standing, who should have known better, displaying and demonstrating to the new members of the Assembly the trickery that can be brought forward. That's all it is. It's a bunch of . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I point out to the honourable member that the use of that word is one that is not normally accepted in

parliamentary circles, and I would ask the honourable member to change it.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, if there is some question in your mind, Sir, and the members of the House that that is on the verge of being — what was the term the Minister of Health used — (Interjection)— verbal slight of hand, I will withdraw that particular word, Mr. Speaker.

But it is in fact demonstration of the kind of misleading, the kind of devious actions that can be taken by members opposite to mislead the public. Totally, Mr. Speaker, the Member for St. Vital has a document which he has referred to that he's afraid to tell his members of his own Party the authenticity of it, the background of it, it's an unsigned document, and trying to play games with this House, Mr. Speaker. I would have to say that there's no question that the way the Minister of Mines and Energy is proceeding to deal with the issue is responsible, and I think we should get on with the business of debating the budgetary affairs of the government, the important issues that are before the people of Manitoba.

QUESTION put, MOTION defeated.

MR. BOYCE: Yeas and Nays, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Call in the members.

A STANDING VOTE was taken, the results being as follows:

YEAS

Messrs. Bostrom, Boyce, Cherniack, Cowan, Desjardins, Doern, Evans, Fox, Green, Hanuschak, Jenkins, Miller, Pawley, Schroeder, Uruski, Uskiw, Walding, and Ms. Westbury.

NAYS

Messrs. Anderson, Banman, Blake, Brown, Cosens, Craik, Domino, Downey, Driedger, Einarson, Enns, Ferguson, Filmon, Galbraith, Gourlay, Hyde, Johnston, Jorgenson, Kovnats, Lyon, MacMaster, McGill, McGregor, McKenzie, Mercier, Minaker, Orchard, Ransom, Sherman, Mrs. Price, and Mr. Steen.

MR. CLERK: Yeas 18; Nays 31.

MR. SPEAKER: I declare the motion lost.

The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge on a point of order.

MS. WESTBURY: On a point of privilege, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Cabinet Minister, who made a remark from his seat on Poles, to withdraw that remark; to have the courage, first of all, to stand and make the remark for the record, and then to withdraw it as being a racist remark which is not suitable to this Chamber.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. GEORGE MINAKER (St. James): Mr. Speaker, if the honourable member is referring to

the fact that I said that solidarity like in Poland is a racist remark, I was referring to the union in Poland.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I believe there is unanimity to call it 5:30. The hour being 5:30, I am leaving the Chair. The House will resume at 8:00 o'clock under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Speaker.